Public access description

This is a corner fragment from the very large Persian carpet (museum Number 326-1894) which the Museum acquired in 1894. The corner fragment was in the collection of Joseph McMullan and when he recognised that it belonged to the large piece already in the V&A, he donated to the Collection.

Descriptive line

Middle East, Carpet; Carpet fragment, wool knotted pile on wool foundation, corner design of blue quarter-medallion on red floral ground with reciprocal border, Safavid Iran, 1500-1550

Physical description

Carpet fragment of hand-knotted woollen pile, on woolen warp and weft.

Carpet fragment, upper right hand corner of Medallion Carpet (museum number 326-1894), hand knotted woollen pile on woolen warp and weft, 16th century Persian.

WARP: white wool; Z2S; 25 threads per inch (100 per dm).

WEFT: white wool; Z2S; 3 shoots after each row of knots; 14 knots per inch (56 per dm).

PILE: wool; 12 colours: red, orange, dark yellow, yellow, dark green, green, light green, dark blue, blue, light blue, black, white; asymmetrical knot tied around two threads and open to the left; 175 knots per sq. inch (2800 per sq. dm).

SIDE FINISH: missing; modern over sewing with light brown wool.

END FINISH: missing; modern over sewing with light brown wool.

DESIGN: Field: lower 4 inches (10 cm) has a yellow ground; there is a similar yellow band 4" (10 cm) wide towards the top of the field; the rest is red. Along the lower right hand side there is part of a white ground compartment above which is part of a light green cartouche. Both have been cut off by the borders and both contain floral sprays. The ground is covered with three layers of stems which are difficult to analyse while the carpet is glazed and on display. However, the layers appear to be:

1. The lower one consists of an angular orange stem which forms diamonds, one of which contains a white blossom and another of which contains 2 white buds and orange interlacing. A large palmette in light blue and black is positioned at each corner of the diamond.
2. The middle one is a curling green stem which seems to be discontinuous; it bears palmettes and buds.
3. The uppermost one has yellow spiralling stems bearing green and light and dark blue split leaves.

In the upper right hand corner is a quarter medallion: it has a blue ground edged with dark yellow. It contains two large cloud bands - one orange and one yellow - with blossoms, palmettes and split leaves on dark yellow stems.

Borders: there are five decorative borders, from the middle these are:

(1) black ground with angular yellow meander outlined in orange bearing alternately light blue and yellow blossoms.
(2) White ground with a fine orange angular meander bearing orange and yellow blossoms.
(3) Incomplete along the upper end: dark green ground with a fine, angular meander in yellow with a variety of different blossoms and leaves.
(4) Missing along the upper end: dark yellow ground with strapwork. There are three discontinuous elements in orange, blue and dark blue each containing floral stems and linking one white and orange diamond and one white and dark yellow palmette.
(5) Reciprocals trefoils in blue and white outlined in orange, each containing a stylised plant motif.

Dimensions

Weight: 27.5 kg, Width: 1563 mm TOP, Width: 1580 mm BOTTOM, Length: 2317 mm PROPER LEFT, Length: 2335 mm PROPER RIGHT

Museum number
T.267-1959

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O67293/fragment-unknown/