

Public Program

All public events take place at VCUQatar campus, Education City, Qatar.

Sunday, November 4	19:00	Opening ceremonies
	19:30	Keynote Speaker, Carole Hillenbrand – <i>Gardens Beneath Which Rivers Flow: the Significance of Water in Classical Islamic Culture</i>
	20:30	Buffet reception for all attendees*
Monday, November 5	09:00	Marcus Milwright – <i>The Archaeology of Urban Water Systems: The Cases of Nafpleio and Nafpaktos in Southern Greece</i>
	09:45	Mohammad al-Asad – <i>Water Scarcity and Landscaping in the Islamic World: Contemporary Solutions to Historical Problems</i>
	10:30	COFFEE BREAK*
	11:00	Catherine B. Asher – <i>Out of the Desert: Water Traditions in the South Asian Landscape</i>
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	14:45	Panel discussion
	16:00	CLOSING TEA RECEPTION*

*Your registration includes meals and refreshments.



November 4–6, 2007
Doha, Qatar

Hosted by Virginia Commonwealth University
School of the Arts in Qatar

Welcome



For those of you who are visiting Qatar for the first time to attend the symposium, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the thumb-shaped peninsula which is the home of Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUQatar), the Qatar Foundation and Education City, a city which is truly devoted to research and education.

Doha is at the heart of Qatar and most of the population lives in the city. The city is currently investing in one of the most exciting skylines in the Middle East, with futuristic new buildings by world renowned architects such as Arata Isozaki, I.M. Pei, Santiago Calatrava and Ibrahim Al Jaidah. With projects such as The Pearl, North Beach Development, the Museum of Islamic Arts and the Qatar Photography Museum, Qatar continues to attract attention on the world stage.

We hope that during your stay, you have the chance to view this amazing city. Maybe take a walk on the beautiful Corniche which stretches for several kilometers or enjoy the views of Doha's constantly developing skyline.



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About VCU School of the Arts in Qatar



VCUQatar is the accredited branch campus of Virginia Commonwealth University, based in Richmond, Virginia in the United States. Founded in 1997, the school offers specialized undergraduate degrees in fashion design, graphic design and interior design. The partnership between Virginia Commonwealth University and the Qatar Foundation was established to share the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned to create an educational center for design excellence in the Middle East.

VCUQatar nurtures the creativity and technical skills necessary for professional careers in design by appointing faculty members, who regularly exhibit work, engage in research, publish, and lecture internationally. Faculty members guide and motivate students through an intensive curriculum that prepares students to assume careers as professional designers.



For the fifth consecutive year, VCUQatar, in partnership with the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing, will host the annual design conference, Tasmeem Doha, in March of 2008. Visit tasmeem.qatar.vcu.edu for more information.

The March 2007 conference focused on the implementation of sustainable design policies and practices in society. Internationally recognized designers continued the discussion initiated in recent Tasmeem conferences on the significant role designers play in shaping cultural identity and in determining a society’s economic and quality of life strategies.

As part of their course work, VCUQatar students designed the mascots and logos for the Gulf Cup Games, GCC Sports Federation and the Qatar Olympic Committee. Interior design students developed interior layouts for CHN University and collaborated with graphic design students on a project in the Souq Waqif. Fashion design students have supported fashion shows for non-profit organizations for social benefits. Several students entered international competitions during the academic year.



VCUQatar graduates are now pursuing careers at the Emiri Diwan, Q-Tel, Urban Planning Authority, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qatar National Hotels, Qatar Tourism Authority, Barwa, Qatar Diar and Al Jazeera Children’s Channel.



I welcome you to the biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, presented by Virginia Commonwealth University and the VCU School of the Arts in Qatar. As the leading design program in the Middle East and the leading public university program in the United States, it is fitting for VCU to launch one of the world's leading scholarly venues for the study of Islamic art and design.

The 2007 Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium takes as its starting point water in Islamic art and culture and shares a direct relationship to sustainability of natural resources. This issue of sustainability was the theme of VCUQatar's Tasmeem Doha 2007 symposium on design last spring and is a focus in our educational programs in Qatar and the United States.

It is my pleasure to join you for the Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art and its exploration of one of the world's major cultural traditions.

Richard E. Toscan, PhD
Dean, VCU School of the Arts
Vice Provost for International Affairs
Virginia Commonwealth University



It is my pleasure to welcome you to Virginia Commonwealth University, School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUQatar). We are honored to host the second biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture.

The symposium is a wonderful opportunity for students at VCUQatar and students throughout the region to learn from experts in Islamic Art and to participate in the ideas presented by each speaker within their areas of expertise.

VCUQatar is committed to delivering an outstanding, relevant design and visual arts education. As a member of Education City, VCUQatar's efforts embody the Qatar Foundation's "commitment to education – and to becoming one of the most developed knowledge-based societies around the world."

The work presented by Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom and all of the distinguished speakers will shed light on history while inspiring ideas for future creations.

This symposium demonstrates VCUQatar's commitment to contribute to the education of the community and to share knowledge of Islamic Arts within Qatar and throughout the world. For those of you unfamiliar with Islamic art, we hope you leave the symposium with an understanding of the culture and history that is behind the art.

On behalf of VCUQatar, I would like to thank you for attending this event, which is a major milestone in the school's history.

Allyson Vanstone
Dean, VCUQatar

About the Qatar Foundation



Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development is a private, non-profit organization established in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani. Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned is the chairperson of Qatar Foundation and personally guides the organization’s direction and programs.

Qatar Foundation’s mission is to prepare the people of Qatar and the region to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world and to make Qatar a leader in innovative education and research. To achieve this mission, Qatar Foundation partners with elite institutions and supports a network of centers, all committed to the principle that a nation’s greatest natural resource is its people.

Many of Qatar Foundation’s member organizations are located in Education City. Situated on the periphery of Doha, the site covers 14 million square meters and houses educational facilities which range from school age to research level, including branch campuses of some of the world’s leading universities. This bold venture aims to aid the transformation of Qatar into one of the world’s leading knowledge-based societies. Education City is also conceived of as a forum, where universities can share facilities and research and forge relationships with other institutions and businesses.

Key to Qatar Foundation’s commitment to education, research and community development is the preservation and promotion of the cultural and artistic heritage of Qatar and the Arab-Islamic world. Qatar Foundation, in partnership with the Virginia Commonwealth University, is extremely proud to sponsor the Second Biennial Symposium on Islamic Art.

www.qf.edu.qa

On behalf of the Qatar Foundation I would like to welcome you all to the Second Biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art. We are extremely proud to host the Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture Symposium in partnership with the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia and Doha, Qatar. It is our hope that this symposium will invigorate the worldwide thirst for knowledge about Islamic art.

The purpose of this symposium is to gather advanced students and scholars from around the world, who have insight and experience with Islamic art to meet and interact with one another. We are also happy that the fifteen fellowships have provided students and scholars with the opportunity to visit Qatar, which is now one of the fastest-growing Islamic art centers in the Middle East.

Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, who jointly hold the Hamad Bin Khalifa Endowed Chair of Islamic Art at VCU and the Norma Jean Calderwood University Chair of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College, are recognized as being among the leading scholars of Islamic Art in the world and have done a marvelous job in organizing this symposium.

At the Qatar Foundation, one of our objectives is for all our students to be educated within the context of the culture and history of the region. To this end, the international speakers will explore the theme of water in Islamic lands from southern Europe to South Asia. The symposium is an occasion to observe the realization of mature traditions of the Islamic World as well as the nurturing of new ones.

Dr Saif Ali Al-Hajari
Vice Chairman for the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development



I should like to cordially welcome all those attending the Second Biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, which was launched in Richmond, Virginia, in 2004. The symposium is being held this year in Doha, Qatar, for the first time, and it will continue to alternate between Qatar and the United States every two years.

The 2007 symposium “Rivers of Paradise, Water in Islamic Art and Culture” will attract renowned scholars from around the world to address many aspects of the theme, from water supply and distribution, to the role of water in religion and popular culture.

Since 1998, Qatar Foundation has partnered with the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of the Arts to bring one of the best American design programs to the communities of our region. By hosting events such as the Islamic Symposium, Tasmeem Doha and various public lectures and exhibitions, VCU School of the Arts in Qatar serves as a bridge between art and design in the West and the Middle East.

Sincerely,

Abdulla Bin Ali Al-Thani
Vice President, Education
Qatar Foundation

From the Organizers

Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom

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Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture is the second biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art (the first, *Expanding Frontiers*, was held in Richmond, VA in 2004). Water, on which all life depends, has been an image that runs through all aspects of Islamic civilization beginning in seventh-century Arabia with the revelation of the Qur'an itself. Water is a sign of divine grace. God created water before the Heavens and the Earth, and Muslims prepare themselves for worship with water. Although water will also be one of the torments of the damned, the gardens of Paradise have springs which provide drinks of wonderful taste to the blessed and rivers whose waters will never run brackish. Water is depicted already in the early eighth-century mosaics of the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus, and early Islamic palaces were graced with fountains, pools, and baths. Craftsmen made vessels for storing and serving water, and builders developed ingenious systems to deliver and display it. While some of water's importance in Islamic civilization stems from its religious connotations, other aspects respond to the environment in which Islamic civilization developed, a region often characterized by extreme heat and aridity. When water was insufficient, Muslims offered prayers for rain. Some water, like Job's miraculous spring that is mentioned in the Qur'an (38:42) and located by some in Bukhara, had magical and curative powers. The image of water was also expanded in the Islamic mystical tradition, which juxtaposes the ocean of inner meaning with the external world.

We chose water for the topic of the Second Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art not only because it transcends the specifics of medium, place and time within the history of Islamic art, but also because of its continuing relevance to the world today, as population growth puts increasing pressure on existing supplies of fresh water and climate change threatens to make the world we know at once a drier and wetter place. Understanding the past helps us prepare to face the challenges of the future.



Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, who have shared the Hamad Bin Khalifa Endowed Chair of Islamic Art at Virginia Commonwealth University since its establishment in 2005, are the organizers of Rivers of Paradise. A wife and husband team, they are the authors of well over a dozen books and hundreds of articles on all aspects of Islamic art and architecture. Blair's latest book is *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh, 2006), a survey of the quintessential form of Islamic art; Bloom's latest book is *Arts of the City Victorious* (London, 2007), the first full-length study of the art and architecture of the Fatimid dynasty in North Africa and Egypt. Also holders of the Norma Jean Calderwood University Professorship of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College, where they organized the 2006–2007 exhibition, *Cosmophilia: Islamic Art from the David Collection Copenhagen*, they are currently editing *The New Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, a 3-volume compilation that will be published in 2008.

Speakers



Our distinguished roster of speakers illustrates the wide range of approaches to studying Islamic art in the early 21st century. Some are historians or art historians who teach in universities, others are curators who work in museums. Some are practicing architects, others are conservators and archaeologists. Some deal with the history of objects while others specialize in the history of buildings and their environments. All are experts in their respective fields, although at different stages of their careers. The geographical and chronological span of their interests is equally wide: from Spain to south Asia and many places in between; from unearthing the secrets of the early Islamic period to unraveling the complex issues of modern times. Their perspectives are just as varied: some were born, live and work in Islamic lands, but were educated in Europe and America, while others were born, live and work in Europe or America, but have a deep love for and knowledge of Islamic civilization. In short, they represent the best and the brightest in the multifaceted field of Islamic art, and they will bring sparkling insights as they address our theme of water in Islamic art and culture.

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Sunday Nov 4, 19:30

Carole Hillenbrand, Keynote Speaker

Gardens Beneath Which Rivers Flow: The Significance of Water in Classical Islamic Culture



Professor of Islamic History and Head of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh

Recipient of the 2005 King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies

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This lecture examines various aspects of the role of water in the medieval Islamic world, dominated as it was by arid deserts, but also home to some of the world’s earliest civilisations, located in the plains watered by the Nile, Euphrates, Tigris and even the distant Indus. Special attention is given to the descriptions of water - in the Qur’an, with its evocative images of Paradise; in the hadith which tells how the Prophet Muhammad prayed for rain; and, more generally, in medieval Arabic religious literature, such as the stories of the prophets. The discussion will also focus on how water is featured in classical Arabic and Persian poetry and prose, as trope and symbol. It will examine the part that water played in the daily lives of medieval Muslims, both in religious contexts - notably the precepts of Islamic law (the Shari’a) and the use of water for ritual purification in worship, in festivals and in the ceremonies of death, as well as the symbolic associations of water as blessing, for example the waters of Zamzam and Kawthar.

The lecture will also highlight the importance of water in the secular sphere. The latter encompasses, of course, water as a symbol of wealth, power and pleasure, from regattas to gardens. Irrigation and water provision will also be covered in their manifold aspects - weirs, dams, sluices, mills, canals (both above ground and below), and the various associated devices, from the Nilometer and the water-clock to the shaduf and the water-wheel, including such structures as hammams and public fountains. The lecture will also explore Muslim attitudes toward the sea, from the thriving Indian Ocean trade to the marvels of the east which forever lay just over the horizon and which are described in the literature of travel and fantasy.

Biography

Educated at the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford and Edinburgh, Carole Hillenbrand is now Professor of Islamic History and Head of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh. She was visiting professor at Dartmouth College in 1994 and the University of Groningen in the Netherlands in 2002. She also serves as Vice-President of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, Islamic Advisory Editor for Edinburgh University, and editor of the series entitled “Studies in Persian and Turkish History,” published by Routledge since 1999. In addition to her many scholarly publications, she has written articles in popular newspapers and magazines on aspects of Islam and appeared on some fifteen television and radio documentary and discussion programs in the UK, the USA and the Middle East.



Jonah and the whale
Rashid al-Din, Jami’ al-tawarikh, 1314 AD, Edinburgh. University Library, Ms. Arab 20, folio 23v.



The infant Moses in a basket on the Nile
Rashid al-Din, Jami’ al-tawarikh, 1314 AD, Edinburgh. University Library, Ms. Arab 20, folio 7v.

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- The waning of the Umayyad caliphate (Albany, 1989)
- A Muslim principality in Crusader times: the early Artuqid state (Leiden, 1990)
- The Crusades: Islamic perspectives (Edinburgh, 1999)
- Turkish myth and Muslim symbol: the Battle of Manzikert (Edinburgh, 2007)

Monday Nov 5, 09:45

Mohammad al-Asad

Water Scarcity and Landscaping in the Islamic World:
Contemporary Solutions to Historical Problems



Founding director and Chairman,
Board of Directors of CSBE (Center for
the Study of the Built Environment)
in Amman

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The problems of water scarcity historically constituted a major challenge for the sustainability of human settlements in numerous parts of the Islamic world. In response, many Muslim communities developed creative and effective systems for collecting, storing, and distributing water for the purposes of drinking, personal hygiene, general household use, irrigating food crops, and landscaping.

New challenges relating to water scarcity have appeared today. Even though modern technological advances have brought about new methods for acquiring water that is fit for supporting human needs, such as desalinization and the construction of massive dams, there are concerns regarding the excessive energy consumption and the potentially negative environmental impacts connected to such methods. Also, massive population growth and increases in ground pollution levels have meant that while demand for fresh water is increasing rapidly, supply sources are falling under the threats of serious environmental degradation.

Integrated sets of solutions – and even an ethic – have emerged over the past few decades to address the challenges of water scarcity. A few of these relate to landscaping and comprise the practices of Water Conserving Landscapes. Even though such practices have been systemized and documented only since the 1980s, and primarily in parts of the Western world affected by water scarcity such as Australia and the southwestern United States, they in fact incorporate age-old practices that date to the pre-modern era, many of which had been developed and used regularly in the Islamic world.

This paper presents a contemporary Water Conserving Landscapes project that is being carried out in the Islamic world, in Jordan. The paper addresses the project’s research components, which include gathering, processing, developing, and disseminating information on Water Conserving Landscapes, as well as its practical components, which involve the design and implementation of landscaping solutions.

Biography

Mohammed al-Asad is founding director and chairman of the Board of Directors of CSBE (Center for the Study of the Built Environment) in Amman, a study and research institute that investigates landscaping in dry climates. He is also an adjunct professor at the School of Architecture at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.



Site plan for the National Gallery of Fine Arts Park.
Image courtesy of Center for the Study of the Built Environment.

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Co-editor with Majd Musa: *Exploring the Built Environment: Documenting the Presentations of Diwan al-Mimar* (Amman: Center for the Study of the Built Environment and Darat al-Funun-The Khalid Shoman Foundation, 2007)

Editor with Majd Musa: *Architectural Criticism and Journalism: Global Perspectives* (Turin: Allemandi for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 2006)

Co-author with Sahel Al Hiyari: *Sahel Al Hiyari Projects* (Amman: Center for the Study of the Built Environment, 2005)

Co-author with Ghazi Bisheh, Fawzi Zayadine, Ina Kehrberg, and Lara Tohme: *Jordan: The Umayyads and the Rise of Islamic Art* (Brussels: Museum With No Frontiers; and Madrid: Electa, 2000). Also available in Arabic, French, Italian, and Spanish translation.

Old Houses of Jordan: Amman, 1920–1950 (Amman: TURAB, 1997)



The central platform of the National Gallery of
Fine Arts Park. Image courtesy of Center for
the Study of the Built Environment.

Monday Nov 5, 11:00

Catherine B. Asher
Out of the Desert: Water Traditions in the South Asian Landscape



Professor of Art History,
University of Minnesota

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South Asia has had a sophisticated tradition of architecture associated with water as early as 2500 B.C.E. Many of the practices developed during this time and later into historical periods were inherited and adapted by Muslim rulers and patrons once they entered the Indian subcontinent. This paper seeks to explore these practices through two case studies. One is the architecture built under the north Indian Sultan Sher Shah Sur (r. 1538–45) who used this patronage as a legitimizing device. The other is the ritual, traditions and architecture which developed at the south Indian shrine of the Sufi saint, Shahul Hamid (d. 1560). Although the motivation behind the patronage of water architecture and the lore that grows around each figure are quite different, the use of water to promote public welfare, spiritual values and maximize land irrigation is common to each.

Biography / Bibliography

Catherine B. Asher, Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Minnesota, specializes in the intersection of Indic and Islamic cultural practice by India’s Muslim and Hindu populations. Her publications include *The Architecture of Mughal India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; revised 2001); *India Before Europe*, co-authored with Cynthia Talbot (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), and *Perceptions of South Asia’s Visual Past*, co-edited with Thomas R. Metcalf (New Delhi: Oxford and IBH and the American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994). She has written many articles on Indian art and architecture particularly on that of the Muslim Mughals and Hindu Rajas who often served as the Mughals’ supporters. Some of her recent essays include: “Building a Legacy: Sher Shah’s Architecture and the Politics of Propaganda,” in *The Architecture of the Indian Sultanates* (2006); “From Rajadharma to Indian Nationalism: Iconographies of Pre- and Post-Independence Jaipur,” in *Picturing the Nation: Iconographies of Modern India* (2007), and “A Ray from the Sun: Mughal Ideology and the Visual Construction of the Divine,” in *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience* (2004). She is currently working on a book the Muslim, Hindu and Jain architecture of Jaipur, a city in north India and another on the Mughal site of Fatehpur Sikri.



Shrine of Shahul Hamid in Nagore, India
Photo by Catherine B. Asher



Interior
Tomb of Ibrahim Sur in Narnaul, India. 1542
Photo by Catherine B. Asher



Interior ceiling
Tomb of Ibrahim Sur in Narnaul, India. 1542
Photo by Catherine B. Asher

Tuesday Nov 6, 14:00

Walter B. Denny

Water and Water Imagery in Architecture and the Arts in Ottoman Times



Professor of Art History, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Charles Grant Ellis Research Associate in Islamic Carpets at the Textile Museum in Washington D.C.

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The Ottoman Empire was relatively rich in water resources. Over the centuries, the Ottomans, who inherited Roman, Byzantine, and Seljuk infrastructure, created a variety of bath and fountain architecture. These included public baths (hammam) and thermal baths (kaplica), which followed the classic Roman model, with separate hours for men and women, and sometimes with doubled facilities to accommodate both sexes simultaneously.

Ottoman mosques follow the Islamic pattern of providing water for ritual ablutions in fountains known as shadirvan. These may consist of long rows of low benches in front of a wall with multiple taps fed by a nearby reservoir, or a more decorative free-standing polygonal type. With a central reservoir surrounded by taps and benches, these are often surmounted by a small dome over the reservoir and an umbrella-like roof.

The most common Ottoman public fountain is the cheshme, consisting of a carved marble slab set into a wall with a trough in front fed by one or more water taps. Such fountains were the main source of water for cooking, bathing, washing and drinking in the majority of urban neighborhoods. By the eighteenth century, the most popular type of public fountain was the sebil, consisting of a cylindrical chamber with metal grilles, through which an attendant passed cups of water, or even sold fruit drinks known as sherbet, to clients. Both sebil and cheshme fountains were sometimes incorporated into larger structures, often royal endowments, that today constitute the most famous and highly decorated of all Ottoman public fountains.

Biography

Walter B. Denny has taught at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst Art History Program since 1970. His primary field of teaching and research is the art and architecture of the Islamic world, in particular the artistic traditions of the Ottoman Turks, Islamic carpets and textiles, and issues of economics and patronage in Islamic art. In addition to curatorships at Harvard University (1970–2000) and Smith College (2000–2005) art museums, in September of 2002 he was named Charles Grant Ellis Research Associate in Oriental Carpets at The Textile Museum, Washington, DC.



Shadirvan fountain, Selim II Mosque
Edirne, Turkey, 1572
Photo by Walter Denny



Cheshme fountain of Bereket Zade
Istanbul, Turkey, 18th century
Photo by Walter Denny



Cheshme fountain at Machka, Istanbul
19th century
Photo by Walter Denny

After undergraduate study at Robert College (Istanbul), Grinnell College, the State University of Iowa and Oberlin College, he received his B.A. cum laude from Oberlin in 1964. He pursued graduate study at Istanbul Technical University and Harvard University, receiving his MA and Ph.D. from Harvard in 1965 and 1971.

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The Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets (Washington D.C. and London: Textile Museum in association with Scala, 2002)

Co-author with N. Atasoy, L. Mackie and H. Tezcan: *Ipek: Ottoman Imperial Silks and Velvets* (London: Azimuth Editions, 2001). Also available in Turkish translation.

Tuesday Nov 6, 11:45

Agnieszka Dobrowolska

*Architecture as a Message:
the Sabil of Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha in Cairo*



Conservation Architect, Egypt

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Offering free drinking water to the public as charity from a sabil has been known throughout the Middle East ever since the early days of Islam. In Mamluk and Ottoman Cairo, the sabils were combined with elementary schools in a single architectural unit, the sabil-kuttab. There were more than three hundreds of them in Cairo by the end of the 18th century, and with their fairly uniform style, they were among the hallmarks of the city’s architectural landscape. About seventy still survive. In 1820, Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha built a sabil at a prominent location on the main thoroughfare of mediaeval Cairo. This building owed nothing to the centuries-old tradition established in the city. It introduced a new style drawing its inspiration directly from Istanbul, the imperial capital. It constituted a powerful political statement expressed in architectural terms, proclaiming the suzerainty of Muhammad ‘Ali’s family as the new ruling dynasty in Egypt.

Biography / Bibliography

Agnieszka Dobrowolska is a conservation architect who has worked for fifteen years on numerous archaeological and conservation sites in Egypt, directing a number of architectural conservation projects in the country, many of them in Cairo. She has also designed museum displays and exhibitions in Egypt and in Bahrain. She is the author of *The Building Crafts of Cairo: A Living Tradition* (AUC Press 2005), *Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha and His Sabil* (with Khaled Fahmy; AUC Press 2004), and *Heliopolis: Rebirth of the City of the Sun* (with Jaroslaw Dobrowolski, AUC Press 2006).



Muizz Liddin Allah Street in the heart of mediaeval Cairo



Complex of Sabil Muhammad Ali Pasha



The style of Muhammad Ali Sabil was a complete novelty when it was built.

Tuesday Nov 6, 11:00

Howayda Al-Harithy

Sabil-Kuttab and the Conception of Water During the Mamluk Period



Professor in the Department of Architecture and Design, American University of Beirut (AUB)

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During the Mamluk period, 1258–1517, numerous sabils were constructed in Cairo by wealthy amirs and sultans as part of their patronage program and agenda. The earliest surviving sabil is the sabil of al-Nasir Muhammad, which was attached to the complex of his father Qalawun on al-Mu’iz Street (1326). Others include the sabil of the Madrasa of al-Amir Iljay Al-Yusufi (1373) in Souq al-Silah, the sabil of the Khanqa of Sultan Faraj ibn Barquq (1400–11) in the Northern Cemetery and the Sabil of Qaitbay on Saliba Street (1479–80). The study of Mamluk sabils, since their appearance during the early part of the fourteenth century, is intended to determine how they evolved from modest architectural features to sophisticated urban interventions. Through the comparative analysis of different sabils and sabil-kuttab in terms of their location, waqf, inscriptions, typology and architectural decoration, the paper argues that sabils did not only develop from simple attached features to elaborate free-standing urban landmarks, but also evolved programmatically from the practical function of providing water to the commemorative purpose of glorifying their founders. They came to occupy a significant role in advancing the Mamluk political agenda through architectural patronage by taking on a central role in the production of social space in Cairo.

Biography / Bibliography

Howayda Al-Harithy is a Professor of Architecture at the American University of Beirut where she has taught studios in architecture and urban design and courses in art and architectural history and theory since 1994. She served as the Chair of the Department of Architecture and Design between 2003 and 2006. Al-Harithy was a visiting professor at the Department of Fine Arts at Harvard University in 1994 and at the Department of Architecture at MIT in 1993 and in 2000. During the academic year 2005–06, Al-Harithy was a visiting scholar at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. She received her bachelor degree in architecture from the Oregon School of Design in 1985, masters in architecture from MIT in 1987, Ph.D. in art history from Harvard University in 1992. Her research in Islamic art and architecture focuses on the Mamluk period, 1258–1517. Al-Harithy published a monograph in the Bibliotheca Islamica series entitled *The Waqf Document of Sultan Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Qalawun*. She also published several articles in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, *Muqarnas*, *Mamluk Studies Review*, *Middle East Women’s Studies Review*, and the *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*. Her most recent



Sabil of al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun, Cairo, 1326 (K.A. C Creswell)



Sabil of Azbak al-Yusufi, Cairo, 1495 (K.A. C Creswell)



Sabil of Amir Inal al-Yusufi, Cairo, 1393 (K.A. C Creswell)

research focuses on urban heritage and conservation featured in recent articles such as “[Reframing] World Heritage,” in *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review: Journal of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments*, 17/1 (UC Berkeley, California: Fall 2005): 7–17 and “Under attack,” in *IJMES: International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 39/2 (May 2007): 68–69.

Monday Nov 5, 11:45

Perween Hasan

Paradise Flooded: Water and Architecture in Mughal Bengal



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The map of Bengal, particularly the eastern part which is now Bangladesh, looks like a maze of rivers. Silt deposited by these rivers created the delta of eastern and southern Bengal, a landmass that is still forming and re-forming. The changing courses of these rivers and the heavy rainfall during the monsoon account for the often disastrous floods. Yet the waters also nourish, for the alluvial soil is rich and yields an abundance of agricultural produce.

The Muslims who came here, first the Turks, then the Afghans and Mughals, found a landscape unlike anything they had ever seen, nor was it anything like that other well-watered landscape of the Muslim imagination: Paradise. Very few liked it, but all were overwhelmed at the productivity of the land; the revenues it yielded enticed them to stay.

The Mughals, known for their grand imperial architecture of Delhi, Agra, and Lahore, built a number of monuments in Bengal which were unique to this riverine landscape. The paper will discuss forts, a garden, and two caravanserais, all by the river, in and around Dhaka city (Jahangirnagar). These building types were introduced by the Mughals, and are evidence of the peculiar problems they had to cope with, and explains their motivation to brave the odds and stay.

Biography/Bibliography

Perween Hasan is a specialist in the architecture of the Indian subcontinent. After receiving her Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1984, she joined the department of Islamic History and Culture at Dhaka University where she now serves as professor and an associate of the department of Women and Gender Studies. She often lectures and teaches in the United States. In 1993–94 she was Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at Oberlin College where she taught in the art department. She returned to Oberlin College in 2000 as the Shansi Visiting Professor, and in 2006 was a Fulbright visiting scholar at the University of Southern Maine. Author of over 20 articles, essays, and book chapters in journals, encyclopedias, and edited volumes, she has also been a distinguished lecturer at the V&A in London England, and a consultant to Sesame Street, the World Bank Cultural Preservation Program, and the Social Science Research Council. Her most recent publication is *Sultans and Mosques: The Early Muslim Architecture of Bangladesh* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007).



South gate, Lalbagh Fort, Dhaka 17th century

Monday Nov 5, 14:00

Linda Komaroff

Sip, Dip, and Pour: Toward a Typology of Water Vessels in Islamic Art



Curator of Islamic Art and Department Head,
Art of the Middle East, Los Angeles
County Museum

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Even a quick glance around any museum installation of Islamic art, or a peak inside a related storeroom, would reveal a preponderance of vessels of all shapes and sizes, representing a variety of media and all manner of decoration. Within the field of the history of Islamic art, our usual taxonomic ordering of these objects most often tends towards classification by date, dynasty, place, medium, and decoration. Surprisingly, although it is frequently the very first question that the museum visitor asks, we do not always focus our attention on what substances these diverse vessels were meant to hold, and how, if at all, their intended contents and use dictated their ultimate appearance. For the purpose of this conference and given the fact that providing water, whether for drinking or for washing, was a basic precept of hospitality within the Islamic world, this paper will delineate some of the ways in which we can identify and classify water vessels, and the extent to which their function might transcend or be restricted by such distinctions as time, place, material, and decoration.

Biography / Bibliography

A specialist in Islamic art, with a Ph.D. from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, Linda Komaroff has been at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art since 1995. She is curator of Islamic art and department head, Art of the Middle East. Her exhibitions at LACMA include *Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakıp Sabancı Collection*, Istanbul (1999), and *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353* (2003). Her publications and scholarly interests have focused primarily on the Iranian world. She is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including two Fulbright fellowships, while the *Legacy of Genghis Khan* exhibition catalogue was awarded the prestigious Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Award from the College Art Association. In 2003 she received the Muslim Public Affairs Council Media Award. She has taught at Hamilton College, New York University, Princeton University, and UCLA. At present, she is working on a major international loan exhibition—*Gifts of the Sultans: The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts*.



Canteen, Syria or Egypt, 15th century
Fritware, unglazed
Height: 10 in. (25.4 cm)
Diameter: 7 7/8 in. (20 cm)
The Madina Collection of Islamic Art, gift of Camilla Chandler Frost
M.2002.1.56



Jar, Iraq, 12th century
Earthenware, molded, applied, and incised decoration
Height: 22 1/8 in. (56.19 cm)
The Madina Collection of Islamic Art, gift of Camilla Chandler Frost
M.2002.1.82

Monday Nov 5, 09:00

Marcus Milwright

The Archaeology of Urban Water Systems: The Cases of Nafpleio and Nafpaktos in Southern Greece



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Throughout the Islamic world there are examples of impressive hydraulic engineering projects ranging from networks of underground canals (qanat) to large rain-fed cisterns located along arid sections of trade or pilgrimage routes. Fountains (sabils) were established to provide fresh water for town and city dwellers. Bathhouses (hammams) are another ubiquitous feature of traditional urban environments. Archaeology has the potential to trace the evolution of such water management systems in both rural and urban contexts. In particular, techniques such as excavations, field survey, and the analysis of aerial and satellite photographs can establish the spatial relationships of hydraulic features within a given area. The introduction to this paper will identify some of the significant areas in which archaeology has contributed to the study of Islamic water systems. The main part focuses on recent research on the Ottoman period (late 15th–early 19th century) in the port towns of Nafpleio and Nafpaktos (Lepanto) in southern Greece. The chronological development and distribution of the fountains, bathhouses, watermills, and other features are discussed in the light of evidence provided by primary textual sources, maps, and topographic representations. In the conclusion the water systems identified in Nafpleio and Nafpaktos are compared to those found in other regions of the Ottoman sultanate.

Biography / Bibliography

Marcus Milwright is Associate Professor of Medieval Islamic Art and Archaeology in the Department of History in Art of the University of Victoria, Canada. He received his doctorate in 1999 from the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, and has held fellowships with the Wingate Foundation, the Warburg Institute, the British Academy, and the Aga Khan Programs for Islamic Architecture in Harvard University and MIT. His research interests include the art and architecture of the Islamic Middle East, cross-cultural contacts in the Mediterranean, the history of medicine, European representations of Muslim rulers, and the Ottoman architecture of Greece. He is involved in archaeological projects in Jordan, Syria, Iran, and Greece. In 2001 he curated the exhibition of the Tanavoli metalwork collection, *Persian Steel: A Mirror on Life in Iran*, at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. He has written chapters on Islamic art and archaeology for volumes 1 and 4 of the forthcoming *New Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 2008) and is the author of numerous journal articles. His book, *The Fortress of the Raven: Karak in the Middle Islamic Period* (c.1100–1650) will be published by Brill in 2008. He is currently writing a book on the archaeology of the Islamic world for Edinburgh University Press.



View of the port, town, and castle of
Nafpaktos, Greece
Photo by Marcus Milwright

Monday Nov 5, 14:45

Venetia Porter

Mysterious Inscriptions on “Frozen Water”: Early Medieval Islamic Rock Crystal Seals



Curator of the Islamic and contemporary Middle Eastern art collections, British Museum

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A significant number of early medieval amulets from the Islamic world are made of rock crystal – the material described by the Classical and early Arab authors as “Frozen water.” They are engraved in reverse and so are technically seals and contain strings of Arabic letters in angular Kufic style or “linear Kufic,” as it is sometimes described. These obscure inscriptions are clearly magical in intent. They are sometimes combined with other “magical” elements such as five-pointed stars, or recognisable phrases of a benedictory nature. Although in some examples, similar configurations of letters can be detected, of the examples studied, not one is exactly the same as the other. They can include words such as ajal “hurry,” “haste” – one of a number of words believed to hasten the action of a spell. The question is what was the function of these objects and how they were used. Were they stamped onto something or did the fact that they are engraved in reverse add to their obscure magical quality? In a pioneering work, based on a group of these rock crystal seals in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Luvik Kalus put forward the theory that certain words appearing within the lines are associated with water, which led him to suggest that these objects would have been used to induce rain or draw water into wells.

This paper will place these rock crystal seals within the context of magical objects where this style of inscription is also found. Working from a group of about 40 rock crystal seals, in a number of public and private collections, it will look in detail at these inscriptions, and discuss how such stones could have been used, bringing in documentary sources on rainmaking ceremonies (istisqa) and the medieval use of gems, and re-examine the assertion of the link with rain making.

Biography

Venetia Porter is a curator of the Islamic and contemporary Middle Eastern art collections at the British Museum and was previously curator of Islamic coins in the department of Coins and Medals. She studied Arabic and Islamic art at Oxford University and obtained her PhD on the medieval history and architecture of the Yemen from the University of Durham in 1992. Her areas of research and interest have focused on Islamic pottery, particularly medieval Syrian pottery and Islamic tiles, Islamic coins, and medieval Yemen. She has worked on Arabic inscriptions and Arabic and Persian amulets and seals in the British Museum, which are the focus of a forthcoming catalogue. In 2003, she curated the exhibition *Mightier than the Sword*, which was shown in the Potter Museum,



Triangular rock crystal seal (photo reversed) with Arabic inscriptions and a five-pointed star known as “Solomon’s seal.” British Museum OA+14325.

University of Melbourne, Australia, and then traveled to the Islamic Arts Museum, Kuala Lumpur in 2004. In 2006, she curated the exhibition *Word into Art: Artists of the Middle Eastern Art*, at the British Museum, which will travel to Dubai in February 2008.

Bibliography

Islamic Tiles (London: British Museum Press, 1995)

Co-editor with J. F. Healey, *Studies on Arabia in Honour of G. Rex Smith*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002)

Co-author with Heba Salih: *Mightier than the Sword* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2004)

Word into Art: Artists of the Modern Middle East (London: British Museum Press, 2006)

Tuesday Nov 6, 09:45

D. Fairchild Ruggles

The Great Mosque of Cordoba: Fruited Trees and Ablution Fountains



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The Great Mosque of Cordoba is justifiably famous, and its majestic architecture has attracted the attention of visitors who admired it in the Umayyad and later periods of Islamic rule in Spain (al-Andalus).

The mosque was built by the first Hispano-Umayyad emir, Abd al-Rahman I, beginning in 786 on the site of a Visigothic church. Sources relate that the burgeoning Muslim community first rented space in the church and then purchased the site, demolishing the church for the handsome new mosque. The mosque was expanded in the 9th and 10th centuries as the Muslim population grew. Upon the conquest of Cordoba in 13th century, the mosque was converted to a church, and in the 16th century, a cathedral replaced the central portion of the old prayer hall. Throughout these dramatic changes to the building, the courtyard remained with its trees – successive generations of palms and especially fragrant oranges, which require irrigation.

Sources indicate that the mosque courtyard was planted with fruit trees at least as early as the 9th century. Moreover, there are clear signs that from the very beginning, the mosque was built with hydraulics in mind, both to fill the ablution fountains and to nourish the courtyard plantings. Water was collected first by a simple catchment system that collected and funneled water from the roof gables into the courtyard, unseen from the ground. During the dry season, water was also brought by aqueduct that was an extension of a Roman aqueduct network, repaired in the Umayyad period. Through its intelligent harvesting of water, the mosque was linked to the larger environment of mountains, plain, river, and city.

Biography

D. Fairchild Ruggles is professor of art, architecture, and landscape history at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and co-founder and co-director of the Collaborative for Cultural Heritage and Museum Practices. Her work focuses primarily on the gardens and architecture of Islamic Spain and South Asia, especially the close connections between garden-making, the irrigated agricultural landscape, and the power of the sovereign panoramic view. In recent years, she has contributed to the Heritage Trust of Baroda’s successfully nomination of the pilgrimage city Champaner-Pavagadh (India) as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the United States, she recently appeared in the PBS special documentary program, “Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain”



The courtyard of the Great Mosque of Cordoba, cultivated with orange and palm trees.



The mosque’s peaked roofs drain into runnels that pour water into the courtyard, irrigating the trees and recharging the underground cisterns.

(Gardner Films, 2007). Her current research projects are a volume of sources and documents on Islamic art and visual culture and a study of the history of arts patronage by women in the Islamic world.

Bibliography

Islamic Gardens and Landscapes (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming in 2007)

Co-editor with Dianne Harris: *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007)

Co-editor with Robert Ousterhaut, “Encounters with Islam: The Medieval Mediterranean Experience,” special issue of *Gesta*, vol. 43/2 (2004)

Gardens, Landscape, and Vision in the Palaces of Islamic Spain (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000)

Editor, *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000)

Co-editor with Elizabeth Kryder-Reid: “Sight and Site in the Garden,” special issue of *Journal of Garden History*, vol. 14 (1994)

Tuesday Nov 6, 09:00

Yasser Tabbaa

Control and Abandon: Images of Water in Arabic Poetry and Gardens



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Let us compare this 6th century poem by Imru’ al-Qays:

*Halt, friends both! Let us weep, recalling a love and a lodging
by the rim of the twisted sands between al-Dakhoul and Haumal,
Toodih and al-Miqrat, whose trace is not yet effaced
for all the spinning of the south winds and the northern blasts;
there, all about its yards, and away in dry hollows
you may see the dung of antelopes spattered like peppercorns.*

and this 14th century poem by Ibn Zamrak:

*Silver melting which flows between jewels, one
like the other in beauty, white in purity
A running stream evokes the illusion of a solid substance
For the eyes, so that we wonder which one is fluid.
Don’t you see that it’s the water which is running over the rim of the fountain,
whereas it’s the structure which offers channels for the water flow.*

Between the Mu’allaqas of Imru’ al-Qays and Zuhayr b. Abi Sulma and the descriptive poetry of Ibn Khafaja and Ibn Zamrak extends a poetic tradition that moved from “weeping by the ruins” to the evocation of vast palaces, luxurious gardens and exotic fountains. Whether in the imagination of the poets or in the physical creations of architects and landscapists, watered gardens and courtyards occupied a central space and retained a constant presence in both verse and verdure. By dwelling on the exchange and interplay between poetry and garden design and by highlighting the physical, aesthetic and technological aspects of water in both poetry and architecture, this paper hopes to develop and enrich this relationship and to examine its resonance from pre-Islamic times to the late medieval period and beyond.

The generally arid climate of most Middle Eastern countries placed a high value on water, making it a central feature in religious and royal iconography and an important vehicle for technological innovation. The provision of water was one of the great meritorious acts of Islamic piety, and most dynasts spent considerable efforts on canalization, water-elevating machines, as well as cisterns, pools, and public fountains.

Ruggles has long noted that what we see in the palaces of Spain is but the artistic payoff of a vast hydraulic infrastructure, while Grabar, Tabbaa and Robinson have generally focused on the iconographic qualities of gardens and fountains. Further



research in the descriptive genre of later Islamic poetry suggests that poets often extolled the virtues of both fountains and water elevating machines, whether channels, norias, or saqiyas. A dialectical process, in fact, may have formed between gardens and garden poetry, such that as gardens and fountains became increasingly viewed in poetic terms, the gardens themselves may have aspired to these literary ideals. Such congruence between two artistic genres is quite rare in Islam and deserves closer investigation.

Biography / Bibliography

Yasser Tabbaa is a scholar in Islamic art and architecture and an occasional curator of art exhibitions. He has previously taught at several prestigious US universities, including M.I.T., The University of Michigan, and Oberlin College. He has served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Jordan and is currently Deputy Headmaster and Dean of the Faculty at King’s Academy in Amman, Jordan.

He has published numerous articles and book chapters on Islamic architecture, ornament, calligraphy, and gardens; and two books: *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo* (Penn State University Press,1996) and *The Transformation of Islamic during the Sunni Revival* (University of Washington Press, 2001). He is currently working on a book-length project that deals with the contemporary Shi’ite Shrines of Syria.



Fellows



In order to foster the development of an international community of researchers and scholars in Islamic art and cultures, the Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art decided to provide a limited number of fellowships to attend the conference. Fifteen fellows were selected after an intense international competition elicited over three hundred applications from around the world. Like the speakers, the fellows represent diverse geographic and cultural areas, ranging from the United States to Indonesia, from Russia to Yemen and the Sudan, and are at different stages of their careers, from graduate students to distinguished scholars. Like the speakers, they include historians and art historians, archaeologists, curators, and architects. While some specialize in aspects of Islamic art and architecture, others come from outside the field but want to integrate aspects of Islamic art into their own discipline, be it modern or medieval art, Byzantine history, or the history of irrigation. Their presence will bring added richness and new perspectives to the symposium.



Abdurrahman Muhammad Al-Haddad

Engineer-consultant for the Social Fund for Development & Sanaa Municipality, Traditional Garden Revitalization Project Officer and Advisor Team member of the WaDImena Program research project Building on Indigenous Knowledge for Water Demand Management in Yemen: the Enhancement of Traditional Garden Irrigation with Mosque Greywater. Citizen of Yemen. alhaddad@yahoo.com



Esameddin Alhadi

Visiting Instructor, Department of African and Asian Languages and Literatures, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. Ph.D. candidate, Cultural studies program, College of Education, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. Specialist in Islamic Archeology and in the use of art collections to promote teachers' professional development. Citizen of Sudan. ealhadi@gmail.com



Dr. Tahar Bellal

Department of architecture, University Ferhat Abbas, Sétif, Algeria. Architect and Specialist in Berber housing. Citizen of Algeria. bellal56@yahoo.fr



Dr. B. Deniz Calis-Kural

Bahcesehir University, Faculty of architecture, Istanbul, Turkey. Architect and specialist in Ottoman garden and landscape traditions. Citizen of Turkey. dcalis@hotmail.com



Dr. Michael Decker

Maroulis Professor of Byzantine History and Orthodox Religion; Assistant Professor, Byzantine History, University of South Florida-Tampa, Florida. Specialist in Byzantium, Late Antique and Early Medieval Mediterranean Archaeology and History. In press: *Tilling the Hateful Earth: Agriculture in the Early Byzantine East*. Oxford University Press, Oxford Byzantine Monograph Series. Citizen of USA. michael_j_decker@yahoo.com



Mohammad Gharipour

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Abu Khaled Mohammad Khademul Haque

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Dr. Katherine Hoffman

Professor and Chairperson, Fine Arts Department, St. Anselm College, Manchester, New Hampshire. Specialist in cross-cultural impact of Islamic art on western art. Citizen of USA. KHoffman@anselm.edu



Riyaz Latif

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Dr. Vivian Mann

Morris and Eva Feld Chair in Judaica, The Jewish Museum, New York. Advisor, Master of Arts Program in Jewish Art & Material Culture, Graduate School, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York. Specialist in Jewish art in Islamic lands. Citizen of USA. v2329@verizon.net



Dr. Vigilio Martinez-Enamorado

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Alan Mikhail

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Dr. Lawrence Nees

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Mimi Savitri

Lecturer, Archaeology Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Gadjah Mada University (Indonesia). Specialist in Islamic archeology in Java. Citizen of Indonesia. mimi_savitri@yahoo.com



Dr. Tatiana Starodub

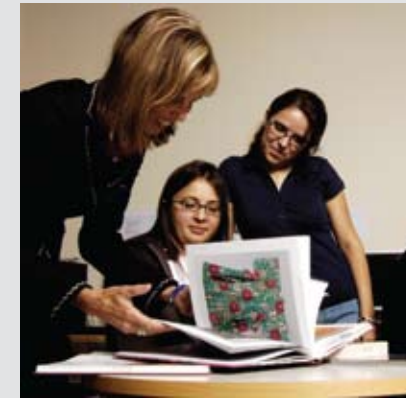
Research Institute of Theory and History of Arts, Russian Academy of Fine Arts. Specialist in history of Medieval Islamic art and architecture. Citizen of Russia. t.starodub@gmail.com

Islamic Art History

V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y



The Department of Art History at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia proudly hosts the Hamad Bin Khalifa Chair in Islamic Art. Within the discipline of Art History, recognition of the importance of the historical evolution and influence of Islamic art worldwide has increased significantly in recent years. Since 1973, the Department of Art History has offered a variety of undergraduate and graduate degree programs in art history, architectural history and museum studies, including the PhD in Art History since 1994. The establishment of the Hamad Bin Khalifa Chair in Islamic Art by the Emir of Qatar in 2005, adds yet another dimension to the academic focus of the department. The established strength of the department faculty resides in its multi-cultural approach to the specific study of modern Western and non-Western art traditions, and the Hamad Bin Khalifa Chair provides a challenging blend of both traditions. Courses, lectures and the International Symposium provide outstanding venues for VCU students to explore the most recent scholarly and intellectual developments in the field. The first and current holders of the Hamad Bin Khalifa Chair are Drs. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, two of



the most highly respected experts on Islamic art in the world. The historical influence of Islamic art is seen around the globe, from Latin American religious architecture to Medieval manuscript paintings, yet Islamic art history has long been marginalized or ignored in mainstream Art History programs nationwide. The Hamad Bin Khalifa Chair in Islamic Art and the associated activities reflect an important change in this area of art historical inquiry for the department and for Art History programs across the nation.

James Farmer
Department Chair, 2007

History of the Symposium



The Hamad Bin Khalifa Endowed Chair in Islamic Art was established by the Emir of Qatar His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. Dr. Blair and Dr. Bloom who share the Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Chair in Islamic Art have organized this international biennial symposium on Islamic art to alternate between Richmond and Doha. The first symposium took place in Richmond Virginia in 2004 and the second one is now being held here in Doha, Qatar.

Islamic art has long fascinated the Western audience and remains a popular subject today, as scholars continue to question whether it is meant only to provide visual delight or has a deeper meaning.

This symposium is an important contribution to Qatar’s cultural efforts and therefore, we hope that it stimulates a wider awareness of the artistic marvels of Islamic civilization. The lectures considers specific objects and propose hypothesis about the role of ornament in Islamic art and why it has remained perennially popular and appealing up to the present day.

Expanded Frontiers

The First Biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa International Symposium on Islamic Art

November 5–6, 2004
Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia
All symposium talks were presented in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts theater

Symposium Schedule

Friday, November 5, 2004

Introduction – James Farmer, Richard Toscan

Keynote Lecture – Oleg Grabar, *Baghdad and Islamic Art*

Reception

Saturday, November 6, 2004

Welcome – James Farmer, Michael Brand

Morning Presentations

Jonathan Bloom, *A Century of Studying Islamic Art*

Gulru Necipoglu-Kafadar, *Crossing the East-West Frontier: Dialogues Between Domed Mosques and Churches in the Early Modern Mediterranean World*

Massumeh Farhad, *Painted Poetry: Text and Image in Persian Manuscripts*

Mohammed Zakariya, *Criticism in Islamic Art-The Case of Calligraphy*

Lunch and Opportunity to Visit VMFA Galleries

Afternoon Presentations

Nabil Safwat, *Ardent Discipline-The Genre of the Masters*

Robert Hillenbrand, *Life and Death of the Author in the Christian and Islamic Tradition*

Oliver Watson, *Masterpieces of the Museum of Islamic Art, Qatar: Art or Decorative Art?*

Panel Discussion, with Questions and Conclusions

VCUQatar Lecture Series

Arts and Architecture of the Islamic World

Since 2005, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar has presented two seasons of lectures on the Arts and Architecture of the Islamic World, that were conceived and organized by Dr. Jochen Sokoly, Gallery Director and Assistant Professor in Art History. The lectures have comprised current scholarly research relating to material culture from the beginning of Islamic civilization up to the present, providing a forum for cultural enquiry, discussion and exchange. They have been open to the public, providing an ongoing program throughout the academic year.

2005 / 2006

November 9, 2005

Guido Licciardi, Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italy. *“Florence and Soltaniyeh: Structural Correspondences in Two Masterpieces of Italian and Iranian Architecture”*

November 30, 2005

Dr. Markus Ritter, Institute for Iranian Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria. *“Renewal and Reshaping of Traditions in 18/19th Century Architecture in Iran”*

March 22, 2006

Rochelle Kessler, Senior Curator, Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena, California. *“Family, Friends, Foreigners, and Foes: Portraiture at the Mughal Court”*

April 26, 2006

Manal al-Dowayan, Photographer and Systems Analyst, Dammam, Saudi Arabia *“Fine Art Photography and the Arab World”*

2006 / 2007

September 20, 2006

Prof. Sheila Blair and Prof. Jonathan Bloom, Hamad Bin Khalifa Chairs in Islamic Art, VCU, Richmond. *“Cosmophilia: Ornament and Islamic Art”*

November 1, 2006

Tim Stanley, Senior Curator, Middle East Asian Department, Victoria and Albert Museum, London Chinese art, Islamic art. *“Tracing Patterns of Exchange in the Decorative Arts at the Victoria and Albert Museum”*

January 31, 2007

Prof. Nasser Rabat, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Architecture, MIT, Boston. *“Islamic Architecture and the Veil of Orientalism”*

April 25, 2007

Jack Persekian, Artistic Director Sharjah Biennial. *“Still Life - Art, Ecology and the Politics of Change - The Sharjah Biennial 8, 2007”*

VCUQatar Gallery

Exhibitions with a Focus on the Arts + Culture of the Islamic World

VCUQatar Gallery’s primary role is to serve as an educational resource within Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar and beyond. It supports programs and networks inside and outside of the school and is a forum open to all audiences. Its exhibitions are all-inclusive in terms of content, but focus on all aspects of art and design. They aim at creating a dialog on ideas, concepts and processes in society between educators, students and the general public: at VCUQatar, in Doha and internationally.

Contemporary Architectural Development in Qatar: The Work and Vision of Ibrahim Jaidah and His Design Studio

Curated by Jochen Sokoly and Natalie Bailey. September 1–21, 2005



Ibrahim Jaidah is one of Qatar’s pre-eminent architects and managing director of the Doha-based firm Arab Engineering Bureau. Given Qatar’s extraordinary current economic and social development, Jaidah’s architectural works are based on his belief that the buildings he designs will be part of a future legacy for Qatar. The exhibition of drawings, plans, photographs models and animation highlights some of Ibrahim Jaidah’s most important works with special focus on the process of developing buildings. Also featured is the way Jaidah’s architecture has developed from a style with direct references to traditional Qatari architecture to one that draws from International Style and beyond.

Ibrahim Abu Rub

November 20–December 6, 2005

Palestinian artist Dr. Ibrahim Abu-Rub, formerly professor in the College of Education at Qatar University, is particularly renowned for his commissions of large-scale murals. In 2000, he created an outdoor wall mural entitled “The Journey of a Great Nation” commissioned by the city of Ariha in Palestine for one of its public parks. Much of his work is an expression of the struggle of the Palestinian people and deals with human conditions, such as confinement, distress and suffering, but also hope. The exhibition shows a number of past works, notably large-scale figural paintings and drawings on paper and canvas, and a sequence of studies and experimental drawings.





Nuqtaha (The Points) – The 5th Color

Curated by Leland Hill. February 8–March 1, 2006

Nuqtaha (The Points) – The 5th Color comprises a selection of works by the members of this Iranian group of graphic designers. The exhibition consists of 10 posters from each member: Alireza Mostafazadeh Ebrahimi, Majid Abbasi, Saed Meshki, and Bijan Sayfour. Their sensitivity to Arabic and Latin typography, along with their stunningly conceptual approach to imagery, provide a window to the graphic style of contemporary Iran. They strive to make the dynamic atmosphere of Iranian graphic design available to the world by presenting their work and opinions throughout the country. The members of The 5th Color draw their strength from one another, providing an opportunity for cultural collaboration in graphic design that would not be possible individually.



Loghat al-Aqlam – Languages of the Pen

Historical, Modern and Contemporary Calligraphy from the Collection of the Arab Modern Art Museum, Doha

Curated by Jochen Sokoly. March 8–April 5, 2006

The exhibition shows how modern and contemporary calligraphers and artists who use calligraphy owe debts to the styles and aesthetic of historical calligraphy, and how they have departed from historical precedence to develop their own styles and aesthetics. The works are a rarely seen collection developed by the vision and initiative of Shaykh Hassan Bin Muhammad Bin Ali al-Thani to preserve works by modern and contemporary Arab artists, which now is part of Qatar Foundation in Doha. Examples of historical scripts date from the early Islamic period to the 19th century, including pages from Abbasid Qur'an manuscripts in Kufic script, and works of Ottoman calligraphers.



Qatar Now – Ceramics from the Workshop of Munira Al-Meer

Curated by Jochen Sokoly. August 30 – September 27, 2006

Mounira al-Meer is a pioneer in the field of ceramics in Qatar. Having studied in Qatar and the United States, her sculptural forms are entirely new and bold compared to the traditional methods previously taught in Qatari art programs. The exhibition shows a selection of 20 highlights from Mounira al-Meer's past and recent works, many of which were characterized by the combination of intense organic shapes with experimental glazes. Al-Meer has worked to create unique forms largely independent of historic references or influence. Her work is inspired by a reverence for God and the desire to adhere to his guidance. In this respect, her sculptural pieces look both outward and inward, even to the molecular level, to discover and speak to the divine creative force.



Camille Zakharia – Elusive Homelands

Curated by Jochen Sokoly. October 4–November 8, 2006

"We, as immigrants, constantly search our innermost selves to justify our selfishness, and our noble explanations around." (Camille Zakharia)

"Elusive Homelands" is a series of photo collages and paintings created by the Lebanese-Canadian artist Camille Zakharia. In this body of work Zakharia, who lives in Bahrain and has been a migrant himself, documents the living environment immigrant Middle Eastern families in Nova Scotia, Canada. This exhibition addresses some of the major personal issues most immigrants have to live through and their acculturation in their new land of residence. The works are the result of a project to document the stories of immigration of Arab families and individuals from the Near East undertaken by Camille Zakharia in the late 1990's. The works represent Zakharia's interpretation of the personal histories and current circumstances of the families, and draw on some distorted memories of his own childhood and the lives of the people who lived in those memories.



Qatar Now: Hazawi – Stories from the Past, Present and Future

Curated by Halim Choueiry and Peter Martin. August 29–October 7, 2007

University School of the Arts in Qatar, each graphic design student is required to complete a printed publication design course. Halim Choueiry and Peter Martin have developed this requirement into an opportunity for these students to learn relevant skills, methodologies, and knowledge in publication and printing, while developing a tangible contribution to the community of Qatar. In the spring semesters of 2005, 2006, and 2007 students developed, designed, and produced three books, which investigate aspects of everyday life in Qatar. The exhibition Qatar Now: Hazawi – Stories from the Past, Present and Future comprised a selection of students' graphic contributions to the three publications Rituals, Hazawi Al Heen, and Hazawi Al Mustaqbal.

For further information regarding the current and future programs of VCUQatar Gallery or the Islamic Art lecture series please contact:

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CURRENT EXHIBITION

*The exhibition will be held at the VCUQatar Gallery
October 24 to December 1, 2007*

Self-Representation in the Arabian Gulf: Perspectives in Photography and Video

Co-curated by Natalie Bailey and Sally Van Gorder

This exhibition explores the themes of self-portraiture and identity in the Gulf region through lens-based media. The twelve participating artists live and work in the countries of Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. In part, the aim of this exhibition is to actively contribute to the contemporary arts dialogue that is developing in Qatar and in the Gulf region as a whole. More specifically, it poses the question: In this culture, defined by strongly held beliefs and traditions yet also by rapid development and increasing wealth, how do people who live here perceive themselves? Using the camera as a tool to capture their very personal visions, these artists' works range from literal photographic self-portraits to metaphorical interactive computer animations.

The exhibiting artists are Anas Al-Shaikh, Camille Zakharia, Ebtisam Abdul Aziz, Hassan Meer, Khalifa Al-Obaidly, Loredana Mantello, Madeline McGehee, Manal Al-Dowayan, Mohammed Kazem, Nuha Asad, Roqaya Al-Thani and Tarek Al-Ghoussein.



Images from *C-series*
by Tarek Al-Ghoussein



I am...a Petroleum Engineer
by Manal Al Dowayan



UNESCO: Qur’anic Botanic Gardens Network

UNESCO has initiated a comprehensive project called “Qur’anic Botanic Gardens Network,” with the main scope of improving the preservation of botanic diversity in the Arab region. More specifically, the project aims at establishing new botanic gardens in the Arab region and setting up centres of excellence for botanic education, scientific research and conservation.

Being acutely aware of the lack of capacity for botanical research, education, and conservation in the region, and of the great importance of establishing botanic gardens, the UNESCO Office in Doha has been working on the issue since September 2000. Afterwards, in 2006 UNESCO launched a Main Line of Action called “Enhancing linkages between cultural heritage and biological diversity conservation,” which the Member States approved, and UNESCO Doha elaborated a project proposal on this subject. The activity received further essential support from UNESCO Natural Sciences Sector, and from the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences.

The Qur’anic botanic gardens project facilitates linkages between traditional Islamic respect for natural habitats, the cultures inspired by the Holy Books of Islam and protection of environment and biological diversity. The establishment of new gardens influenced by scientific and cultural concepts from the Islamic civilizations and from oral and written masterpieces of the Islamic cultures, particularly from the Holy Qur’an, can realize a physical embodiment of garden traditions and preserve the botanic diversity of the regional environment. Furthermore, the project makes possible the development of shared strategies and programs focused on the improvement of education and environmental awareness within a framework of sustainable and peaceful development.



Water Canal in the Bagh-E Delgosha
Shiraz (Iran)



Modern Persian Garden based on
the *Chahar Bagh* Traditional Concept
Isfahan (Iran)



Traditional Arab Date Palm Garden surrounded by mud walls
Tayma (Saudi Arabia)

UNESCO Office in Doha has recently presented the project at the second Arab Botanic Gardens Meeting held in Amman in March 2007, under the auspices of His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah Bin al Hussein, and supported by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Bint Ali. The first Qur’anic Botanic Garden will be established in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates), thanks to the benevolence of His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, who has offered a donation to undertake the project in his country. UNESCO Office in Doha has established an International Advisory Committee that has already developed comprehensive technical guidelines specifying the technical requirement of the garden. Currently, the Office is developing the master plan for this garden and will complete it by the end of 2007.

Moreover, UNESCO Office in Doha is working on a second garden to establish in Qatar. This project has been undertaken as a joint activity with Qatar Foundation, which is the educational institution established by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, and thanks to a donation offered by Maersk Oil Qatar AS. As it was done for the garden in the Emirates, UNESCO has established an International Advisory Committee, produced guidelines with the technical requirements and is starting development of the master plan.

Post-Symposium Information

Please visit blog.islamicartdoha.org during the symposium for live blogging by students.

Rivers of Paradise speaker presentations will be available on our website shortly following the Symposium.

Yale University Press is publishing the proceedings of the symposium. The illustrated volume will be available at the Third Biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium in Islamic Art, in the Fall of 2009.

2009 Symposium: Call for Papers

The Third Biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, to be held at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia, for three days during the autumn (October–November) of 2009, will address the theme of color in Islamic art and civilization.

The organizers invite potential speakers to submit a CV and a 250-word abstract on any aspect of this theme, ranging from the symbolic use of color to its practical applications in painting, tilework, and the like. See the Symposium website (www.islamicartdoha.org) by late February of 2008 for instructions on submitting abstracts online in late spring of 2008. Approximately 12 papers will be selected. Successful applicants will be notified at the end of summer 2008. Speakers will be expected to present an illustrated 40-minute talk and a publishable text of approximately 5000 words. The sponsors will cover all travel and lodging expenses between the speakers’ home and Richmond, and will provide a generous honorarium (upon acceptance of their written text) as well as a copy of the published proceedings.

Sign up at www.islamicartdoha.org to receive occasional updates and announcements by email.



From the Coordinator
Diane Tepfer

As coordinator of this symposium I have enjoyed working with collegial committees at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia, and at University City, Doha, Qatar. The international community of scholars of Islamic art and culture who are the Rivers of Paradise chairs, speakers and fellows have graciously cooperated with the myriad of requests they received by email; in turn they introduced me to the lure of Islamic art history. This has been an enriching global group effort.

In Qatar I am most grateful to my partner Donna Duffett who supervised all local arrangements. Dean Allyson Vanstone cordially welcomed us to VCUQatar and offered guidance; Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Charles Bleick organized student participation, while art history faculty members Natalie Bailey, Lisa Clayton, and Jochen Sokoly prepared students to become active attendees at the symposium. Senior Associate Dean for Finance and Administration Dottie Milligan managed arrangements and prepared budgets with Kathy Kilpatrick; Margarita Zuniga secured visas for invited travelers, and much more. Librarian Dana Beth and her staff acquired publications by symposium speakers for the library; Supplies and Stores Coordinator Dwight Rose secured speakers' books for sale and authors' signing; Director of Marketing Moamer Qazafi publicized the symposium locally and throughout the Middle East; Fashion Design Chair Sandra Wilkins and Jochen Sokoly designed the distinctive Rivers of Paradise bag, and supervised the local fabrication; Natalie Bailey and Sally Van Gorder served as guest curators for the contemporary exhibition at the VCUQatar Art Gallery; and Graphic Designer Sherry Blankenship coordinated the fabrication of banners.

VCUarts Associate Dean for VCUQatar, John DeMao, led the committee in Richmond, which consists of Art Director Teresa Engle, Director of Communications Dawn K. Waters, and Web Developer Andrew Ilnicki. Nancy Scott, James Farmer, Joseph Dimiceli, Scott Dossick, Thomas Gresham, Kimberly Seagraves, and Heather Keisch, also assisted with the symposium.

Beyond VCU we thank Mohammad Zakariya for calligraphing the handsome Rivers of Paradise logo; Guido Licciardi, UNESCO Qatar, who made us more aware of Qatar heritage; Shawn Cordle at Covington Travel; Alan Fisher at H-Islamart, Christopher Howard at College Art Association, the staff of Historians of Islamic art [HIAA], and the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) for circulating news of the symposium and Hamad Bin Khalifa Fellowships, and Stephen Kochuba, Cultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy, Doha, Qatar.

Sustainable Design was the theme of Tasmeem, VCU Qatar's annual design Conference in 2007. Rivers of Paradise is following up by examining traditional Islamic practice which incorporated sustainability into the design of water systems and landscaping in desert lands, and places where water is overabundant. Some speakers are discussing historic water vessels. The refillable water bottle VCU is distributing to symposium attendees does not have the aesthetic appeal of the vessels illustrated on other pages, and its inscription is not meant to be mysterious, but using this Nalgene vessel is a twenty-first century way of respecting Islamic principles of sustainability. The custom-designed symposium bags have been fabricated locally in raw silk from India with colors that evoke water, the sun, and the local desert landscape. We hope you will find these unique bags handsome and proudly use them again and again.



I look forward to meeting you during the symposium. See you in 2009!

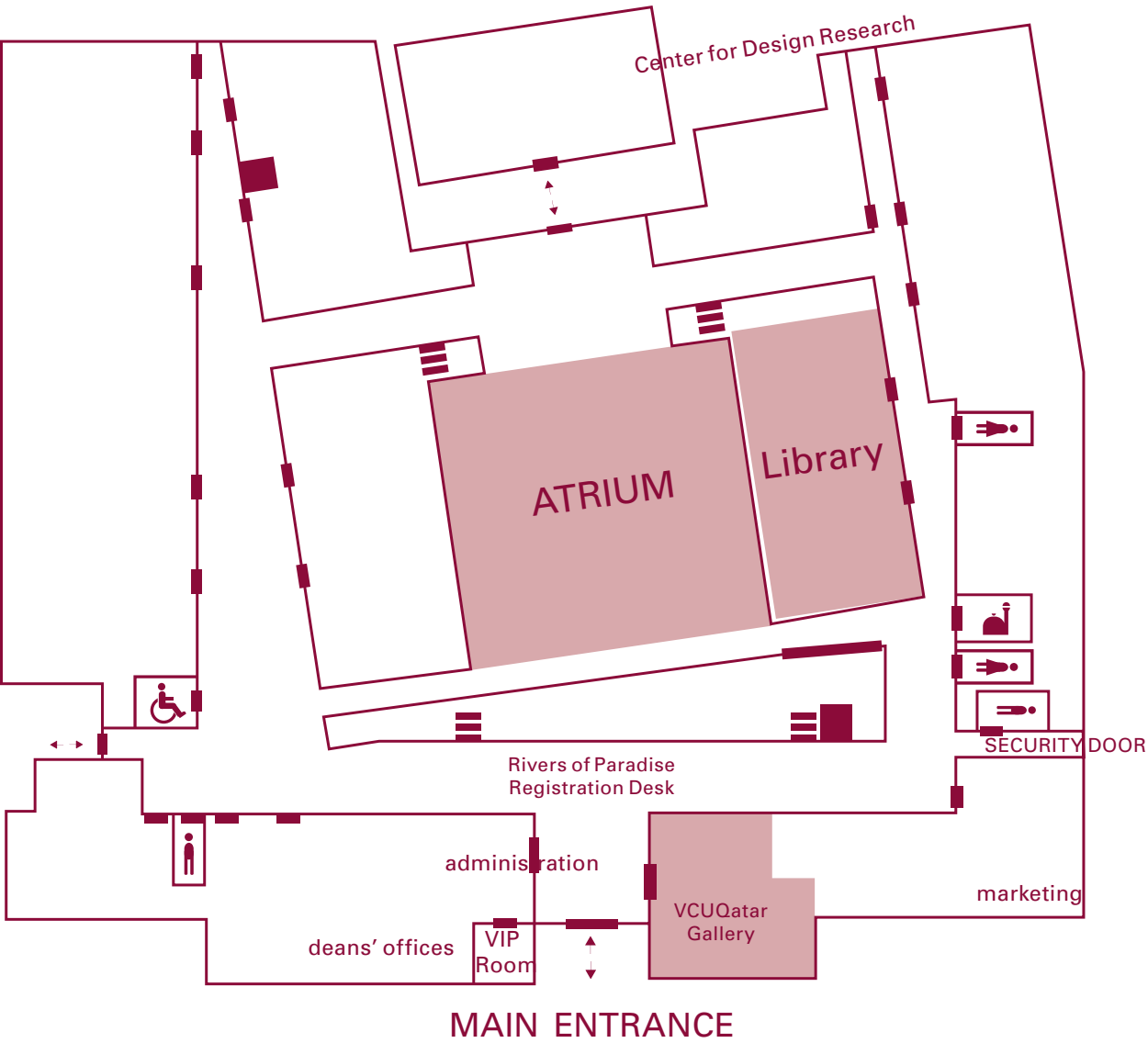
Sincerely,

Diane Tepfer
Symposium Coordinator

VCU School of the Arts in Qatar



Photo by Larry Koltys



VCUQatar Ground Floor

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