

SCHEDULE *of* EVENTS

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2	5–6 pm	Conference Registration
	6–7:30 pm	Opening Ceremony and Keynote Address: Drs. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, <i>Color in Islamic Art</i>
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3	SESSIONS, DAY 1, PALACIO CONGRESOS	
	8:30–9 am	Conference Registration
	9–9:15 am	Opening Remarks, Drs. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom
	9:15–10 am	Olga Bush, “ <i>Designs Always Polychromed or Gilded</i> ”: the Aesthetics of <i>Color in the Alhambra</i>
	10–10:45 am	Samir Mahmoud, <i>Color, Symbolism, and the Mystic Quest: the Spiritual Exegesis of Color in Sufism in the Works of Henry Corbin</i>
	10:45–11:30 am	COFFEE BREAK
	11:30–12:15 pm	Cheryl Porter, <i>The Role of Economics, Geography and Tradition in the Artist’s Choice of Colors for Manuscript Painting</i>
	12:15–1 pm	Jon Thompson, <i>Some Observations on Color in Carpets</i>
	1–2:30 pm	LUNCH
	2:45–3:30 pm	Lawrence Nees, <i>Blue Behind Gold: the Inscription of the Dome of the Rock and its Relatives</i>
	3:30–4:15 pm	Julie Scott Meisami, “ <i>I Guess That’s Why They Call It the Blues</i> ”: <i>Depictions of Majnun in Persian Illustrated Manuscripts</i>
	4:15–4:45	COFFEE BREAK
	4:45–5:30	Marianna Shreve Simpson, <i>Why My Name is Red: Ahmar, Surkh and Kirmizi in the History of Islamic Art</i>
	5:30–6 pm	Discussion, Closing
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4	SESSIONS, DAY 2, PALACIO CONGRESOS	
	10–10:30 am	Conference Registration
	10:30–10:45 am	Opening Remarks, Drs. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom
	10:45–11:30 am	Noha Sadek, <i>Colors of Power and Piety in Rasulid Yemen</i>
	11:30–12:15 pm	Maribel Fierro, “ <i>The Battle of Colors</i> ”: <i>Colors and Their Meaning in the Search for Political Legitimacy in the Islamic West</i>
	12:15–1 pm	Michael Schreffler, “ <i>Threads of Many Colors</i> ”: <i>Islam, America, and the Visual Culture of Conquest</i>
	1–2:30 pm	LUNCH
	2:45–3:30 pm	Bernard O’Kane, <i>Ceramics In or On the Building? The Relationships of Architecture and the Consumer in the Development of Pottery and Tilework</i>
	3:30–4:15 pm	Manu Sobti / Mohammad Gharipour, <i>The Hues of Paradise - Examining Color Design Layout in the Islamic Garden</i>
	4:15–5 pm	Discussion, Closing
	5–6:30 pm	Closing Reception, Alcazar de los Reyes



الدوحة في رمضان ودلفينا ذكركم مدينة

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And Diverse Are Their Hues

COLOR IN ISLAMIC ART AND CULTURE

THIRD BIENNIAL HAMAD BIN KHALIFA SYMPOSIUM ON ISLAMIC ART

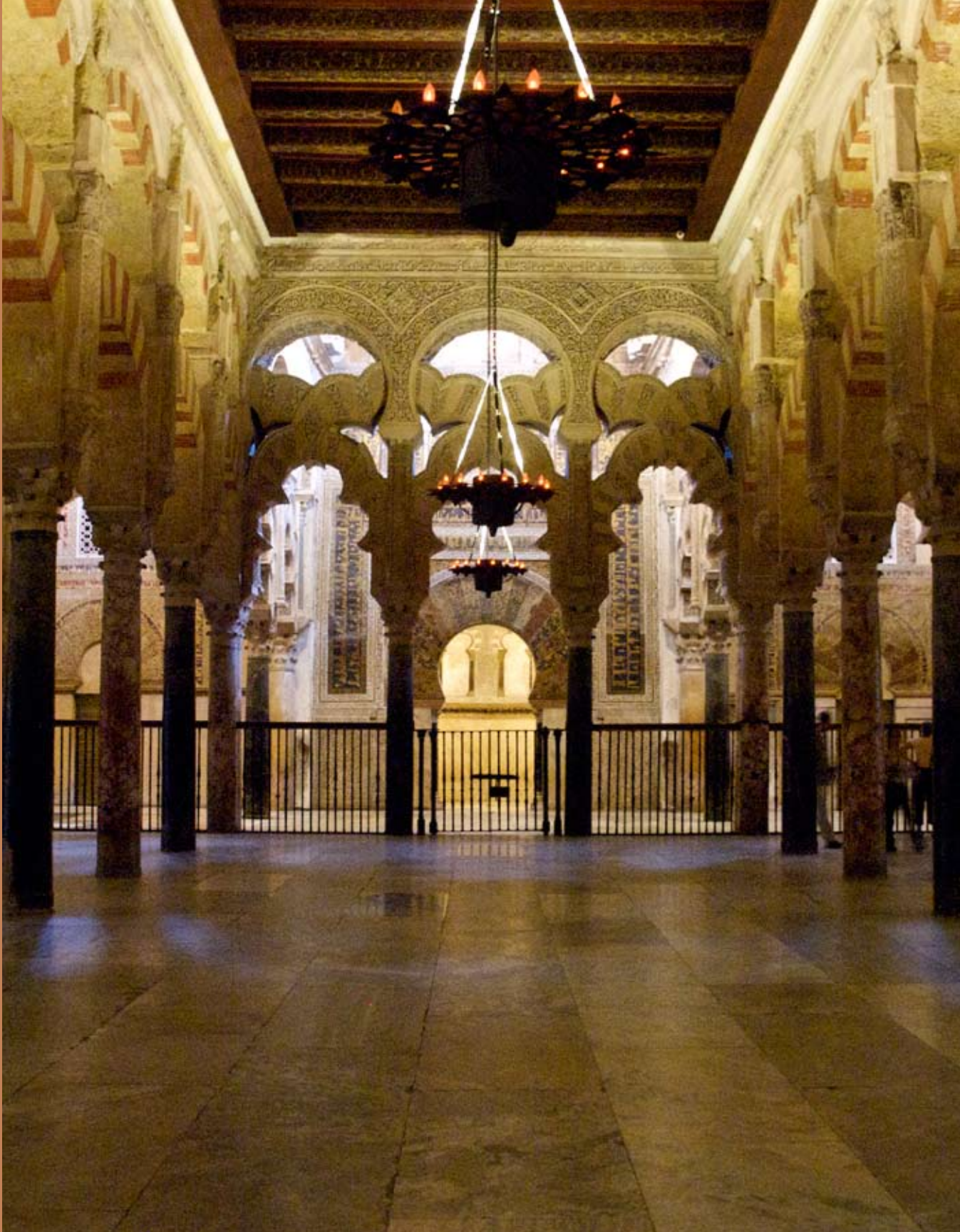
November 2–4, 2009
Córdoba, Spain



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Publications by many of our speakers and fellows will be available for purchase outside of the lecture hall at Palacio Congressos on November 3–4.



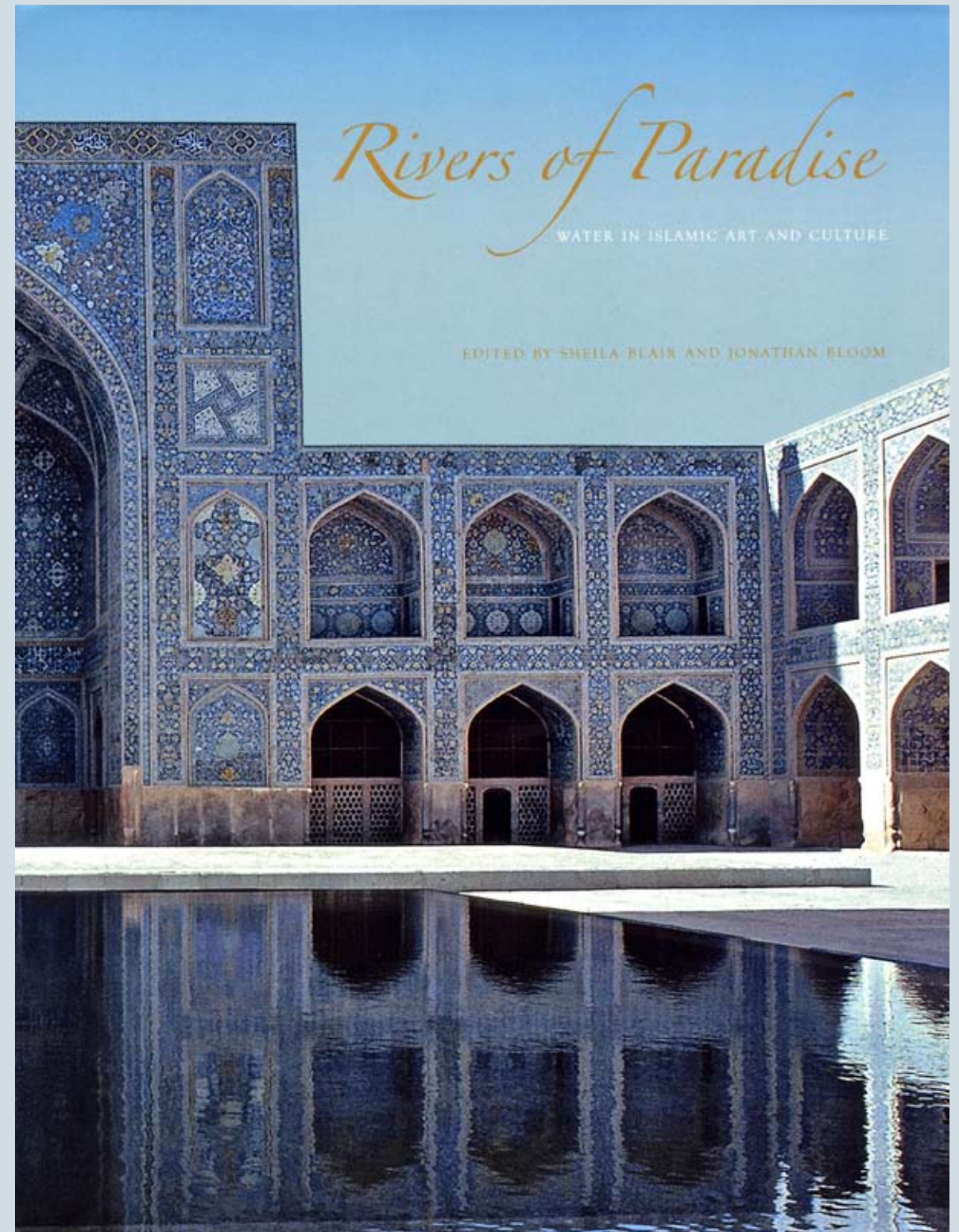
The Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art



And Diverse Are Their Hues: Color in Islamic Art and Culture is the third biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art. Sponsored by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of the Arts, VCU Qatar, and the Qatar Foundation and organized by Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, shared holders of the Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Chair in Islamic Art at VCU, the symposia seek to explore broad issues in the visual arts of the Islamic world.

The first symposium, entitled *Expanded Frontiers*, was held in Richmond, Virginia in November 2004. Eight scholars addressed a range of topics from the history of Islamic art to its relationships with the arts of Christian Europe. The second symposium, *Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture*, was held in Doha, Qatar in November 2007. Twelve speakers approached the many meanings and roles of water in Islamic art and society from religious, literary, archeological, architectural, and functional perspectives. The holders of the chair edited the proceedings of the second symposium which were published by Yale University Press in the fall of 2009 in an extraordinarily handsome volume of the same name. The fourth symposium will be held in Doha in November 2011 in cooperation with the new Museum of Islamic Art there. Speakers will discuss the arts of the object, concentrating on splendid examples in the museum's collection, and highlight the important role of the 'decorative arts' in the artistic traditions of the Islamic lands.

The Hamad bin Khalifa Symposia on Islamic Art address significant themes and issues in understanding the visual arts of the Islamic lands. These symposia seek to make the latest and most interesting scholarship in this growing field of Islamic art available and accessible to a wide audience, ranging from students and scholars to artists, architects, designers and the interested public.





The biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium in Islamic Art and Culture has its origins in the bold commitment the State of Qatar made to become the leader in university education for the Arabian Gulf region and beyond. In 1997, Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Missned invited the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts to establish a campus in Qatar's Education City, where we have since been joined by other leading universities.

In recognition of our role as the founding campus of Education City, the Emir of Qatar subsequently endowed the Hamad bin Khalifa Chair in Islamic Art History within VCU's Department of Art History. It was with great pleasure that we were then able to appoint Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom as the inaugural holders of the Khalifa Chair. The Emir stipulated that the Chairs create a biennial international symposium on Islamic art to alternate between Qatar and other countries. This is what brings us today to beautiful Córdoba, Spain.

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. I welcome you to *And Diverse Are Their Hues*, and thank the many scholars of Islamic art and culture who have given our symposia such intellectual breadth and have expanded our understanding of the arts and cultures of the Islamic world.

Richard E. Toscan, PhD

Vice Provost for International Affairs
Dean, VCU School of the Arts
Virginia Commonwealth University



Welcome to the third biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art. The symposium is a passionate collaboration among our esteemed Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Co-Chairs of Islamic Art, Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts and VCUQatar. The symposium demonstrates our commitment to leadership in the international development and distribution of Islamic art history and its relevance to contemporary culture.

Selecting Córdoba for the 2009 symposium provides a unique opportunity for our students and alumni to be exposed to ideas that will be emphasized by this important geographic location in the history of Islamic culture.

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

On behalf of VCUQatar, I would like to thank you for participating in this event and contributing to the conversation.

Allyson Vanstone

Dean, VCUQatar



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the third biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art.

The Qatar Foundation and Virginia Commonwealth University share the conviction that a deeper understanding of the artistic traditions of the Islamic world will enrich us all. By delivering its highly esteemed design programs in Qatar, VCU is empowering talented students to express and develop their cultural understanding through cutting-edge techniques. The Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art explores the Islamic artistic tradition in depth, and will undoubtedly promote fruitful interpretations by all who have taken part.

I am pleased that this year's program includes presentations by scholars of global renown who are addressing some of the most intriguing topics. When the series was launched five years ago, the venue was intended to alternate between Richmond, Virginia, and Doha, Qatar, but I believe it is appropriate that this time we are meeting in the ancient city of Córdoba. The city's history and geography connect it with both east and west, and the idea of a cultural bridge is central to the concept of the symposium.

Dr Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani
Vice-President, Education, Qatar Foundation

About the Qatar Foundation

The 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 the Qatar Foundation and personally guides the organization's direction and programs.

The 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, the 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 the 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 the 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. The Qatar Foundation, in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University, is extremely proud to sponsor the third biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art.

www.qf.edu.qa

**SHEILA S. BLAIR &
JONATHAN M. BLOOM**

Keynote Address and Symposium Organizers
Color in Islamic Art

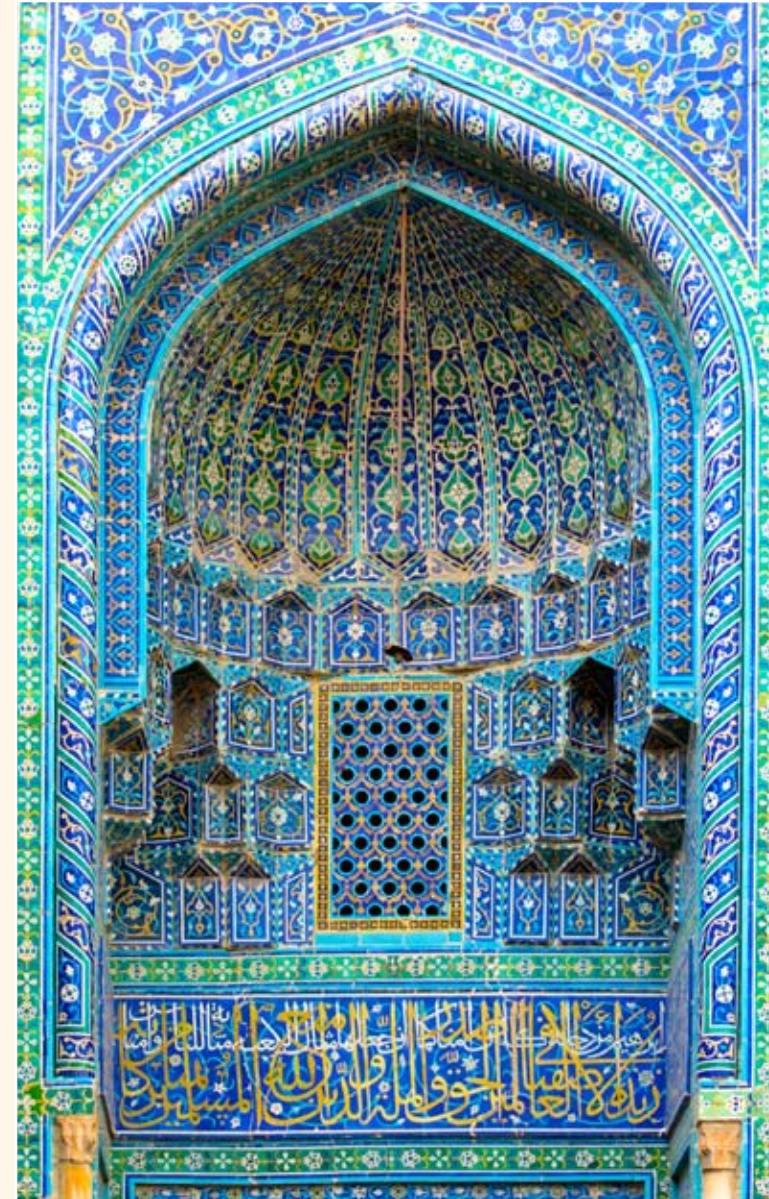


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Everyone remarks on the colorful nature of Islamic art. From the fabled azure domes of Samarkand to the luminous miniature paintings of Behzad, color is a distinctive feature of virtually all the arts created in the Islamic lands over the past fourteen centuries. Famous buildings from the Jami' al-Abyad ("White Mosque") in Ramla and the Yeşil Cami ("Green Mosque") in Bursa to the Masjid-i Kabud ("Blue Mosque") in Tabriz and the Lal Qila ("Red Fort") in Agra are named for their distinctive color, and even such innately monochrome media as metalwork were transformed by colorful inlays. Nevertheless, few if any scholars have further investigated the roles of color in Islamic art and culture.

Arabic reserves a special verbal form for colors, and the Qur'an sees color as an attribute of God's creation. As Arabic culture developed and spread along with Islam, it incorporated and elaborated the scientific knowledge of previous civilizations, such as Aristotle's investigation of the rainbow. The rich chromatic vocabulary of Arabic, Persian and other languages in the region eventually spread to European languages, and many of our color words—azure, carmine, crimson, khaki, lilac, orange, saffron, scarlet, and turquoise—derive from the languages of the Islamic lands. The Qur'an had already used color metaphorically, as in the purity associated with white, and later philosophers and mystics expanded this symbolism. The great 12th-century poet Nizami Ganjavi, for example, used the traditional seven colors to structure his classic poem *Haft paykar* ("Seven portraits"), in which Bahram Gur, the personification of the ideal ruler, visits seven princesses in seven pavilions of seven colors, where they recount seven stories about the seven stages of human life, destiny or the mystical path.

Perhaps as an unconscious response to the sere and monochromatic landscapes that characterize much of the region, bright color was ubiquitous in the visual arts of the Islamic lands. People donned brilliantly colored garments and even the kiswa, the cloth covering the Kaaba in Mecca, could be white, green or even red fabric in contrast to the somber black used today. The production, trade, and use of dyes played important roles in medieval economies. Potters developed a wide range of techniques to cloak their earth-colored products with vivid glazes, and similarly glazed tiles enveloped buildings in webs of glittering color. This keynote address will introduce the audience to many of the issues that other speakers will develop over the following two days.



*Portal on the shrine of Shaykh Safi at Ardabil, Iran
Photo by Jonathan Bloom*

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 the Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art. A wife and husband team, they are the authors and editors of well over a dozen books and hundreds of articles on all aspects of Islamic art and architecture, including *Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture*, the beautiful volume of papers from the previous symposium. 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, they have recently edited the 3-volume *Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, published by Oxford University Press.

“Designs Always Polychromed or Gilded”: the Aesthetics of Color in the Alhambra



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To present-day visitors to the Alhambra (the palatial complex of the Nasrid dynasty in Granada), the carved stucco panels that form the primary architectural embellishment of the precincts appear devoid of color. This was not the case at the time of its construction and occupation by the Nasrid court. On the contrary, the vast parietal expanses of carved stucco were painted in vibrant colors, whose pigments were made of such precious substances as lapis lazuli and gold.

Raman and optical microscopy of the stucco in the Alhambra confirms that the architectural drawings of Owen Jones and William Harvey are fairly accurate with regard to the original pigmentation, and thus can serve as a point of departure for the reconstruction of the aesthetics of color in the Alhambra. This paper focuses on the kineticism already described by medieval observers as a “vibration,” a perception that brings to the fore questions regarding the understanding of optics during the medieval period. Theoretical postulations of color perception, such as “the proportionality of colors” mentioned by the Ikhwan al-Safa’ in their *Rasa’il* and the more complex analysis of luminosity, hue and saturation by Ibn al-Haytham in his *Kitab al-manazir* (“Book of Optics”), will provide a historical grounding for the discussion of the aesthetic principles that would have informed the practice of medieval architects and craftsmen. I will also draw on recent confirmation of and theoretical advances over medieval optics, turning to neurobiologist Margaret Livingstone’s study of modern painting, to further the understanding of the use of color in the Alhambra.

OLGA BUSH received her Ph.D. in Islamic Art and Architecture at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University in 2006. Dr. Bush is currently a visiting professor at Vassar College, and was formerly the Sylvan and Pamela Coleman research fellow in the Islamic Department, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. She has taught Islamic Art and Architecture at the State University of New York at New Paltz, and she specializes in the art and architecture of medieval Muslim Spain. Her essay titled “The Architecture of Jewish Identity: The Neo-Islamic Central Synagogue of New York,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (2004) received The Society of Architectural Historians’ Scott Opler Award for Emerging Scholars, and her paper titled “A Poem is a Robe and a Castle: Inscribing Verses on Textiles and Architecture in the Alhambra,” presented at the 11th Biennial Symposium of the Textile Society of America, was nominated for the Textile Society Of America Founding Presidents Award (2008). Dr. Bush’s most recent article, “The Writing on the Wall: Reading the Decoration of the Alhambra,” was published in *Muqarnas* 26 (2009).



Alhambra, capital, 14th Century.
Photo by Olga Bush.



Alhambra, dado, ceramic-tile mosaic, 14th Century.
Photo by Olga Bush.

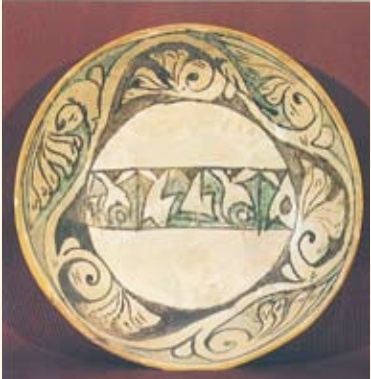
“The Battle of Colors”: Colors and Their Meaning in the Search for Political Legitimacy in the Islamic West



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In two previous articles devoted to the Messianic figure of “al-Asfar” (published in *Studia Islamica* 1993 and *JSAI* 1998), I analyzed the religious and political significance of yellow in the Islamic world. Part of the materials collected there pointed to the continuous political use of this color in the Islamic West by characters or groups who claimed Yemeni descent. In this way, they marked a boundary that separated them from the Qaysis, with whom the red color was associated, as indicated – for example – by the red tent of the Almohad (Mu’minid) caliphs. Although Zanata Berbers, the Mu’minids claimed Qaysi descent and therefore adopted a custom associated with the Prophet, who was said to have erected a red tent when camping before an important battle. In my paper, I will discuss such political and religious boundaries marked by color, exploring the historical precedents adduced to justify them and reconstructing what may be called “the battle of colors” in the Islamic West.

MARIBEL FIERRO works at the Center for Human and Social Sciences of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas in Madrid. Her main fields of interest are the religious and intellectual history of the Islamic West, Islamic law, and heresy in pre-modern Muslim societies. She is sectional editor for Religious Sciences for the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (3rd edition) and secretary of the journal *Al-Qantara*. She has edited with P. Cressier and L. Molina *Los Almohades: Problemas y Perspectivas* (CSIC/Casa de Velázquez, 2005) and with Christian Lange, *Public Violence in Islamic Societies: Power, Discipline and the Construction of the Public Sphere: 7th-19th Centuries CE* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009). Among her recent publications are *Abd al-Rahman III, the First Córdoba Caliph* (Oneworld, 2005) and “The Movable Minbar in Córdoba: How the Umayyads of al-Andalus Claimed the Inheritance of the Prophet,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 33 (2007).



Dish with inscription, “Al-Mulk,” 10th Century, Madrid. Archaeological Museum.



Cantiga CLXV. Library of El Escorial.



Banner of Las Navas, Early 13th Century, Burgos, Monastery of Las Huelgas. Museum of Medieval Clothing.

Color, Symbolism, and the Mystic Quest: the Spiritual Exegesis of Color in Sufism in the Works of Henry Corbin



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This paper is an attempt to elucidate one aspect of the phenomenology of color in Islam, namely that found in the works of some mystics. To achieve this it will draw on various mystical commentaries on those Quranic verses that explicitly refer to color. Particular reference will be made to the Sufi commentaries. It will then explore how some of these verses and the nature of color were discussed by Sufis like Najumddin Kubra and 'Alludawlah Simnani in their phenomenology of colors. Particular attention will be paid to Henry Corbin's groundbreaking work on these authors in his *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism* and other essays where he elucidates the supra-sensory modes of perception associated with mystic perception and where he explores parallels between these Sufis and Goethe's *Farbenlehre*. Some of the questions that will be asked are: What are the implications of these theories of color photisms on our scientific theories of light and color? What can they reveal about the nature of reality? Can the theories of the Sufis on color symbolism as revealing the various states of the mystic quest reveal anything about color in Islamic art? It is not our intention to resolve the problem in this paper but to contribute to the debate. The paper is intended as an introduction to the topic and will rehearse many of the arguments put forward by Henry Corbin with the intention of placing his work on color theory back in the limelight after years of neglect.

SAMIR MAHMOUD is a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, where the focus of his research is aesthetics in Ibn 'Arabi. Mr. Mahmoud has won numerous awards from the University of New South Wales and from Cambridge University. His publications include "The Space of Soul: Towards a Phenomenology of Sacred Space," in *Sacred Species and Sites: Guardians of Biocultural Diversity* (2008) and "From Heidegger to Suhrawardi: An Introduction to the Thought of Henry Corbin" (2006), published on the official website of Henry Corbin, www.amiscorbin.com. Mr. Mahmoud has worked previously as a researcher at the Australian Museum, Sydney and as a designer at CIVITAS, an urban design and architecture firm based in Sydney, and has taught courses at the Centre for Muslim-Jewish Relations in Cambridge, UK.



Bihzad: Seduction of Yusuf. National Library of Cairo.



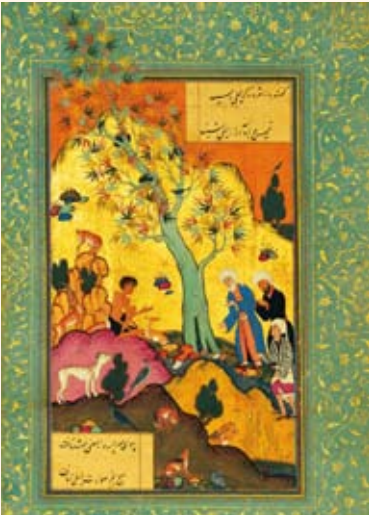
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The ill-fated love of the poet Qays ibn al-Mulawwah, known popularly as Majnun (“the madman,” “le fou d’amour”) for his cousin Layla (Layli) has been told in song and story from 7th-century Arabia until the present day, and has captured the imagination of writers, poets, composers, and illustrators. In the Persian literary tradition the story was retold in verse by Nizami Ganjavi around 1188–92. Nizami’s poem was subsequently emulated and reworked by such Persian poets as Amir Khusraw Dihlavi and Jami. Recensions of these poems were widely illustrated from the Timurid period onwards. In examining illustrations of Nizami’s version and of others, illustrated at different times, in different places, and by different artists, one feature stands out as remarkable: in the majority of the illustrations, Majnun is depicted as clothed in blue. Whether as a child, from the time that he falls in love with Layli, through his wanderings in the desert, until he receives news of Layli’s death and comes to mourn at her grave, he is shown as wearing blue shirts, a blue loincloth (in the desert), a blue cloth (on his pilgrimage to the Ka’ba), and predominantly blue garments in other scenes. Blue, as is well known, is the color of mourning; it is also (but not necessarily) associated with Sufism. This paper will suggest that there is a consistency in depictions of Majnun which transcends boundaries of time and place and which points to a specific iconography in treatments of Majnun.

JULIE SCOTT MEISAMI is a native of Berkeley, California. She received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1971. From 1971–1980 she taught English Literature and Comparative Literature in Tehran, Iran, chiefly at the University of Tehran, where she was instrumental in forming the MA program in Comparative Literature. After several years in California (1980–1985), where she taught courses in Comparative Literature and pursued independent research, in 1985 she was appointed University Lecturer in Persian at the University of Oxford, teaching courses in Persian and Arabic literature until her retirement in 2002. In 2002–2003 she held an Aga Khan Fellowship in Islamic Architecture at Harvard University, where she pursued her art history research. She currently lives in Point Richmond, California, where she continues her research on two major projects: depictions of Majnun in Persian illustrated manuscripts, and a re-evaluation of the so-called “Gazelle Mosaic” at Khirbat al-Mafjar. She is currently participating in a project to write a descriptive catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. Her many publications include *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, (Princeton University Press, 1987), *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (co-edited with Paul Starkey, Routledge, 1998), *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century*



Majnun at the Ka’ba
Falnama of Shah Tahmasp, Tabriz, ca. 1550
Attributed to Aqa Mirak
Musee d’art et d’histoire, Geneva, 1971–107/37



Majnun Visited by Relatives
Amir Khusraw Dihlavi, Layli and Majnun, late 15th c.
National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg



Majnun in the Desert
Shah Tahmasp’s Khamsa of Nizami, 1539–43
Attributed to Aqa Mirak
London, British Library

(Edinburgh University Press, 1999) and *Structure and Meaning in Medieval Arabic and Persian Poetry: Orient Pearls* (Routledge, 2003). Her translations include *The Sea of Precious Virtues* (Bar al-Fava’id), *A Medieval Islamic Mirror for Princes* (University of Utah Press, 1991) and *Nizami, The Haft Paykar: A Medieval Persian Romance* (Oxford University Press, 1995).

Blue Behind Gold: the Inscription of the Dome of the Rock and its Relatives



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Gold inscriptions set against a blue background are prominent in such well known early Islamic works as the Dome of the Rock and the Umayyad mosques at Damascus and Medina and the mosque at Córdoba, and of course in the remarkable Blue Qur'an. Yet the pre-Islamic history of this epigraphic scheme, and its meaning and reception in the early Islamic world, seem to have elicited only limited attention from scholars. In the case of the Blue Qur'an, it has been associated with the supposed use of purple in some late antique books, which is misleading. Blue backgrounds for gold inscriptions can in fact be found in earlier Roman and contemporary Western luxury manuscripts, but that does not per se explain why blue would have been chosen. A surprising body of evidence suggests that, although there are important precedents and analogues in Roman and Late Antique art, for example in works with cosmological import, the early Islamic inscriptions in gold against a blue background may also be connected with peacocks and with Solomon, and a conception of rulership not founded primarily upon Roman inspiration.

LAWRENCE NEES studied at the University of Chicago and Harvard University, where he received a doctoral degree in 1977. He has taught at the University of Delaware since 1978, where he is professor in the Department of Art History. Currently the vice-president of the International Center of Medieval Art, his research areas focus on the earlier medieval period, especially ca. 500–1000 C.E., including Late Antique, Insular, Frankish and Byzantine as well as Islamic art and history. He is the author of *From Justinian to Charlemagne, European Art 565–787: an Annotated Bibliography* (G.K. Hall, 1985), *The Gundohinus Gospels* (Medieval Academy of America, 1987), *A Tainted Mantle: Hercules and the Classical Tradition at the Carolingian Court* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), *Early Medieval Art* (Oxford University Press, 2002), and editor of *Approaches to Early-Medieval Art* (Medieval Academy of America, 1998), and is currently completing *Illuminating The Word: on the Beginnings of Medieval Book Decoration*. His next book will be *Essays in the Margins of Early Islamic Art*.



World map, from illustrated manuscript of Cosmas Indicopleustes' <Topographia>, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vatican, cod. gr. 699, fol. 40v



Leaf from the Blue Qur'an, probably N. Africa 10th c. CE



Detail of mosaic inscription, Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, ca. 691 CE

Ceramics In or On the Building? The Relationships of Patrons, Architecture and the Consumer in the Development of Pottery and Tilework



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Islamic tilework made a slow start, at least compared to Islamic pottery. Although some Abbasid luster tiles are known, it was not until the Seljuq period, and then only tentatively, that architectural tilework grew in popularity. How could tilework compete with the variegated colors of mina'i pottery? The eventual answer was with tile mosaic, a technique unique to architecture that had the advantage of initially firing each tile at the optimum temperature to achieve a rich glaze, and of maintaining perfect separation between colors.

This technique was labor intensive and hence expensive, and therefore alternatives were sought. Little headway was made in 14th century Iran with underglaze-painted tiles, although these, despite the difficulties of preventing colors running under the glaze, did increase their colour palette slightly. The delicacy of mina'i made it unsuitable for tiles, but two other overglaze-painted styles used by potters, those called "cuerda seca" and "lajvardina" ware, were eventually developed and, once a way had been found to minimize the colors running together, became in late 14th-century Transoxiana a viable alternative to tile mosaic.

Technological developments shifted in the 15th century to Anatolia, where the underglaze palette became broader, eventually resulting in some of Islamic art's greatest creations, Iznik pottery and tiles. This paper will further discuss these shifts in technology and taste, exploring when, how and why the color palettes and motifs of architectural tilework were coupled with pottery workshops, and what happened when they were not.

BERNARD O'KANE is professor of Islamic Art and Architecture at the American University in Cairo, where he has worked since 1980. Prior to that he was assistant director of the British Institute of Persian Studies, Tehran. He has also held visiting professorships at Harvard University and at the University of California, Berkeley. His publications include *Timurid Architecture in Khurasan* (Mazda Publishers/Undena Publications, 1987); *Studies in Persian Art and Architecture* (American University in Cairo Press, 1995); *Early Persian Paintings: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the late Fourteenth century* (I.B. Tauris, 2003); *The World of Islamic Art* (American University in Cairo Press, 2008); as well as the edited volumes *The Iconography of Islamic Art: Studies in Honor of Robert Hillenbrand* (Edinburgh University Press, 2005) and *The Treasures of Islamic Art in the Museums of Cairo* (American University in Cairo Press, 2009).



Detail of overglaze painted tiles in the mihrab of the
Yeşil türbe (1424), Bursa, Turkey.
Photo by Bernard O'Kane.



Detail of overglaze painted tiles in the mausoleum of Shad-i Malik Agha (1372),
Shah-i Zinda, Samarqand, Uzbekistan. Photo by Bernard O'Kane.

The Role of Economics, Geography and Tradition in the Artist's Choice of Colors for Manuscript Painting



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The paper will address issues of the artist’s choice of coloring materials and suggest that, as for Western artists, this was based less on philosophical imperatives than on geography and economics. This in turn was greatly influenced by tradition. In particular, the paper will examine those colors used to paint the great Mamluk Qur’ans and identify unique features of those painted in Egypt. Scientific analysis of these manuscripts has shown that the unusual (and difficult) technique of making and painting red organic glazes (from locally-grown *Carthamus tinctoria*) over gold leaf, has been executed in exactly the manner described by Ibn Badis in his *Book of the Staff of the Scribes*, ca 1025. The identification of colors made from materials traditionally used only in Egypt provides convincing evidence of the origins of these books.

The paper will also address the issue of color preference in manuscript painting, using the Blue Qur’an from Tunisia as an example. Understanding the technique of how parchment is colored, combined with the study of technical treatises and scientific analysis of historic “purple” parchments, it can be argued that the blue of this parchment was the artistic/philosophical preference of one who knew how and where to obtain the coloring materials and how to color the parchment in the Byzantine manner, but chose instead, the (indigo) blue.

CHERYL PORTER is the deputy director of the Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation & Dar al-Kutub Manuscript Project in Cairo, Egypt. She is responsible for the drafting and implementation of preservation and conservation strategies, designing an ongoing program of visiting specialists and developing research programs, especially concerned with Islamic material culture. She was elected secretary of The Islamic Manuscript Association Conservation Sub-committee in 2007. Since 1988, as the director of the Montefiascone Project at the Seminario Barbarigo in Montefiascone, Italy, she co-ordinated an extensive international conservation program for scholars and students of the book. Her essays include “The Use of Alum in the Preparation of Tawed Skin for Book Covers in the 11th–15th Centuries: Advantages and Disadvantages for the Book Structure,” in *L’Alun de Méditerranée* (2005), “Pigments on Parchment – Flaking and Consolidation,” in *Conservazione Dei Materiali Librari Archivistici e Grafici* (1999), “You Can’t Tell a Pigment by its Colour,” in *Making the Medieval Book: Techniques of Production* (1995), and “Laser Raman Spectroscopy – a Tool for Non-destructive Pigment Analysis for Manuscripts,” in *The Paper Conservator* (1992).



Rasid 10
Scribe 'Ali bin Mohammad al Maktu al Ashrifa
774 H and 1372–3 AD



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Surviving Rasulid religious architecture in Yemen (1229–1454) attests to the extensive use of painted decorations to cover large parts of its interiors: domes, vaults and walls. These decorations, consisting of inscriptions, geometric and floral designs executed in tempera over a plaster base, largely exhibit close connections to illuminated manuscript pages. Through the analysis of both the architecture and historical sources, it is possible to confirm that only the sultans and their female family members had the privilege of constructing lavishly painted monuments. This paper examines the reasons why the Rasulids patrons opted for painted decorations over other techniques. It discusses the possible existence of a color hierarchy, the selection of specific colors for particular motifs, such as the red five-petalled rosette, and the use of color symmetry. The paper also argues that the political and religious climate (namely the strong rivalry with the Mamluks in Egypt, on the one hand, and the Zaydis who ruled over the northern regions of Yemen, on the other, in addition to significant Sufi activities) may have contributed to the elaboration of a Rasulid system of visually perceptible symbols and signs. Finally, it details how painted decorations successfully reflected the Rasulids' wealth and cosmopolitan connections, as well as their symbols of sovereignty and religious affiliation.

A specialist in Yemeni art and architecture, NOHA SADEK received her Ph.D. in Middle East and Islamic Studies from the University of Toronto in 1990. She has taught courses on Islamic art at the University of Saint-Joseph and the American University in Beirut, Lebanon, and has participated in exhibition projects at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, and the National Museum of Lebanon in Beirut. She was director of the American Institute for Yemeni Studies in Sanaa, Yemen from 1995–1997. Sadek has published articles on the medieval architecture of Yemen, and served as editor of *Studies on Medieval Yemen* (2003) and *Studies in the Archaeology of Yemen* (2002), both in Arabic. She has two works in progress: *Rasulid Art and Architecture in Yemen (626–858 AH/1229–1454 AD): Power and Legitimacy and Women Patrons in Medieval South Arabia*.



Madrasa al-Ashrafiya (1400) in Taizz, Yemen, painted decoration in central dome. Photo by Noha Sadek.



Madrasa al-Ashrafiya (1400) in Taizz, Yemen, exterior. Photo by Noha Sadek.

MICHAEL J. SCHREFFLER *"Threads of Many Colors": Islam, America, and the Visual Culture of Conquest*

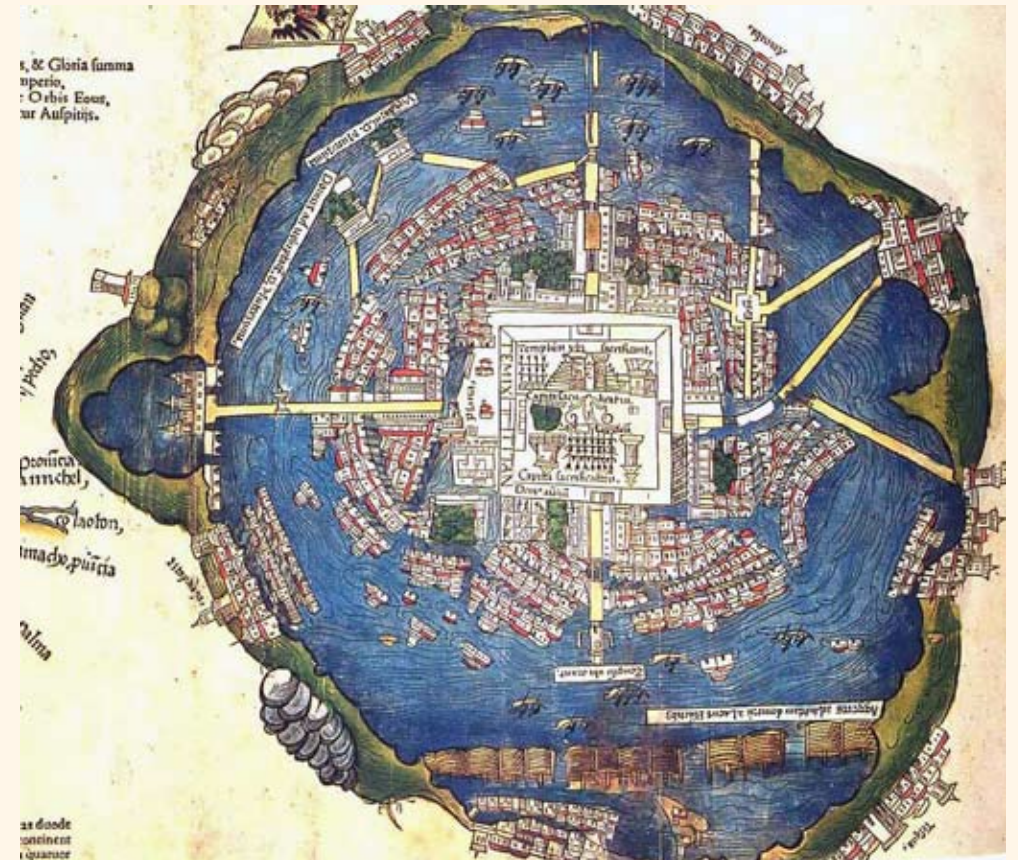


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Recent scholarship has explored a range of motifs and techniques in colonial Latin American architecture whose history can be traced to the Islamic world. They include the use of colorful tiles, decorative wooden ceilings, and the ornamentation of doorways and windows. These forms were produced throughout colonial Mexico and Peru through the transference of designs and construction practices that were widespread in Andalucía both before and after the "reconquest" of 1492.

This paper examines a different and relatively unexplored aspect of the relationship between the visual culture of the Islamic world and that of colonial Latin America. It surveys a corpus of early modern Spanish texts and images in which people, places, and things in the Americas are compared or conflated with their counterparts in the Islamic world. These rhetorical dynamics are particularly widespread in textual and visual representations of the Conquest of Aztec Mexico and Inca Peru. Indeed, in one of his letters to the king of Spain, the conquistador Hernán Cortés lauded the Aztecs' marketplace, noting that "they sell cotton threads of so many colors that it seems like the silk market of Granada." My analysis of these texts and images centers on the visual components of their comparisons and conflations. It considers the ways in which the evocation of color and colorful objects intervened in this comparative rhetoric and examines the ideological work in which it was engaged. As such, it contributes to knowledge about perceptions of Islamic art and culture in early modern Europe and the Americas.

MICHAEL SCHREFFLER's research examines the agency of visual culture in political theory and governance in early modern Latin America. He is an associate professor in the Department of Art History at Virginia Commonwealth University, where he has taught since 2000. He is currently in residence as an Ailsa Bruce Mellon Senior Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, a research institute at the National Gallery, Washington, D.C., where he is at work on a book about colonial architecture in Cuzco, Peru. He is the author of *The Art of Allegiance: Visual Culture and Imperial Power in Baroque New Spain* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007). His publications include "Vespucci Rediscovered America and the Pictorial Rhetoric of Cannibalism," *Art History* (June 2005), and "Representing the Conquest of Mexico in the Seventeenth-Century Empire of the Spanish Hapsburgs," *Invasion and Transformation: Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico* (University Press of Colorado, 2007). His article entitled "'Their Cortés and Our Cortés: Spanish Colonialism and Aztec Representation'" will appear in the *Art Bulletin* in December 2009.



Hernán Cortés
"Cortés' 1524 Map of Tenochtitlan," in *Praeclara Ferdinadi Cortesii de Noua maris Oceani Hispania narratio*

MARIANNA SHREVE
SIMPSON



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*Why My Name is Red: “Ahmar,” “Surkh” and “Kirmizi”
in the History of Islamic Art*

In 1614, Philip III, ruler of Hapsburg Iberia, sent ‘Abbas I, ruler of Safavid Iran, a gift of several hundred luxury items, including vessels and furniture fashioned of silver and gold, worth altogether over 32,000 ducats. Far more valuable than the precious metal objects, however, were the five barrels of cochineal, the brilliant red dye stuff made from the dried and crushed shells of insects found on the branches of the prickly pear cactus in the highlands of Mexico. While Shah ‘Abbas may have been impressed by the value and distant origin of the cochineal, the color itself was hardly a novelty. Indeed, by his day red in various hues (crimson, scarlet, rose, ruby, etc, etc.) had been a ubiquitous color in the palette of artists and artisans of all media in Iran and throughout the Islamic world for centuries. This paper will explore the sources and shades of red through a selection of objects, including ceramics, textiles and manuscripts, from the early, medieval and early modern periods of Islamic art with the goal of better understanding the color’s varied “charge” (i.e., its meanings, associations and values) within Islamic civilization as a whole.

MARIANNA SHREVE SIMPSON (Ph.D., Harvard University, 1978), an independent scholar, has published, taught and lectured widely on Islamic art in general and the arts of the book in particular. She has worked at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art (associate dean, 1980–92); Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution (curator of Islamic Near Eastern art, 1992–95) and Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (director of curatorial affairs and curator of Islamic art, 1995–2000). Over the years Simpson also has taught as a visiting faculty member at: UCLA; Georgetown; Princeton; Johns Hopkins; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; the Maryland Institute College of Art; University of Pennsylvania, and the Bard Graduate Center, New York. Recent awards have included: a Senior Fellowship, CASVA, National Gallery of Art; a Collaborative Research Award, Getty Grant Program; a Senior Fellowship, National Endowment for the Humanities; and membership, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. She currently serves as president-elect of the Historians of Islamic Art Association, and begins a two-year term as president in February 2010.



Kafan, silk velvet, Turkey, Istanbul or Bursa, 16th century. Istanbul, Topkapi Saray Museum, 13/6



Plate, buff ware with underglaze decoration, Iran, 10th century. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, F65.27



Folio from De Materia Medica of Dioscorides, Iraq, Baghdad, dated 1224. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, F1932.20v



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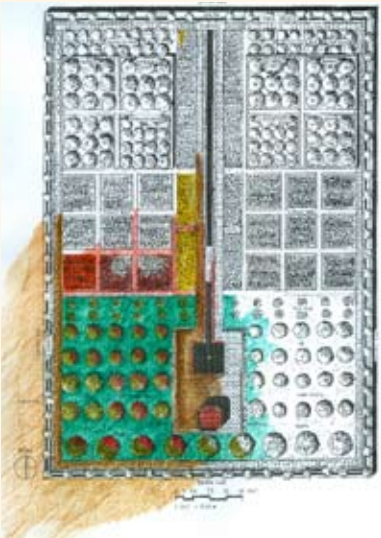
Historical research has revealed tantalizing glimpses of Islamic garden environments through the course of time. While differing in arrangement and ensemble, context and patronage, all were salubrious environments par excellence, intended explicitly for the purposes of repose and enjoyment. But even the most detailed historical descriptions do little to provide the complete reconstruction of how these gardens may have actually engaged the visitor or interlocutor. How did these environments specifically provide the unique sensory stimuli that combined the senses? How and which colors were observed, what fragrances and aromas provided paradisiacal bliss?

In its focus on ‘reconstructing experience’ in the garden environment, this paper argues that such spatial and particularly experiential reconstructions would necessitate a specific examination of color prevalent in the plant materials employed in these garden layouts. Towards this goal, it examines suggestions for color schemes, planting combinations and design specifications within the proposed layouts of two historical gardens through extant manuals and manuscripts. Capturing the unique space-time continuum of an expanding Islamic world, the first was located on its eastern fringes of the Timurid ecumenae in 16th century Herat, known today through its agricultural manual the *Irshad al-Zira’a*. While Heravi’s description may have been imaginary and therefore reflected an idealized Timurid garden, it is nevertheless tempting to employ it as a possible ‘recipe’ for color palettes in the natural environment. Located westwards was the second and quintessentially Safavid Sa’adat Abad, built by Shah Tamasp in 17th century Qazvin, now known through the Jannat Al-Asmar. Few studies have specifically examined these manuals for insights on the use of color within the landscaped environment, and how the arrangement of plants, flowers, fruits, and design elements may have potentially been based on an overarching ‘color’ master plan. The change of seasons, gardening conventions, plant species, patronage and upkeep would have radically altered how these environments progressively blossomed and withered away. This research seeks to enhance some of these intriguing vignettes and propose a series of reconstructions that encompass descriptions of magical hue within the garden environment.

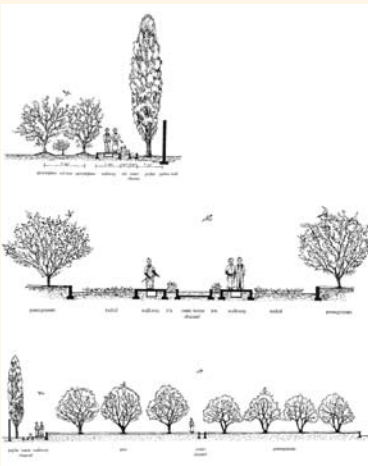
MANU P. SOBTI is an Islamic architecture and urban historian, currently teaching design and architectural history at the School of Architecture & Urban Planning (SARUP), University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Sobti’s

current research focuses on the urban historical genesis of early-medieval Islamic cities along the Silk Road and in the Indian Subcontinent. In recognition for his work, he has received several awards, including the Center for 21st Century Studies Fellowship at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (2009), travel grants from the National Council for East European and Eurasian Studies in Seattle (2009), a research and development grant from the Graham Foundation of the Arts in Chicago (2008), research grants from the French Institute for Central Asian Studies in Tashkent (2003), the Michael Ventris Memorial Award from Architectural Association School in London (2001) and the Aga Khan Fellowship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge (1993–95). He has published widely in journals, books and monographs, and presented his research at more than 40 national and international venues. He is currently working on a book entitled *The Sliver of the Oxus Borderland: Medieval Cultural Encounters between the Arabs and Persians* (Brill Publications, expected Fall, 2010). Sobti also directs an intensive India Study Abroad Program, joining students from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee USA, CEPT Ahmedabad INDIA, CCA Chandigarh INDIA and recently the Chinese University in Hong Kong.

Raised in the historic city of Isfahan, MOHAMMAD GHARIPOUR received his Ph.D. in Architectural Theory and History from Georgia Institute of Technology in 2008 and Masters of Architecture from the University of Tehran in 2000. He currently teaches landscape and architectural history at the College of Art and Architecture, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. His areas of research include Japanese traditional and contemporary architecture, Persianate gardens and architecture, and restorative environments. As the recipient of Spiro Kostof fellowship award from the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) in 2008. Dr. Gharipour’s articles include “The Achaemenid Contribution to the History of Garden Design” *Middle Eastern & North African Intellectual and Cultural Studies* (Binghamton University, 2006); “Light as The Definer of Spaces in Kahn’s Kimbell Museum,” *Essays on American Art and Architecture*, ed. Robert Sheardy (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), “Healing Gardens: An Examination of the Relationship between Healing and Natural Environment” *The Journal of Environmental Studies* (2005); and “Pure House X&Y: A Comparative Study on the Influences of Climate, Social Context, and Cultural Behavior in the Design of Sukiya and Safavid Houses,” *Architecture Asia* (2004).



Partial reconstruction of color palette in the
Timurid chaharbagh, based on Maria E.
Subtelny (Brill, 1997).



Plantation profiles and landscape specifications
as suggested in Maria E. Subtelny (Brill, 1997).



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What strikes one today, looking at woolen carpets six hundred and more years old is not only the extraordinary brightness, clarity, stability and range of colors in use, but also the harmonious and pleasing quality of the colors that the dyers were able to achieve using a variety of naturally occurring substances derived from plants, insects and minerals.

Recently much work has been done by dye chemists to discover the composition and sources of the dyes used in traditional technology. We now know that centuries of experimentation enabled dyers to establish which plants provided stable colors, especially yellows, which are often unstable to light. It has also established something of more subtle interest: that many dye plants contain not one color-yielding substance but several. For example madder (*Rubia tinctorum*) yields three major and as many as fifteen minor dyestuffs. As a result, the light reflected from the surface of madder-dyed wool includes a spread of wavelengths. Experiments show that when this occurs, such dyes are perceived as pleasing and harmonious. Dyers knew this intuitively and some yellow dyes, which reflect light in a narrow waveband, were 'sweetened' by adding red to broaden the band of wavelengths reflected and thus improve their acceptability. Many synthetic dyes reflect light in a very narrow waveband and are accordingly perceived as harsh and 'strident'. Their advent has served to reveal the remarkable level of skill and instinctive understanding of color achieved by dyers, whose work in the past has contributed to the important place of carpets in the Islamic world.

DR. JON THOMPSON recently retired as May Beattie Fellow in Carpet Studies at the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology and the Khalili Research Centre, at the University of Oxford. He continues to teach courses at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, and at the Victoria and Albert Museum. He is the author of numerous publications on carpets, including *Timbuktu to Tibet*, *Exotic Rugs & Textiles from New York Collectors* (2008), *Milestones in the History of Carpets* (Moshe Tabnina, 2006), *Silk 13th to 18th Centuries: Treasures from the Museum of Islamic Art Qatar* (National Council for Culture, Art and Heritage, Doha, 2004), *Hunt for Paradise, Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501–1576* (co-editor and co-author, Asia Society, 2003), *The Nomadic Peoples of Iran* (co-editor and co-author, Azimuth Editions, 2002), *Textiles through the Ages* (co-editor and co-author, Ashmolean Museum, 2002), *Silk, Carpets and the Silk Road* (NHK Culture Center Tokyo, 1988) and *Carpet Magic* (Barbican Art Gallery, 1983). Prior to his distinguished career as a specialist in the arts of the carpet, Dr. Thompson was a consultant physician at The London Hospital, Bethnal Green (1973–79), and a Lecturer in Medicine at University College Hospital, London (1969–73) and The London Hospital, Whitechapel (1966–69).



Face of transport bag, Jaf Kurd, 19th century. Marc Feldman collection.



Detail of Turkish carpet, mid-15th century
Museum of Antique Textile Arts Milan.



Saddle bag, Shahsevan tribe, Iran, 19th century.
Bruce Baganz collection.

The Hamad bin Khalifa Travel Fellowship

In 2007, the Hamad bin Khalifa Travel Fellowship was created by the Symposium organizers in order to provide financial support to scholars who wished to attend the conference, held in Doha, Qatar. That year, fifteen fellows were selected after an international competition that drew more than three hundred applications from around the world.

This year, competition was as intense, with over three hundred applications from sixty countries. These fifteen fellows represent a wide and talented cross-section of scholars currently engaged in the field of Islamic art, and we are pleased and honored to have them take part in *And Diverse Are Their Hues*.



SAMER AKKACH is associate professor of architectural history and theory at the School of Architecture, The University of Adelaide, Australia, and founding director of the Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture (CAMEA).
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MARI-TERE ALVAREZ is a project specialist with the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, the associate director of the University of Southern California's International Museum Institute and the project director of the University of Southern California's Mencía de Mendoza Research Project.
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HEBA NAYEL BARAKAT is a project manager and Islamic art consultant at the Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage in Giza, Egypt, and a consultant to the director of the Islamic Arts Museum, Malaysia.
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2009 Fellowship Recipients



FATMA DAHMANI is a Ph.D. candidate in Islamic art history at the University of Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne where her dissertation examines the wall paintings found at the Abbasid city of Samarra, Iraq.
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BLAKE DE MARIA is an assistant professor of art history at Santa Clara University where she also serves as the director of the University's Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program.
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HARIS DERVISEVIC is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Art History at the University of Zagreb, Croatia, where his research interests focus on 18th century Islamic art in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
d.haris@hotmail.com



JULIA GONNELLA is a curator at the Museum of Islamic Art (SMPK) in Berlin, and has directed the Islamic section of the Syrian-German excavations on the Citadel of Aleppo since 1996.
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2009 Fellowship Recipients, Continued



MÓNICA HERRERA-CASAI is a Ph.D. student at the Universities of La Laguna and Barcelona, and a research associate for the project Islamic Chartmaking in the Mediterranean Context (ca. 1300-1600), based at the University of Barcelona.

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HADI JAHANABADIAN is a conservation architect with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in Afghanistan, where he has been involved in planning and restoration projects in Gazurgah, Herat and Balkh.

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FRANCESCA LEONI is a post-doctoral scholar in the Department of Art History at Rice University in Houston, Texas and an assistant curator at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, where she is contributing to the establishment of a permanent collection of Islamic art.

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ROXANI MARGARITI ELENI is associate professor in the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies at Emory University who has participated in archaeological excavations and surveys in England, Greece, Turkey, Oman and the UAE.

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NINA NEMTSEVA is associate professor at National University Uzbekistan in Mirzo Ulugbeka, Tashkent, and a senior scientific collaborator at the Institute of History at the Academy of the Sciences, Uzbekistan.

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AYSE OYA PANCAROĞLU is associate professor in the Department of History, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul.

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KAREN PINTO is an assistant professor in the History Department at Gettysburg College.

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IDRIES TREVATHAN is a conservator at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) and a co-founder of the Malaysian Heritage Conservation Network.

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Islamic Art History at VCU



The VCU Department of Art History is a proud co-sponsor of the third biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art. This year's site, Córdoba, reflects recent developments within the field of art history and, more specifically, those within VCU's Department of Art History, as there has been increasing interest in cultural and artistic exchanges between the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and the Americas. The historical influence of Islamic art and architecture is seen around the globe, from Latin American religious structures to medieval manuscript illuminations, Renaissance portraits and decorative arts, 19th century painting, and the work of contemporary artists. This broadened scope of study has enriched the educational experience of our students and suggested avenues for further academic exploration.

Since 1973, the Department of Art History has offered a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs in art history, architectural history and museum studies. The Ph.D. in art history has been offered since 1994. The establishment of the Hamad bin Khalifa Chair in Islamic Art by the Emir of Qatar in 2005 has been of central importance in adding new dimensions to the academic focus of the department as it continues to expand. This position, which is jointly held by renowned Professors Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, and the activities associated with it, which includes *And Diverse Are Their Hues: Color in Islamic Art and Culture*, reflects critical changes shaping art historical inquiry and the Department of Art History's commitment to participating in the ongoing dialogue that constitutes this investigation.

VCUQatar Lecture Series
Arts and Architecture of the Islamic World

February 3, 2008
DR. VENETIA PORTER
Curator, Islamic and Contemporary Middle East, British Museum, London



Word into Art: Artists of the Modern Middle East was an exhibition curated by Venetia Porter at the British Museum, London in the summer of 2006. Based largely on the collections of the British Museum and others, the exhibition demonstrated the imaginative ways in which artists across the Middle East and North Africa use the power of the written word in their art today. Word into Art was shown in an expanded version at the Dubai International Financial Centre in February 2008. Dr. Porter's lecture discussed the public's responses to the exhibition when it was shown in London and examined the powerful and innovative ways that artists from across the Middle East are using script today.

Nun, Ali Hassan, mixed media on paper, courtesy of The British Museum, London

March 16, 2008
PROFESSOR PRISCILLA SOUCEK
Deputy Director and James R. McCredie Professor of Islamic Art, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, New York

Masterpieces from the Khalili Collection
Priscilla Soucek's lecture focused on objects from the Khalili Collection, London on exhibition at the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi in April 2008. The exhibition, an encyclopedic overview of Islamic art from the beginning of the Islamic era to the 19th century, gave testimony to the extraordinary range and quality of the skillfulness of Islamic craftsmen and artists, but also to the vision of the collector Nasser David Khalili.

January 28, 2009
DR. JOCHEN SOKOLY
Gallery Director and Assistant Professor in Art History, Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Doha



Threads of History: Textiles of the Abbasid and Fatimid Caliphates
Jochen Sokoly's lecture focused on a group of inscribed textiles from Egypt and the Central Islamic lands commonly known as tiraz textiles. The term tiraz, although subject to some scholarly debate, refers to an inscription that contains historical content referring to an official commission by an Islamic ruler or one of his representatives. It is the historical content of these textile inscriptions – in addition to their archaeological importance – which makes them a valuable resource for historical research into the caliphal administration of the early Islamic period.

March 11, 2009
DR. ELIZABETH MERKLINGER
Independent Architectural Historian Ottawa

Islamic Architecture of Conquest: Mosques and Tombs in India
Dr. Elizabeth Merklinger is an art and architectural historian and a frequent university and museum lecturer. She has curated exhibitions on Buddhist and Hindu art at the National Gallery of Canada and is the author of *Sultanate Architecture of Pre-Mughal India* (2005) and *Indian Islamic Architecture: The Deccan* (1981).

April 15, 2009
DR. HEATHER ECKER
Head of the Department of the Arts of Asia and the Islamic World, and Curator of Islamic Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit



Asia in Aragón: Patronage of the Rug Industry in Early Modern Spain
By the 13th century, Muslim women in the Southeastern villages of al-Andalus were weaving carpets that were of sufficient quality to be appreciated by Castilian royalty. By the 15th century, they were making carpets in sufficient quantity to be exported to all of the major Iberian cities and throughout the Mediterranean. Dr. Heather Ecker explored various historical approaches that help to uncover both the economically and aesthetically important early modern industry of Spanish carpet weaving.

Carpet made for María de Castilla, Queen of Aragón (detail). Probably Letur, Murcia, Spain ca.1416-58. Wool pile on a wool foundation 502 x 238 cm Hispanic Society of America, New York, H328

The Gallery | VCUQatar

Selected 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 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.



March 19 – April 19, 2008
Tawasel/Continuity: Contemporary Artists from Sudan comprised the works of Muhammad Omar Khalil, Mahmoud Mohamed Farah, Rashid Diab, Ahmed Abdel Aal and Islam Kamil – artists of different ages, working in different media, who have lived in the Sudanese diaspora in North America, Europe and the Middle East for large parts of their lives. The exhibition presented the various ways in which these artists continue to draw inspiration from their Sudanese origins via the colors, forms, stories and memories of their homeland.



September 3 – October 4, 2008
Qatar Now: Talisman–Manar al-Muftah A graphic designer by profession, Manar al-Muftah is a graduate of VCUQatar. Al-Muftah’s work is characterized by the juxtaposition of the expected clear-cut clean appearance of what we conceive as graphic design with the rough, the unpredictable, and the multi-textured. While graphic work is usually machine printed, Manar's letters were hand printed and interwoven with hand collaged elements. But most importantly, the letters in Manar’s work were taken out of their context. They were not part of a meaningful literary text, and stand on their own as letters, creating a new context of meaning that transcends the written word.



February – March 7, 2009
Faces and Letters: Through the Eyes of Collectors in Doha focused on art works created by contemporary artists living or rooted in the Middle East chosen from four collections in Doha, Qatar: Tariq Al-Jaidah, Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani, Osama Abusitta and the Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar Foundation, all of whom have played an integral role in promoting contemporary art by Middle Eastern artists in and out of Qatar.



March 8 – April 15, 2009
Nada Sehnaoui–Rubble A visual artist living and working in Beirut, Nada Sehnaoui created an installation conceived as a space of meditation on the bombardment of Beirut by Israeli warplanes in the summer of 2006. The work comprised 125 stools covered in photographs that the artist took of collapsed buildings in the suburbs of Beirut. The stools were positioned in a grid and provided a quiet space for reflection.



An exhibition curated by Abdulla Al Thani and Jochen Sokoly in cooperation with Al Markhiya Gallery and the Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha

September 9 – October 10, 2009
Qatar Now: Ali Hassan–A Retrospective This retrospective explored the work of the contemporary Qatari artist Ali Hassan, who is today one of the most renowned and active contemporary artists in Qatar with a particular focus in art education. Trained first as a calligrapher, he studied history at Qatar University. As the former chairman of the Youth Creative Art Centre and the Girl's Creativity Art Centre in Doha he plays a highly influential role in the shaping of new generations of students of the visual arts.

Featuring works from as early as the 1980’s until the present, the exhibition looks at the development of his work, which over time has combined both calligraphic and figural forms, often abstracted (perhaps the most prominent feature of Ali Hassan’s calligraphic work is his treatment of the letter “nun”). Ali Hassan’s general style is particularly characterized by the use of strong colors and a mix of materials and collage. However, in his most recent work he has embarked on the sculptural application of calligraphy in both ceramic and installation art.



October 21–November 21, 2009
Transit: Meredith Brice, Stephen Copland, Karee S. Dahl and Colin G. Reaney Transit brings together the works of four Australian visual artists who were formerly resident in the Emirate of Sharjah, UAE. Both artist couples have focused on a common theme in their work: the notion of an itinerant art practice built on responses to shifts and movements in moving through and living within different contexts within the global village. Transit explores gender in the artist-partnership relationship. The female perspective of the transitory life is interpreted through the experience of making traditional craft forms within the context of a supposed domestic, nurturing space.

Meredith Brice's interest lies within the areas of science and technology, specifically nanotechnology and the creation of smart or so-called “intelligent textiles,” while Stephen Copland's works paint a poetic response to the migrant experience and the migratory life. Karee S. Dahl is interested in the “process and material relationships between drawing, painting, sculpture and installation practice” within the context of textiles, while Colin S. Reaney interprets the transitory life through sculptural forms that address such concepts as portability, intransience, accountability and property.

Project: I am Color

Project by VCUQatar Art Foundation students.
Photographer: Markus Elblaus

In 2007, my students did a project on the subject of water. This project was in response to the theme — *Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture* — for that year’s Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, held at VCUQatar in November of that year.

Last spring when the new Museum of Islamic Art opened in Doha, I talked with Dr. Sheila Blair and Dr. Jonathan Bloom, organizers of the symposium, about having the freshmen students work on another project related to the 2009 symposium theme — *And Diverse Are Their Hues: Color in Islamic Art and Culture*. We agreed to go ahead with another photo project and to call this project: “I Am Color/Portrait.”

For this project, names of colors were randomly drawn by the students. The work involved researching the selected color in terms of different cultural contexts and psychology. Through their research, the students were to become the particular color they had selected or they were to have a model become that color under their direction.

Each student followed specific criteria to present their final portrait:

- 1. The selected color was applied to the face using special theatrical face paints that added an element of excitement to the portraits.
- 2. Backdrops were used to add texture, volume and dimension; drapes or garments were used to give meaning and context to the finished portrait.
- 3. Props, such as hats or headdresses, were added to the portrait.

The day of the photo shoot was an exciting one for the students. The entire class participated as stylists for each other, a wonderful group effort. We would like to extend our thanks to Markus Elblaus, VCUQatar university photographer and to the VCUQatar Image Resource Library for providing visual documentation for this project.

Kathleen Ferguson-Huntington
Assistant Professor
Art Foundation
VCUQatar



Green/Nature. Student: Anbreen Qaisar.



Red/Anger. Student: Maryam Al Khalifa.



Orange/Youth Passing Away. Student: Zlatan Pejdash.



Yellow/Life. Student: Erin Gibson.



White/Purity. Student: Marion Sanguesa.

Córdoba, Center of Islamic Art and Culture

In 206 BCE the Romans conquered a Carthaginian settlement on the north bank of the Guadalquivir River. Recognizing its strategic and commercial importance, they made Corduba the capital of the province of Hispania Ulterior Baetica, and it flourished for centuries until the Barbarian invasions, when it fell to the Visigoths in 572 CE. The town fell to Muslim conquerors from North Africa in 711, who made it the center of Muslim administration for the Iberian Peninsula. In 756, prince Abd al-Rahman I, the sole surviving member of the Umayyad dynasty of Damascus, escaped from Syria and established his family in Qurtuba, laying the foundations for several centuries of glory and prosperity. He began construction of the Great Mosque (La Mezquita) in 786, on the site of a Roman temple and a Visigothic church, employing a unique system of two-tiered horseshoe-shaped arches made of alternating brick and stone that would come to characterize much Islamic architecture in the region. The mosque was expanded by Abd al-Rahman's successors, most notably al-Hakam II, who added the southernmost extension including the magnificent mihrab with carved marble and mosaic work in 961–66. Although the Umayyads' palace had been adjacent to the mosque, in 936, after he assumed the title of caliph, Abd al-Rahman III began the enormous palace complex of Madinat al-Zahra several kilometers to the west of the city. In the 10th century the city was the greatest in western Europe, with more than a quarter million Muslims, Christians and Jews, over 300 mosques, churches, synagogues, palaces, baths, public buildings, and a library containing 400,000 volumes. Renowned for its artistic and intellectual life, it was rivaled only by Constantinople and Baghdad.

The Caliphate of Córdoba suddenly imploded after the bitter civil war of 1009–31, and Madinat al-Zahra was looted and destroyed. With the arrival of the Almoravid and Almohad dynasties from North Africa in the 11th and 12th centuries, Córdoba regained some of its former glory, producing such great philosophers as Averroes (Abu Walid-ibn Rushd) and Maimonides (Musa ibn Maymun). In 1236 the city was taken by Ferdinand III of Castile and the mosque consecrated as a cathedral for Christian worship. In the 14th century the Capilla Real was constructed in an Islamicizing style and in the 15th century the totally Gothic Capilla Mayor was inserted into the former mosque's prayer hall. Córdoba lost much of its political and intellectual importance in the following centuries, although it maintained a commercial role. In 1984, the historic city center was inscribed by UNESCO on the World Heritage List.



Letter from the Coordinator



Coordinating this symposium has been both challenging and fun. This might be expected when the team that has worked so hard over the last two years to bring this event to fruition includes individuals in the United States, Spain and Qatar – among them, graphic and web designers, public relations experts, financial and budget specialists, event planners, audio-visual technicians, restaurant owners, university administrators... like the speakers and the fellows, the behind-the-scenes team is a diverse and talented group, and I am grateful for having benefited from their wisdom, energy and hard work.

One person should be singled out first: the internationally known calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya, who has again designed the beautiful, eye-catching logo that we have been lucky to use for this Symposium. At VCUarts, Art Director and Graphic Designer Teresa Engle Ilnicki created all of our visual materials (including the book you now hold in your hands); Andrew Ilnicki designed and managed our website; VCUarts Director of Communications Dawn Waters was indispensable in all matters, not only those related to publicity; Kim Seagraves, always calm and organized amidst occasional chaos, managed the “backbone” of our work, ensuring that all forms and procedures were followed, especially in regard to travel; and Mary Lou Kastelberg and Melyatta Powers had the thankless job of tracking invoices and contracts in differing currencies. Throughout, Dean Richard Toscan and Associate Dean Nancy Scott were integral in guiding all matters large and small, and in providing the necessary support and resources for this event. In addition, I thank Joe DiMiceli, VCUarts Computer Center director; Karen Balmer, assistant to the Board of Visitors; Daniel Grenier, computer technician, Jessica Sumpter, external relations and events coordinator, and Shawn Cordle at Covington Travel for her work on the symposium.

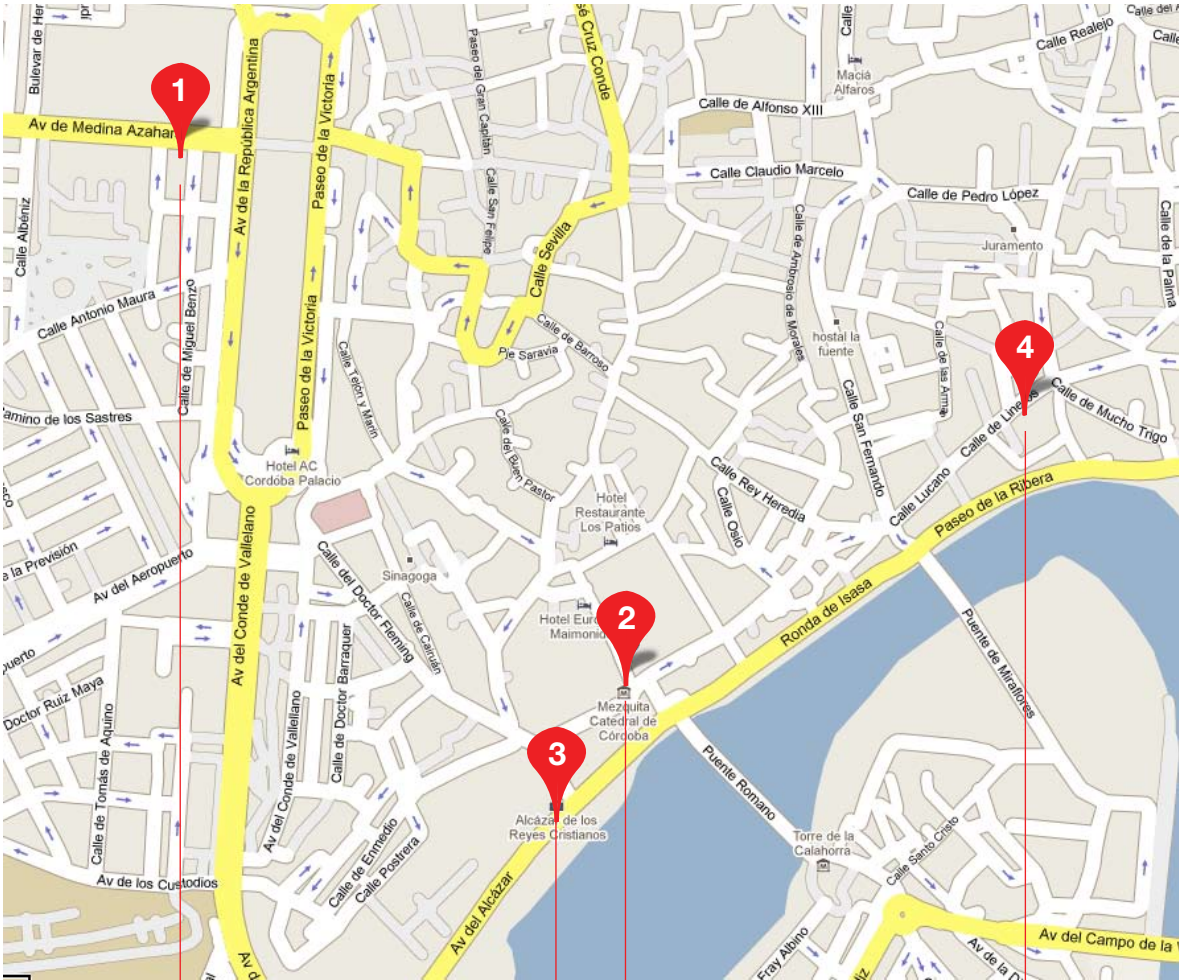
At VCUQatar, Chief Administration Officer Bill McGee was a force of nature, whose decisiveness was of special benefit to us all. Events Coordinator Donna Duffett brought her special touch to the Symposium, ensuring that everything from the symposium bags to the lunches, dinners and receptions were unique and unforgettable. The Dean of VCUQatar, Allyson Vanstone, was a constant help and guide. In addition, I thank Margarita Zuniga, Dean’s office administrator, for her help in arranging travel, and Brian Harris and Lulwa Mohammed for ensuring that all bills were paid on time.

It is still unclear who of this group deserves full credit for the idea of holding *And Diverse Are Their Hues* in Córdoba. Once the decision was made, we all were fortunate to have such strong allies in the city that helped to produce the event – namely, Isabel-Reyes González Roncero, vice chancellor for International Relations and Cooperation at the University of Córdoba, Manuel Torres Aguilar, and José Manuel Villalba Montoro. Antonio Osuna at PIC was our event-planning wizard, managing many of the most mundane details with constant good humor. In addition, I thank the staffs of the Hospes Palacio Bailío, the Amistad Hotel and Al Margen for their work.

Finally, a special note of thanks to the Co-chairs, Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, who again chose a wonderfully provocative topic and roster of speakers, who were a pleasure to work with, and who in many ways *are* the Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art. It is they who have made this symposium the special event that it is. I hope you enjoy yourself at *And Diverse Are Their Hues*, and that we see you at future symposia!

Warmly,

Marisa Angell Brown
Symposium Coordinator



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*Opening Ceremony and
Keynote Address, November 2*

2. Palacio Congressos
Calle Torrijos 10
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*Conference sessions,
November 3 & 4*

3. Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos
Plaza Santo de los Martires
Closing Reception, November 4

4. Bodegas Campos
Restaurant
Calle de los Lineros 32
Tel +34 957.497.500