

The Meaning of the Mosque & the Story of a Great Jeweled Carpet

Two Fridays: February 16 and February 23, 2018
Tallent Hall # 182 10 AM-12 PM

February 16: The Meaning of the Mosque

In the first class we will examine the design of two historic mosque types. We will see how the first design—a forest of columns, a mihrab, and a dome set immediately in front of it—creates a systematic guide to Islamic history from the Creation of the Universe to the establishment of the Umayyads (the first of the hereditary caliphal dynasties) in the 7th century. The designs are, effectively, 3-dimensional diagrams and they make it possible to walk through that history and witness it, or experience solidarity with it. The 2nd design—a dome-chambered mosque—was developed by Sinan under Suleiman the Magnificent in the 16th century. It too creates an environmental guide to the history of Islam, especially its prophetic spread to Constantinople. Each of these designs became standard for the next several centuries. Each is popularly assumed to have no narrative meaning, although the evidence in favor of meaning is strong and delightful.



February 23: The Story of a Great Jeweled Carpet

In the second class, we will discover the design of a fabulous lost jeweled carpet. Known as *The Springtime of Chosroes*, it was taken as loot from Ctesiphon in Iraq under the second Caliph, Umar, just a few years after Muhammad's death. According to contemporary sources it caused Caliph Umar much soul-searching, and as we uncover its design and subsequent history, we will see that it had an unsuspected influence on the development of The Prophet's Mosque in Medinah. Tragically, the carpet perished in a fire during the 15th century but descendants of it survive and we will see directly just what an astonishing thing it was.

Questions? Call Jo Ann Shea at 262-554-8081 or email to joaz44@hotmail.com



Mosque & Jeweled Carpet: Members \$10 Guests \$20 Register by Friday, Jan 26, 2018

Name _____ Check # _____

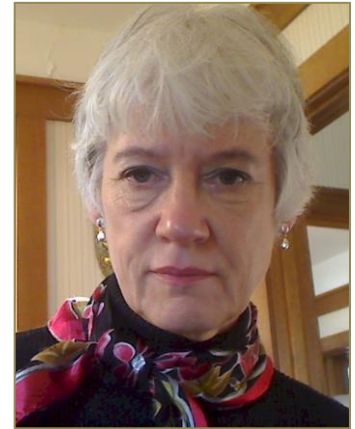
Phone _____ Email _____

Emergency contact name & phone _____

Deliver **cash** registration to the ALL office in Tallent Hall. **Checks** payable to UW Parkside/ALL; deliver or mail to Vanessa. **Credit card** registration for members must be submitted online; an email with a member registration **LINK** will be sent around the 1st Monday each month. NO online credit card registrations can be accepted for guests. As registrations fill, members get preference in signing up.

Pippin Michelli earned her Ph.D. (Medieval art) in 1980 and has taught at all educational levels, especially in universities, liberal arts colleges, and dedicated art schools.

Her approach is based on a close examination of the artifacts and architecture to discover what they can say about themselves, and it is this chorus of voices that she uses to throw light on their culture(s) of origin and the possible intentions of their makers and commissioners. This approach causes her to notice aspects that generally go unremarked, especially including the apparently coincidental, accidental, and incomplete. This has guided her study of all periods of Western art and architecture up to the present.

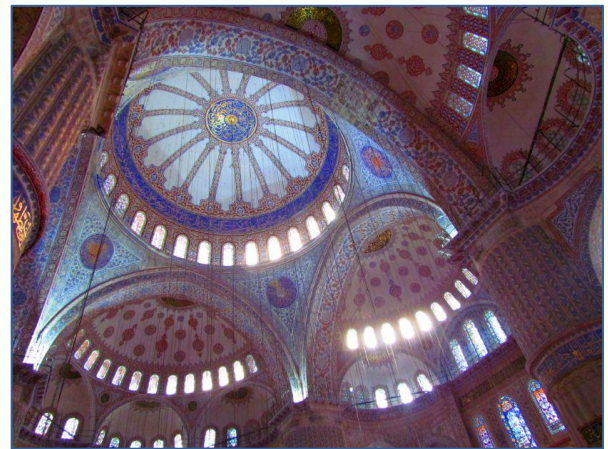


Alongside the art and buildings, she examines primary source texts on aesthetics, calendar-keeping, hagiography, and historical annals, whose content and structure reveal the unarticulated assumptions of the artists and builders.

For Islamic art and architecture, which are the products of a highly specific worldview, she again examines the works closely to discover what they have to say about themselves, and studies primary source texts concerning the nature of knowledge, the purpose of existence, the arrival of Islam, and the metaphysical and physical universes inferred by early religious scholars and astronomers.



Jeweled Zardozi work carpet



Dome of the Blue Mosque, Istanbul