

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

FOURTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215 extension 511

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SYMPOSIUM ON MAMLUK ART CONVENES
AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D.C. May 12, 1981. Twenty distinguished scholars from North America, Europe and the Near East will present papers at a symposium on art of the Mamluk era to be held at the National Gallery of Art from Wednesday, May 13, through Saturday, May 16.

The Mamluks, considered among the greatest patrons of art and architecture in the history of the Islamic world, emerged as one of the major dynasties in Egypt and Syria. They came to power during the thirteenth century and ruled for more than 250 years, during which time artistic activity flourished under their highly energetic patronage.

Co-sponsored by the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery of Art and the National Gallery's Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, the symposium will be held in the National Gallery's East Building auditorium. Henry A. Millon, Dean of the Center for Advanced Study, and Dr. Esin Atil, Associate Curator at the Freer, will give opening remarks.

(Editors' Note: The symposium is not open to the public although press coverage is permitted. Please contact the Gallery's Information Office in advance.)

The symposium coincides with exhibitions of Mamluk art which open at the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery and the National Museum of Natural History this week.

The symposium is supported by grants from the League of Arab Nations and anonymous donors.

(more)

Among the speakers at the symposium will be Oleg Grabar, Harvard University, and Ira Lapidus, University of California at Berkeley, two of the foremost authorities in the field of Islamic studies. They will deliver their remarks at the closing session, Saturday, May 16, from 10 a.m. to noon. Grabar will speak on "Architecture and the Arts," and Lapidus will discuss "The Political, Economic and Social Setting."

The exhibitions opening on May 15 are Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks, a Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service presentation installed in the National Museum of Natural History through July 19, and Art of the Mamluks, a special installation at the Freer Gallery of Art of Mamluk objects from the Freer Gallery's collection which will continue for an indefinite period. Dr. Atil is curator of both exhibitions.

Scholars from several institutions which have loaned objects for the exhibition Renaissance of Islam participating in the symposium are Abd el-Rauf Ali Yusuf, Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo; Marilyn Jenkins and Manuel Keene, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Louise W. Mackie, Royal Ontario Museum; David James, The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin; and J. Michael Rogers, The British Museum, London.

Others who will deliver papers on subjects ranging from art, architecture and city planning to the astronomy, politics and court manners of the period are David Ayalon, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; John Woods, University of Chicago; Karl Stowasser, University of Maryland; André Raymond, University of Provence, Marseille; Laila Ali Ibrahim and George T. Scanlon, American University in Cairo; Michael Meinecke, German Archaeological Institute, Damascus; Donald P. Little and Hayat Salam-Liebich, McGill University, Montreal; David A. King, New York University; J.W. Allan, The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; and Dr. Atil.

(more)

In seven sessions, the program is as follows:

WEDNESDAY, May 13

Opening Remarks 9 - 9:30 a.m.

Henry A. Millon (Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art)
Esin Atil (Freer Gallery of Art)

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Chairman: Ira Lapidus (University of California at Berkeley)

Speakers: David Ayalon (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)--
"From Ayyubids to Mamluks"
John Woods (University of Chicago)--"East-West Relations
in the Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries"
Karl Stowasser (University of Maryland)--"Manners and
Customs at the Mamluk Court"

2 - 5 p.m.

Chairman: Stephen Humphreys (Institute for Advanced Study,
Princeton)

Speakers: André Raymond (University of Provence)--"The Urban
Structure of Cairo in the Fifteenth Century"
Laila Ali Ibrahim (American University in Cairo)--
"Residential Architecture in Mamluk Cairo"
Michael Meinecke (German Archaeological Institute,
Damascus)--"Regional Architectural Schools: Evolution
and Interrelations"

THURSDAY, May 14

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Chairman: Oleg Grabar (Harvard University)

Speakers: Donald P. Little (McGill University)--"Haram Documents
and Mamluk Jerusalem"
Hayat Salam-Liebich (McGill University)--"Patronage in
the Building of a New Mamluk City"
Manuel Keene (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)--
"Developments in Mamluk Geometric Ornament"

2 - 5 p.m.

Chairman: Jere Bacharach (University of Washington)

Speakers: David A. King (New York University)--"Astronomy
of the Mamluks"
J.W. Allan (The Ashmolean Museum)--"Shaban, Barquq, and
the Decline of the Mamluk Metalworking Industry"

(more)

2 - 5 p.m. (continued)

Speakers: Abd el-Rauf Ali Yusuf (Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo)--
"Wooden Vessels of the Mamluk Period"

FRIDAY, May 15

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Chairman: Walter Denny (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)

Speakers: Marilyn Jenkins (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)--
"Mamluk Underglaze-painted Pottery: Whence and Whither?"
George T. Scanlon (American University in Cairo)--
"Fustat Pottery: 'Sgraff' and Slip and What's Left Over"
Louise W. Mackie (Royal Ontario Museum)--"Mamluk Textiles:
National and International Considerations"

2 - 5 p.m.

Chairman: Ulkü Bates (Hunter College)

Speakers: David James (The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin)--
"The Koran of Baybars II"
Esin Atil (Freer Gallery of Art)--"Mamluk Painting in the
Late Fifteenth Century"
J. Michael Rogers (The British Museum)--"Mamluk and Ottoman
Decorative Arts"

SATURDAY, May 16

10 a.m. - noon

Speakers: Ira Lapidus (University of California at Berkeley)--
"The Political, Economic and Social Setting"
Oleg Grabar (Harvard University)--"Architecture and
the Arts"

Closing remarks: Marianna S. Simpson (Center for Advanced Study in
the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art)

END