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A MINIATURE QUR'AN, COPIED BY MUHAMMAD SALIM AL-DIMASHQI. OTTOMAN, DATED 1300 AH/1882-3 AD

Illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, approximately 205 leaves, 26 lines per page written in extremely minute ghubari script in black ink, sutra headings in red, opening double page of illumination, contemporary brown morocco binding and case with gilt floral motifs, in a modern brown cloth box 25 by 21cm.

This miniature Qur’an is of almost unbelievable small dimensions and must surely be one of the smallest complete manuscripts of the Qur’an. Despite the miniature size of the script, the text is legible and relatively clear.

£5,000-5,500 €5,850-6,300

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TWO QUR'AN SECTIONS IN ONE VOLUME. PERSIA. TIMURID. CIRCA 1420-40

TEXT: JUL. 12 AND JUL. 17

Arabic manuscript on paper, 54 leaves, 7 lines per page written in neat naskhi script in black ink on cream paper, gold flourishes between verses, sutra headings written in gold thuluth script on panels decorated with red cross-bchatas and floral motifs and cloud swirls in reserve, two juz’ headings of fine polychrome illumination with the juz’ titles written in gold thuluth script on floral panels, remarqued throughout, fine 16th century gilt-stamped binding with doublures decorated with medallions and coromseilles of gold filigree over polychrome grounds. Text area: 14.9 by 10cm. Remargined page 23.4 by 16.4cm.

The very fine illumination of the two juz’ headings is typical of the work of the Shiraz school of the second quarter of the 16th century.

£8,000-10,000 €9,800-12,200
A FINE AND LARGE QUR'AN ATTRIBUTABLE TO RUBZIBAN
MUHAMMAD, PERSIA, SAFAVID, PROBABLY SHIRAZ, EARLY 16TH
CENTURY

320 leaves, 13 lines per page, first and last lines written in large muhaqqaq script in blue ink, middle line written in gold muhaqqaq script, intervening lines written in fine, small ruq'ah script in black ink on gold-spinkled paper, gold montels between verses, lateral panels of floral illumination within text area, fifth and tenth verses marked in margins with illuminated roundels, sura headings written in white or gold kufic script on finely illuminated panels of floral illumination, three opening double pages of fine illumination, including a double-page shamsa, central double page fully illuminated at Susa al-Kafi, three illuminated double pages at end with closing prayer and Fathama, leather bound gilt-stamped red morocco binding, with flap 37 by 24cm.

This is an extremely fine manuscript of the Qur'an, written in an excellent hand and with profuse and exquisite illumination. The sheer quality of the production of the present Qur'an is noteworthy. The text of the Qur'an is written in a variety of finely executed scripts in a variety of colours. The manuscript contains seven fully illuminated double pages, and the illumination is executed with breathtaking skill. Even under strong magnification the floral motifs and split palmettes lose none of their crispness and detail, and indeed some of the painting is so finely applied as to be almost invisible except under magnification. Other characteristics of the quality are the use of two tones of gold and the stippling effect applied to certain areas of the gold grounds by impressing a rounded point into the paper. This latter trait was only seen on the finest examples of illumination.

The illumination in this manuscript is of a style associated with early Safavid manuscript production, and there are several aspects that link it more specifically to the work of Rubziban Muhammad (active 1514-97), the well-known master scribe and illuminator of early 16th century Shiraz. Characteristics that can be directly compared to Rubziban’s work are as follows:

1. The strong use of broad areas of red ground in the illumination, seen here in the sura headings and lateral panels, for example, on fols 15v-4v, 299v, 300r, are seen in very similar displays in the signed Rubziban manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (see Ashen 1983, pl 7) and the signed manuscript in the Nasir D’AlHilli Collection (see James 1990, p154).

2. The geometric framework of the frontpiece of the present manuscript, which also appears on the frontpiece of the signed Rubziban Qur’an in the Khalili Collection (see James 1992, p146-7), and it is also used in a strikingly similar design on a manuscript of the Kalimat of Jami’ of Shiraz, dated 947/1534 (when Rubziban was still active), sold in these rooms 14 October 1999, lot 23.

3. The style of the opening shamsa, which is close to those on the signed Chester Beatty Library manuscript (see James 1983, p177) and the attributed manuscript in the Sackler Gallery, Washington D.C., (see Lowry and Nemazee 1989, p165).

4. The style of central illuminated double page of the present manuscript is very close to the frontpiece of the signed Chester Beatty Library Qur’an (Ashen 1983, pl7)

For a detailed discussion of Rubziban and a list of signed and attributed manuscripts see James 1992, pp 144-163.

€ 100,000-120,000 € 120,000-140,000

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND CONDITION REPORTS AT 300DPI.COM
A LAVISHLY ILLUMINATED QUR'AN, PERSIA, SAFAVID, MID-16TH CENTURY

Illuminated Arabic manuscript on paper, 437 leaves, 12 lines per page written in fine nashri script in gold-sprinkled cream paper, small gold flowers between verses, margins ruled in colours and gold, fifth and tenth verses marked in the margin with illuminated devices, sura headings written in white thuluth script on illuminated panels, each justified by a fully illuminated double page, three further illuminated double pages at the beginning with spacing text and three further illuminated double pages at the end with prayers and Fihams, five original gold-stamped brown morocco binding with central field and border cartouches of floral motifs and cloud scrolls, fine gold-stamped champlevé with central field of tightly interwoven cloud scrolls, central medallion and corners of gilt designs over polychrome grounds, border cartouches of gilt-stamped calligraphy consisting of pious phrases and an outer border band with further cartouches of gilt designs, full flap, 29 x 21 cm.

This is an exceptional Qur'an manuscript, exquisitely and profusely illuminated with 36 fully illuminated double pages and bearing a superb original Safavid gilt-stamped binding. Many Safavid Qur'ans have two or three double pages of illumination at the beginning and end, but very few indeed have an illuminated double page for every sura. The sequence of illuminated pages in this manuscript is as follows:

Folio 1 verso bearing the opening text of Surat al-Fath in white naskhi script within two radiating shamsas within the fully illuminated panels.

Folio 2 verso bearing the opening text of Surat al-Baqara written in gold naskhi script within cupped medallions in the centre of the fully illuminated panels.

Folio 3 verso bearing the continuation of Surat al-Baqara written in twelve lines per page on gold ground with radiating border illumination.

Three folios follow a further twenty-nine fully illuminated double pages, one for each sura.

Folio 42 verso bearing the text Surat al-i'asa written in interlinear gold and floral illumination and border illumination of scrolling foliate tendrils and cloud scrolls in gold.

Folio 42bis verso bearing the text of a closing prayer written in white thuluth script in central cupped medallions with fully illuminated panels.

Folio 43 verso bearing further prayers written in white naskhi script in fully illuminated tabular panels with radiating border illumination.

Folio 43bis verso bearing the Fihams written horizontally and diagonally in fully illuminated tabular panels in thuluth and naskhi scripts.

Very few Qur'ans with such profuse illumination have appeared at auction in the last two decades. For comparable examples see sales in these rooms, 25 October 1992, lot 581, 21 April 1994, lot 15, and 15 October 2005, lot 5.

The contemporary binding of the present Qur'an is also of exceptional quality and in a good state of preservation.

£ 60,000 - 120,000