

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION - DRAGON & PHOENIX CENTURIES OF EXCHANGE
BETWEEN CHINESE AND ISLAMIC WORLDS

BASIN IN THE NAME OF AN OFFICER OF SULTAN AL-MALIK AL-NASIR MUHAMMAD IBN QALA'UN



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THEMES



SUBJECT AREAS



BASIN IN THE NAME OF AN OFFICER OF SULTAN AL-MALIK AL-NASIR MUHAMMAD IBN QALA'UNK

Egypt or Syria

End of 13th – beginning of 14th century

Brass, inlaid with gold and silver

Louvre Abu Dhabi

KEY FACTS

- This basin belongs to a metallic collection produced in Syria and Egypt 850 years ago and which were used primarily for washing and holding water. We can tell that by looking at the fishpond motif inside the bowl.
- Under the lip of the basin, two small inscriptions show the name of an officer from the army of Sultan al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qal'un.
- The basin's body is inscribed with wishes addressed to the owner in elegant cursive script.
- The two lotus flower designs, originally from China, was one of the most frequently used motifs in Islamic art.

THINKING QUESTIONS

1. DESCRIPTION

- *What type of materials were used to make the basin?*
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2. ANALYSIS

- *What motifs and inscriptions can you see on the basin?*
 - *How do you think these decorations were made on the basin?*
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3. INTERPRETATION

- *What was the purpose of this basin?*
 - *Do you see any type of design which that shows its suggested purpose?*
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4. OPINION

- *Why do you think this object was important?*

IN – GALLERY ACTIVITY

SYMBOL DETECTIVE

- Discuss the "Key Facts" highlighting the different types of symbols and motifs used within the basin.
- Create and provide each student with a printed handout which has a table of two columns and five rows.
- Explain that one column will be used to list or draw the found symbols and motifs after-examining the basin, while the other column will contain statements of what they believe each finding represents.
- Encourage students to discuss their findings with a friend once finished with their list.

UAE & REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

- **Museum of the Future**, Dubai building exterior of the building is covered with windows that form a poem by Dubai's ruler HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum about his vision for the city's future, written in Arabic calligraphy. For more information: <https://bit.ly/38IU8uL>

SEE ALSO

Turban Helmet, Turkey, Chapter 10
Architectural Frieze Carved with Quranic Verses, Ghurid empire Northern India, Rajasthan (?), Chapter 6
Platter with Drinkers and Musicians, Al-Jazirah (northern Syria) or north-west Iraq, Chapter 8

CLASSROOM/HOME ACTIVITY

PETAL PRINTS

- Provide each student with a sponge, pencil, scissors, A4 paper, a paint brush set, gold and silver paints, markers, and a lotus petal template for each student. For a sample template: <https://bit.ly/3jZQtJC>.
- Instruct your students to trace the outline of a lotus petal using the pre-cut template onto the sponge followed up cutting it out using the scissors.
- Paint the shape with either gold or silver paint using their paintbrush.
- Ask them to then apply the painted side of the sponge onto the A4 paper to create a print of the petal.
- Ask them to continue process till they create a complete flower. Once done, encourage them to use colored markers to draw the stem and leaves of it.