



Inv. no. 50/1966

FRITWARE DISH, PAINTED IN LUSTRE OVER AN OPAQUE, WHITE
GLAZE

IRAN, KASHAN; END OF 12TH CENTURY

H: 11; DIAM: 47.5 CM

This early Persian dish painted in lustre is unusual with regard to both its size and its dense decoration. It was made in the “monumental style,” in which the unpainted motif emerged on a lustre background after firing. As a result, the motifs were usually fairly simple and striking, something that is actually not the case here.

Twenty-four pupils of both sexes are seated around a bearded teacher, who is wielding a cane. There are also many tablets with various combinations of letters and a bookstand. Everyone is looking the same way except the boy in the top left corner, who is looking at a girl. The scene has been identified as most likely being “the first meeting of Layla and Majnun at school” from Nizami’s famous book *Layla and Majnun*, written in the 1180s.

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