



Inv. no. 45a/2000, 45b/2000 & 45c/2000

WOODEN PANELS WITH INLAID GEOMETRIC DECORATION

IRAN; 17TH CENTURY

A. H: 8.2; W: 6 CM
B. H: 5.9; W: 4.6 CM
C. H: 7.3; W: 5.3 CM

A typical feature of art in the Islamic world is the use of geometric patterns. As is true of vegetal ornamentation, this was a pre-Islamic tradition that was taken to an unparalleled high level in Islamic culture. Geometric patterns, like the arabesque, could be extended unendingly, and both patterns have in fact been seen as a metaphor of the infiniteness of God.

These panels, decorative elements from a door or a *minbar*, were made using the *khatamkari* technique. The individual pieces – of hardwood, ivory, walrus tusk, colored camel bone, and brass – were inlaid in a geometric mosaic with the utmost precision.

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