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FRAGMENT OF A MARBLE FRIEZE

AFGHANISTAN, GHAZNA; C. 1100

H: 38; B: 62; D: 6 CM

After the fall of the Ghaznavids and the destruction of their palaces, reliefs like this one were reused in later buildings, frequently as raw building material, covering their ornaments. The decoration on this relief is quite atypical in a Muslim context, but it is powerful testimony to the major influence that Indian culture had on that of the Ghaznavids.

The nude dancer on the left side is a less refined version of the highly erotic figures known from Hindu art. The motif of the “hunting pair of animals” that was very popular in medieval Islamic art is found in a special variant here: an Indian elephant, proportioned like a deer or a hare, is pursued by a bear

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Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David*

Collection, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 394;
Catherine B. Asher: *Delhi's Qutb complex : the minar, mosque and Mehrauli*, Mumbai 2017, fig. 1.7, p. 18;