ARTh 4825 – Contemporary Islamic Art: Intersections of Past and Present
Spring 2022
Monday & Wednesday 11:00-12:20
ART 280

Instructor: Dr. Tiffany Floyd
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:30-3:30, ART 225

Course Description
This course will explore a series of artists related to the still-debated category of Contemporary Islamic Art. We will think about how these artists use historical modalities, existential philosophies, and sociocultural associations connected to the broad category of Islamic Art to express artistic trends, issues, and agendas relevant in the contemporary moment.

Course Objectives
- To understand the broad theoretical principles related to Contemporary Islamic Art in the Middle East and its Diaspora, as well as the contextual circumstances that spurred their development
- To apply those principles to artistic practices
- To discuss issues, themes, and debates raised by studies of Contemporary Islamic Art in relation to specific artworks and art-related events
- To synthesize class discussions and assigned readings in response to directed questions on artists and artworks
- To conduct individual analyses on an artist and their relation to issues brought up in class

Course Readings
All course readings will be posted on Canvas, organized by class day. There are no required textbooks for this course. Please prepare the assigned readings prior to their listed class day.

Course Requirements and Grading
Course Participation – 10%
4 One-Page Response Papers – 40% (10% each)
Short Research Paper/Studio Project – 30%
  - Abstract – 10%
  - Presentation – 10%

Course Participation (10%)
This course is not structured as a strict lecture. Discussion, presentation, collective analysis, and other forms of participation will be fundamental to our learning throughout the semester. Thus, you are required to attend and participate. Each class will begin with a sign-in sheet to track attendance and you are encouraged to speak up in class (otherwise, you will be called on to contribute!).
One-Page Response Papers (40%)
Over the course of the semester, you will be assigned 4 prompts that ask you to respond to a reading, an issue, a film, etc. You will be presented with directed questions that will ask you to consider the content of the material provided in relation to class discussion. A more detailed breakdown for each response paper can be found on canvas.

5-7 pages Short Research Project / 3-page Studio Project (30%)
You will be required to conduct one short research project or studio project. For the Short Research Project, you will choose one artist (not featured in class) and explore how your artist’s practice reflects a specific issue, debate, theme, or methodology discussed in class. If you are a studio major or wish to complete the Studio Project, you will produce a work of art that engages with a specific issue, debate, theme, or methodology discussed in class and then come up with a 3-page artist statement to explain the what, how, and why of your piece. Both projects will require the use of and engagement with outside sources. A more detailed assignment breakdown can be found on canvas.

Abstract (10%) + Presentation (10%)
As part of your Short Research Project/Studio Project, you will produce an abstract (250 words) and on the last 2 days of class, you will present your work to the class. Again, more details can be found in the assignment breakdown posted on canvas.

Course Schedule:
1. January 19 – Introduction to Course!

2. January 24 – Definitions: Islamic Art Revisited
   - Bloom and Blair, “The Mirage of Islamic Art”
   - Elizabeth Macaulay, “Introduction to Islam,” “About Chronological Periods,” and “Arts of the Islamic World” (links on canvas)

3. January 26 – Definitions: Islamic Art Revisited
   - Silvia Naef, “Reexploring Islamic Art”
   - Sussan Babaie, “Voices of Authority: Locating the ‘Modern’ in ‘Islamic’ Arts”

   - Fereshteh Daftari, “Islamic Art or Not?”
   - Homi Bhabah, “Another Country”
   - Linda Komaroff, “Islamic Art Now and Then”

5. February 2 – Definitions: What is Contemporary Islamic Art?
   ***Artist Sign-up for Final Project – In Class***
   - H.E. Sheikha Al Mayassa, “Defining Meaning and Value in Contemporary Islamic Art”
   - Venetia Porter, “Art and the Image”
   - H.R.H. Princess Wijdan Fawaz Al Hashemi, “Contemporary or Modern Islamic Art?”
6. February 7 – Continuity through Calligraphy
- Selections from Sheila Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*
- Wijdan Ali, “Continuity Through Calligraphy”
- Wijdan Ali, “Subjects and Styles of the Calligraphic School”

7. February 9 – Word Into Art: Calligraphy as Contemporary Art
***Response Paper #1 Due in class***
- Selections from Venetia Porter, *Word Into Art*
- Selections from Rose Issa, *Signs of Our Times*

8. February 14 – Calligraffiti: eL Seed
- eL Seed, *Lost Walls*
- Check out the Projects tab of [https://elseed-art.com/](https://elseed-art.com/)
- Watch: TED Radio Hour: Can the Beauty of Arabic Calligraphy Shift Perspectives?

9. February 16 – Calligraphy = Form + Content: Mounir Fatmi
- Selections from *Mounir Fatmi*
- Selection of short articles/interviews
- Check out [http://www.mounirfatmi.com/actual.html](http://www.mounirfatmi.com/actual.html)

10. February 21 – Text and Image: Hayv Kahraman
- Selections from Hayv Kahraman: Acts of Reparation
- Octavio Zaya, “Are we not all foreigners”
  [https://jackshainman.com/exhibitions/how_iraki_are_you](https://jackshainman.com/exhibitions/how_iraki_are_you)
- Check out the Work tab of [https://hayvkahraman.com/](https://hayvkahraman.com/)

11. February 23 – Continuity through Geometry, Ornamentation, and Abstraction
***Response Paper #2 Due in class***
- Roxane Zand, “Geometry in a New Perspective”
- Sussan Babaie, “The Spectacle of Geometry”
- Met, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History – “Geometric Patterns in Islamic Art” & “Vegetal Patterns in Islamic Art” (links on Canvas)

12. February 28 – Geometry, Ornamentation, and Abstraction: Timo Nasseri
- Selections from *Nasseri*
- Check out the Works tab of [http://www.timonasseri.com/sculpture-1](http://www.timonasseri.com/sculpture-1)

13. March 2 – Geometry, Ornamentation, and Abstraction: Anila Quayyum
- Check out the Installations Tab on [http://www.anilaagha.com/](http://www.anilaagha.com/)
- Interview: [https://www.cartermuseum.org/blog/talk-us-online-anila](https://www.cartermuseum.org/blog/talk-us-online-anila)
- Check out the artist’s recent exhibition at the Amon Carter: [https://www.cartermuseum.org/exhibitions/anila-quayyum-agha-beautiful-despair](https://www.cartermuseum.org/exhibitions/anila-quayyum-agha-beautiful-despair)

14. March 7 – Geometry, Ornamentation, and Abstraction: Dana Awartani
- Check out the Artwork tab of [https://danaawartani.com/](https://danaawartani.com/)

15. March 9 – Geometry, Ornamentation, and Abstraction: Walid Siti
***Abstracts for Final Projects Due in class***
- Selections from [Walid Siti](https://www.walidsiti.com/)
- Check out [https://www.walidsiti.com/](https://www.walidsiti.com/)

16. March 14 – No Class – Enjoy your Spring Break!

17. March 16 – No Class – Enjoy your Spring Break!

18. March 21 – No Class – Museum Visit
***Visit the DMA’s Keir Collection of Islamic Art for Response Paper #3***

***Response Paper #3 Due via Canvas***
- Selections from [Dafatir: Contemporary Iraqi Book Art](https://www.hanaa-malallah.com/)
- Sonja Mejcher-Atassi, “Contemporary Book Art in the Middle East”
- Selections from [Hanaa Malallah, 5.50.1.1.40.1.30.1.30.30.5](https://www.hanaa-malallah.com/)
- Check out [https://www.hanaa-malallah.com/](https://www.hanaa-malallah.com/)

- Selections from [Susan Hefuna: xcultural codes](https://www.susanhefuna.com/)
- Selections from [Susan Hefuna: pars pro toto](https://www.susanhefuna.com/)
- Check out: [https://www.susanhefuna.com/](https://www.susanhefuna.com/)

- Check out: [https://www.ahmedmater.com/](https://www.ahmedmater.com/)
- Venetia Porter, “Illuminations”
- Linda Komaroff, “Illuminations”
- Selections from [Ahmed Mater](https://www.ahmedmater.com/
22. April 4 – Traditions of Making: Miniature Painting, Shahzia Sikander
   - Shahzia Sikander Interview in *Islamic Art: Past, Present and Future*
   - Check out https://www.shahziasikander.com/

23. April 6 – Traditions of Making: Textiles, Ghada Amer
   - Laura Auricchio, “Works in Translation: Ghada Amer’s Hybrid Pleasures”
   - Selections from *Ghada Amer: Reading Between the Threads*
   - Check out https://ghadaamer.com/

   - Selections from Lalla Essaydi: Crossing Boundaries, Bridging Cultures
   - Interview in *Islamic Art: Past, Present, Future*

25. April 13 – A New Tradition: Photography, Shadi Ghadirian
   - Melissa Heer, “Restaging Time”
   - Rose Issa, “Like This”

26. April 18 – A New Tradition: Photography, Hassan Hajjaj
   - Interview in *Islamic Art: Past, Present, Future*
   - Selections from *Hassan Hajjaj: Photography, Fashion, Film, Design*

27. April 20 – A New Tradition: Objects, Mona Hatoum
   - Ursula Panhans-Buhler, “Being Involved”
   - Nina Zimmer, “Epiphanies of the Everyday”
   - Kirsty Bell, “A Mapping of Mona Hatoum”

28. April 25 – A New Tradition: Video, Shirin Neshat
   - Gerald Matt, “In Conversation with Shirin Neshat”
   - Ruth Noack, “Productive Dualism”
   - Hamid Naficy, “Parallel Worlds”

   ***Response Paper #4 Due in class***
   - Clio Unger, “Shoot him Now!”
   - Check out: http://wafaabilal.com/
   - Anjali Kamat, “Interview with Iraqi Artist Wafaa Bilal”

30. May 2 – Presentations
   ***Studio Projects due in class on the day of your presentation!***

31. May 4 – Presentations
***Short Research Papers/Studio Projects due via canvas May 4th at 5pm***

*The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus over the course of the semester*

**Course Disclaimer**
Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be personally challenging or offensive to some students on the grounds, for example, of sexual explicitness, violence, or blasphemy. The College of Visual Arts and Design is devoted to the principle of freedom of expression, artistic and otherwise, and it is not the college’s practice to censor these works or ideas on any of these grounds. Students who might feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course.

**Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences**
According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation].

**ADA Accommodation Statement**
UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu

**Emergency Notification & Procedures**
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**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 Dean of Students 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 deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.