

# Figurative Art | Human Representation

‘During later periods, figurative art manifested primarily in manuscript illustrations and ceramics.’

In later periods although the human form is still present, it does not occur with the same frequency as it had done in the art of the Umayyad period. During the Abbasid (132–750 / 923–1517), Fatimid, and in the periods following, figurative art was manifest primarily in manuscript illustrations and ceramics, where a broad variety of subjects both religious and secular, were addressed. Religious themes include the Prophet's mystical journey and His Ascension. Secular subjects include scenes from daily life and expressions of the ruler's splendour.



**Name:**  
Dish

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira first half of 11th century / AD first half of the 17th century Ottoman

**Details:**  
Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (Medelhavsmuseet)  
Stockholm, Sweden

**Justification:**  
A dish with a male figure from the twilight period of the Ottoman ceramics industry in Iznik. Figurative depictions on Iznik ceramics were inspired by popular imagery.

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Dish

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira first half of the 11th century / AD first half of the 17th century Ottoman

**Details:**  
Museum of Cultural History  
Lund, Sweden

**Justification:**  
A dish with a female figure from the twilight period of the Ottoman ceramics industry in Iznik. Figurative depictions on Iznik ceramics were inspired by popular imagery.

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**Name:**  
Figurative architectural fragment

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 7th century / AD 13th century Artuqid period

**Details:**  
Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts  
Sultanahmet, Istanbul, Türkiye

**Justification:**  
The Artuqids (c. 494–812 / 1101–1409) employed naturalistic and fantastical figures which had symbolic meaning and applied it to the decoration of both artefacts and architecture.

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**Name:**  
Siyer-i Nebi ('Biography of the Prophet')

**Dynasty:**  
mid hegira 11th century / AD 17th century Ottoman

**Details:**  
Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts  
Sultanahmet, Istanbul, Türkiye

**Justification:**  
Mostly encountered in the manuscripts, the Prophet Muhammad, seen here talking to Archangel Gabriel, is usually depicted with his face concealed behind a veil.

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**Name:**  
Brazier

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 2nd century / AD 8th century Umayyad

**Details:**  
Jordan Archaeological Museum  
Amman, Jordan

**Justification:**  
A brazier decorated with erotic scenes; on each of its four corners there is a statuette of a female nude.



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**Name:**

Fresco panel: 'Tall Standing Woman at the Edge of a Pool'

**Dynasty:**

Hegira first third of the 2nd century / AD second third of the 8th century Umayyad

**Details:**

In situ at Qusayr 'Amra  
Amman, Jordan

**Justification:**

A fresco in situ at Qusayr 'Amra depicting three naked women bathing, one of whom stands obliquely in the foreground with a baby in her arms; the scene is reminiscent of similar compositions in classical art.

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