


## "Zal Consults the Magi", Folio 73v from the Shahnama (Book of Kings) of Shah Tahmasp

<b>Author:</b>	Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020)
<b>Artist:</b>	Painting attributed to Sultan Muhammad (active first half 16th century) , assisted by 'Abd al-'Aziz
<b>Workshop director:</b>	Sultan Muhammad (active first half 16th century)
<b>Object Name:</b>	Folio from an illustrated manuscript
<b>Date:</b>	ca. 1530–35
<b>Geography:</b>	Made in Iran, Tabriz
<b>Medium:</b>	Opaque watercolor, ink, silver, and gold on paper
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Painting: H. 11 1/16 x W. 7 1/4 in. (H. 28.1 x W. 18.4 cm) Entire Page: H. 18 9/16 x W. 12 1/2 in. (H. 47.1 x W. 31.8 cm)
<b>Classification:</b>	Codices
<b>Credit Line:</b>	Gift of Arthur A. Houghton Jr., 1970
<b>Accession Number:</b>	1970.301.8

 Not on view

In this painting, Zal is depicted enthroned as he consults his magi, or Zoroastrian wise men, on how to win his father's approval to marry Rudaba, the granddaughter of the evil king Zahhak. The phoenix-like bird on the canopy may refer to the simurgh, which saved and nurtured the infant Zal, whose parents had rejected him for being an albino. The sinuous flowering trees often appear in Turkmen painting of Tabriz.

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## Signatures, Inscriptions, and Markings

**Inscription:** In Persian in nasta'liq script, verses from the Shāhnma of Ferdowsī , the story of گفتر اندر خواب دیدن سام نریمان (the story of Nariman's dream of Sam) (Abu'l-Qasim Feardowsi, The Shāhnāmeḥ (The Book of Kings), ed, Djatal Khalqi- Muṭlagh, Mazda publishers in association with Bibliotheca Persica, Costa Mesa, California and New York, 1988, vol.1, p.202).

A.Ghouchani

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## Provenance

Shah Tahmasp, Iran (until 1568; gifted to Selim II); Sultan Selim II, Istanbul (from 1568); Sultan Selim III, Istanbul (by 1800); Baron Edmond de Rothschild, Paris (by 1903–d. 1934); his son, Baron Maurice de Rothschild, Paris and Pregny, near Geneva (by 1955–d. 1957); [ Stiebel Ltd., New York, until 1959; sold to Houghton]; Arthur A. Houghton Jr., New York (1959–70; gifted to MMA)

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## Exhibition History

New York. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. "A King's Book of Kings: Persian Miniatures from Shah Tahmasp's Shahnama of 1528," May 4, 1972–December 31, 1972, no catalog.

Museum für Islamische Kunst, Pergamonmuseum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. "The Arts of Islam. Masterpieces from the M.M.A.," June 15, 1981–August 8, 1981, no. 73.

Musée du Louvre. "La Dynastie Safavide," October 1, 2007–January 7, 2008, no. 22.

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## References

Levy, Ruben, ed.

. UNESCO collection of representative works: Persian heritage series; [no. 3].  
London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1967.

Welch, Stuart Cary.

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1972. pp. 132-135, ill. pp. 133-135, folio 73v (color, b/w).

"Masterpieces from The Metropolitan Museum of Art New York." In  
Berlin, 1981. no. 73, pp. 184-185, ill. p. 185 (color).

Dickson, Martin, and Stuart Cary Welch.

. Vol. vols. I & II.  
Cambridge, Mass. and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1981. vol. II, ill. pl. 60 (b/w).

Melikian-Chirvani, Assadullah. "L'Art de l'Iran Safavide 1501–1736." In

Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2007. no. 22, pp. 188-189, ill. p. 189 (color).

Canby, Sheila R. "The Persian Book of Kings." In

Madrid, 2011. p. 80, ill. (color), folio 73v.

Canby, Sheila R.

New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014. p. 122, ill. fol. 73v (color).

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## Timeline of Art History

## Timelines

Iran, 1400-1600 A.D.

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## MetPublications

The \_\_\_\_\_ of Shah Tahmasp: The Persian Book of Kings

The \_\_\_\_\_ of Shah Tahmasp: The Persian Book of Kings

A King's Book of Kings: The Shah-nameh of Shah Tahmasp

Department

**Islamic Art (15,072)**

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Artist / Maker / Culture

**Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (216)**

**Sultan Muhammad (6)**

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Object Type / Material

**Codices (1,255)**

**Folios (1,129)**

**Gold (17,077)**

**Illuminated manuscripts (759)**

**Ink (31,753)**

**Manuscripts (1,927)**

**Metal (70,275)**

**Paper (28,764)**

**Silver (15,295)**

## Watercolors (13,085)

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Geographic Location

**Asia (70,810)**

**Iran (9,263)**

**Tabriz (100)**

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Date / Era

**A.D. 1400–1600 (26,364)**

## Related Objects

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### **"Rustam Overpowers the King of Hamavaran", Folio from a Shahnama (Book of Kings)**

Artist: Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020)

Date: late 15th century

Medium: Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper

Accession: 13.160.2

On view in: Not on view

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### **Shahnama (Book of Kings) of Firdausi**

Artist: Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020)

Date: A.H. 1014/A.D. 1605–7

Medium: Ink, opaque watercolor, silver, and gold on paper; lacquer binding

Accession: 13.228.16

On view in: Not on view

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**"Iranian and Turanian Armies in Combat", Folio from a Shahnama (Book of Kings)**

Artist: Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020)

Date: A.H. 741/A.D. 1341

Medium: Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper

Accession: 36.113.1

On view in: Not on view

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**"The Four Knights of Kai Khusrau in the Mountains", Folio from a Shahnama (Book of Kings)**

Artist: Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020)

Date: A.H. 741/A.D. 1341

Medium: Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper

Accession: 36.113.2

On view in: Not on view

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**"Kharrad Recognizes the "Princess" as being an Automaton", Folio from a Shahnama (Book of Kings)**

Artist: Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020)

Date: A.H. 741/A.D. 1341

Medium: Ink, watercolor, and gold on paper

Accession: 36.113.3

On view in: Not on view

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