

Julian Raby

The Dame Jillian Sackler Director of the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and the Freer Gallery of Art

Julian Raby was appointed director of the Freer | Sackler, the Smithsonian's Museums of Asian Art, in March 2002.

Raby, 66, was born in London. He received his bachelor's degree with honors from Magdalen College at the University of Oxford (1971), where he also earned his doctorate in Oriental Studies (1981). His affiliation with Oxford grew to include a prominent role as university lecturer in Islamic art and architecture (1979 to 2006), chairman of curators of the Oriental Institute (1991-1993 and 1995-2000) and chairman of the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies (1993-1995). During his time as chairman of curators, Raby was closely involved with the creation of the Oxford University Teaching and Research Unit in Hebrew and Jewish Studies.



Raby has supervised over 60 special exhibitions at the Freer | Sackler since 2002, and under his leadership a number of exhibitions organized by the Sackler Gallery have traveled worldwide.

With extensive experience in the field of publishing, Raby has distinguished himself in the area of Asian studies as an author, editor and publisher. At Oxford, he was the series founder and series editor of Oxford Studies in Islamic Art. For the British Institute of Archaeology and History in Amman, Jordan, Raby served as the monographs editor (1991–1993). He is also the founder and former co-owner of Azimuth Editions, a major publisher in the field of Asian art.

Raby is the author of numerous papers, articles and books in the field of Islamic art, including "Venice, Dürer and the Oriental Mode" (1982); "Iznik: The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey" (London, 1989), "Turkish Bookbinding in the 15th Century, The Foundation of a Court Style" (1993) and "Qajar Portraits" (London, 1999).

An active participant in professional and educational associations, Raby has served as a member of the Council of the British Institute of Archaeology and History in Amman, Jordan, and is a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He is a Socio Straniero of the Accademia Veneta and a fellow of the Academia Europea. Raby also is a Grand Officer of Order of Prince Henry the Navigator (Portugal), a member of the Presidential Order of Merit (Turkey), a member of the Order of the Rising Sun (Japan), and an honorary member of the International Committee for Congress of Turkish Arts.

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THE SMITHSONIAN'S MUSEUMS OF ASIAN ART