

THE PRAISEWORTHY ONE: DEVOTIONAL IMAGES OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD IN ISLAMIC TRADITIONS

With Christiane Gruber
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This presentation explores a number of paintings of the Prophet Muhammad produced in Persian and Turkish lands from the fourteenth century to the modern day. Ranging from veristic to abstract, these images represent Muhammad's individual traits, primordial luminosity, and veiled essence. Their pictorial motifs reveal that artists engaged in abstract thought and turned to symbolic motifs in order to imagine Muhammad's primordial origins and prophetic standing. In creating and gazing upon such images, artists and viewers also were inspired by various mystical beliefs and practices, including devotional invocation, in the process seeking to express their piety through both verbal and pictorial language. Within a variety of Islamic expressive cultures, paintings thus have functioned as a powerful means for devotional engagement with Muhammad, the "praiseworthy" Prophet and Messenger of Islam.

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4:30PM | 202 FRICK FINE ARTS

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