



The Nature of Islamic Art

Dr Oliver Watson, Ashmolean Museum of Art & Archaeology, Oxford

Special international lecture: Wednesday 22 August At 5.30pm

Art Gallery of South Australia, Radford Auditorium.

Tickets: \$15 (\$5 AGSA Members) Bookings: 08 8207 7050

Dr Oliver Watson is Keeper (Head Curator) of Eastern Art at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford – one of the world's foremost museums of art and archaeology. In this special lecture at the Art Gallery of South Australia, Dr Watson examines Islamic art: why it looks the way it does, how it differs from the art of other major cultures and why misconceptions, such as 'figural representation is banned' have developed in the west. It will be a visual feast, covering all art forms from the central Islamic world from the eighth to the eighteenth centuries. Dr Watson is currently visiting Australia with his Adelaide-born wife and this will be his only professional engagement of the trip.

Dr Watson studied Classic Arabic and Islamic Studies at Durham University in the north of England, before taking a PhD at the University of London in 1971. His PhD examining Persian Lustre Tiles of the 13th and 14th Centuries was awarded in 1977.

He worked for more than twenty years at London's renowned Victoria & Albert Museum as Assistant Keeper in the Department of Ceramics, later becoming Head of the Ceramics Department and then in 2001, he was made Chief Curator of the Middle Eastern Collections. After two years working on secondment in Qatar in the Persian Gulf, Watson left the V&A in 2005 to take up his present post at the Ashmolean.

A world authority on Islamic Art, and particularly ceramics, Dr Watson is widely published and is the author of the books, *Persian Lustre Ware* (London, 1985) and *Ceramics from Islamic Lands* (London, 2004). His secondary research interest is contemporary studio pottery on which he is also a published author.

The Art Gallery of South Australia is home to one of the most significant Islamic art collections in the country, and houses the only permanent display galleries dedicated to Islamic art from the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

TO ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW WITH DR OLIVER WATSON CONTACT:

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