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EARTHENWARE BOWL, DECORATED WITH COLORED SLIPS OVER AN AUBERGINE-COLORED GROUND UNDER A TRANSPARENT GLAZE

CENTRAL ASIA, SAMARKAND, OR AFGHANISTAN; 10TH CENTURY

H: 10; DIAM: 29 CM

This bowl and a number of related ones differ from the usual Samanid pottery by having both an aubergine-colored ground and quite motley, detailed, and imaginative depictions of animals, birds, and human figures. They are virtually unknown from excavations in Nishapur and must have been made in a different Samanid center.

The magnificent lion looks almost like a mythical beast, with winged paws, curious ornamental bands in various places on its body, and a forked tail that ends in palmettes. Another distinctive feature is the asymmetrical, dotted areas that surround the main motif.

Published in:

Jangar Ya. Ilyasov: "Exotic images: on a new group of glazed pottery of the 10th and 11th century" in *Journal of the David Collection*, 4, 2014, p. 50, fig. 1 and cat.no. 32;  
Daniel C. Waugh: "The David Collection: Journal of the David Collection. 4" in *The Silk Road*, 2014, 12, *Featured museum*, I: fig. 2;