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A COPY OF FIRDAWSI'S *SHAHNAMA*. THIS MINIATURE (FOL. 44R):  
'RUSTAM SLAYING THE DRAGON.' SIGNED MUIN MUSAWWIR

IRAN, ISFAHAN (YAZD?); 1060 H = 1650

LEAF: 35.3 × 21.7 CM

This copy of the *Shahnama* was originally in two volumes. In the course of time, some of its illustrations were removed, leaving 27 today that are all signed "made by the humble Muin Musawwir."

Muin Musawwir is perhaps the most famous of Riza-i Abbasi's pupils and was active between 1630 and 1700. This copy of the *Shahnama* was made for Nawwab Abu'l-Mahdi Hasani in Yazd, presumably the Safavid governor of the city. The calligrapher was Muhammad Salih ibn Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad al-Kirmani, and it took him three years to write the text. The colophon states that the illuminator was a certain Mulla Mumin al-Shirazi.

The scene is one of Rustam's seven ordeals, in which he and his faithful horse Rakhsh join forces to slay a terrible dragon. The watercolor-like, semitransparent sky and the almost psychedelic colors

of the landscape are typical of Muin Musawwir's work, as are the monumental scale of the figures and the hero's face and impressive mustache.

Published in:

Christie's, New York, 27-28/6-2006, lot 62;

Sheila R. Canby: "An illustrated Shahnameh of 1650: Isfahan in the service of Yazd" in *Journal of the David Collection*, 3, 2010, pp. 54-113;

fol. 44r:

Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 86;

Sheila R. Canby: "An illustrated Shahnameh of 1650: Isfahan in the service of Yazd" in *Journal of the David Collection*, 3, 2010, fig. 21;

fol. 24v:

Joachim Meyer: *Sanse-lyst: røgelsesbrændere og rosenvandssprinklere fra den islamiske verden*, Davids Samling, København 2015, fig. 4, p. 11;

fol. 74v:

Joachim Meyer: "The Imagery of the Shahnama" in Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Shahnama: the Colorful Epic About Iran's Past*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2016, fig. 4, p. 31;

fol. 350r:

Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Shahnama: the Colorful Epic About Iran's Past*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2016, cat.nr. 56;