

Object Summary



Polychrome Tile Panel with Flowering Vase Motif

17th century

Iran (Isfahan)

Safavid

Ceramic, polychrome pigments

55 x 56 5/8 in. (139.7 x 143.8 cm)

Object Summary

This tile panel is filled with a lively composition of a vase brimming with flowers, and surrounded by trees with twisting trunks and flowering plants with feathery leaves. The multicolored composition was achieved using the black-line technique (also known as cuerda seca) in which a substance containing oil and manganese was used to outline the designs to keep the colorful glazes from running together. During the firing process, this substance would burn away in the kiln, leaving only a sharp, dark outline. This technique was extensively used during the reign of the fifth Safavid ruler Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588-1629 CE). During his reign, many important religious and secular buildings were erected in the capital city of Isfahan, Iran, each clad in the colorful tile.