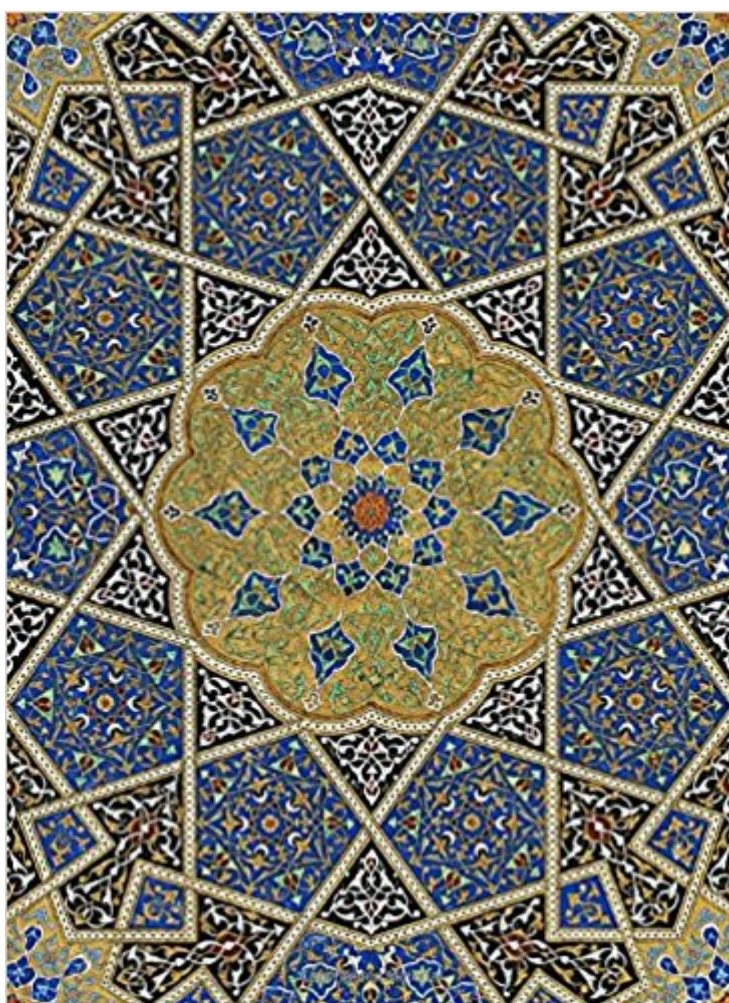


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# The Art Of The Qur'an: Treasures From The Museum Of Turkish And Islamic Arts



## Synopsis

In the early twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire was in political turmoil. Officials moved valuable artworks—including thousands of sumptuous Qur'an (Koran) manuscripts and loose pages dating from the 7th to 17th century—to Istanbul to ensure their safety. Penned by celebrated calligraphers and embellished by skilled illuminators and bookbinders, these manuscripts are now housed in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi or TIEM) in Istanbul, established in 1914. This story unfolds in *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, the companion publication to the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery's groundbreaking exhibition, the first major presentation of Qur'ans in the United States. The book's authors describe the formation of this one-of-a-kind collection and the history of TIEM, whose centuries-old records on patrons, calligraphers, illuminators, and provenance allow us to create "biographies" detailing the production of the Qur'ans in the exhibition. Essays address the Qur'an as a written text—from content and organization to the elaborate calligraphy and illuminated designs that transformed the volumes into beautiful artworks. *The Art of the Qur'an* also includes in-depth descriptions of some seventy works from TIEM and the Smithsonian's Sackler and Freer Galleries. It features full-page, color images of the earliest known Qur'an folios and manuscripts from the Umayyad and Abbasid Near East (7th-10th century), Seljuk Iran and Anatolia (12th century), the Mongol Il-Khanid and Timurid empires and Mamluk Cairo (14th and 15th centuries), Safavid and Ottoman empires (16th and 17th centuries) as well as a number of mosque furnishings, such as Qur'an boxes and stands. Most of these works have rarely, if ever, been published.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**LIBRARY JOURNAL**Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same name at the Freer Sackler Galleries at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC, this volume succeeds in giving a thorough overview of the history of the Qur'an and the role of Qur'anic text in Islamic societies from the late seventh through the 17th centuries. Accompanying essays from experts with academic, museum, and library backgrounds cover a historiography of the topic, a history of collecting and exhibiting Qur'ans, and the evolution of and regional distinctions in materials, layouts, and styles (in calligraphy and in illumination and ornamentation). Though dry at times, the writing is clear and easy to follow. The catalog's 67 entries include beautiful photographs of the items (Qur'ans, Qur'an chests, and Qur'an stands) alongside detailed item descriptions. A glossary is included. **VERDICT** Students and experts of Islamic history, religious studies, and Islamic art will find this work extremely useful and will delight in its comprehensive nature. Essential for academic and art libraries, but not a necessary purchase for public libraries. —Jennifer Naimzadeh, Richland Lib., Columbia, SC

**MASSUMEH FARHAD** is chief curator and curator of Islamic art at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. A specialist in the arts of the book from 16th- and 17th-century Iran, Farhad has curated numerous exhibitions on the arts of the Islamic world and coauthored *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites in Safavid Iran* (2004) and *Falnama: The Book of Omens* (2009). **SIMON RETTIG** is the curatorial fellow for the arts of the Islamic world at the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. He holds a PhD in the history of Islamic art and architecture from Aix-Marseille University. He curated the Sackler's 2014 exhibition *Nasta'liq: The Genius of Persian Calligraphy*.

Just a wonderful exhibit and a fantastic catalog. Fascinating articles, amazing photography. I will cherish my visit to this exhibit for years and always look back to this book as a way to re-visit the Sackler gallery.

This is the catalogue of a fantastic exhibition held at the Sackler Museum in Washington, D.C. The book itself is beautifully produced with up-to-date scholarly information and great illustrations. This should be a must for anyone interested in Islam, Islamic art, the history of Arabic calligraphy, and the art of the book.

Wonderful, beautiful, comprehensive

This is a lovely book. It is well thought out and provides plenty of illumination pages with documentation.

IN GREAT CONDITION

A gorgeous book and great companion to the exhibit at the Sackler which we recently saw. The exhibit deepened my understanding of Islam and the Qur'anic treasures that were exhibited were marvelous. Powerful reminder of how art and deep spirituality intersect and support each other.

Superb collection and a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition of Quran's from the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

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