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## Overview Of The Islamic Calligraphy Exhibition At The Metropolitan Museum Of Art

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is the largest museum in the United States, it is a 2.2 million square feet museum with more than 2 million collections of work. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, also known as the Met, wasn't originally so enormous, as the content of work kept adding, the museum had various additions added to the building. The Met was founded in 1870 by a group of businessmen, artists, and financiers. The purpose of the museum was to educate American people on art. The Metropolitan Museum has a collection on London firearms, people of the Kharga Oasis, fashion around the world, Indian paintings, writing and picturing in Islamic calligraphy, and many more collections. The focus of this essay is the beautiful collection on the writing and picturing in Islamic calligraphy. Calligraphy is written art, it is the composition of lettering with a broad tip brush or other writing instruments. The writing and picturing in the Islamic calligraphy collection is fascinating to many people. The word calligraphy comes from "Greek words kallos, meaning beauty" which it really does withhold and The Met Museum portrays that beauty. Calligraphy was and is a major achievement of Islamic civilization, it is a fundamental element of Islamic art. The Qur'an, which is the central religious text of Islam and Muslims believe is a revelation from God. It is written in Arabic calligraphy which has an aesthetic attraction, seen as art. When writing in calligraphy, an entire word looks like several brush strokes or a single letter looking like an embellishing knot. In Islamic art, vegetal patterns are seen as decorative elements of art. Calligraphy embellishes objects, architecture, and items of daily use, in a way that makes them seem so elegant and decorative, in the Islamic world. Islam has such creativeness and decorative skills in a written style that no other religion or culture has ever had.

The Islamic calligraphy exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum has been open since April 8, 2019 and has about four dozen beautiful attractions based on calligraphy. The combination of writing and picturing in Islamic calligraphy is seen in the objects at The Met. The Metropolitan Museum includes works of art from the ninth century to present, ceramic arts with calligraphy, metalwork, art of the Qur'an, and paper written calligraphy. There is a selection of modern day work by artists from Turkey, Pakistan and Iran, countries where the written word is their primary mode of artistic expression. Islamic calligraphy became a thing in the 7th century when it was used to write the holy book of Islam, the Qur'an. The first calligraphy was known as Kufic, after a city in southern Iraq. After that, calligraphy became an important way of creative and decorative art. The Islamic collection has had an impact on the museum itself. The collections highlight the diversity and connectedness of all the other cultures represented. The art allows visitors to understand different perspectives and a chance to explore the rich and artistic skills of

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Islamic cultures. The Metropolitan Museum becomes bigger and more well-known with the more knowledge it gives people. The Islamic calligraphy collection has had an impact on the visitors of the museum. It gives visitors a view on the idea that even calligraphy is a form of art. Islamic calligraphy fascinates many of the visitors with its sophistication, the different styles, uniqueness, and of course, its beauty. Islamic calligraphy has a huge impact on the improvement of art all over the world, it has influenced different cultures about how different art can be. New styles of art were brought into the world and Islamic art has become a cultural exchange type of thing. Calligraphy has actually become a priority in some schools because the style is seen to be very important and liked by many. I personally am very interested in this exhibition, not because I practice Islam, but because I find calligraphy such a skillful talent knowing that Muslims use that as their form of art amazes me. I did not know that I read art almost every other day of my life, because I read Arabic calligraphy in the Quran.

I remember when I first walked into the Metropolitan Museum, to me it was just a huge building that had thousands of people walking in and out of it. Since I was already across the street at Central Park and I had a free full day, I decided to walk into the museum to explore. I walked in, looked at all the collections, and then I saw the Islamic art collection on my left. I walked to check it out, the first piece of art, a pink paper ripped out of a Qur'an, was something I knew I had seen before. I read whatever was written on it fluently and found it so fascinating because you rarely see a Qur'an in different colors and that old. It was art, art in its own way, Islamic calligraphy art that I didn't know was actually a thing. I decided to explore the entire Islamic collection and everything I saw was literally one-of-a-kind, something that I'd barely find anywhere else. I was amazed by everything that I decided to take my sisters to check it out with me. The Metropolitan Museum has many art pieces that pop out to me, but one that really stands out is Mosque Lamp for the Mausoleum of Amir Aydakin al-'Ala'i al-Bunduqdar. It is a light-brownish mosque lamp made after 1285 in Cairo. This specific art piece caught my attention because of how it's built. In the middle there is a bow surrounded by Arabic calligraphy. I can read Arabic fluently, just don't know the meaning behind what I'm reading, but I did manage to ask someone what the writing meant. The writings reveal that the lamp was ordered for Aidakin's mausoleum which is a building in Cairo. Another important piece of art that caught my eye was a wool carpet, known as a prayer mat. It caught my eye because it has calligraphy written on all around it, a specific type of calligraphy known as Pseudo-Kufic. It was originally supposed to be written in Arabic calligraphy at all four borders, but the designer understands that the end is where people step on and the Arabic calligraphy should not be stepped on, so he blurs out calligraphy from the end to make it seem illegible. The other three borders are legible, so I get a chance to read the Arabic. I find the Islamic calligraphy collection at The Met very attractive and beautiful art.

The art pieces in the Islamic collection at The Metropolitan Museum all have specific provenances that are from all around the world. Album Leaf with Calligraphic Exercise, art

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piece, was created by Asadullah Shirazi. He even wrote a book with practice pages to strengthen a calligrapher's hand and create discipline for the repetition of letters in writing. The Prayer Book piece was created by 'Abd al-Qadir Hisari. He was known for his "calligrams and pictorial calligraphic compositions". He also created another piece that is in the collection which is the Calligraphic Galleon. This is an image of a ship that has the names of the "Seven sleepers and their dog" which are written in Islamic calligraphy at the bottom. Through my research I found out that the exhibition was made possible by the Hagop Kevorkian Fund. The exhibition has pieces from all over the Islamic world such as Spain, South Asia, and places beyond that. The Metropolitan Museum is a New York institution that many people from all around the world are very fond of. Many pieces of art at the museum are widely ranged, since they're from many parts around the world. The pieces have been on display for only three months and the exhibition closes on November 3rd. This exhibition really gives a good view on how a piece of art gives off a different aspect of writing and picture that gives the viewer about a point. This particular museum doesn't just have paintings, but it has paperwork, ceramic work, and work on carpets. The Islamic calligraphy exhibition at The Met shows how the Islamic culture has broadly explored the creative and decorative skills of written work. Many Islamic countries use written work as their form of communication and artistic skills. The Islamic calligraphy exhibition at The Met Museum is just as wonderful and fascinating as the other exhibits.

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