28- Gullistan Saadi

Access no.: 11 M. Adab Farsi
Calligrapher: Sultan Mohammed Nur
Date: Unknown
Style: Safavid
Size: 17.5 x 26 cm

This is a copy of the Gullistan of Saadi Shirazi inscribed in 148 folios by the reknown calligrapher Sultan Mohammed Nur who was active in Herat during the first half of the 16th century.

The manuscript, as many others, was moved at a later period to another atelier where it was remounted on different and larger folios, with an illustrated double frontispiece and two miniatures added to it. That was common practice, where the addition to, and adornment of older manuscripts gave it more value and richness. The frontispiece is exquisitely illustrated with an outdoor theme showing the gathering of two lovers drinking and enjoying the sound of music performed by their attendants.

This theme, and the manner in which the miniature was executed, is characteristic of the period at the beginning of the 17th century under Shah Abbass Safavid. Riza Abbasi was the most renowned artist of the period.
Access no.: 16 M. Adab Farsi
Calligrapher: Emir Hassan
Date: Unknown
Style: Provincial Safavid
Size: 13.5 x 25.5 cm

This manuscript is a copy of the poems of Saadi Shirazi in 220 folios each divided into a text space and marginal space. The text space includes the verses of Gulistan Saadi, while the margin holds the Bustan poems. The illustrations on the title page are much exaggerated, placing the text into cloud bands against gold and floral background.

The manuscript reflects a provincial Safavid atelier, with its static and simple compositions and folded turbans with batons.
This manuscript of Nizami Khamsah inscribed in 347 folios, with nine miniatures, reveals the traditional four column page composition popular during the 16th century in Persia.

The manuscript chapters open with a highly illuminated Unwan (Title) page, yet their cartouches lack the title of the section, confirming the possibility that they were only added at a later time. The miniatures have been retouched at a much later date, and in some cases completely repainted.

The European faces, with their shades and blushes, and the color scheme used suggest an 18th century atelier. The manuscript gives reference to Mirza Mohammed and the year 1159 H / 1750 AD Mirza Mohammed may have been the new owner of the manuscript, if not the illustrator.

Laila meets Majnun in the wilderness
لبي السائح مع مجنون في الغابة