

Two Fragments from a *Mihrab*

Iran, Kashan, late 13th or early 14th century

Glazed stone-paste, underglaze-painted, overglaze-painted luster

Honolulu Academy of Art, Wilhelmina Tenney Memorial Collection, Gift of Renee Halbedl, 1959 (2611.1a-b)

A *mihrab* is a recess or niche in a wall that indicates the direction of Mecca, the holy city toward which Muslims face while praying. Numerous luster *mihrabs* were made in Iran for the tombs of important religious figures during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These two fragments were once part of a much larger *mihrab* that was composed of many tiles of different shapes with dense ornamentation, including scrolling vines and molded inscriptions from the Qur'an.

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