



Islamic Designs for Artists and Craftspeople (Dover Pictorial Archive)

Eva Wilson

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Based on actual designs dating back as far as the ninth century, the 280 royalty-free designs in this volume constitute a rich and varied archive of authentic Islamic motifs. Embodying Chinese floral patterns, nonfigurative and stylized motifs from Central Asia, and a wealth of decorative calligraphic and geometric designs developed by Muslim artists, these illustrations include a wide variety of geometrics, florals, foliates, and animal and human figures. (Although excluded from public, political, and religious buildings because of religious restrictions, depiction of the human figure was tolerated in private dwellings such as harems and baths.)

Carefully researched and beautifully rendered from book illustrations, pottery, metalwork, carvings, and other sources, the patterns come in a splendid variety of imaginative motifs: leaf scrolls, intertwining tendrils, repeating bands, combinations of geometrical shapes and flowing scrolls, bold calligraphic inscriptions, interlacing ribbons, and much more — all set within circular, rectangular, and hexagonal frames, ten-pointed star grids, borders, and many other shapes. Dozens of plates show various stages in design construction, revealing how intricate and complicated-looking patterns are built on simple geometric principles and traditional patterns.

Originally published under the auspices of the British Museum, *Islamic Designs for Artists and Craftspeople* contains a perceptive introduction describing the origins of ornamental patterns developed in accordance with the teachings of the Koran. Additional notes provide useful information on materials and creative techniques.

Crafters and art students will find this collection a stimulating source of inspiration. Commercial artists and designers in search of attractive textile, wallpaper, leatherwork, and needlework patterns will turn to this volume again and again.

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