

Hala Qasqas

Ph.D. Candidate | Islamic Art History

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Highly accomplished PhD candidate in Islamic Art History with over ten years of exceptional research experience. Specializing in the socio-urban history of Damascus and the cultural history of coffee and coffeehouses during the 17th and 18th centuries. Recipient of the prestigious Canadian Graduate Scholarship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

EDUCATION

Sep 2021 Present	Ph.D. in Art History and Visual Studies <i>University of Victoria - Victoria, BC, Canada</i>
Sep 2019 Aug 2020	Post-Graduate Program: Visual Effects <i>Sheridan College - Oakville, ON, Canada</i>
Jan 2019 Aug 2019	Post-Graduate Program: 3D Computer Animation <i>Sheridan College - Oakville, ON, Canada</i>
Sep 2009 May 2012	Master of Arts: Art History <i>Damascus University - Damascus, Syria</i>
Sep 2002 Feb 2007	Bachelor of Arts: Interior Design <i>Damascus University - Damascus, Syria</i>

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sep 2023 Present	Sessional Lecturer <i>University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada</i> Conduct lectures and seminars for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">AHVS 314: Gateway to Paradise: Islamic Gardens and Landscape.AHVS 357: Arts of Mediterranean IslamContinuing Studies: Islamic Geometric Pattern
Sep 2021 Present	Teacher Assistant <i>University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada</i> Assisted in teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none">AHVS 120: Exploring World ArtAHVS 311F: Horror Video Games.AHVS 311E: History of Video Games and Interactive Media
Feb 2022 Present	Sessional Interior Design Instructor <i>Pacific Design Academy, Victoria, BC, Canada</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Taught courses including Space Planning, Design Projects, Design Development, AutoCAD, Lighting, and Portfolio.Developed and updated course materials, guided students through hands-on projects, and mentored students on career paths and portfolio development.
Nov 2021 Feb 2024	Research Assistant <i>University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborated on a project documenting the crafts of Damascus from the 19th to the 20th century. <p>Contributed to research and website development for documenting Iraqi craft history from the 7th to the 20th century.</p>

RESEARCH SKILLS

- Documentation and attention to detail
- Exceptional written communication
- Excellent research and translation skills (Arabic-English)
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Proficiency with primary sources and online databases
- Information organization and evaluation
- 3D graphics conversion using computer software.

LANGUAGES

- Arabic**
Native or bilingual proficiency
- English**
Full professional proficiency
- French**
Limited working proficiency

AFFILIATIONS

- 2022** | ICOMOS, The International Council on Monuments and Sites
- 2022** | ICOM, International Council of Museums
- 2021** | HIAA, Historian of Islamic Art Association

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 2021** | Damascus Heritage Archive Project
 - A community of professional researchers committed to conserving the Damascene cultural heritage, tangible and intangible.

- Jan 2007
Jan 2019
- Senior Interior Architect**
Futurism, Damascus, Syria
- Led and managed communication with contractors, builders, and clients for 50+ projects across the Middle East.
 - Created detailed floor plans and schematic designs using AutoCAD and 3D perspectives.
- Sep 2010
Jun 2017
- Teacher Assistant**
Damascus University, Damascus, Syria
- Assisted in teaching Interior Design Projects, graded assignments, and facilitated classroom activities and workshops.

AWARDS

- Jul 2022
- Canada Graduate Scholarship Doctoral**
SSHRC Doctoral Awards competition (\$105,000)
- Jul 2022
- President's Research Scholarship**
Faculty of Graduate Studies at UVic (\$15,000)
- May 2022
- SSHRC Doctoral Fellowships**
Social Science Research Council (\$80,000)
- May 2022
- Florence and Wallace Wilkinson**
Memorial Bursary at UVic (\$5000)
- Dec 2021
- Herbert Bertram Falkenstein**
Graduate Scholarship in Fine Arts at UVic (\$20,000)
- Dec 2021
- Jeffrey Rubinoff Scholar**
Art as a Source of Knowledge Scholarship (\$2000)
- Sep 2021
- University of Victoria Graduate Fellowship**
Art History & Visual Studies (\$36,000)

CERTIFICATIONS

- 2022-01-
2022-06
- French for Reading and Translation**
University of Wisconsin-Madison – Madison, USA
- 2018-01-
2018-12
- General Art and Sciences (ESL)**
Sheridan College - Oakville, ON

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

- *Damascene Mosques in the Mamluk Era: Architectural-Historical Study.* (Damascus: Dar Ninawa, 2020)
- *History of Damascene Coffeehouses.* (Damascus: Dar Ninawa, 2019)
- *Damascene Mosques in the Ottoman Era: Architectural-Historical Study.* (Damascus: Dar Ninawa, 2018)
- *Gardens Architecture: Study in the foundations of garden design and styles.* (Damascus: Dar Ninawa Publishing, 2017)
- *Islamic gardens: A Study in The Design of Islamic Gardens and Their Constituent Elements.* (Damascus: Dar Ninawa, 2015)

SOFTWARE

Microsoft Office



Adobe Creative Suite



Autodesk AutoCAD



Autodesk Maya



Autodesk 3Ds Max



Houdini



Nuke/Nuke Studio



Davinci Resolve



Zbrush



BOOKS CHAPTERS

- “Marginalized Voices: Female Shadow Puppets of 18th-Century Syria from the ‘Azm Palace Collection, Damascus.” In *Medieval Islamic History in 50 Objects* (under review)
- “The Architecture of Sociability: Coffeehouses and Urban Spaces in Early Modern Damascus.” In *Syrian Architectural History* (under review)

REFEREED JOURNALS PAPERS

- “Diplomacy and Architectural Ambience: Damascus in Renaissance Art.” Under Review (2024)
- “Traditional Artworks roles in Damascene Coffeehouses.” *Aleppo University Journal of Engineering Sciences* (2017).
- “Al-barrani the outside section of Damascus Bathhouse Social and Beauty Value.” *Damascus University Journal of Engineering Sciences* (2016).
- “A Study on Entertainment Signs of Old Time Festivals in Damascus.” *Damascus University Journal of Engineering Sciences* (2016).
- “Al-Badri and the Discourse of Beauties: A Study of the Concept of Islamic Garden.” *Journal of Architecture and Planning*, King Saud University 27, no. 2 (2015).
- “Ibn al-‘Awwam and the Book of al-Filāha: The Science of Gardening in Islamic Tradition.” *IUG Journal of Natural and Engineering Studies*, Islamic University-Gaza 22, no. 2 (2014).
- “Water in the Islamic Garden: Between the Physical and Symbolic.” *Aleppo University Journal of Engineering Sciences* 102 (2011).

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- “Oral History and Social Commentary: The Legacy of Shadow Puppetry in 18th-Century Damascus.” In *The 11th Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium*, Toronto: University of Toronto (2024)
- “Liberation in a Cup: Coffee, Controversy, and Community in Damascus.” In *MISSC*, Montreal: McGill University (2024)
- “Unraveling the Socio-Urban Fabric: Architectural Insights from the 18th-Century Coffeehouses of Damascus.” In *MEICON*, Vancouver: Simon Fraser University (2024)
- “Urban Fabric and Architectural Narratives: Exploring the 18th-Century Coffeehouses of Damascus.” In *Visual Inputs*, Victoria: The University of Victoria (2024)
- “Coffeehouses of Damascus: Unveiling the Architectural and Historical Narratives.” In *Islamic Art History Research Workshop*, York: The University of York (2023)
- “Diplomacy and Architectural Ambience: Damascus in Renaissance Art.” In *Visual Inputs*, Victoria: The University of Victoria (2023)
- “The Legitimacy of Coffee and Coffeehouses in Damascus 1600-1800.” In *MEICON*, Vancouver: The University of British Columbia (2022)
- “The Visual Heritage of Popular Tales: Folk Art in Damascene Coffeehouses 1850-1950.” In *Visual Inputs*, Victoria: The University of Victoria (2022)
- “The Role of Women in Building Mosques during the Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras in Damascus”. In *Eye on the Mosques of Damascus*, Damascus: al-Takiyya al-Sulaimanyia (2016) In *Eye on the Mosques of Damascus*, Damascus: al-Takiyya al-Sulaimanyia (2016)