Catalogue no. 54

A decorative folio of poetry
Calligrapher: Unknown
Date: 16th / 17th century
Style: Nasta’iiq
Size: 11.7 x 19 cm
Accession number: 1998.2.119

Description

Shells, mother of pearl and pearls occupy a large place in Persian symbolic poetry. The folios become the ocean ground where the ink dot (a priceless pearl) moves in writing and unveils its delightful meaning.

"An un-pierced pearl from the sea of religious devotion is every dot that came from his pearl-strewn Pen."

An Ottoman album
16th Century

Text

The shell of the mother of pearl is valuable because of that single pearl inside; you are that single hidden pearl of the roaign who adorns the palace.
**Catalogue no. 55**

**A decorative folio of poetry**

- **Calligrapher:** Unknown
- **Date:** c. 17th century
- **Style:** Nasta’liq
- **Size:** 13.2 x 6.3 cm
- **Accession number:** 1998.2.46

**Description**

A beautiful diagonal arrangement of a Ruba’i poem, written in black Nasta’liq placed within cloud-shaped compartments. The triangular compartments in the background of the calligraphy reveal the beautiful combination of bouquets of flowers and leaf scrolls.

**Text**

Praise for a monarch or spiritual guide, whose head touches the heaven and the whole world sits under his protection, and the arrogant of the world humbly kiss the floor of his court.
Advice in Persian

I would like to give advice to the youngsters
Not to associate with just any worthless person
But (this advice should be formulated) in such a manner that, coming from us humble ones,
It would not shame them

Catalogue no. 56

Text

Calligrapher: Unknown
Date: c. 17th century
Style: Nasta’liq
Size: 17.7 x 8.4 cm
Accession number: 1998.2.197

In a simple composition, the calligrapher inscribes these two couplets diagonally in dark black Nasta’liq script. In the background, wisps of floral chains and sprays of blossoms fill up the entire folio in faded gold. The decorations of the single folios were made more attractive and elaborate as they were intended as ornamental panels.

خواهش که بان تازه گل از روزی نصیحت
گویند که با هر خس و خاری تنشیند
اما بطریقی که زما خاک تشیعان
بر خاطر از هیچ عیاری تنشیند
A stanza of a love poem

Calligrapher: Abdul Rashid al Daylami
Date: 1030-1072 AH / 1621-1661 AD
Style: Nasta’liq
Size: 19.4 x 10.3 cm
Accession Number: 1998.2.113

Description

A double couplet in fine black Nasta’liq written on brownish Indian paper. The text is placed within cloud-shaped compartments against a gold ground that is adorned with polychrome flowers. The folio exhibits a consistent and well-formed script, with the last line written diagonally, indicating the name of the calligrapher, Abdul Rashid al Daylami, who was a famous poet and calligrapher at the royal atelier of Shah Jahan.

The poem is a reflection of the lover who is being separated from his beloved. In a delicate manner, the poem reflects the mystical understanding of the love of man for his God, the Creator. Man as the seeker of God’s love, deviates from the divine path, and complains of the growing distance and pain forcing him to unite with the "Aghyar", the deviators.

Text

گرچه زنده است بر صاحب دلان
هر کجا ذکری ز وصل یا یار نیست

همیز زندان عاشق مشتق را
نشتر از صحت افیار نیست
Catalogue no. 58

Two couplets of prayers
Calligrapher: Khalil Allah
Date: Mid 17th century
Style: Arabic language in Nasta’liq style
Size: 18.3 x 8.7 cm
Accession number: 1998.2.24

Description
The double couplet of Arabic poetry in Nasta’liq style is synchronised and elegant. The black text is written in cha‘īqa diagonal composition on cream paper adorned with gold feathery leaves. The text box displays two triangular panels at top right and lower left corners, where the name of the calligrapher is recorded.

Text
The text calls out for Ali
Who unveils all wondertainment,
Who you’ll find as a help in all calamities
And all the worries and disappointments will fade away;

تاد علياً مظهر العجائب
تجلد عوناً في الشواب
كل هم وغم سنجلى
بولايتك يا علي يا علي
فخیر خليل الله
Catalogue no. 59

Double couplets of poetry

Calligrapher: Mohammed Saleh Isfahani
Date: 1107 AH / 1696 AD
Style: Nasta'liq
Size: 17.8 x 8.1 cm
Accession number: 1998.2.25

Description

The single folio comprises two couplets of poetry in Persian Nasta'liq. The four lines are in the chalipa diagonal manner, written in cloud-shaped compartments against a gold ground. The text recalls the Ruba'i quartet style. The last letters of the first, second, and fourth hemistich are the same set.

The poetry reflects hope for a bright future, a future that can be attained only through God's forgiveness.

Good wishes and advice were favoured as panels, they seem to have had a market demand and became a popular acquisition

Text

شلی‌ده ام که برین طارم زر اندوست
ختی که عافیت کار جمله محمودست
مگر که هم کرم او کند تدارک ما
وگر نه کیست که او دامن نیالودست

91
**Catalogue no. 60**

*A single folio of prayers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calligrapher:</th>
<th>Mohammed Salih</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>End of the 17th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style:</td>
<td><em>Nasta’liq</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size:</td>
<td>14.9 x 7.0 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession number:</td>
<td>1998.2.129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

The folio depicts eight diagonal lines of black Arabic script in the *Nasta’liq* style. The eighth line is the signature of the calligrapher. The folio is called a mashaq, indicating that it was an exercise folio, yet it reflects a highly perceptive master calligrapher.

The calligrapher inscribed a simple Doa, perhaps the one he repeated after prayers. In the process of writing it he elongated some letters, indicating that a stress and an elongated sound should be the manner in which it is recited. For example he stressed “Tawfiq” (success), Subhan and Al ‘azeem, Subhana and nasta‘een’.

**Text**

God, you grant us success  
And guide us to achieve  
Glory to God, the Greatest  
Glory to God to whom I pray  
God protect me from sins  
And I repent to Thee
Catalogue no. 61

**Two couplets of poetry**

**Calligrapher:** Abu Al Baqa al Mousawi  
**Date:** 1093 AH / 1682 AD  
**Style:** Nasta’liq  
**Size:** 22.1 x 11.6 cm  
**Accession number:** 1998.2.109

**Description**

Four lines of deep black text on a plain background are written in a diagonal composition: 'chalipa', with no border frames. The elegant Nasta’liq emphasises the horizontality of several letters by elongating them, giving them extra width and masterly sophistication. The calligrapher proudly signs and dates his folio as an expression of his satisfaction.

The text refers to the beauty of the spring season, where "trees blossom and nightingales sing, when the world rejuvenates its youth, and people young and old, mystics and laymen mix together and celebrate joyfully this auspicious occasion."

**Text**

درخت هنچه بر آورد و بلان مستند  
جهان جوان شد و یاران بیان بخشند  
بساط سبزه لکد کرب شد بیاین ششام  
زبس که عارف و عانی برقص بر جشتند
Wise sayings

Calligrapher: Nasr Aidin Ali
Date: 18th century
Style: Nasta’liq
Size: 11.7 x 8.7
Accession number: 1998.2.114

Description

In Persian Sufi poetry, a group of 6-13 verses are known as a ghazal or ode. In many cases the ghazal witnesses the rhyming of only the first couplet. Mystical poems usually reflect the desire to investigate and indulge on an “inward spiritual journey.” Here, through these verses, the Sheikh, a holy man, compares himself to the humblest of men, who contemplates on the spiritual journey of his heart and mind.

Text

Where is the Sheikh, where is the one in the very low profession *
Who discredited the way of the pious ones
He sat on the city’s tunnel and dreamt of unachievable ideas
One heart and so much sorrow, one head and so much wondering.

* the word ‘Mahmoodeh Kimokht’ is used here to refer to the profession of handling skins of animals especially those of horses and asses. It can be interpreted as referring to one from a very low profession.

کجا شیفی کجا محمود کیموفق
طرق زهد را به نام دارد
کنار خانقا ضرکره آب
نشست و خیال خانم دارد
یک دل و این همه درد و غم دل
یک سر و این همه سرگذانِی
Catalogue no. 63

Wise sayings

Calligrapher: Unknown
Date: 17th century
Style: Persian in Nasta’liq
Size: 26.4 x 14.5 cm
Accession number: 1998.2.126

Description

The beautiful composition of a poem on marbled paper shows the width of the reed pen, its nib and the darkness of the black ink. In the process of making it part of a Muraqqa’ or album, they surrounded the calligraphy with cloud-shaped compartments, and covered the remaining marbled paper in gold. The effect of the faded marbling on the background gives this folio its unique look.

Text

What is the dervish
Like a sifted speck of dust
That has been rinsed with water
With no pain under his feet
And no dust left behind his heel

دروشتی چیست
خاکی بخشته و آبی
بر و ریخته نه گل یارا
از و دردی و نه بست یا را
از و گردي