

# “Visiting Scholars on Islam”

Thursday, March 8

Lane’s Center for Meeting and Learning

CML 226 • 1–2:30 pm and 5–6:30 pm



## Irfan Omar

1–2:30 pm

### *Farid Al-Din `Attar: Conference of the Birds*

Dr. Omar will teach selections from this, the most famous of all Sufi (Islamic mystical) texts, by one of the greatest Sufi poets, who lived from 1142-1221 in northeastern Iran.

For the text and notes go to:

<http://www.angelfire.com/rnb/bashiri/Poets/Attar.html>

5–6:30 pm

### *Dialogue of the Heart: Seeing the ‘Other’ from an Islamic Perspective*

Two examples of interreligious engagement that may be characterized as “dialogue of the heart” will be discussed.

These examples are that of the 13th century meeting between St. Francis and the Sultan of Egypt, and the 17th century dialogue of Prince Dara Shikoh with the Hindu saint Baba Lal. These were encounters of people from different faiths, ranks, places, and even languages, which resulted in a “dialogue of the heart.” In both cases they parted with a deeper sense of transcendent and esoteric unity, despite the real imminent and exoteric differences between the faiths of Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism.

**Irfan A. Omar** is an Associate Professor of Theology at Marquette University. He graduated with a doctorate in Religious Studies from Temple University in 2001. He specializes in Islamic thought with a special focus on inter-religious connections between Islam and other religions. His secondary areas of interest are Islamic mysticism and South Asian Studies. He has edited/co-edited several volumes including *Islam and Other Religions: Pathways to Dialogue*. Dr. Omar currently serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* and is on the steering committee of the Ethics Section of the American Academy of Religion (AAR).

— This series is part of Lane’s Initiative on Islam and Other Religions. —

This presentation is offered in conjunction with the Season for Nonviolence and Lane Interfaith Alliance.