

Echoes of Paradise: the Garden and Flora in Islamic Art | The Role of Individual Plants and Flowers

‘Some flowers were particularly popular; a particular favourite was the rose.’

Some flowers were particularly popular and are represented repeatedly in the arts of the Muslim world. A particular favourite was the rose. In popular Islamic tradition the rose was created from a drop of sweat which the Prophet Muhammad lost during his miraculous night journey to Paradise. It also symbolises the unity of Allah, its petals the Muslim Umma, or community. Others see the rose as a symbol of the Prophet at the heart of all believers. Its thorns remind us of the difficulties Muslims have to overcome in their quest for God. Its scent anticipates those of the paradisiacal rose gardens to come.



Name:

Embroidery

Dynasty:

Hegira early 12th century / AD early 18th century Ottoman

Details:

Museum of National Antiquities
Stockholm, Sweden

Justification:

This fine embroidery is decorated with rose-like flowers and was used to cover a turban, a sign of authority and rank in Ottoman Turkey.



Name:

Embroidery

Dynasty:

Hegira early 12th century / AD early 18th century Ottoman

Details:

Museum of National Antiquities
Stockholm, Sweden

Justification:

The delicate rose sprays on this turban cover are worked in a naturalistic manner.



Name:

Dish

Dynasty:

Hegira around 1009 / AD around 1600 Ottoman

Details:

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

Justification:

Here, the rose and the tulip, another flower with religious overtones, are combined in a harmonious all-over design.
