

Brass bowl and lid, engraved and inlaid with silver and a black substance

Syria, late 15th century

The bowl, made for European market, is decorated mainly with a strapwork geometric pattern. On the side of the bowl, the octagonal star ornament is set into a densely interwoven network. A variant of these patterns appears on the lid and the bottom.

Henderson Bequest

78.12-30.696



Yusuf in the presence of Zulaykha, from a manuscript of Nizami's Makhzan al-Asrar

Safavid Iran, Shiraz, c.1570 AD.

Gouache on paper

Various geometric designs decorate the architecture in this illustration of Yusuf, the biblical Joseph, before Zulaykha, Potiphar's wife. Hexagonal tiles cover the dado of the wall. The interlocking pattern of eight-pointed stars and crosses with triangular extremities is used for the floor. The balcony is decorated with six intersecting circles.

1941 6-19 010



**Brass vase with cover, cast, turned and engraved, silver inlay
Syria, Mamluk dynasty, 15th century**

The decoration consists of interlaced octagons framed by an oval repeated several times. This geometric pattern contains a stylised floral motif. A stem with flowers and leaves is reproduced along its neck. The main decoration is the result of a pattern produced by the superposition of circles. This shape and decoration are found in Veneto-Saracenic pieces made for the European market.

1970.06.03.1



**'Sultanabad' dish
Iran, Ilkhanid dynasty, late 13th-early 14th century
Ceramic, stonepaste body, underglaze blue and black slip,
transparent glaze**

Although Chinese motifs dominate ceramics produced under the Mongol Ilkhanid rulers of Iran, this piece has a geometric motif of concentric circles and a star and cross pattern typical of Islamic ornament. 'Sultanabad' is the name of the city (today Arak) where this kind of ceramics were first sold.

1888,0413.4



Small Vase
Egypt, 9th-10th century
Glass, moulded, tooled

The moulded decoration, blown in a single-part mould, consists of a row of large concentric rhomboids with a sunken dot in the centre. The base is decorated with a circular pattern of rhomboids, each containing a rosette of four sunken dots.

1945 10-17 263



Conical Bowl
Iran, Kashan, early 13th century
Lustreware ceramic, stonepaste body

The inside of the bowl is divided into several distinct zones of varying width encircling a central medallion filled with geometric interlace. The cavetto is decorated with two bands of benedictory inscriptions, both written in cursive lettering on the lustre ground flanked by a spiralling arabesque scroll. Vertical lines of dotted horseshoe half-roundels decorate the exterior.

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**High tin bronze Bowl, hammered and chased
Iran, Khurasan, 11th century**

The exterior of the bowl is decorated with six symmetric patterns within three types of roundels. The first is a six-pointed star radiating from a central circle. The second is a cross flanked by punched dots, and the third consists of two small circles side by side. Many geometric patterns in Islamic art are based on circles and their segments.

1981 7-7 1



**Small lusterware bowl
Northern Syria, Raqqa, 1st half 13th century
Ceramic, stonepaste body, lusterware glaze**

This bowl is divided into quadrants by a cruciform design, making the centre of the bowl the focal point where the geometric pattern originates. Although the four sections are symmetrical, two quadrants contain stylised vegetal ornament related to the arabesque, while the other two enclose peacock's eye motifs.

Godman Bequest G.270



Lusterware Cross tile

Iran, Kashan, from the Imamzadeh Yahya at Veramin of 660

AH/1262 AD

Ceramic, stonepaste body, luster glaze

This tile is cruciform-shaped with pointed ends to each arm of the cross. Although its decoration is not geometric, its shape consists of four rectangles terminating in triangles. The shape allowed the tile to alternate with eight-pointed star-tiles. The inscription is from the Qur'an.

Godman Bequest G.462



Rustam attacking the palace of Afrasiyab, from a dispersed Shahnameh manuscript

Iran, Safavid dynasty, c. 1610

Gouache and gold on paper

Geometric forms appear throughout this painting. In addition to the rectangular shapes of the buildings, doors and windows, the tilework of the middle ground consists of octagons enclosing squares. The bricks of the wall around the palace are plain and rectangular, whereas individual buildings have square and rhombic bricks.

Bequest of Sir Bernard Eckstein, Bart. 1948 12-11 07



Brass inkwell with lid, inlaid with silver and copper
Iran, 12th century

The inkwell is decorated on the sides and lid with inlaid silver kufic and naskh inscriptions and interwoven geometric designs. One motif is a rope pattern based upon six circles. Another is of four straight lines bisecting a circle and forming a square. The rings on the sides are for suspending the inkwell.

1939 6-20 1

