

Backgrounder on Works of Art in the Aga Khan collection

Islamic Art (page 12)

- Refers to visual arts that were produced in regions of the world where Islam was the predominant religion and culture.
- In broad terms this includes the following forms of art:
 - Manuscript illuminations and painting
 - Objects made of: glass, ceramics, metal, wood, ivory,
 - Textiles
 - architecture
- These forms are only a small representation of the diversity of art forms that developed across Europe, Africa and Asia, west to Spain and East to China and dating back to the 7th century and up until today.

Big ideas about Islamic Arts and Muslim Societies (page 18)

- The production of art varies in range and breadth across both time and geographical boundaries
- There is a wide spectrum in the purpose and uses of the art, ranging from religious to secular and courtly to utilitarian.
- Calligraphy has an important place in the art.
- Islamic art is a great source of inspiration for creative design projects
- There are many mathematical principles and concepts embedded and found in Islamic art that leads to a greater understanding of both mathematics, in particular geometry and in the arts.
- Great connections can be found between art and science.
- Similar to the way in which the art reflects plurality and diversity, so too does this represent an opportunity to understand both the diversity and plurality of Muslim societies in Canada and around the world today.

The works of art in the Aga Khan Museum Collection (page 10)

- Works on paper: manuscripts, individual folios of calligraphy, miniature paintings and related documents.
- Three-dimensional pieces (objects): ceramics (tiles, bowls, other earthenware), metalwork (candlesticks, astrolabe), jewellery (necklaces, bracelets), architectural elements (arabesques, fountains, doors), textiles (clothing and fabrics), and glass.

Calligraphy (decorative writing) (page 11)

- Calligraphy is used for decoration with the goal of embellishing both material objects and architecture.
- This is a highly developed art-form that is appreciated for its form and the skills of the calligrapher rather than its legibility