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How do we know Islamic art? What tells us that images and artifacts are products of the Muslim world, a culture that has historically extended from Spain to Southeast Asia and spanned a period from A.D. 622 to our day? This exquisitely and extensively illustrated book allows readers to identify those elements and themes that define art forms as Islamic, and to examine them in works of painting and metalwork, in calligraphy and manuscripts, ceramics, glass, wood, and ivory comprising one of the most imposing collections of arts from across the Muslim world.

Arranged thematically--in chapters focusing on religion and belief, the supernatural and natural worlds, feasting, the hunt, war, music, and power--Islamic Art in Detail provides a much-needed cultural context for these widely varied works while pointing out exceptional features. In its exploration of selected works, the book juxtaposes images of each object with enlarged details--details that might otherwise be virtually invisible to the naked eye--affording surprising comparisons between seemingly unrelated pieces and offering a rare multifaceted view of the art, technique, and iconography of some of the Islamic world's most beautiful images and artifacts.