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Interconnected Beauty: Ariadne Galleries to unveil Christian and Islamic antiquities collection

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Ariadne Galleries will be showcasing 5th – 6th century ecclesiastical architectural fragments from Asia Minor or Syria at the Paris Biennale des Antiquaires.

A rare and beautiful collection of Early Christian and Islamic artworks will be debuted by [Ariadne Galleries](#) at the Grand Palais in Paris as part of the 25th [Biennale des Antiquaires](#) this September.

“In all of my years collecting and dealing in ancient art, this is the first time that I have had a group of objects that speak so strongly to



the transition from Classical art to the Christian aesthetics that characterize the culture of Medieval Europe,” says Torkom Demirjian, president and founder of Ariadne Galleries which has locations in New York, Paris, and Munich.

“Much to our surprise, this art does not originate in Western Europe, where it would have its strongest influence, but in the areas that we today call the Near East or Middle East.” explains Demirjian.

These pieces originate from "areas that people do not normally associate with Christianity today,” he says.

Among the highlights is a very important group of 5th – 6th century ecclesiastical architectural fragments from Asia Minor or Syria. These boldly carved decorations sport overtly Christian symbols such as Christograms, rams, and peacocks, images meant to invoke the presence of Christ and the Garden of Paradise. The lacy, graphic qualities of the motifs completely cover the available surface of the stone.

Two-dimensional works of art from the East would eventually evolve into the flat, attenuated figures that grace the great cathedrals of Europe. Images of Medieval saints owe some of their stylistic characteristics to artists from Asia Minor, Egypt, and Syria.

Demirjian states, “We believe that this exhibit is important and timely, especially considering the current religious and political situation in the Middle East. While the region is most strongly associated with Islam today, history shows that this was not always the case, and that there is a shared cultural connection with an area and a people who may seem very different from us.”

Along with the early Christian objects, Ariadne will be displaying works of art from ancient Greece, Rome, Southern Arabia and Western Islam.

The Western Islamic pieces, three large, beautifully carved wooden wall panels and a lattice-like stucco relief, are of particular note for their quality and rarity. While the majority of Islamic works come from the familiar regions of the Near and Middle East, it is extremely rare to have surviving examples of Islamic Art with Spanish origins.

This superb group of objects presents an intriguing East-meets-West theme that makes Ariadne Galleries a booth to visit at the Biennale, on view from September 15 to 22.

A work from the collection at Ariadne Galleries.



A Byzantine roundel from Ariadne Galleries.