SOTHEBY'S
FOUNDED 1744

Oriental Manuscripts
and Miniatures

LONDON
WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL 1995
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SOTHEBY’S HOLDINGS, INC.

A. Alfred Taubman
Chairman

Max M. Fisher
Lord Carnarvon
Vice Chairman

Diana D. Brooks
President and Chief Executive Officer

Michael L. Aitkens + Viscount Blakenham + Ambassador Walter J. P. Curley
The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Gowrie + The Marquess of Hartington
Julian Thompson + Leslie Herbert Weather

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SOTHEBY’S EUROPE

Simon de Pury
Henry Wynneham
Chairmen

George Bailey
Managing Director

Princesse de Beauvoir de Cuvry + D.W. Bennett, F.G.A.

D.D. Brooks + P.M. Cervino + M.S.J. Clore + Dr. Christopher Graf Douglas + P. Mack

The Hon. James Stonor + M.J. Strauss + S.A. Taylor + R.J. de la M. Thompson

SENIOR DIRECTORS

J. Baddeley + M. Bing + G. Cecchettini + G. Child + N. Davey + H. Dyhlén + P.D. Garner

Dr. C. de Hamel + P. Hoek + Dr. A. Housleib + H.M. Kay + J.M. Linde + D. Luxembourg

C.J.D. Mackay + T. Meyer + J.J. Miller + J. Moore-Gwyn + F. Nicholas + E.A. Peel + P. Pollen

A. Pradèvre + A. Rhodes + L.P.H. Ritter + Dr. S. W. Roe + R. Suter + M. Southern

Comte de Limburg Stirum + J.M. Stock + S. Sturcliffe + H. Graf von Spreti + M. Thomson-Rower

J. Van Schaik + P. Waldron + H. Wernys + P.M. Whittfield + J. Wilson

The Earl of Arundel + Peter Bland + William Farrer + Sir Nicholas Henderson, K.C.M.G.

Lady Victoria Leatham + Lord Nicholas Gordon-Levett, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir Charles Morrison + The Baron Vaux, K.C.M.G.

ADVISORY BOARD, SOTHEBY’S HOLDINGS, INC.

Giovanni Agnelli + Her Royal Highness, the Infanta Pilar de Borbón, Duchess of Badajoz + Ann Getty + Emilio Giota + Alexia Gregory

Anne Ford Johnson + Sir Q.W. Lee + Graham Llewellyn

John L. Marion + The Hon. Sir Angus Ogilvy + Carroll Petrie

William Pitt + Carol Price + Prof. Dr. Werner Schmatenbach

Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza de Kesse
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Lots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qur'an leaves and Qur'ans</td>
<td>1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic, Persian and Turkish Manuscripts</td>
<td>45-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian and Turkish Miniatures</td>
<td>80-101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calligraphy and Illumination</td>
<td>102-108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacquer</td>
<td>109-113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qajar oil Paintings</td>
<td>114-118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Miniatures</td>
<td>119-160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures**  

*Sale LNS245*

---

**Day of Sale**  

Wednesday, 26th April, 1995 at 3 pm  
In the Main Galleries  
34-35 New Bond Street, London, W1

---

**On View**

- **Friday, 21st April**  
  9 am to 4.30 pm
- **Sunday, 23rd April**  
  12 noon to 4 pm
- **Monday, 24th April**  
  9 am to 4.30 pm
- **Tuesday, 25th April**  
  9 am to 4.30 pm

**Absentee Bids**

This catalogue may be referred to as LNS245 "KITAB"  
Fax (for bids only): (0171) 495 8255

Front Cover Illustration: Lot 20 (detail)  
Back Cover Illustration: Lot 123 (detail)  
Catalogue £14 at the gallery, £16 by mail, £18 overseas

---

**Sotheby’s**

Auctioneers of Literary Property and  
Works Illustrative of the Fine Arts  
34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA  
Telephone (0171) 495 8080  
Fax (0171) 495 3180  
Registered at the above address No. 874067

This sale is subject to the Conditions of Business printed in this catalogue and to reserves.
SALE ENQUIRIES AND INFORMATION

SPECIALIST IN CHARGE
Marcus Fraser
0171 408 5332

SALE ADMINISTRATOR
Camilla Previté
0171 408 5334
Fax: 0171 408 5960

CLIENT ADVISORY SERVICES
For assistance in buying at this auction.
Natacha Chiaramonte
0171 408 5204
Telephone Bidding: Anthea Roberts
0171 408 5203
Fax: 0171 408 5924

ABSENTEE BIDS
David Stanley
0171 408 5283

24 HOUR RECORDED INFORMATION
Current Auctions and Viewing
0171 408 5868
Spoken Auction Results
0171 408 5855
Faxed Auction Results
0171 408 5959

PAYMENT AND SHIPPING
Buying: Carolyn Whitehead
0171 408 5272
Selling: Anne Brockington
0171 408 5925
Shipping: Susan Barnard
0171 408 5280
Kings House, Warehouse: Peter Cobbett
0181 568 1901

SUBSCRIPTIONS
0171 408 5129
Sotheby's carries on business whether or actual or prospective buyers and sellers or consignors requiring inspection, appraisal or valuation of any description may be referred to the following section on the terms and conditions on such other terms, conditions, and restrictions as may be specified or agreed upon. It is the practice of Sotheby's to comply with the provisions of the "Road Traffic Act" and all other regulations relating to the transportation of works of art. In 1971, Sotheby's announced that it was its intention to purchase the entire catalogue of the auction in which the lot was offered, for the purpose of determining whether or not the sale was "definitive forgery." By means of the means hereinbefore stated, the prices of Sotheby's catalogues do not necessarily reflect the prices of goods sold. Therefore, the reader should interpret the following information with appropriate caution.

General conditions and definitions

(i) the description in the catalogue at the date of the sale was in accordance with the then generally accepted opinion of scholars and authorities and is fairly indicated that there was a conflict of such a description; or

(ii) the only method of establishing at the date of publication of the catalogue that the lot was a "definitive forgery" was by means of a declaration by authorities whose opinions are not generally respected or are not generally recognized.

Please refer to the back of the catalogue for clauses 17-31 inclusive, for the "Conditions Concerning Sellers and Consignors."

The conditions, in addition to the usual terms of sale and purchase, include:

(i) a buyer's claim under this condition shall be limited to any amount paid in respect of the lot and shall not extend to any loss, interest or expense incurred or expenditure incurred by the buyer in respect of the lot.

(ii) The buyer's claim under this condition shall be nil if and only if the lot is in fact a "definitive forgery" as explained in the catalogue.

(iii) Sotheby's does not make any representations or warranties, implied or express, as to whether any lot is subject to copyright, nor whether the purchaser acquires any copyright, including but not limited to any reproduction rights, in any lot sold.

For these conditions, apply and all matters common therewith shall also be governed by English law. Sotheby's hereby submits to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts and all other parties concerned hereby submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.

In these Conditions:

(a) "catalogue" includes any advertisement, brochure, estimate, price list and other publication;

(b) "fall" means the date by which a lot is knocked down by the auctioneer to the bidder;

(c) "total amount due" means the "hammer price" in respect of the lot sold, together with any buyer's premium, Value Added Tax chargeable and additional charges and expenses due from a defaulting buyer under Condition 15, in pounds sterling.

(d) "book" means any item included or proposed to be included in a sale of books and includes a manuscript or a print;

(e) "deliberate forgery" means an imitative creation with the intention of deceiving as to authenticity of the period, origin, source or style which is not shown to be such in the description in the catalogue and the reasonable expectation of the buyer and the buyer is not aware of any such characteristics or the buyer has inspected the work in question and in corporation with the description refers to bids made.

(f) Sotheby's shall have the right, at its discretion, to refuse admission to its premises to a person until it has received instructions by phone or in writing from a person, or to eject any person bid made or to stop further bidding for any reason of being responsible for the fall of any lot or for defaulting to bid in writing or failing to deliver the bidding card or for any reason of being responsible for the fall of any lot.

(g) Any indemnity under these Conditions shall extend to all actions, proceedings, costs, demands and damages which may arise as a result of any breach of this condition by the seller or any express or implied indemnity or responsibility to which the seller may be subject in respect of any claim or for whatever cause and in whatever manner sold for any damages, claims, costs, expenses, charges, losses, or any other costs, expenses, or liabilities or for whatever cause.

(h) Sotheby's makes no absolute discretion without giving any reason to refuse any fall, to divide any lot, to combine two or more lots, to withdraw or to cancel any lot or to withdraw any lot for auction at any time on its discretion in case of dispute to put any lot for auction again.

(i) Liability of Sotheby's under these Conditions is limited to the amount paid in respect of the lot and any other sums, expenses and "total amount due" to any person entitled to the benefit of the indemnity for that such person claims as a result of any such action or other proceedings, and "total amount due" to any person entitled to the benefit of the indemnity for that such person claims as a result of any such action or other proceedings.

(j) "total amount due" includes the hammer price and all other charges and expenses and all other costs and expenses which may be incurred in connection with any such action or other proceedings, and "total amount due" to any person entitled to the benefit of the indemnity for that such person claims as a result of any such action or other proceedings.

(k) "total amount due" includes the hammer price and all other charges and expenses and all other costs and expenses which may be incurred in connection with any such action or other proceedings, and "total amount due" to any person entitled to the benefit of the indemnity for that such person claims as a result of any such action or other proceedings.

(2) Certification of the lot purchased shall not pass to the buyer until he has paid in full to Sotheby's all the "total amount due."
SOTHEBY'S CARD

A Sotheby's identification card has been issued to:

Regular buyers. Please bring this with you to all sales in which you participate, as listed in the registration.

Conditions of Business

By bidding at auction, bidders agree to be bound by the Conditions of Business in force, as amended by any posted notices or oral announcements. Sotheby's specifically refers you to paragraph 47 of the Conditions, entitled "Liability of Sotheby's and Sellers." Sales are subject to reservation of title only as provided in paragraph 16.

Absentee Bids

If instructed we will execute bids and advise intending purchasers. For the service there is a fee. Lots will always be bought as cheaply as is allowed by other bidders and reserves as are on our books. In the event of identical bids, the earliest will take precedence. Always indicate a "top limit" - the amount to which you would bid if you were attending the auction yourself. "Buy" or unlimited bids will not be accepted. Orders, when placed by telephone, are accepted only on the condition that the buyer be present at the sale for the order to be considered valid.

To ensure a satisfactory service to bidders, we urge you must send bids to us at least 23 hours before the sale.

Buying in Person

To inspect the progress of the sale, all intending bidders are asked to collect a bidding paddle before the commencement of sales. All intending purchasers who do not have a Sotheby's card should bring with them some form of identification.

The numbered paddle may be used by you to indicate your bids to the auctioneer during the sale. Should you lose your bidding paddle, please indicate that your bid can be seen by the auctioneer and that it is your number that is called out. Should there be any doubts as to price or buyer, please draw the auctioneer's attention to him immediately. All lots sold will be invoiced to the name and address given against the item of the numbered bid paddles and cannot be transferred to other names or addresses. Please do not display your paddles; in the event of loss, inform the Sales Clerk. At the end of the sale please return your paddles to the registration desk.

This sale is subject to the conditions of business printed in this catalogue and to reserves.

Applications for Export Licences

European Community and United Kingdom

Sotheby's, upon request, will arrange through appropriate agencies for the relevant export licence. Full details of the categories and value limits for such specific export licences, whether or not EU or UK, are required in due course and are available upon request. The information shown here is for guidance only.

Applications for export licences are the responsibility of the export licence holder and the information shown here is for guidance only.

Wine (per consignment) - 10% for lots sold for £500 or more (15% up to £999.99). Mints, Medals and Militaria; Postage Stamps - 15% (throughout).

Veteran and Classic Cars (excluding entry fee) - 10% throughout.

Automobilia - 12½% for lots sold for £3,000 or more (15% up to £999.99).

A minimum commission of £60 will be charged on all lots with the exception of the following:

- Clocks & Watches - £40
- Coins, Medals and Militaria - £15
- Postage Stamps - Nil
- Automobilia - £40
- Wine minimum consignment commission - £30
- Cosmetics - £40

Insurance

The rate of premium payable by the vendor is 1% of the hammer price or, if unsold, 1% of the reserve price, if any, 1% of the hammer price or, if unsold, 1% of the reserve price, if any.

VAT

Commission, illustrations, advertising and marketing are subject to VAT for UK residents and those residents of EU countries who are not registered for VAT.

Payment of Sale Proceeds

Sotheby's shall remit the sale proceeds to the seller not later than 55 days after the auction, subject to all such entitlements being made in accordance with our Conditions of Business. Sotheby's offers all sellers alternative means of payment to Sterling cheques. This includes a facility to buy currency at the rate of exchange prevailing on the day of settlement. A charge of 10% will be deducted from the proceeds of sale for any payment other than by Sterling cheque.

property for inspection and valuation

Sotheby's will be pleased to give valuations and guidance regarding property brought in for inspection and for sale by vendors. This service is free of charge and is available on week days between 9.00 am and 4.30 pm. We will inspect properties and advise owners who wish to sell at auction, without charge. In certain instances however it may be necessary to charge out of pocket and travelling expenses.

CATALOGUES AND PRICE LISTS

These can be obtained on Annual Subscription £90, or with a single order £110. A Subscription Department, 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA. Telephone: 0171 408 5129 or 408 5148. Catalogues may also be purchased from our catalogue desk at the above address.

WRITTEN VALUATIONS

The provision of written valuations for Insurance, Inheritance Tax (Probate), Sale by Private Treaty or any other purpose is an important part of Sotheby's service. Valuations can be arranged through any of our International offices or salerooms in London or Bilkingham. Fees vary according to the nature and amount of work to be undertaken, but will always be highly competitive.
IMPORTANT NOTICE TO BUYERS OF FURNITURE, CARPETS, LARGE WORKS OF ART, SCULPTURE AND CLOCKS

On the afternoon of the sale purchased lots will be sent to Sotheby's, King's House Warehouse, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 3AS. Tel: (0181) 508 1900 and will be subject to a removal and handling charge of £3.00 plus VAT per lot if not collected within twelve working days (Saturday and Sunday included) of the sale. A further charge of £1.00 plus VAT per lot per week or part thereof will be levied for the next two weeks and thereafter a charge of £0.50 plus VAT per lot per week or part thereof will be incurred. Lots will only be released to the purchaser or his authorised representative if full payment has been received by Sotheby's together with settlement of any removal, handling and storage charges due.

It will not be necessary to obtain release notes prior to collecting lots from King's House. Payment for storage charges should be made direct to Sotheby's at King's House Warehouse but payment for purchases should be made to the Cashiers at Sotheby's at 34-55 New Bond Street, Wl. Buyers who have established credit arrangements with Sotheby's may collect purchases prior to payment. Bidders by post and telephone are advised to check on the afternoon of the sale whether they have been successful.

CLEARANCE AND INSURANCE

Purchasers are urgently requested to arrange clearance as early as possible and are reminded that purchases are only insured for a period of five working days following the day of sale. The loading of furniture onto the vans begins at 2pm. Purchasers wishing to clear their goods on the afternoon of the sale should contact the department's administration at the rostrum immediately after the sale or in the department before 2pm.

IMPORTANT NOTICE CONCERNING CONDITIONS OF LOTS OFFERED FOR SALE

Sotheby's are pleased to give a condition report on request. Nevertheless intending buyers are reminded that all lots are sold as shown and their attention is drawn to Clause 36 of the Conditions of Business. The absence of reference to conditions of the lot in the catalogue description does not imply that the lot is free from faults or imperfections.

UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

Whilst every care has been taken in cataloguing upholstered furniture, no guarantee can be given to the originality of timber covered by upholstery or fabric.

IMPORTANT NOTICE CONCERNING ELECTRICAL GOODS

All electrical goods are sold on the basis of their decorative value only and should be assumed not to be operative. It is essential that prior to any intended use, the electrical system is checked and approved by a qualified electrician.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR U.S. BUYERS - IMPORT OF ITEMS

Prospective U.S. buyers intending to import their purchases to the United States are advised to contact Sotheby's Shipping Department prior to the sale.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

1. U.N. EMBARGO ON TRADE WITH IRAQ

The United Nations trade embargo prohibits us from accepting bids from any person in Iraq (including any body controlled by Iraqi residents or companies, wherever carrying on business), or from any other person where we have reasonable cause to believe (i) that the lot(s) will be supplied or delivered to or to the order of a person in Iraq or (ii) that the lot(s) will be used for the purposes of any business carried on in or operated from Iraq.

Acceptance of any bid by the auctioneer is conditional upon the above being inapplicable.

For assistance and further details, please contact a member of the Expert Department or the Legal Department PRIOR to bidding.

2. EMBARGO ON IMPORTATION OF PERSIAN/IRANIAN WORKS OF ART AND CARPETS TO THE U.S.A.

Those clients considering purchasing Persian/Iranian works of art or carpets with the intention of exporting them to the U.S.A. should enquire of the relevant U.S. Government Department regarding the proper importation of such items. The Islamic and Carpet Department does however remain available to assist buyers with such enquiries, so far as is practicable.

Buyers should be aware that Sotheby's does not represent that this approval will be granted.

3. CLEARANCE OF LOTS FOR THIS PARTICULAR SALE

After 5pm on the day of the Sale large works of art and all carpets will be transferred to our warehouse and will be subject to our usual charges.

Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures

WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL 1995 AT 3 PM

All lots are offered subject to the Conditions of Business printed in this catalogue and to reserves. All lots marked with * are subject to 17½% V.A.T.

QUR'AN LEAVES

1. Large Qur'an bifolium (Sura X v.103-Sura XI v.11) in rayhâni script on paper, Egypt, Mamlûk, c.1300

11 lines to the page written in neat rayhâni script in brown ink on cream paper, interlinear Persian translation in small red wash, gold flowers decorated with coloured dots between verses, illuminated device in margins, sura heading (Sura Hud) in white on a finely illustrated panel of scrolling fanata motifs in blue, red and gold with a palmette extending into the margin, slight dampstains at top corners, 485 x 341mm.

£800-1,000

2. Large Qur'an leaf (Sura VII vv.100-129) in eastern kufic script on paper, Persia, twelfth/thirteenth century

10 lines to the page written in bold eastern kufic script in dark brown ink on brown paper, interlinear Persian translation in red, verse divisions marked with gold roundels outlined in red, illuminated oval markers outlined in blue every ten verses, larger illuminated roundels in margins (slightly trimmed), dampstaining mostly restricted to margins, edges frayed, 371 by 306mm.

From the same manuscript as lot 4 in this sale.

£600-1,200
Large Qur’an bifolium in fine mashaqqaq script on paper (Sura LXXXVII), Mamluk, c.1350-40

7 lines to the page written in mashaqqaq script on cream-coloured paper, discoveries in black, ‘basmallah’ written in gold, finely illuminated geometric gold markers between verses, large, finely illuminated devices in margins, sura heading for Surat al-Mursalat written in blue thuluth script on a finely illuminated panel of geometric and foliate motifs in colours and gold with illuminated palmette extending into margins, ‘alif’ notations written in blue, red and black in margins, some staining at top, some repairs, framed, 473 by 335mm.

This bifolium, which constitutes the whole of Surat al-Mursalat, originates from the second volume of a grand Qur’an commissioned by the Mamluk Amir Ibrahim ibn Mahmud al-Suyuti Manjuk. The first volume is in the National Museum, Damascus (see The Arts of Islam (exhibition catalogue - Hayward Gallery), London 1979, no.529, p.331). Other leaves from the same Qur’an have been sold in these rooms 19th October 1994, lot 5; 23rd May 1986, lot 262; 22nd April 1980, lot 155; and 7th December 1971, lots 262-266.

£1,560-2,000

4

Qur’an fragment (Sura XXVIII v.64-Sura XXIX v.68), five large leaves in eastern kufic script on paper, Persia, twelfth/thirteenth century

5 leaves, 10 lines to the page written in bold eastern kufic script in dark brown ink on brown paper, interlinear Persian translation in red, verse divisions marked with gold roundels outlined in red, some gold marks outlined in blue every five verses, larger illuminated roundels in margins (slightly trimmed), sura heading (Surat al-Ankabut) written in gold outlined in red, dampstaining mostly restricted to margins, edges frayed, 372 by 302mm.

From the same manuscript as lot 2 in this sale. One of the most striking aspects of eastern kufic scripts is the huge variations of style which calligraphers attained under the general heading of eastern kufic. To a greater extent than their western Islamic counterparts, the scribes of eastern kufic script injected a strong element of artistic licence into the calligraphic exercise of writing. This individuality makes comparisons between different eastern kufic manuscripts rather difficult, and the present fragment is no exception. The slightly cursive quality of the script indicates a date of late twelfth or even thirteenth century. The nearest comparative piece is a single Qur’an leaf sold in these rooms 15th April 1985, lot 63.

£3,000-4,000
Qur'an fragment (Sura II vv.276-282, Sura IV vv.48-61), Arabic manuscript on paper in eastern kufic script, Persia, eleventh century
8 leaves, 7 lines to the page written in fine eastern kufic script in dark brown ink on brown paper, interspersed Persian translations in brown ink, gold rounds, calligraphic gold roundels in red between verses, larger gold circular or oval devices in margins, some dampstains, edges frayed, 320 by 210mm.
£4,000-5,000

Fragment of a large vellum Qur'an leaf in kufic (Sura II vv.164-166), North Africa, ninth century
13 lines to the page written in large, fine kufic script in brown ink on vellum, marginalisation in red and green, verse divisions marked with triangular clusters of gold dots, divisions of five verses marked with the letter 'ba' in gold, some slight staining, frayed, trimmed with very slight loss of text, laid down on paper, 258 by 413mm.
This fragment constitutes the text area of a very large vellum Qur'an leaf. One margin remains and measures approximately 55mm. Only the first letter of every line is lost, so it can be estimated that the leaf would have measured approximately 500 by 470mm, when complete. The elegant kufic script is large (vertical letters measure 20mm, high) and shows a strong element of horizontal elongation. It can be compared with a fragment of a kufic leaf illustrated in Musawwir Senā'i, Dar Al-häuser Al-Kuwaitiyyah, Kuwait (exhibition catalogue, 19th March-19th May 1985), nos. 58, p.40.
£1,500-2,000
Illuminated opening double page from a Qur'an manuscript (Sura I - Sura II v.13), Ottoman, c.1450-80

7 lines to the page written in fine large naskhi script in black on cream paper, diacritics in black, interlinear decoration of fine gold cross-hatching with floral motifs in blue, gold floral decorated with coloured dots between verses, five border illumination in blue, green, red and gold, small inscription on reverse, edges repaired, 311 by 199mm.

£1,000-1,200

Vellum Qur'an leaf in kufic (Sura XXX vv.25-7), North Africa, tenth century

3 lines to the page written in large bold kufic script in brown ink on vellum, diacritics in red and green, ruled, edges foxed, reverse worn, few holes, 189 by 254mm.

£1,000-1,200

Qur'an fragment (Sura II-VII), Illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, Mamluk, c.1400

65 leaves, 13 lines to the page written in naskhi script on thick paper, gold floral between verses, verso headings in red thuluth, 'basmalah' in gold, opening page with illuminated panels in colours and gold above and below text, damaged, numerous repairs, 350 by 242mm, and another Qur'anic fragment consisting of 14 large Mamluk leaves in naskhi script, loose in a modern brown morocco binding.

£2,000-3,000

£1,500-2,000

Large illuminated bifolium from a Qur'an manuscript (Sura IV vv.135-162), Persia or India, c.1500-80

53 leaves, 14 lines to the page written in naskhi script on cream paper, gold roundels decorated with coloured dots between verses, margins ruled in orange, blue and gold, fine border illumination in colours and gold, trimmed, spine repaired, 350 by 241mm.

£1,000-1,500

Qur'an fragment, Illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, Persia, Safavid, late sixteenth century

53 leaves, 14 lines to the page written in naskhi script on cream paper, gold roundels decorated with coloured dots between verses, margins ruled in orange, blue and gold, catchwords, illuminated marginal devices, verso headings in white thuluth on panels of fine illumination in colours and gold, some discoloration, losses, brown, 305 by 213mm.

£1,800-2,200

From the same Qur'an as lot 14 in this sale.

£1,800-2,200
Large illuminated Qur'an leaf (Sura Al-Fatihah and Al-Nas - CXIV-CXV) in eastern kufic script on paper, Iraq or Persia, eleventh century

verso with 8 lines to the page written in fine eastern kufic script in dark brown ink on buff paper, dactyls in brown, further orthographic markings in red, blue and brown, circular devices in brown, blue or green with gold letters and surrounded by gold dots between verses, fifth verse marked by large gold device based on the letter ha, sura heading (Sura Al-Nas) in eastern kufic in white on a panel of bold illumination of stylized foliate motifs with a border band of rope-motif and a palmette extending into margin, verso with four lines of script surrounded by bold illumination in green, black, brown and gold with a palmette extending into margin, trimmed at corner with repair, in mounts, 34 by 24mm.

This is an important eleventh century Qur'an leaf in eastern kufic. It would have been the penultimate leaf of a grand Qur'an, probably in several volumes. The verso forms the right-hand page of a fully illuminated double page finispiece and the fact that Surat al-Nas ends on this folio indicates that the left-hand page would have contained a colophon. The script is typical of eastern kufic in the eleventh century and the illumination, with its bold designs, is reminiscent of western Islamic illumination of the tenth century, particularly the marginal palmettes. An interesting feature of the present leaf is that in the verse division markers the illuminator has written the exact verse count, not simply the initial letter of a word, or an epsilon rotation, but the whole Arabic word for one, two, three etc.


£8,000-12,000

Blue vellum Qur'an leaf in gold kufic (Sura II vv.267-273), Qairawan, early tenth century

15 lines to the page written in fine elongated kufic script in gold on blue-dyed vellum, silver dots between verses, large silver circular device in margin, punctum marks down inner margin from previous stitching, few words with gold script, silver ruled, trimmed, 283 by 390mm.

The Qur'an from which this leaf originates was ordered by the Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun and was intended for the Great Mosque at Mashhad. For some reason it never left Qairawan where it was executed, and the majority of the manuscript remains in the National Library in Tunis. Other detached leaves are now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, and private collections, including the Nasser D Khalili collection (see F. Déroche, The Abbasid Tradition, London 1992, no.42, pp.92-3, where the origins of the Qur'an are discussed at some length).

Several other leaves from the same Qur'an have been sold in these rooms. For further references see footnote 47 to lot 279, 20th November 1986.

£15,000-20,000