Layers of Islamic Art and the Museum Context
Workshop, Berlin, 13–16 January 2010

Chaired by Benoît Junod (Aga Khan Trust for Culture) and Stefan Weber (Museum für Islamische Kunst)

In recent years several museums have reorganized their galleries of Islamic art and developed new approaches towards their aesthetical and contextual presentation. While museums and galleries increasingly become important forums for public interest in Muslim cultures, there has been little discussion on content, categories of order and their new role in the light of modern museology and museum pedagogy. This is true to a certain degree for the contextual research on objects of Islamic art. What are the stories embedded in objects and how can they be told?

These themes are explored in a workshop entitled Layers of Islamic Art and the Museum Context. The workshop will coincide with the projects of re-conventionalizing the Museum for Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin and designing the new museum for the Aga Khan Collection in Toronto. These two projects of international partners shall provide the opportunity to rethink our concepts of Islamic art and its role for the public today.
Wed 13 Jan 2010
Mashatta-Hall, Pergamonmuseum

19:00
Opening
MICHAEL EISENHAUER
Welcome note
WOLF LEPENIES

Keynote lecture*
OLG GRABAR
Collecting and Exhibiting: The Role of the Museum in the Study
and Knowledge of Islamic Art; the Past and the Future
Reception

Thu 14 Jan 2010
Th.-Wiegand-Hall, Pergamonmuseum

10:00—11:30
Introduction
BENOIT JUNOD
The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto
STEFAN WEBER
Plans for the New Museum of Islamic
Art Berlin
CHRISTINE GERBICH
“A painted room with many doors” —
Asking Visitors at the Museum
of Islamic Art Berlin

11:30 Coffee-Break

11:45—13:15
Object and Concept
AVINOAM SHALEM
Multivalent Paradigm of Interpretation
and the Anima of the Object
Responding: ALNOOR MERCHANT and
CHRISTIAN SASSMANSHAUSEN

BESHARA DOUMANI
The Social Life of Things as the
Backbone of New Narratives
GÜLÜNECİPOĞLU
Islamic Art: Concepts and Approaches
Responding: JULIA GONNELLA and
LORENZ KORN

13:15 Lunch

14:30—16:00
EVA TROELENBERG
Islamic Art and the Invention of the
“Masterpiece”
ANNE-CHRISTINE TAYLOR
The Aesthetizing versus Contextualising
Debate and the Musée du Quai Branly
Responding: JENS KRÖGER

16:00 Coffee-Break

16:15—17:45
KJELD VON FOLSACH
Concepts of the New Installation of Islamic
Art in the David Collection, Copenhagen
LADAN AKBARNIA
The Option of ‘Interim’ Reinstallation:
Brooklyn Museum’s Arts of the Islamic
World Galleries
MARY McWILLIAMS
Sub-themes and Over-painting: Exhibiting
Islamic Art in American Art Museums.
Responding: MIRIAM KÜHN

Fri 15 Jan 2010
Th.-Wiegand-Hall, Pergamonmuseum

14:30—16:00
ISLAMIC ART OR MATERIAL CULTURE?
GÜLÜNECİPOĞLU
Islamic Art: Concepts and Approaches
Responding: JULIA GONNELLA and
LORENZ KORN

16:15—17:45
BEHSHARA DOUMANI
The Social Life of Things as the
Backbone of New Narratives
GUDRUN KRÄMER
The Cultural Turn, the Spatial Turn,
and the Writing of Middle Eastern
History
Responding: MUNIR FAKHER ELDIN

Sat 16 Jan 2010
Th.-Wiegand-Hall, Pergamonmuseum

10:00—11:30
Meaning and Audience
NASSER RABBAT
Islamic Art at a Crossroad
Responding: MARTINA MÜLLER-WIENER
and KIRSTEN SCHEID

11:45—13:15
Meaning and Audience
RIEM SPIELHAUS
Islamic Art as a Space of Public Culture
SUSAN KAMEL, CHRISTINE GERBICH,
SUSANNE LANWERD
Do you speak Islamic Art?
A Project on Curating, Museum Studies,
and Audience Development
Responding: VERA BEYER

13:15 Lunch

14:30—16:00
OLIVER WATSON
Doha – and the Acceptance of Other
Audiences
JULIETTE FRITSCH
Islamic Middle East: The Jameel
Gallery: Working from Vision to Reality
Responding: NADYA SBAYTI

16:00 Coffee-Break

16:15—17:45
ANTON D. PRITULA
The Hermitage Concept of Islamic Art: Projects and Plans
IMAN R. ABDULLATTAH
Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo
Revisited
Responding: SEIF AL-RASHIDI