

CELEBRATION OF MARBLING FESTIVAL
EVENING LECTURES BY DR. JAKE BENSON APRIL 21 & 22
PERSIAN AND INDIAN MARBLING 15TH THROUGH 17TH CENTURIES: FOCUSED
RESEARCH



Jake Benson is the Curator of the Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation & Dar al-Kutub Manuscript Project (TIF-DAK), a programme that assists the National Library of Egypt in Cairo with the preservation, digitisation, cataloguing, and exhibition of their manuscript collections written primarily in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. Prior to that, he was an undergraduate then graduate Persian Flagship Scholar at the University of Maryland from 2008 to 2011. A trained bookbinder and conservator, Jake is especially interested in primary technical sources concerning bookbinding and decorative paper production, as well as poetry and other literature revealing the views of the book arts not only by literary figures, but also artists and patrons of Persianate manuscripts. In addition to his work on Persianate marbling, he is currently writing an essay on Indian marbled miniature paintings for the forthcoming catalogue for an exhibition of Deccani art to be held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the spring of 2015.

Lectures:

Lecture 1: *Naqsh bar āb*: Abri in the late 15th-17th centuries.

This lecture will trace the early evolution of paper marbling in the Islamic world, and focus on the innovations of a Persian master named Mir Muhammad Tahir in India. In addition to primary textual sources about the art, it will also discuss examples of calligraphy written on marbled paper and references to marbling in Persianate poetry.

Lecture 2: *Tasāvīr-i abrī*: Indian marbled drawings and paintings

This lecture will expand upon a forthcoming chapter for a catalogue of the Deccan exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum. In India in the 17th century, a form of painting that combined marbling with different masking techniques developed, likely in the Deccan region during the hegemony of the Nizam Shahi, Adil Shahi, and Qutb Shahi Sultanates. This lecture will focus on recent discoveries that shed new light on the topic.

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