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Oriental Manuscripts
and Miniatures
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Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures

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Oriental Manuscripts
and Miniatures

WEDNESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 1995 AT 10.30 AM

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QUR'AN LEAVES AND MANUSCRIPTS

1. Large Qur'an bifolium (Sura XXVI, v.15-Sura XXVIII, v.5) in maghribi script on vellum, Southern Spain or North Africa, thirteenth-fourteenth century

7 lines to the page written in large gold maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, decorated with gold script and borders. Bound in vellum, bound in modern vellum, with original leather binding (Surats al-Fatir and Surat al-Bayyinah) written in large gold kufic letters, extended margins, gold edges, and illuminated pendants extending into margins, each in vellum, 269 x 263mm.

£1,000-1,500

2. Qur'an leaf (Sura LXXX, v.38 - Sura LXXI, v.9) in maghribi script on vellum, Southern Spain or North Africa, thirteenth-fourteenth century

7 lines to the page written in large gold maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, decorated in yellow, blue, and green, gold trilobate devices decorated with coloured dots between verses, five verses marked with gold scallop-shaped devices in text and in margins, ten verses marked with gold flutes in text and large illuminated roundels in margins, vellum binding (Surat al-Fatir) written in bold kufic script in gold with red edges with a finely illuminated pendent extending into margin, in vellum, 269 x 263mm.

£1,500-2,000

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5. CLEARANCE OF LOTS FOR THE PARTICULAR SALE

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

THIS SALE IS SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS PRINTED IN THIS CATALOGUE AND TO RESERVES.
Large vellum Qur'an leaf in kufic script (Sura XI, vv.10-21), Near East, probably Arabia, ninth century

13 lines to the page written in fine kufic script in brown ink on vellum, discrepancies in red, verse divisions marked with rows of three diagonal dashes in brown ink, ten verses marked with coloured star or rectangle, ink on reverse worn, edges slightly frayed, vertical format, 315 by 414mm.
£2,000-4,000

Four leaves from a Qur'an in maghribi script on vellum, Southern Spain or North Africa, twelfth/thirteenth century

7 lines to the page written in bold maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, discrepancies in red, blue, yellow and green, gold ornamental containing the word 'sura' in white on blue ground between verses, five verses marked with scallop shaped device in gold, ten verses marked in margins with gold pear-shaped device containing the word 'al-qaf' in white kufic on blue ground, demarcating mostly restricted to margins, 185 by 195mm.
£1,000-1,500

Large vellum Qur'an leaf in mawqif script (Sura XXIX, vv.33-41), Near East, late eighth century

16 lines to the page written in pale blue kufic script in brown ink on vellum, letter pointing of thin diagonal dashes, word pointing in red and green, verse divisions marked with short vertical row of diagonal dashes, four holes, edges affected by recent damage with some loss of text, in mounts, 202 by 367mm.

Other leaves from the same Qur'an are in Museum and private collections including the David Collection, Copenhagen (see K. von Fohr, Islamic art - The David Collection, Copenhagen 1990, p.34) and the Khalili Collection, London (see F. Déroche, The Abbasid Traditions, London 1992, pp.220-221), and several have been sold in these rooms, most recently 22nd October 1993, lot 30 and 30th April 1992, lot 317.
£1,500-2,000

Four Qur'an leaves in maghribi script on vellum, Southern Spain or North Africa, thirteenth/fourteenth century

7 lines to the page written in large bold maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, discrepancies in orange, blue and green, gold ornamental devices decorated with coloured dots between verses, five verses marked with gold scallop-shaped device in text and in margins, ten verses marked with gold fillets in text and large illuminated roundels in margins containing the word 'asriba', seen heading (Sura al-lutf) written in bold kufic script in gold with red edges, 273 by 267mm and slightly smaller.
£1,500-2,000
7. Quran fragment (including Sura XVI, vv.1-11), Arabic manuscript in maghribi script on vellum, North Africa or Southern Spain, twelfth/thirteenth century. 9 leaves, 13 lines to the page written in neat maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, diversities in red orange and blue, gold florals decorated with red and blue dots between verses, five verses marked with gold scallop-shaped device, ten verses marked with gold rounded, circular, and pear-shaped illuminated devices in margins, sura heading (Sura al-Nasih) written in gold kufic with illuminated palmette extending into margin, some repairs to edges, some dampstaining, modern stained red morocco, 183 by 153mm. A fragment of 142 leaves from the same Quran was sold at Christie’s, 11th April 1989, lot 33. £2,000-3,000

8. Quran section (Juz XVII), Arabic manuscript in maghribi script on vellum, North Africa or Southern Spain, circa thirteenth century. 43 leaves, 7 lines to the page written in bold maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, diversities in red, green and orange, five verses marked with gold scallop-shaped device, ten verses marked with gold rounded, circular and pear-shaped illuminated devices in margins, sura headings written in gold kufic with illuminated palmette extending into margin, opening sura heading in gold kufic on an illuminated panel of red cross-hatching with rectilinear gold border, opening page with large square panel of geometric illumination and extending palmette (near worn), one leaf with hole repaired, few leaves with edges repaired, some spotting and dampstaining, modern stained red morocco, with flap, 165 by 150mm. £2,000-3,000

9. Quran fragment in maghribi script on vellum, Southern Spain or North Africa, twelfth/thirteenth century. 17 leaves, 5 lines to the page written in bold maghribi script in brown ink on vellum, diversities in green, yellow, red and blue, gold tassel devices between verses, five verses marked with gold scallop-shaped device, dampstaining, later stained brown morocco, somewhat worn, with flap, 165 by 125mm. £2,000-3,000

10. Small Quran fragment (Sura II, vv.185-211), Arabic manuscript in kufic script on vellum, North Africa, tenth century. 18 leaves, 6 lines to the page written in kufic script in brown ink on vellum, diversities in red and green, five verses marked by gold device in form of the letter la’, ten verses marked with small gold rounded decorated with green and red dots, some pages with lins of ink, later Ottoman binding of red morocco with central gilt-stamped cartouche, upper cover detached, 88 by 134mm. This fragment is textually contiguous, save for one folio, and has been mishandled. It starts with Sura II, verse 197-211, then jumps back to Sura II, verse 185-196. It must be lacking one folio since the text of the second half of verse 196 and the first half of 197 is missing. £5,000-7,000

11. Nine Quran leaves in thuluth script on paper (Sura XI, vv.85-119), Masnah Egypt or Ilhanid Persia, fourteenth century. 9 leaves, five lines to the page written in bold thuluth script on thick brown paper, gold ornaments decorated with blue and red dots between verses, margins ruled in blue and gold, further text divisions marked in margins in white thuluth within finely illuminated rounds in red, gold and blue, slight dampstaining in lower and upper margins close to spine, 273 by 277mm. £2,000-3,000
12 Qur'an section (Juz V), Arabic manuscript in sini script on paper, China, sixteenth/seventeenth century

62 leaves, 5 lines to the page written in sini script on thick cream paper, margins ruled in red, catchwords in black occasionally trimmed, opening double page with text surrounded by panels of bold foliate decoration in colours and gold, folio 1a with later rondel containing Basmallah in floriated sini script, closing double page with later foliate decoration, thumbed, some staining, cloth boards, worn, with flap, 253 by 183mm.

Chinese Qur'an sections have been sold in these rooms 19th October 1994, lot 43; 27th April 1994, lot 25; 22nd October 1993, lot 36 and 28th April 1993, lot 100.

£2,000-3,000

13 Qur'an section (Juz IV), Arabic manuscript in sini script on paper, China, eighteenth century

47 leaves, 5 lines to the page written in bold sini script on thick buff paper, sura heading (Surat al-Nisa') written in red, margins ruled in red, opening double page with text surrounded by panels of foliate decoration in Chinese style in red, green and yellow, closing double page with similar decoration, folio 1a with rondel containing Basmallah in floriated sini script, thumbed, some staining, some leaves with minor planes or catchwords in a poor Arabic hand, brown morocco binding with stamped Chinese motifs, with flap, 220 by 173mm.

Sections from the same Qur'an have been sold in these rooms, 27th April 1994, lot 25 and 28th April 1993, lot 100.

£1,000-2,000

14 Large Qur'an, Arabic manuscript on paper, Egypt, Mamluk, c.1350

268 leaves, thirteen lines to the page written in fine maw;lupajj script in black ink on thick cream paper, gold rosettes decorated with blue dots between verses, ten verses and further textural divisions written in margins in gold, sura headings in gold with blue dividers, opening double page of fine illumination now damaged and repaired with loss of text and illumination, margins repaired throughout, modern stumped brown morocco with flap, 364 by 276mm.

£4,000-6,000

15 A large quantity of vellum and paper leaves and fragments from Maghribi Qur'ans and other manuscripts, Southern Spain and North Africa, circa eleventh to fifteenth centuries

In various styles of maghrabi script, 272 by 266mm, and smaller (est)

£5,000-5,000
Vellum Qur'an leaf in gold kufic (Sura XVII, vv.85-87), Qairawan, the Great Mosque, tenth century

5 lines to the page written in elegant kufic script in gold on vellum, diacritics in brown ink with red, green and blue dots, gold florals with blue surround between verses, fifth verse marked with gold, blue and red roundel containing the word 'khamsa' written in gold kufic, framed, 147 by 204mm.

Compare with two folios in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunis, which were written at the Great Mosque, Qairawan, see "Le Corneille et son temps", 2000 ans d'art et de histoire en Tunisie (Musée du Petit Palais de la ville de Paris exhibition), Paris, 1983, p.292. Two similar leaves were exhibited in Geneva, see "Treasures of Islam" (Musée Rath exhibition catalogue), London, 1985, p.34, no.1. Other leaves from the same Qur'an were sold in these rooms, 28th April 1993, lot 71; 10th April 1989, lot 169 and 10th October 1988, lot 179 (footnote includes further references).

£6,000-8,000

Large illuminated Qur'an leaf (Suras Al-Fatima and Al-Nas - CXIII-CXIV) in 'eastern kufic' script on paper, Fez, Middle North Africa, probably Cairo or Qairawan, eleventh century

recto with 8 lines to the page written in fine eastern kufic script in dark brown ink on buff paper, diacritics 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 (Surat al-Nas) in eastern kufic in white on a panel of bold illumination of stylised foliate motifs with a border band of roug-mazaf and a palmate extending into margin, verse with four lines of script surrounded by bold illumination in green, black, brown and gold with a palmate extending into margin, illumined at corners with repairs, in mount, 340 by 240mm.

Until recently on long term loan to the British Library Oriental Collections, loan no. 22.

From the same Qur'an as lot 21 in this sale.

This is an important eleventh century Qur'an leaf in so-called eastern kufic. It would have been the penultimate leaf of a grand Qur'an 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. We now know from the particular abjad system used for the verse count in lot 21 that the complete Qur'an must have originated in the North Africa or elsewhere in the Mediterranean region (see footnote to that lot for full explanation).

Other fragments from the same Qur'an are in the Khalidi Collection, London (see F. Deroche, The Abbasid Tradition, London 1992, pp.156-65).

£5,000-12,000
Qu'ran, illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, Persia, Timurid, c.1420-30

487 leaves, 11 lines to the page written in fine mawqi'in script in black ink on buff paper, gold roundels decorated with coloured dots between verses, further textual divisions noted in margins in gold thuluth, margins ruled in blue and gold, many headings in fine gold thuluth with interstices of certain letters infilled with black, on panels of red cross-hatching with floral tendrils or panels of wavy gold motifs, opening double page with interlinear red cross-hatching remarqued with 19th century Ottoman illumination, five worm holes, five leaves with repairs to outer margins, one folio with corner repaired slightly offsetting text, later brown marocco with gilt-stamped central medallion of foliate motifs, with flap, 212 by 141mm.

£2,000-3,000

Qu'ran, illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, copied by Abulahun ibn Sultan Muhammad Harawi, Persia, sixteenth century

306 leaves, 14 lines to the page written in neat naskhi script on paper, gold florals between verses, margins ruled in blue and gold, illuminated devices in wide margins, some headings in gold thuluth in panels of fine cross-hatching with foliate motifs in blue, opening double page of fine illumination in colours and gold, nineteenth century floral lacquer binding 227 by 140mm.

£2,000-3,000

Qu'ran section (Suras I, VI, XVIII, XXXIV, XXXV), Persia, early sixteenth century

59 leaves, 11 lines to the page, first and last lines written in large mawqi'in script in black, middle line in large mawqi'in script in gold, intervening lines in smaller elegant naskhi script in black, divarications in blue, black and red, interlinear and intercolophon rules in gold, margins ruled in colours and gold, catchwords in wide margins, some headings in white thuluth script on finely illuminated panels of foliate motifs, illuminated circular marginal devices, opening double page of fine illumination in colours and gold, pseudo-marble page with foliate cartouches of Yusuf ibn al-Malhi, giving the date A.H.690/A.D.1291, five pages with slight spotting and dusting, otherwise in good condition, modern brown marocco gilt, 250 by 160mm.

£4,000-5,000
AN IMPORTANT ELEVENTH CENTURY QUR'AN SECTION

21 Qur'an section (composite), illuminated Arabic manuscript in 'eastern kufic' script on thick paper, Fatimid North Africa, probably Cairo or Qairawan, eleventh century

52 leaves, 8 lines to the page written in large fine eastern kufic script in dark brown ink on thick brown paper, decorated in the same brown ink, orthographic markings in red, blue, green and brown, illuminated roundels and borders with verses giving exact verse count from 1-16 in gold kufic, five verses marked in margins with illuminated isometric device containing the word 'khamsa' in gold kufic, one verse noted, twenty etc. verse marked with a large illuminated roundel in margins with exact verse count written in gold kufic, further noting of verse count using abjad letters written within an illuminated roundel in gold kufic, literary instructions (sagla) noted in margins in gold kufic on a rounded within illuminations square, vina headings in gold kufic on illuminated panels with cross-hatching or foliate motifs and stylised palmettes extending into margins, one fully illuminated page (finispage) of bold foliate and geometric illumination, some staining and discoloration, trimmed, final two folios with repairs to outer margin, modern brown morocco gilt, 359 x 234mm.

This is a composite volume consisting of the following parts of the Qur'an:

Surat al-Anf (VII), v. 20546
Surat al-Anf (VIII), v. 1-29 (including sura heading), 5445, 72-73.
Surat al-Baqara (IX), v. 1-5 (including sura heading), 13-29, 50-100
Surat Yoosuf (X), v. 74-60, 70-92, 1059.
Surat Hud (XI), v. 1-4 (including sura heading).
Surat al-Baqar (XII), v. 11-43.
Surat Ibrahim (XIV), v. 1-16 (including sura heading).
Surat al-Nahl (XVI), v. 1-25 (including sura heading).
Surat Ibrahim (XIV), 21-25.

Until recently on long term loan to the British Library Oriental Collections, loan no. 22.

It is written in fine bold eastern kufic script and its large size allows elaborate illumination at every point where there is a textual division. The exact verse count is maintained by writing the number of verses up to ten in the relevant roundel in the text and every ten verses a larger roundel appears in the margin with the exact number, i.e. ten, twenty, thirty and so on. There is also a roundel containing an abjad letter every ten verses. This is a rare, but not unknown system, and in this case offers us the most important piece of information about the whole manuscript. Opposite the sixteenth verse of Surat al-Baqar on folio 15 is the letter kuf. This letter represents the number 60 only in the western abjad system, which was used in North Africa and the Mediterranean area. In the eastern system the letter sin represents the number 69.

This is a fascinating and important detail. It is known that so-called eastern kufic script was used in Mediterranean region for the text of the Qur'an as early as the tenth century (see F. Déroche, The Abbasid Tradition, London 1992, pp.146-51), but very few examples can be certainly attributed to the Islamic west. In the case of the present manuscript a North African provenance would accord with the bold illumination, which is in a distinctly western Islamic style.

A single leaf from the same Qur'an is lot 17 in this sale and several fragments are in the Khallil Collection, London (see F. Déroche, op. cit., no.84, pp.156-165), the first part of which was sold at Christie's, 16th June 1957, lot 77.

£60,000-90,000