

The Courtauld Bag hunters - colouring sheet

The Courtauld Bag was made in Mosul (present-day Iraq) in the early 14th Century. At this time, Mosul was an important metalworking centre and was located on a major East-West trade route.

The bag is made of inlaid gold and silver on sheets of brass. The decoration on the bag includes a large roundel on the front and back. Both of these depict hunters on horseback, one of which is killing a lion with a spear. The other is carrying a bird of prey on his arm, which would have been used to hunt mammals such as foxes and hares.

All the pictorial panels on the bag have a background of dense, scrolling stems and leaves. Geometric decoration is also a major part of the decorative scheme of the bag, the patterns on these roundels are based on a triangle grid.

Some areas of inlaid decoration have been lost.



The Courtauld Bag is on display at the History of Science Museum as part of the exhibition Precious and Rare: Islamic metalwork from the Courtauld Gallery. The exhibition is a partnership between The Courtauld and the Subject Specialist Network (SSN) for Islamic Art and Material Culture (hosted by Birmingham Museums) and made possible with Art Fund support.

