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INTRODUCTION

With this volume, *Ars Orientalis* marks another significant milestone in its history. First published in 1954, the journal was one of the earliest dedicated to Asian art in its broadest sense, covering a geographic and cultural area from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pacific Ocean. With the growing importance of new digital technologies, in 2014 *Ars Orientalis* transitioned to its online format. It also began a new column, “Digital Initiatives,” which highlights the intersections of research, pedagogy, and digital research and analytic methods. Three years later, it became one of the first academic art history journals to embrace the open-access model, with the twin goals of reaching new communities of scholars both nationally and internationally and removing economic barriers to sharing scholarship while also retaining its print version.

Building upon the desire to increase the journal’s scope and diversify its audience, this volume reflects a change in the journal’s submission model. In recent decades, *Ars Orientalis* has focused on guest-edited thematic volumes, which allowed for a wide interdisciplinary and comparative approach to specific topics and subjects. The result has been a series of innovative studies on a range of topics, from early photography and the imperial image to Asian dress and the tradition of reusing and recycling in Japanese material culture. While this format was highly successful, the advisory board and editors of *Ars Orientalis* have decided to return to a model of open submissions. Prospective articles are welcomed by September 1 of each year for consideration.

This volume also introduces a new section, “Conversations from the Field.” These occasional, shorter, and non-peer-reviewed pieces aim to highlight methodological approaches, interviews with contemporary artists, and reflections on the discipline of art history and material culture. A conversation with the artist Jananne al-Ani about her use of the camera to encourage the viewer to engage with the familiar, and discover the unfamiliar, inaugurates this new *Ars Orientalis* feature.

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