

Object Summary



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Polychrome Border Tiles with Flowering Vine Motif

1938-1939

Iran

Stonepaste, polychrome pigments

Overall (frame with border): 100 3/4 x 63 1/2 in. (255.9 x 161.3cm) Other
(each tile): 6 x 6 in. (15.2 x 15.2cm)

Scrolling, leafy vines border the doors and archways of the central courtyard at Shangri La. This design, commonly called “the arabesque,” is composed of s-shaped tendrils and fan-like leaves. A ubiquitous motif throughout the Islamic world, the arabesque originated from Byzantine and Sasanian designs and gradually developed into a symmetrical, geometric design of abstract leafy scrolls. This tile border, created by craftsmen in Iran during the 1930s, was designed to emulate the artistic style of seventeenth-century Iran. The floral patterns, called khata’i in Persian, incorporate Chinese-inspired lotus scrolls.