



IMPRESSIVE: Sculptor Halima Cassell works on one of her creations - and is in the running for a major Asian award

# Sculptor's art is shaping up to challenge for top award

A BLACKBURN artist has been shortlisted for 'Britain's most prestigious Muslim awards'.

Halima Cassell, a sculptor, who fuses her Asian cultural roots with a fascination for African pattern work, is nominated in the Alhambra Awards for Excellence in Arts category at the Muslim News Awards.

She is shortlisted alongside famous names including England cricketer Moeen Ali, BBC journalist Shabnam Bashir Mahmood and fellow Islamic artist Maryam Golubeva.

A delighted Halima said: "It is wonderful to be shortlisted."

"I think the awards represent recognition of the hard work and determination people put in in the different fields and there are lots of awards given in lots of different categories."

The artist will be heading down to London today and keeping her fingers crossed as she waits to find out if she is a winner.

Talented artist is in the frame to win a prestigious prize for her inspired African pattern work

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Ahmed Versi, editor at *The Muslim News*, said: "As in previous years, we have been humbled by the quality and the quantity of entries for each category of award."

"With the huge focus on bad news stories when it comes to Islam and British Muslims, it is all the more important that we recognise those Muslims among us who are doing great things to transform the lives of their communities and society."

"We should honour and celebrate the exemplary work of the men, women and children present among us tonight."

Nominations for The Muslim News Awards for Excellence come from the newspaper's 150,000 plus readership, while shortlist and final judging conducted by an independent panel of judges who pick through the entries

to find the pick of the bunch.

The Muslim News Awards for Excellence is a high-profile gala ceremony showcasing the best of British Muslim talent and is hosted by *The Muslim News*, the country's largest ethnic minority newspaper.

The newspaper works toward bestowing talented British Muslims the recognition they deserve for making positive contributions in their fields and communities across the nation.

Prime Minister David Cameron added: "Britain's Muslim communities make an incredible contribution to this country."

"We see it around us, every single day, in our schools and our hospitals, in businesses and in the arts."

"The Muslim News Awards for Excellence does a fantastic job of honouring those who go above and beyond, people of whom our country can be truly proud."



STEADY HAND: Halima Cassell