Dr. Shabout
Office: Art 211
Office Hours: Wednesday 3-4; or by appointment
E-mail: nada.shabout@unt.edu

Course Description:
This course will explore the historical background, thematic elements, and the visual language of the Middle East through the lens of painting.

Required Text:
There is no required textbook for this course. All required reading can be found on blackboard, through web links, or on reserve at the Eagle Commons Library.

On Reserve at Eagle Commons Library:
Nurhan Atasoy, edited and translated by Tulay Artan, Splendors of the Ottoman Sultans.
Mike Barry, Figurative art in medieval Islam and the riddle of Bihzâd of Herât (1465-1535).
Sheila R. Canby, The golden age of Persian art, 1501-1722.
Anna Contadini, ed., Arab painting: text and image in illustrated Arabic manuscripts.
Iftikhar Dadi, Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia.
Layla S. Diba, and Maryam Ekhtiar, eds., Royal Persian paintings: the Qajar epoch, 1785-1925.
Oleg Grabar, Islamic Art and Beyond: Constructing the Study of Islamic Art, Volume III, Ashgate, 2006.
Oleg Grabar, Islamic Visual Culture, 1100-1800.
Oleg Grabar, Mostly Miniature: an Introduction to Persian Painting.
Oleg Grabar, The formation of Islamic art.
Christiane Gruber, Ilkhanid Book of Ascension, The: A Persian-Sunni Devotional Tale. UNT online resources.
Robert Hillenbrant, ed., Persian painting: from the Mongols to the Qajars; studies in honour of Basil W. Robinson.
J.M. Rogers, Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman art from the collection of Nasser D. Khalili.
Nada Shabout, Modern Arab art: formation of Arab Aesthetics.
Som Prakash Verma, Interpreting Mughal painting: essays on art, society, and culture.
Wendy Shaw, *Ottoman painting: reflections of western art from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic*, 2011.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Further develop your critical thinking, speaking, writing and research skills.
2. To develop an understanding of painting in the Middle East through an examination of the artistic practices and traditions present within the region from the Islamic period to the contemporary.
3. To grasp and utilize complex theoretical and methodological topics that informs the academic understanding of painting in the Middle East.

**Course Structure and Evaluation:**

The course is divided into lectures, group presentations, and one major project. Class time will be dedicated to lectures and group presentations. You will be evaluated on your preparedness for each class, regardless if your group is presenting that day. It may be helpful to bring your readings, notes, and questions to class. You will also be evaluated on the organization, thoughtfulness, and resourcefulness of your writing assignments. Every student is also expected to fully participate in the preparation and execution of group presentations and any accompanying written materials.

Check Black Board regularly—at least twice a week—for announcements and syllabus changes. If I email you, please reply within 3 days and I will do the same.

**Grading System:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Component</th>
<th>Weight of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 In-Class Group Presentations and Accompanying Papers</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition Project</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the course, you will complete a variety of assignments and projects that are designed to help you develop your critical thinking, speaking, writing, and research skills. Here are the main components of your course:

**Class Participation and Attendance:** You are expected to complete the assigned readings, as well as attend and participate in each and every class. You are also required to attend 3 out of class lectures or community event—lectures and events are prompted in the course schedule.

In the case of emergency or other university-sanctioned absence, please alert me by email and provide me with proof of absence by the next class time. You are only allowed ONE unexcused absence. More than ONE unexcused absence will result in the lowering your grade a full letter grade.

**3 In-Class Group Presentations and Accompanying Papers:** You will be assigned to one of six groups. Each group is assigned to a series of readings on a specific class day (3 presentations/papers total – refer to course outline). You will work together to create a presentation in order to “teach” the class about the content of your readings – find a common thread and “teach” from that perspective. You might need to do extra research for your topic outside of the assigned reading. You will need to put together a powerpoint with images that illustrate your various points. You will also need to write individually a two-page paper summarizing your readings, discussing how they inform the topic of that
particular class, and suggesting an artwork or two that exemplify that topic. In addition to the papers your group will be responsible with posing a series of discussion questions to the class during your presentation (4-6 questions, turn these in typed with your papers). You are expected to participate in the preparation and presentation of your group assignments. Keep in mind: you will be accountable to your group members through a peer review. **Papers must be formatted in 12-point font with 1” margins**

**Exhibition Project:** You will work with your group to create an exhibition of paintings from a thematic or historical perspective. You will need to include at least 10 works of art in your exhibition and accompanying “wall text.” You will also write a 5 page paper outlining the premise of your exhibition, its major themes, its historical context/s, its included artworks, and its value to the art historical community. Individually each member of the group will write a visual analysis of one, chosen in collaboration, work of art. **Papers must be formatted in 12-point font with 1” margins.** Each group will have one exhibition, one collective paper and 6 individual visual analysis. You will then present your exhibition at the end of the semester. How you chose to organize the exhibition and the presentation is up to you as long as it is coherent and well communicated. Be creative!

**Policy on Quality of Written Work:** Translating visual signs into verbal language is not an easy task. Thus, in the visual and subjective realm of art history, clarity of presented ideas is vital. Therefore, your written work will be evaluated in terms of proper grammar, syntax, and spelling, as well as the clear and logical presentation of ideas and argument. If you make errors in any of these areas consistently, your grade will be lowered.

**Some warnings and guidelines:** If you have problems with your writing, feel free to seek out help from the University Writing Center. The Writing Center is located in Rm 105 of the Auditorium Building. The services are open to all students, free of charge. M-F 8am to 5pm. 565-2563. [www.unt.edu/writinglab/](http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/).

**Papers must be formatted in 12-point font with 1” margins.**

Save all work. That means save soft on your computer and on a back-up of your choice. Also, save hard copies. We will not accept excuses for lost work, printers out of cartridges or computers crash. Always plan for the worst and hope for the best when it comes to your technology. Always save your paper on a disc, and save often!! That way, if you have a problem with a hard drive or printer, you can go immediately to another computer to finish your work. Not all computers are created equal. To guarantee success, use computers in the computer lab in the Art Building and not in your dorm, the library, Student Center, or even your own at home unless you are sure of its capability.

**Attendance Policy:**
You have 1 free absence, use it wisely. Thereafter, each absence will result in lowering your final grade ten points. Discuss any emergencies with me as soon as you can.

**Cheating and Plagiarism Policy:**
Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and violate UNT’s Code of Student Conduct. Any suspected act of dishonesty will result in a grade of “F” in the course. Further, the professor will
write a letter to the Dean of the School of Visual Arts and the Dean of Students, who will pursue disciplinary actions at their discretion. Cheating in this class includes not participating in your group assignments. Each group will have a group leader to ensure participation. It will be the group’s leader responsibility to inform the professor of unproductive members.

You cannot use a paper or project from another class or from this class in another without consulting both professors.

According to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, plagiarism is defined as “the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words or statements of another person as one’s own without acknowledgement” (www.unt.edu/csrr). Copying material from any source without providing a citation (footnote or endnote) is a form of plagiarism. Likewise, if you paraphrase another author’s words or ideas, you must credit that person with a citation. While most incidents of plagiarism at the graduate level are unintentional, it is your responsibility to ensure that you accurately indicate which words and ideas are those of others.

Suspected plagiarized papers and essays will be uploaded and checked on http://www.turnitin.com

**Acceptable Student Behavior:**
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

**American Disabilities Act:**
The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline.

Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at
www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

**Course Risk Factor:**
According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category one course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves and others.

**Center for Students Rights and Responsibilities:**
Each student at UNT is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information.

**Evacuation Plan**
In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teachers and act accordingly.

**A Final Disclaimer:**
*The professors reserve the right to alter this syllabus if and when necessary*

**Course Outline**

1–January 15th – Course Introduction
Review of the Syllabus and introduction to the class

**Group formation**

January 14 – February 1: The Artist on Film Exhibition at the UNT Art Gallery with related film screenings TBD, see http://gallery.unt.edu/exhibitions.

2 – January 22nd – Introduction: Painting in the Middle East and Islamic World
In Class: *Islam an Empire of Faith.*

**Everyone Read**
Oleg Grabar, Ch 3, “On the Universality of Art History”; Ch 8, “Islamic Ornament and Western Abstraction”; Ch 18, What Makes Islamic Art Islamic”; and Ch 23, “The
Aesthetics of Islamic Art” in *Islamic Art and Beyond: Constructing the Study of Islamic Art*, Volume III, Ashgate, 2006. On BB


3- January 29th – Painting with an Everyday Twist – Secular Miniatures

**Group Presentations**

**Everyone Read**


Richard Ettinghausen, “Introduction” 11-16; and “General Remarks on the Manuscripts of the Late 12th to the Middle of the 13th century” 59-103. In *Arab painting*. On BB.

Sheila Canby, Ch 6, “The Pen or the Brush?” 75, in *Persian Painting*. On BB.

**Group 1** Present on *Maqamat al-Hariri*: Edited by Anna Contadini, *Arab painting: text and image in illustrated Arabic manuscripts*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.

**Group 2** Present on Representations of the Prophet Mohammed: Christiane Gruber, *Ilkhanid Book of Ascension, The: A Persian-Sunni Devotional Tale*. UNT online resources. Additional readings on BB.

**Group 3** Present on the *Shahnameh*: Sheila R. Canby, *The golden age of Persian art*, 1501-1722. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library. Additional readings on BB.

**Wednesday, January 29, Public lecture by Kiki Smith, 7pm, location TBD**

4-February 5th—Evolving Cultures

In Class: *When the World Spoke Arabic* series

**Wednesday, 5 February, D. Jack Davis Lecture in Art Education presented by Sydney Walker, Professor of Art Education, Ohio State University, title, location, and time TBD**

**Sunday, February 9- event on South Asia at UT Arlington, 6TH FLOOR: 1:00 – 5:00 PM**

5- February 12th –Painting in Qajar and Safavid Iran, and the Mughal Courts

**Group Presentations**

**Everyone Read**

Layla Diba, Ch 7, “The Qajar Court Painter Yahya Ghaffari,” 83 in *Persian Painting*. On BB.


Group 5 Read and Present on Qajar painting: Edited by Layla S. Diba, with Maryam Ekhtiar; essays by B.W. Robinson, *Royal Persian paintings: the Qajar epoch, 1785-1925*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.

Group 6 Read and Present on Bihzad: Michael Barry, *Figurative art in medieval Islam and the riddle of Bihzâd of Herât (1465-1535)*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.

6- February 19th – Painting in the Ottoman Empire

**Group Presentations**

**Everyone Read**

Wendy Shaw, “Introduction” and Ch 1, “From Old Niches to New Painting,” in *Ottoman painting: reflections of western art from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic*. On BB.

Group 1 Read and Present on: Nurhan Atasoy; edited and translated by Tulay Artan, *Splendors of the Ottoman Sultans*; and *Empire of the sultans: Ottoman art from the collection of Nasser D. Khalili*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.

Group 2 Read and Present on: Shaw, Ch 2, “Digesting Western Art: the Academy and Realism,” Ch 4, “Art Goes Public” and “Ch 6, “Art for a New Nation,” in *Ottoman painting*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.

7- February 26th -- Painting the Modern: The Middle East

**Everyone Read**


Introduction: The Polemics of Modern Arab Art, 1-10
Chapter 1: Formation and Transformation, 13-31
Chapter 2: Modern Arab Attitude Toward Art, 35-57


**Friday, February 28, CAMCSI Workshop: On Representation, ART 223, 2-5 pm.**

Artist Sama AlShaibi, [http://samaalshaibi.com](http://samaalshaibi.com), Associate Professor of Photography/Video Art at the University of Arizona, Tucson, Curators Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, ART REORIENTED, [www.artreoriented.com](http://www.artreoriented.com), and Art Historian Sarah Rogers.
8- March 5th – Painting the Modern: South Asia and Egypt

*Group Presentations*

*Everyone Read*


**Group 3** Read and Present on: Iftikhar Dadi, Ch 1 Abdur Rahman Chughtai,” and Ch. 2, “Mid-century Modernism,” in *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.


9- March 12th – SPRING BREAK! ENJOY!

10- March 19th – Final Project Workshop

*Group appointments-schedule will distributed in class*

11- March 26th – Painting the Modern: Developments in Middle Eastern Modern Art - Iraq

*Group Presentations*

*Everyone Read*

Muzaffar, “Iraq Its History People Politics” on BB.


**Group 2** Read and Present on: Shabout, *Modern Arab Art*, chapter 4, 97-121.

**Group 3** Read and Present on: Meem Gallery, *Iraqi Art Project*. On BB.
**March 29th, Field trip to Houston to view Fotofest-details TBA**

**12- April 2nd – Guest Lecture**

Guest Lecture, be prepared to ask questions

*Thursday, 3 April, Nora Taylor, Professor of Art History, Theory and Criticism/Alsdorf Professor of South and Southeast Asian Art History, School of Art Institute, Chicago will present a lecture comparing two contemporary Vietnamese artists, Dinh Q Le and Danh Vo, in their use of historical documents related to the war, title, time, and location TBD*

**13- April 9th – Museum Visit**

Nur: Light in Art and Science from the Islamic World

On view exclusively in the U.S. at the DMA, Nur: Light in Art and Science from the Islamic World is an exhibition of Islamic art and culture exploring the use and meaning of light in Islamic art and science.

*Around/before 8 April: Tempeett Hazel: [http://sixtyinchesfromcenter.org/archive/?page_id=2711](http://sixtyinchesfromcenter.org/archive/?page_id=2711)*

*Thursday, April 10, Amy Herman, AB, JD, MA, President of The Art of Perception, a professional development program that teaches participants to enhance their perception and communication skills by analyzing works of art will present The Art of Perception at 4pm in location TBD*

**14- April 16th – Painting the Past: Contemporary Engagements with the Islamic Tradition**

*Group Presentations*

*Everyone Read*

Shabout. “Rethinking Contemporary Arab Art,” in Arab Express, Mori Museum, Tokyo, 2012, 172-177 (On BB)

Muller, Nat. “Contemporary Art in the Middle East,” in Contemporary Art in the Middle East, 12-25 (On BB)

Group 4, Group 5 and Group 6: each group is to construct an argument, documented by specific artists and works, about the place of painting in contemporary art of the Middle East, in consultation of the listed below books and your additional research:


Nadine, Monem, ed., *Contemporary Art in the Middle East*. On reserve at Eagle Commons Library.


**Thursday, April 17, Dr. Walter Mignolo, Duke University, William H. Wannamaker Professor of Literature, [http://waltermignolo.com/](http://waltermignolo.com/), 5:30 - 7 p.m., ENV 110, "The Closing of Modernity: Growth, Development, and Death"**

**15- April 23rd – Exhibition Project Presentations**

All groups will present today. Each group will have 30 mins to present.

**Thursday, April 24, 2 pm: Aga Khan Lecture, Professor Sheila Blair**

**Thursday, April 24, Dr. Ussama Makdisi, Rice University, Professor of History and Arab-American Educational Foundation Chair of Arab Studies, [http://history.rice.edu/makdisi/](http://history.rice.edu/makdisi/), 5:30 - 7 p.m., Willis Library Forum. Title: TBA, but it will be about Arab-American relations through a historical perspective.**

**16-April 30th – Exhibition Projects DUE by 5pm**

I will be in my office on this day to accept your projects (visual of your exhibition and accompanying paper). Please put your exhibition on a CD or a Flashdrive to be transferred.

**2-4 May: CAMCSI Arab Film Festival Texas: [http://cams.unt.edu/](http://cams.unt.edu/).**