

Islamic 'beautiful writing' a brocade of the pen

East Lansing, Michigan—

The Kresge Art Museum will present an exhibition of Islamic writing entitled *Brocade of the Pen: The Art of Islamic Writing*. Curated by Carol Fisher, museum education coordinator, the exhibition runs until April 21.

As the most important design element in Islamic art, writing holds a special place in the Islamic aesthetic. In this exhibition, 85 objects will demonstrate the use of "beautiful writing" on two and three dimensional objects, and selected photographs will illustrate its use on important Islamic architectural monuments.

These items and photographs are drawn from private collections in New York City, Washington, D.C., Cambridge, Massachusetts, Detroit and East Lansing, as well as the collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts; the University of Michigan, Rare Book Room; the University of Michigan Museum of Art; the Aga Khan Photographic Archives of Islamic Art, Harvard and MIT; and the Wexner Center, Ohio State University; as well as the Kresge Art Museum.

Rather than a comprehensive overview of the art of writing, the goal of this exhibition is two pronged in that it presents the concept of Islamic writing as an introduction for the general public and at the same time uses the objects to raise questions of a more specialized nature pertaining to the study of writing within the body of Islamic art for those interested in probing more deeply.

The exhibition will focus on

questions concerned with: the manufacture of beautiful writing; the aesthetics of beautiful writing; symbolism in the art of beautiful writing; examples of the function of beautiful writing and examples of the use of beautiful writing on three dimensional objects such as metalwork.

A catalogue subsidized in part by the Institute of Turkish Studies, Washington, D.C. and The Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities, Michigan State University, edited by Carol Fisher and containing essays by Ulku Bales, Holly Edwards, Heath Lowry, Nancy Micklewright, Raymond Silverman and Mohamed Zakariya will be for sale.

Docent-led tours of the exhibition will be offered to the general public upon request and a teacher's resource packet designed to supplement history, social studies, humanities, geography and art classes is for sale at the museum for \$2. Videos *Islamic Art* and *Suleyman the Magnificent* are available for viewing upon request throughout the exhibition.

Museum hours are 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays except Thursday, noon-8 p.m. Thursday, 1 p.m.-4 p.m. weekends. Admission is free. Call 517-355-7631 for more information.

The Kresge Art Center is located east of the old Auditorium and north of the Red Cedar River on Auditorium Road. The building houses the Kresge Art Museum and the Michigan State University Department of Art.



ISLAMIC AESTHETIC— The exhibit's 85 objects, including this 12th century Persian silhouette ware jug, demonstrate the use of "beautiful writing."

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