



FROM THE PRESIDENT

HIAA President, Kishwar Rizvi, shares news about the organization as well as upcoming initiatives and events.

Dear Colleagues,

Happy Fall, I hope the new academic year is off to a good start. While we all remain cautious in our daily lives and still have restrictions to meeting in person, we can be proud of the many ways that we have collectively come together to teach, to curate, and to learn from each other.

It has been a busy summer for the HIAA Board, working with a new website developer to bring better functionality to our membership portal and make it easier for the webmaster to add content in a timely manner. We launched the new website on October 7, 2021, which can be found here.

The Board has determined that it is time to revisit the Articles of Association, which were last amended in 2006. We have found that they are unclear on several procedural matters, including social media protocols, the issuing of statements, and so forth. We have also determined the need for a Mission Statement that clarifies our values as an international organization working at the nexus of art, history, and culture. We will be reaching out to you, the members, in the coming months for your input and help as we move to update the Articles and best represent the interests and values of our community. (continues on page 2).

About HIAA

The Historians of Islamic Art Association (HIAA) is a private, non-profit, non-political organization whose purpose is to promote the study and teaching of the art, architecture and archaeology of Islamic cultures and to facilitate communication and cooperation among those engaged in scholarly and other professional activities related to these fields.

Join or renew your membership here.

Current HIAA Board

- Kishwar Rizvi, President
Sussan Babaei, Past President
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Fatima Quraishi, Secretary
Sinem Casale, Webmaster and News Editor
Ashely Dimmig, H-ISLAMART Editor
Hala Auji, International Representative
Matt Saba, Social Media Manager
Courtney Lesoon, Graduate Student Representative

Submissions

(Winter 2022 issue) Share your news here.

Acknowledgements

HIAA thanks Hala Auji, Sinem Casale, Bihter Esener, Christiane Gruber, Fatima Quraishi, Simon Rettig, Kishwar Rizvi, and Matt Saba for their work on this issue.

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Membership Drive 2021

Our ongoing membership drive is a huge success. At last count, we are at 634 members, a record high. Many of our new members are students, which bodes well for the future of the organization. Recognizing that the pandemic is far from over and the hardships that many are still faced with, we will extend **free membership** to students who are unable to pay. As ever, we welcome those who are able, to **join** as usual and also consider becoming sustainable members. We also invite members to **donate** to HIAA, so that we may continue supporting junior scholars through travel and publication grants.

2021 HIAA Awards

We are delighted to announce two winners for the *Summer 2021* cycle of the **Grabar Travel Grant**.

- **Yeliz Teber**, Oxford University, to present a paper titled "Muslim Heretics in Ottoman Europe during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," at *Radical Religious Communities in Pre-Modern Societies* at the Hussite Museum (Tabor, Czech Republic).
- **Sarah Slingsluff**, University of Edinburgh, to present a paper entitled, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Andalusi Cultural Heritage Sites in the Southwest Meseta," at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association (Montreal, Canada).

With our thanks to the selection committee of Matthew Saba, MIT (Chair), Lamia Balafrej, UCLA, and Sylvia Houghteling, Bryn Mawr College.

Upcoming HIAA Events

The **HIAA Majlis at CAA 2022** will feature talks by:

- **Srinanda Ganguly**, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, "Gender and Patronage at the Tombs of Khusrau Bagh, Allahabad."
- **Sylvia Houghteling**, Bryn Mawr College, "Figures Rendered in Dyes: Representations of Race on Golconda's Painted Cotton Textiles."
- **Atri Hatef Naiemi**, University of Victoria, "In Search of Blessing: The Veneration of the Tomb of Ghazan Khan from the Ilkhanid Period to the Present."
- **Meredyth Winter**, Colgate University, "Mixed Messages' Mapping Class and Ethnicity within the Medieval Mosques of Qazwin."

- **Sylvia Wu**, University of Chicago, "Domes and Minarets: The Self-Destructive Portrayal of China's Recent Mosques."

With our thanks to the selection committee of Fatima Quraishi, UC Riverside (Chair), Mirjam Shatanawi, Reinwardt Academy/Amsterdam University of the Arts, and Heghnar Watenpaugh, UC Davis.

The **HIAA-sponsored panel at CAA 2022**, "The Racialized Figure in Islamic Art & Culture," is organized by Holley Ledbetter, University of Michigan (chair).

It will include the following papers and participants:

- **Sascha Crasnow**, University of Michigan, "Can the Master's Tools be Remade?: Nour Ballout's Queer Muslim Archive."
- **Negar Habibi**, University of Geneva, "Moon-Faced Idols and Slim-Waisted Women: Racialized Gender in Safavid Painting."
- **Holley Ledbetter**, University of Michigan, "Making Race Visible: Racialized Automata at the Fatimid Court."
- **Mira Xenia Schwerda**, University of Edinburgh, "Ma'sumah Nizam Mafi and Her Unnamed Ladies-in-Waiting: Photography and the Politics of Race in Qajar Iran."
- **Christiane Gruber**, University of Michigan (discussant)

With our thanks to the selection committee of Ashley Dimmig, Walters Art Museum (Chair), Abbey Stockstill, Southern Methodist University, and Ladan Akbarnia, San Diego Museum of Art.

2021 HIAA Elections

Mark your calendars for the HIAA Elections, which will take place on **November 7, 2021**. We will be electing three new Board members, to the positions of President-elect, Webmaster, and Social Media Manager. We encourage members to send nominations and self-nominations. *Please send your suggestions to the HIAA Secretary: sec.hiaa@gmail.com.*

Finally, please look out for initiatives for graduate students in the coming year, including an upcoming dissertation writing workshop.

Wishing you all the best,

Kishwar Rizvi, President
presidentislamicarthistory@gmail.com

INTERVIEW: A CONVERSATION WITH GÜLRU NECİPOĞLU

HIAA Board Member Simon Rettig recently sat for an interview with Gülrü Necipoğlu, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art and Director of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University. Prof. Necipoğlu discussed the state of the field of Islamic art and the evolutions she noticed over the past decades.

Simon Rettig [SR]: You have been teaching at Harvard University since 1986 first as an assistant professor and after 1993 as the Aga Khan Professor. How would you say the field of history of Islamic art has changed and evolved since then?

Gülrü Necipoğlu [GN]: It changed a lot, as it has grown in terms of individuals and institutions, with innumerable publications difficult to keep up with. When I was a graduate student, there were only four or five professors in the field and very few graduate students, to the point that we all knew each other! Whereas now it is a real field with an extended network of professors and students, which, I consider very healthy. At the time, Islamic art history was also a purely medieval field. I remember our coursework at Harvard, the latest material that was dealt with was the eleventh century, the last monument Oleg Grabar was concluding his survey course with was the Friday Mosque in Isfahan! In the 1980s, the Mongol and the Timurid periods became sort of the growth field. Currently, the early modern era has become the “new normal,” with modern and contemporary increasingly popular. Barely any student applies to study the medieval period anymore. I am now worried we overdid the extension!

SR: What about architecture? And the field of Middle Eastern studies?

GN: A similar pattern can be observed in both. When I was a graduate student, the focus was on architecture and urban history. That changed completely with the increasing difficulty of travel. Also, because archaeology which was taught in the Art History departments is now separate; it has become a field on its own with some important repercussions: The questions archaeologists ask are less art historical, as they have their own methodological tools and conceptual approaches. Simultaneously, schools of Architecture always used to have an art and architecture

history survey throughout the year. When I started teaching, I was regularly invited to lecture on the Hagia Sophia and Sinan at the Graduate School of Design. Then, this stopped. Disciplines have become more segregated in a way. As for Middle Eastern Studies, I have observed lately a pattern comparable to that of Art History, at least at Harvard University. Students want to study not even the early modern period but mostly the modern and contemporary. There seems to be a disinterest in periods before 1500.

SR: You trained dozens of students, many of whom are now professors at other universities in the US and abroad. Did your teaching evolve?

GN: It is wonderful to have had all these students over the years. Each of them focused on different subjects; I am amazed at the range! In my teaching, I have always stressed the importance of making the field relevant to non-specialists, especially because we have seminars only with a handful of students specializing in Islamic art history at Harvard. I have generally stressed intercultural relations, sources and processes of art making, the agency of artisans, and aesthetic concepts in my teaching. Very early on, I also initiated a seminar for graduate students called “Critical Approaches to Islamic Art.” That was the time when postcolonial studies developed at Columbia University (where I was a post-doc) with Edward Said, so the seminar was very much a critique of orientalist approaches in our field, with a deconstructionist perspective. It seems to me that, at present, this is rather common knowledge. Perhaps it is now the time to construct new approaches than criticize old ones, which students in the future will deconstruct. Another important and recent development concerns the historiography of the field, which we never studied when I was a graduate student with Oleg Grabar.

SR: Have you noticed any evolution in terms of profile, interests?

GN: The field has become increasingly specialized. A recent trend or interest is the transregional movements of objects. But not everything moves! Perhaps, this is a reason why architecture is less popular these days. Architecture, calligraphy, and manuscript painting were always considered among the “highest” forms of art in our field, whereas objects and material culture fell into the category of “crafts.” Nowadays, materiality is “in.” The growing focus on material culture fosters anthropological approaches and seems to be a generational reaction against “high arts.” Art history in the classical sense is perceived as

somewhat “elitist,” with the vernacular and humble attracting increasing attention.

Challenging the canon and expanding the range of subjects is certainly a positive development, of which I consider myself a part. Yet coming from an older generation, I believe the study of “masterpieces” is still important, if not fundamental. These are the works that in all fields – not only Islamic art – represent a very special development within mass production. Ignoring these works will only reinforce the prejudiced orientalist view that Islamic art is merely craft since there is no concept of “art.” Our field is still very young and even the most well-known works have yet to be further investigated in greater depth. If you look at my own scholarship, the Topkapı Palace or monuments of Sinan are famous buildings. But I chose to study them on purpose because there was so much available and underused documentation, which allowed me to develop deeper analyses by building upon accumulated studies, instead of starting from scratch. In my view, what the field of Islamic art history needs is a balance between different directions of research, old and new. Let’s not assume that works that have entered the Pelican History of Art and Architecture have been fully exhausted.

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SR: *Your teaching and scholarship aside, what do you feel is one of your most rewarding accomplishments?*

GN: I think it is being the editor of *Muqarnas*. The journal does not only “influence” directions in the field, but also helps young scholars and students to publish their innovative work. *Muqarnas* was apparently a gift from His Highness the Aga Khan to Oleg Grabar and when the latter retired, I had to struggle for the continuation of the journal. As there was no more additional funding, it had to be incorporated into our endowed funds. It was my wish to keep Oleg Grabar’s legacy alive because he valued



Photograph of Prof. Gülru Necipoğlu

Muqarnas very much, and rightly so. It is not only about educating the next generations of students and making our field more visible, but also about leaving a permanent record of its evolution over time.

SR: *You were one of the first female professors in the Art History Department at Harvard University. Did it impact your teaching?*

GN: That is true, when I was a graduate student there were no tenured women professors in the art history department! Yet the vast majority of students was female. So we all signed a petition in the early 1980s with the following question: if all our professors are men, what does that mean about our future chances for a job opportunity in the faculties of art history departments? This was an eye opener to me; to tell you the truth, I had taken it for granted initially. It impacted my teaching in terms of addressing gender issues, which of course have been central to our field also because of the debated position of women in Islam.

SR: *Do you have any advice for current or prospective students who embark in Islamic art history and think of embracing a career in it?*

GN: Have a passion for the object of your study and study it well! Don't try to surf on popular approaches or seemingly trendy topics. Having been around for quite some time, I have observed many shifts in approach and methodology, trends can fall out of fashion quite rapidly. What you choose to study will remain and bring its own methodology. Often, students ask first "What is the latest theoretical current?" and then they will select a relevant object or subject. I suggest: Do it the other way! Start with what you feel passionate about and then select the relevant method. Oleg Grabar once told me: "When you give a lecture, your audience must be totally mesmerized by what you are showing on the screen." You need a captivating "sexy" object or objects to begin with. I think the ideal would be to both pose big questions and interpret fascinating artifacts. This will make others realize that ours is an important field that can no longer be ignored. This is a bigger mission for our still young field: to make it relevant in all respects!

Therefore, there is a positive message here for students. They don't need to find or unearth something nobody heard about. Well-known works and groups of artifacts need to be studied in greater depth, combining theoretical sophistication with formal analysis. And do not forget the medieval and premodern historical subjects, the traditional "classics" of the field. Of course, the "classic" is neither stable nor static... Finally, we must show how important art history and material culture are for other disciplines. Our students are the future art historians. We and they cannot leave Islamic art history to social historians, just as we cannot leave archaeology to archaeologists.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon Rettig is Associate Curator for the Arts of the Islamic World at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art (Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery). A specialist of the Persian arts of the book, he received his doctorate from the University of Aix-Marseille I under Prof. Yves Porter's supervision. Rettig is also the current Treasurer of HIAA.

HIAA 2021 BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM REPORT: REGIME CHANGE

Bihter Esener (Koç University) and Christiane Gruber (University of Michigan) share their account of this year's exceptional symposium, which took place entirely on Zoom.

The seventh HIAA Biennial Symposium, which was originally planned to meet in-person in October 2020, was postponed to April 2021 due to the outbreak of the COVID pandemic. While the world was shifting to online meetings, we also faced the difficult decision to transform the symposium into an online event—the first ever in the history of HIAA symposia. On the one hand, hosting the symposium remotely proved a logistical challenge in terms of accommodating different time zones, facilitating social and intellectual interactions, and managing technical issues. On the other hand, the online meeting presented us a new perspective and opportunity to reach a wide audience and bring scholars and students of Islamic art together virtually. More than 450 individuals from around the world registered and attended: besides America, Europe, and the SWANA (South West Asia and North Africa) region, participants beamed in from Brazil, Bangladesh, Taiwan, China and Australia, among others (fig. 1).

Our symposium committee members **Anneka Lenssen (UC-Berkeley)**, **Michael Chagnon (Aga Khan Museum)**, and **Alain George (Oxford University)** conceptualized this event with a number of questions and

goals in mind. First, we wished to call attention to the regimes of thought and inquiry that structure our own field, creating strata of scholarly practices and presumptions that needed exhuming and revisiting. We also asked colleagues to raise questions of method and interpretation in order to spotlight the promises and pitfalls—the blind spots and even erasures—that result from creating new frameworks and approaches to core questions about objects, materials, and ideas in the field of Islamic art. In our online agora, we came together to reflect on how we write histories of Islamic art, architecture, and visual culture, and in the service of what interests and for whom. Today more than ever, it appears that we are turning from sub-field insularity to a more global commons by leveraging the tools of integrated technologies while concurrently breaching through geographic, thematic, and conceptual borders.

The four-day symposium included eleven panels as well as a distinguished lecture sponsored by the University of Michigan's (UM) Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum (DISC), an Archnet information session spearheaded by our MIT colleagues, and a lecture in honor of Esin Atıl delivered by Shreve Simpson. The symposium's DISC distinguished keynote speaker, Stefan Weber, explored how museums can present the mobility of humans and objects as well as counter Islamophobic rhetoric by reminding us to stay focused on the positive, especially as we reach out to new audiences to ask them to reach into their own lived experiences (fig. 2). Thereafter, the symposium's opening panel, **Communicating Art History**, complemented Weber's presentation by discussing the growth and directions of the field, how scholars can engage with non-specialist public audiences (including those active online), and how much more needs to be accomplished.

Moving forward, the panel on **Craft and its Potentials** demonstrated how the reconceptualization of the histories of craft production and consumption can present new narratives when they are approached from below, rather than top-down or palace-out. For its part, **The Labour of Names** panel explored the meanings of inscribing signatures in relation to artistic production, labor, and patronage. As a heuristic device, the signature per se invites a regime change in our notional

HIAA Biennial Symposium 2021



Figure 1. Map showing the range of global participation in this year's online symposium.

approaches to the concept of the individual itself. Re-engaging the Qur'an, scholars who presented papers on the panel **Looking at the Margins** invited us to re-engage with the holy text as a material object that shifts along with practices of orality and prayer, forced displacement, and the transference of ownership. In **New Regimes of Perception in Early Modern Iran**, panelists focused on Safavid Isfahan in particular in order to explore how regimes of being and acting are not only material and visual but also sonorous, olfactory, and filled with flavor. Moving outward from the SWANA region, the panels on **Islamic South Asia** and **Sub-Saharan Africa** burst through the traditional geographic boundaries of Islamic art, architecture and archaeology to uncover a variety of cultural practices, material cultures, contact zones, and human networks of exchange in Islamic contexts. Finally, the **Fragments, Relics, Rubble, & Memory** panel focused on objects along with their historical memories and political shifts in their sociocultural, spatial, and temporal contexts, while the panel on **Regime Changes in Technologies and Media** addressed the impact of photography and new printing techniques over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The symposium's digital shift, the Zoom meeting, and the chat box features also presented a regime change in terms of intellectual and social interaction. We both knew that we would miss navigating in the same physical space



Figure 2. Screen grab from Stefan Weber's keynote lecture.



Figure 3. Screen grab showing symposium participants.

by exchanging ideas and sharing conversations over meals and drinks. And yet, we were thrilled to find that some of these "lost" informal spaces of interaction emerged in the Zoom chat box, where we witnessed lively discussions as well as the emergence of potential collaborations. Instead of a webinar, the Zoom meeting format also allowed optimal openness, inclusivity, and interactivity—a checkerboard of togetherness of sorts (fig. 3).

Once again, we wish to offer our renewed thanks to the HIAA board, symposium committee, UM's History of Art Department and Technology Services, and scholars and students of Islamic art from around the world. We look forward to seeing you—in person, we hope!—at the next HIAA Biennial Symposium in Houston, Texas. In the meanwhile, please stay tuned for more information as we hope to place the symposium's lecture recordings online in the not-to-distant future.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bihter Esener is a Ph.D. candidate in History of Art at Koç University, Istanbul, and a research assistant in the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is one of the founding members and the Digital Technologies Coordinator of *Khamseen: Islamic Art History Online*. Her dissertation aims to contextualize Seljuk-period bronze mirrors within the lives of the inhabitants of medieval Anatolia. Her research has been supported by a variety of institutions, including the American Research Institute in Turkey's George Hanfmann Fellowship, SOAS-Getty Medieval Research Project, and Koç University's Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for Late Antique and Byzantine Studies.

Christiane Gruber is Professor and Chair in the History of Art Department at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and Founding Director of *Khamseen: Islamic Art History Online*. Her fields of interest include Islamic ascension texts and images, depictions of the Prophet Muhammad, book arts, codicology, and paleography, architecture, and visual and material culture from the medieval period to today. Her most recent publications include her third monograph *The Praiseworthy One: The Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Texts and Images* and her edited volume *The Image Debate: Figural Representation in Islam and Across the World*, both published in 2019.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

How can new digital practices provide us with the tools through which to meaningfully bring together studies of space and knowledge production in Islamic art history? In her work on the early Islamic city, Courtney Lesoon, a PhD candidate at MIT, demonstrates how digital platforms allow researchers to analyze historical data in innovative ways.

In my dissertation, titled “Spatializing Ahl al-‘Ilm: Learning and the Rise of the Early Islamic City (632–1067 CE),” I hypothesize that early Islamic learning was a generative force of urbanism. It anchored people’s lives inside of cities and contributed to other social exchanges that have been identified as important drivers of urbanism such as religious life, bureaucracy, trade, and extra-familial kinship. I argue that, before the wide adoption of the madrasa system in the eleventh century, learning in the central Islamic lands was conducted in four types of spaces inside the Islamic city: religious, commercial, government-sponsored, and residential spaces. My dissertation posits that pre-madrasa learning constituted a system and that this system can best be understood in spatial terms.

In order to understand how—and exactly where—learning was taking place inside the early Islamic city, I knew I had to consult a wide range of primary sources including prosopographical literature (biographical dictionaries), *hadith*, writings on the “merits of places” (*fadaʿil*), chronicles, geographical literature, anthologies of poetry, and anthologies of comportment (*adab*). To help navigate through this breadth of primary sources, I have organized my chapters geographically, treating Damascus as a case study of early Islamic learning in “religious spaces” (Ch. 1), Baghdad as a case study of early Islamic learning in “government-sponsored spaces” (Ch. 2), and Cairo as a case study of early Islamic learning in commercial spaces (Ch. 3). For my fourth chapter on “learning in residential spaces,” I plan to employ evidence from all three cities.

Most Arabic texts from this period are not only available in critical edition but are also digitized and available online. This allows my research to be conducted anywhere (an unexpected relief as the pandemic drags on). Although there are several desktop applications, such as Shamela and Jedli, that can be used to execute simple searches on primary texts, most of these programs only run on Windows operating systems. They also have very limited functionality.

The gold standard in digitized Arabic manuscripts, I discovered, is the Open Islamic Texts Initiative (OpenITI),

“a multi-institutional effort to construct the first machine-actionable scholarly corpus of premodern Islamicate texts.” The team at OpenITI has uploaded thousands of volumes of classical Arabic texts onto the website GitHub as “markdown” files (at the time of this newsletter the corpus included 10,243 titles). GitHub is a web-based repository where programmers can store large files of computer code and edit them collaboratively. Markdown files (.markdown) are essentially plain text files (.txt) with inserted code. The extra code that the OpenITI team has inserted into these files includes bibliographic information (author, title, editor, publisher, year, etc.), page numbers, and even paragraph markers! These markdown files though are not immediately searchable on GitHub. To search through these texts, one must download them onto a computer and deal with them offline.

In order to understand how—and exactly where—learning was taking place inside the early Islamic city, I knew I had to consult a wide range of primary sources [...] I wanted to be able to search through my primary sources for particular words, especially place names and the names of scholars. I also wanted to control exactly which texts (and which critical editions of those texts) I was searching through.

I wanted to be able to search through my primary sources for particular words, especially place names and the names of scholars. I also wanted to control exactly which texts (and which critical editions of those texts) I was searching through. Most importantly though, I needed to keep track of bibliographic information as I read and took notes. To do this, I needed my own code. As I did not know how to code and certainly didn’t have time to learn, I decided to hire a programmer. The goal was to develop a script in Python (the most easily accessible and easily applicable computer language for my purposes) that could succinctly search through various texts and render focused results that could be easily read, organized, and cited.

The script in its current iteration searches for a term (a single word or phrase) across multiple texts at once (whichever texts I drop into in the selected folder). It then renders a spreadsheet (.csv file) of the results. Each appearance of the search term populates its own row in

the spreadsheet. The first several columns of each row provides bibliographic information, including author, title, editor, publication information, page number, and paragraph number. The full text of the paragraph where the search term appears populates the last column of each row.

Organizing my chapters by city—Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo—allows me to limit my search terms and limit my searchable texts. For example, instead of searching “masjid” across all available texts, I can run the search only on texts written by scholars who lived in Damascus before the thirteenth century. These kinds of searches are especially useful for biographical dictionaries. By being able to cross-reference data points found in biographical dictionaries with data points sourced from other textual genres, a narrative of learning inside the Islamic city has begun to emerge.

```

19 with open('data.pkl', 'rb') as file:
20     books = pickle.load(file)
21     output = {}
22     for book in books:
23         dic = book.get_paragraphs()
24         for key, value in zip(dic.keys(), dic.values()):
25             if 'رواق' in value:
26                 # print(book.get_metadata()['BookURI'], book.get_author(), key)
27                 # print(book.get_text(key))
28                 output[book.get_name()] = [book.get_metadata()['AuthorNAME'], book.
29

```

Screenshot of code used to execute searches on primary source material (search term “riwaq”). Written in Python by Sami R. Amer, May 2021.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Courtney Lesoon is a PhD candidate in the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture in the History, Theory & Criticism Section of the Department of Architecture at MIT. Her current dissertation project is titled “Spatializing Ahl al-‘Ilm: Learning and the Rise of the Early Islamic City 632–1067 CE.” She was recently awarded HIAA’s Margaret B. Ševčenko Prize for the best unpublished essay written by a junior scholar for her paper “The Sphero-conical as Apothecary Vessel: An Argument for Dedicated Use.” Lesoon is also the current HIAA Graduate Student Representative.

Updates under Member News, Recent Publications, Exhibitions Curated, and Dissertations Completed were submitted by their respective authors for inclusion in this year's newsletter.

If you want us to include details about your accomplishments in the newsletter's Winter 2022 issue, please fill out [this form](#).

Entries in "Member News" have been edited for clarity and brevity according to the newsletter's design guidelines.

MEMBER NEWS

Read about new appointments, awards, and other achievements by some of our members for the years 2020-2021.

Leila Alhagh received the Willem Snoek Conservation Award, Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, The University of Melbourne APR-Intern, State Library of Victoria.

Iñigo Almela received an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Postdoctoral fellowship at the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin (May 2021 - April 2023).

Hala Auji was granted tenure and promoted to the rank of associate professor at the American University of Beirut; she was also named a 2021-22 EUME Fellow at the Forum Transregionale Studien, Berlin.

Olga Bush was awarded the Leste K. Little Residency in Medieval Studies at the American Academy in Rome

(fall 2021) for her project "Animals and Ethics: Interspecies Relations in the Built Environments of Medieval Mediterranean Courts" related to her new monograph in progress.

Olivia Clemens received the Jane and Morgan Whitney Fellowship, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2021-22).

Jaimee Comstock-Skipp received a PhD Research Grant Fellowship from the Orient Institut Istanbul (July-December 2020); and an Erasmus+ Fellowship from the Al-Beruni Institute for Oriental Studies, Tashkent, Uzbekistan (spring-summer 2020).

Chanchal Dadlani was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship (2021-22) for her book on artistic and intellectual exchanges between France and India in the eighteenth century.

Bihter Esener received the SOAS-Getty Research Grant, Medieval Eastern Mediterranean Cities as Places of Artistic Interchange (March-May 2021).

Zahra Faridany-Akhavan launched the video series "Shahnameh Stories." <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsFgBm4UtjZeXRvnuDoCnzg>

Elisabeth Fraser's essay, "Ottoman Costume Album as Mobile Object and Agent of Contact" was awarded the 2021 article prize by the Forum on Early-Modern Empires and Global Interactions (FEEGI).

Andrew Gayed has been appointed as an assistant professor of Art History and Visual Culture at OCAD

University (Ontario College of Art and Design).

Christiane Gruber organized and hosted a field-wide discussion about online resources for the teaching of Islamic art (2020); she also participated in the international K6-12 teacher training webinar "Islam Through Art," part of the series "How to Teach about the Middle East—and Get It Right!," at UNC and UM Title VI centers (2021).

Vivek Gupta was awarded a Bagri Foundation Grant for the exhibition, "Shahzia Sikander: Unbound," at Jesus College, University of Cambridge, 2021-22.

Lydia Harrington was awarded a Boston University Center for the Humanities Graduate Dissertation Fellowship (2020-21).

Renata Holod gave the following lectures: "The Visual and Material Culture of Rayy, as Revealed through the Excavations Headed by Erich Schmidt in the late 1930s" at Harvard University (2021); and "Jerba: Tracking the Impact of the So-Called Justinianic Plague, 560-750 CE" for CEMA (2021).

Yui Kanda began a new position in April 2021 as a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Richard McGregor was named a CAORC Research Fellow at the American Research Center in Cairo.

Leslee Katrina Michelsen has been appointed to the ICOM-US Board of Directors (for a three-year term).

Hoda Nedaeifar has been selected as a participant in the CCL/Mellon

Seminar in Curatorial Practice by the Center of Curatorial Leadership, Summer 2021.

Keelan Overton was named a Getty Scholar, Getty Research Institute in Fall 2020 (deferred).

Fatima Quraishi was named a 2021-22 Fellow at the Society for the Humanities, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

Elizabeth Rauh began a position as assistant professor of Modern Art and Visual Cultures at the Department of Arts, The American University in Cairo (in January 2021). She was also awarded a Postdoctoral Visiting Faculty Fellowship in Modern and Contemporary Art History, Cleveland Institute of Art (2021-22).

Ahmad Sukkar began a position as assistant professor of Islamic Architecture and Art, Cultural Heritage, Urban Conflict, and Modern Design in the Architectural Engineering Department, University of Sharjah (2021-22). Sukkar was also named a "Global Academy Scholar" by the Global Academy, Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA), and he held a 2019-20 Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture Postdoctoral Fellowship (MIT).

Nancy Um's *Indian Ocean Exchanges*, an art history fellowship program, received a Connecting Art Histories grant from the Getty Foundation. <http://indianoceanexchanges.com>

Selin Ünlüönen began a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in Art History at Oberlin College (since fall 2021).

Rachel Winter was awarded a Craft Research Fund Project Grant from the Center for Craft Humanities & Social Sciences Research, University of California, Santa Barbara.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The following articles, books, and book chapters on Islamic Art and Architecture were published between 2020-2021.

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Almela, Iñigo. "La mezquita de al-Manşūr en la Qaşba de Marrakech. Aproximación a su configuración almohade" [The mosque of al-Manşūr in the Qaşba of Marrakech. Approach to its Almohad configuration]. *Arqueología de la Arquitectura* 17 (2020).
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Babayan, Kathryn. *The City as Anthology: Eroticism and Urbanity in*

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—— “Experiments in Eden: Midcentury Artist Voyages into the Mesopotamian Marshlands.” *Shifting Terrains: Art, Environment, and Urbanism in Iraq. Special issue of Journal of Contemporary Iraq & the Arab World*, July 2021

—— “Bridging Identity: Language, Worldmaking, and Iranian-American Publics in the Work of Siah Armajani.” In *Intersections: Visual Cultures of Islamic Cosmopolitanism*, edited by Melia Belli and Saleema Waraich. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2021.

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EXHIBITIONS CURATED

The following exhibitions were curated by HIAA members between 2020-2021.

Alhagh, Leila. *Didar*. Middle Eastern Collection of the University of Melbourne.

Michelsen, Leslee Katrina. *Kamran Samimi: Sanctuaries*. Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Shangri La Museum of Islamic Art, Culture & Design. <https://www.shangriilahawaii.org/visit/exhibitions/kamran-samimi-sanctuaries/>

Mumtaz, Murad. *Tasvir Khana: Practicing Indian Drawing and Painting*. Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA). <https://>

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Rauh, Elizabeth. *Iraq En Route: A Photographic Journey, 1952-1953.* Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research, Cranbrook Institute of Art.

DISSERTATIONS COMPLETED

The following doctoral dissertations in Islamic Art and Architecture were successfully defended between January and June 2021.

Akhtar, Munazzah. "Interrogating the Dead: Re-assessing the Cultural Identities of the Samma Dynasty (1351-1522) at the Necropolis of Makli, Sindh." (University of Victoria, Canada, Marcus Milwright, 2021).

Alhagh, Leila. "Interdisciplinary approaches to the study of distanced Islamic manuscripts: 'Sad Kalamih [Kalima] Shah Vilayat (One Hundred Sayings by Ali): Manzumih [Manzuma] dar Hajj (Futuh al-Haramayn)' – a case study." (The University of Melbourne, Robyn Sloggett, Amir Zekrgoo, and Petronella Nel, 2021).

Corsi, Andrea Luigi. "Early Abbasid Stucco Decoration in Iraq and Iran (c. 750-850): Origin, Diffusion, and Developments. The Unpublished Corpus of Early Abbasid Stucco from the Excavations in the Friday Mosque of Isfahan." ("Sapienza" University of Rome, Maria Vittoria Fontana and Bruno Genito, 2021).

de Ruyter, Mick. "The Fighting Dhow: early modern vernacular watercraft and organised maritime violence in the Persian Gulf." (Flinders University, Wendy van Duivenvoorde, 2021).

Fein, Ariel. "Emiral Patronage: George of Antioch, the Martorana, and the Arab-Christians of Norman Sicily." (Yale University, Robert Nelson, 2021).

Harrington, Lydia. "'Improve and reform them': Vocational Schools and the Modernization of Late Ottoman Baghdad, Damascus, and Beirut." (Boston University, Emine Fetvacı, 2021).

Kanda, Yui. "Persian Verses and Crafts in the Late Timurid and Safavid Periods." (The University of Tokyo, Tomoko Masuya, 2021).

Rabasco García, Víctor. "La arquitectura áulica de las taifas andalusíes. Configuración y evolución de nuevos espacios de poder en el siglo XI mediterráneo." (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Susana Calvo Capilla, 2021).

Terndrup, Alison. "The Sultan's Gaze: Power and Ceremony in the Imperial Portraiture Campaign of Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808 - 1839)." (Boston University, Emine Fetvacı, 2021).

Ünlüönen, Selin. "Pictures as Mirrors for Shah Tahmasp: How Manuscript Painting Shaped Court Culture in Early-Modern Iran." (Yale University, Kishwar Rizvi, 2021).

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Benefits of membership include access to the **Member Directory** and **Newsletters**, as well the opportunity to participate in symposia and workshops sponsored by HIAA, and to compete for travel and research grants. Your generous support helps fund the latter, which have proven essential for junior scholars doing exciting new research in the field.

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The **Margaret B. Ševčenko Prize** in Islamic Art and Culture is accepting articles until **November 15, 2021**. Please send your submission to sevchenko.hiaa@gmail.com.

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The **Grabar Post-Doctoral Fellowship** is accepting applications until **November 15, 2021**. Please send your application to grabar.hiaa@gmail.com.

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HIAA Elections

On **November 7, 2021**, we will be electing three new Board members, to the positions of President-elect, Webmaster, and Social Media Manager. Please send nominations and self-nominations to the HIAA Secretary: sec.hiaa@gmail.com.