

# David Ohannessian and the Armenian Ceramics of Jerusalem

**Sato Moughalian**  
(Independent Scholar)

**Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 4:00 – 5:30 pm**  
**Lower Dodge Gallery, Zimmerli Art Museum**

In the early twentieth century, David Ohannessian (1884-1953) revived the sixteenth-century techniques of Ottoman painted tiles, and restored and created monumental works throughout the Middle East and in Europe. In 1916, during the Armenian Genocide, Ohannessian was arrested, sentenced to death, and deported into the Syrian desert of Deir Zor. He and his young family nearly succumbed to typhus and starvation, but emerged from the desert and entered into the community of refugees in Aleppo. In late 1918, British diplomat Mark Sykes encountered Ohannessian there and connected the artist with the new Military Governor of Jerusalem, Ronald Storrs, who was seeking a ceramist to restore the tiling of the Dome of the Rock. In early 1919, Ohannessian traveled to Palestine, where he re-established his art, adapting it to the local materials. His work left a permanent aesthetic imprint on the city of Jerusalem.



**Sato Moughalian** (<http://www.perspectivesensemble.com/index.php>), a professional flutist and David Ohannessian's granddaughter, will present a talk drawn from her biography-in-progress of the artist. It will trace the migration of this art from the historic ceramics center of Kutahya in the waning years of the Ottoman Empire to its new and now enduring home in Jerusalem. **Sarolta Takács**, Professor of History and Director, Modern Greek Studies Program, Rutgers-NB and **Tuna Artun**, Assistant Professor of History, Rutgers-NB, will respond.

The Center for European Studies  
The Armenian Studies Program  
The Department of Art History  
The Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life  
The Center for Middle East Studies