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TERRES D'ISLAM

LES COLLECTIONS DE CÉRAMIQUE MOYEN-ORIENTALE DU MUSÉE ARIANA À GENÈVE

ANNE-CLAIRE SCHUMACHER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAURO MAGLIANI

The Islamic collection in the Musée Ariana contains over 700 pieces, covering a period of one thousand years (from the eleventh to the twenty-first century) and encompassing a vast geographical area ranging from Transoxiana, Persia, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt in the east right up to Spain in the west. It illustrates the main technical innovations introduced by the inventiveness of Middle-eastern potters, who were anxious to compete with Chinese kilns. It was in this context that potters in Mesopotamia perfected their faïence in the eleventh century, expertise taken up by the Persians in the next century. Architectural squares and panels, everyday plates, and ceremonial dishes were decorated with attractive and elaborate geometric, vegetal, calligraphic, or animal designs. A broad range of colours was used, especially cobalt blue, azure, and metallic finishes. This substantial collection had not yet been the object of specific scientific examination. The present publication, drawing contributions from experts in the field and designed to accompany an exhibition, aims to fill this gap.

Anne-Claire Schumacher is a curator in the Musée Ariana in Geneva and the author of several articles and publications connected with the collections in the Musée Ariana, including *La Manufacture de porcelaine de Langenthal, entre design industriel et vaisselle du dimanche*, 5 Continents, Milan 2012.

Mauro Magliani is an art photographer with an international reputation. He has worked for several museums and collectors around the world.