



VCUQATAR LECTURE SERIES

Arts and Architecture of the Islamic World

Threads of History: Textiles of the Abbasid and Fatimid Caliphates

THE ATRIUM, VCUQATAR
JANUARY 28, 7.30 PM

DR. JOCHEN SOKOLY
GALLERY DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN ART HISTORY
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY IN QATAR

Jochen Sokoly's lecture focuses on a group of inscribed textiles from Egypt and the Central Islamic lands commonly known as *tiraz* textiles. The term *tiraz*, although subject to some scholarly debate, refers to an inscription that contains historical content referring to an official commission by an Islamic ruler or one of his representatives. It usually lists the name of the ruler, and his titles, as well as administrative information relating to the object's manufacture. It is the historical content of these textile inscriptions which makes them a valuable resource for historical research into the caliphal administration of the early Islamic period. Apart from the content of the inscriptions this group of textiles is furthermore significant archaeologically, as they can offer a glimpse into the burial practices of the early Islamic period in Egypt.

JOCHEN SOKOLY received his doctorate in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford where he specialized in the History of Islamic Art and Architecture. He has been a research fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, London. Dr. Sokoly has worked as a UNESCO curatorial consultant for the Al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait National Museum, Kuwait where he is preparing the publication of the museum's collection of early Islamic inscribed textiles. He currently holds the post of Assistant Professor in Art History and Gallery Director at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar, where he lectures in Art History and has organized a number of exhibitions.

Ikat textile inscribed in gold, Yemen, 10th century AD, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto