

Turkmen Jewelry

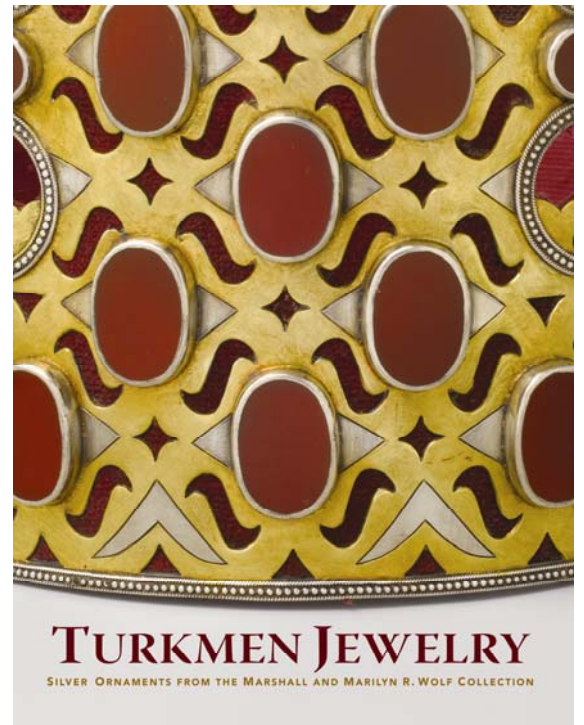
Silver Ornaments from the Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf Collection

Layla S. Diba

Best known for their carpets and textiles, the nomadic Turkmen people of Central Asia have also long distinguished themselves as the makers of extraordinary silver jewelry. This book presents more than two hundred examples of Turkmen jewelry, created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from the renowned collection of Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf.

These remarkable objects—crowns and headbands, armbands and rings, necklets and amulet holders—are characterized by graceful forms, bold geometry, delicate openwork, and often enormous scale. Working with a limited set of materials (silver accented by gold, carnelian, turquoise, and colored glass) and relatively simple techniques, Turkmen silversmiths used great ingenuity to achieve their dazzling effects.

This book, the first publication in the United States devoted to Turkmen jewelry, highlights the aesthetic aspects of these objects, which until recently were valued primarily for their ethnographic significance. Layla S. Diba situates Turkmen ornament within both its historical context and the tradition of Islamic silver jewelry production. By taking an art historical approach and providing detailed formal analysis of the objects, supplemented by gorgeous color photographs, this publication broadens the appreciation of these vibrant, monumental pieces, elevating them from folk art to fine art.



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