While research on Islamic art became a scholarly field in the twentieth century, it built on studies and perspectives of the nineteenth century. This period saw an intellectual, documentary, artistic, and commercial exploration of ‘Oriental’ art, and this encounter was accompanied by the rise of academic art history and the museum, and of art reform movements and historicist styles.

The 1873 Vienna World’s Fair is a particularly suitable trajectory for expanding Islamic art historiography into this period. It was staged when commercialisation and popularisation, as well as academisation and categorisation of Islamic arts and architecture began to accelerate. Scholarship has recognised the nineteenth-century world’s fairs as a major stage for ‘Oriental’ displays from a global outlook. In Vienna, the organisers promoted the representation of a large number of ‘Oriental’ countries and foregrounded cultural themes, as to distinguish from previous fairs in London and Paris. The Ottoman Empire, Persia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco partook with a large number of national pavilions designed with motifs of Islamic architecture and showcasing crafts, artefacts, and historic objects of Islamic art. Their appreciation and broad reception were on display in orientalising designs of products by the European art industries. Paintings, photographs, commissioned books, and articles in newspapers further contributed to the image of ‘Oriental’ or Islamic art.

This conference aims to look at the Vienna Fair as an intersection of processes and phenomena that contributed to Islamic art historiography. As the sesquicentennial is approaching, the conference will explore the Fair as spaces for exhibiting Islamic arts and architecture, for their commercial and artistic reception, and for setting scholarship in motion. Looking through the lens of the Fair and investigating its making and impact reveals processes that contributed to perceiving and categorising, collecting and studying, institutionalising and commercialising Islamic art, within international, national, and local perspectives.
THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2021

18.00 Evening Lecture
Finbarr Barry Flood (New York University)
Circa 1873: Orientalism, Modernity, and the Invention of the Bilderverbot

19.45 Reception

FRIDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2021

9.30–10.00 Welcome & Introduction
Sebastian Schütze, Dean, Faculty Historical and Cultural Studies
Lioba Theis, Head of Department of Art History
Markus Ritter, Conference Organizer

10.00–11.00 Conceptualizing Islamic Art in Late Nineteenth-Century Art Historiography (Ebba Koch)
Eva-Maria Troelenberg (University of Utrecht)
‘Purely Artistic Criteria’? On Islamic Art Historiography and Its Categories in Alois Riegl’s Art History
Iván Szántó (Eötvös Lorand University, Budapest)
Vienna 1873 – Budapest 1896: Two Decades of Developing ‘Islamic Art’ in Hungarian Scholarship

11.30–13.00 Exhibiting and Categorizing Islamic Art in the Fair (Sabiba Göloğlu)
Nilay Özli (Bilgi University, Istanbul)
The Sultan’s Treasury in Vienna: Ottoman Presence at the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair
Mercedes Volait (Centre national de recherche scientifique, Paris)
Spolia in se at the Fair, 1867-1889: A Channel for Islamic Reuse in Nineteenth-Century Architecture and Furniture?
Nancy Demerdash-Fatemi (Albion College, Michigan)
The Scramble for North Africa: Geopolitics, ‘Bedouin Style’ and Islamic Art at the Tunisian and Moroccan Exhibits of the 1873 Wiener Weltausstellung

13.00–14.30 Lunch Break

14.30–15.30 Mediating Photography (Yuka Kadoi)
Franziska Niemand (Vitrocentre Romont)
Architecture through the Lens of the Vienna Photographers Association: A Case Study of Glass Plaster Windows at the Egyptian and Ottoman Pavilions
Erin Hyde Nolan (Maine College of Art & Design)
Expanding Photographic Authorship: The Remaking of the Elbise-i Osmaniyye After 1873

15.30–16.00 Coffee & Tea Break

16.00–17.30 Staging Art in ‘Oriental’ Historicism and Self-Representation (Lukas Nickel)
Ahmet Ersoy (Boğaziçi University, Istanbul)
The Unsullied and the Bastard: Ottoman Things at the Prater
Maryam Heydarkhani (Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran)
Mirroring Persia’s Aura in the Vienna World’s Fair: Tracing Mediators, Planners and Architectural Features in the Pavilion of Iran
Ahmed Wahby (German University in Cairo)
An Opera House in Cairo and a Mamluk Pavilion in Vienna: Egypt’s Architectural Duality towards the End of the Nineteenth Century

SATURDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2021

9.30–10.30 Commercial Trajectories for Collecting and Studying Islamic Art (Kerstin Jobst)
Elke Helbig (University of Zurich)
Collecting, Exhibiting, and Mediating Arts and Textiles from ‘Persia’: The Ziegler & Co. and Its Role at the Vienna World’s Fair
Barbara Karl (Textile Museum Sankt Gallen)
Symmetric / Asymmetric: Economics and Scholarship in the Context of the Carpet Exhibition at the k.k. Handelsgesellschaft

10.30–11.00 Coffee & Tea Break

11.00–12.30 Islamic Art as a Model: Reception and Study in European Art Industries and Arts (Johannes Wieninger)
Gwendolyn Collaço (Los Angeles County Museum of Art)
Commemorating Triumph at the 1873 World’s Fair in Mamluk-Revival Glass
Ibolya Gerelyes (Hungarian National Museum, Budapest)
‘Saracen’ Influences on the Products of the Zsolnay Ceramic Factory, Pécs
Mirjam Rajner (Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan)
Maurycc Gottlieb at the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair: A Polish Jewish Artist in Search of an Oriental Identity

12.30–14.00 Lunch Break

14.00–15.00 Disseminating the Fair’s ‘Orient’ (Yavuz Köse)
Ceren Göğüş (İstanbul Kültür University)
The Re-Representation of the Orient: An Inspection of Austrian Printed Press During the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair
Federica Broilo (University of Urbino “Carlo Bo”)
Arabian Nights on the Danube: The Ottoman Empire at the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair in the Words of the Italian Press

15.00–15.30 Coffee & Tea Break

15.30–17.00 Reception of Egyptian Islamic Architecture in Austro-Hungarian Historicism (Andreas Nierhaus)
Maximilian Hartmuth (University of Vienna)
World’s Fairs as Stages and Instruments of Artistic Dissemination, Taste-Making, and Network-Building across the Christian-Muslim Divide
Elke Pfugradt-Abdel Aziz (Dusseldorf)
Works of Carl von Diebitsch as Part of the Franz Schmoranz Jr Legacy: The ‘Egyptische Baugruppe’ at the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair
Péter T. Nagy (Qatar National Museum, Doha)
Beyond the Khedive’s Palace: Neo-Mamluk Architecture in Late Nineteenth-Century Budapest

17.00 Closing Remarks