



# The Met Store Celebrates 'The Heirloom Project' With a Focus on Artisans

The initiative emphasizes artisanship and age-old techniques.

By **ROSEMARY FEITELBERG**  MAY 5, 2022, 7:06PM



A D'Ascoli design from "The Heirloom Project." COURTESY OF THE HEIRLOOM PROJECT

**ARTFULLY MADE:** To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the **Metropolitan Museum of Art's** reimagined Islamic galleries, the Met Store is touting artisans and age-old craftsmanship techniques through "The Heirloom Project."

After a sampling of the collection debuted last year, the just-released assortment highlights a broader range of designs from more diverse makers. The development of the program was put in motion in spring 2021 and table linens from AlNour were initially offered. Madeline Weinrib serves as creative director for the project.

A number of companies and artisans are pitching in with products such as Turquoise Mountain, Zarif Design, Silvia Furmanovich, Hanut Singh, Kashmir Loom, Munnu The Gem Palace, Mehry Mu and more. The assortment includes hammered brass necklaces, silk twill kaftans, Kashmiri-style scarves, carved emerald earrings, hand-blocked Indian printed placemats and hand painted bone china, among other designs

Their designs and other creations will be sold and will evolve throughout this year. The personal stories of the makers will also be told in the months ahead, according to Morgan Pearce, The Met's general manager of marketing, licensing and partnerships.

Some of the makers — Indian jeweler Singh, handbag designer Mu (who collaborated on bags with Turquoise Mountain that were handmade by Syrian refugees) and Furmanovich among them — will be on hand at a four-day trunk show at the Fifth Avenue museum's mezzanine-level store that runs through Monday. The majority of The Heirloom Project's partners come from the Islamic world. There is representation from Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Lebanon, Morocco and Turkey, as well brands from other parts of the world that offered different viewpoints that The Met Store wanted to express, Pearce said. An example would be Furmanovich's "gorgeous work in wood marquetry, which is such a known and beloved Islamic technique. But she has her own spin on it," she said. Each of the designers will also bring pieces from their own collections. "It will be a really special, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to shop these brands that aren't always available in New York," Pearce said.

Shoppers will find some of the artisans in The Met Store between 1 and 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday and Monday. Acknowledging some of the hiccups caused by the pandemic, Pearce said the event should be a nice moment now that everyone has "come through and made it through as a collective."

The Islamic Wing is an area that The Met Store has not explored in depth, and rather than try to replicate things, Pearce said, "We really thought it was important to dive into the area of craftsmanship, which is so integral to the galleries."

The idea of doing something "more authentic and personal" was the idea that Weinrib presented with an emphasis on artisanship, handmade goods and their beautiful qualities that cannot be duplicated on a mass scale, she said. "We're so proud to get to work with such a wonderful group of artisans who have engaged so thoughtfully with The Met and have put so much effort and care into creating pieces despite all the challenges in COVID[-19]. We hope that similarly they will be proud to work with The Met and we can raise awareness of their wonderful brands and the work that they do that may be less familiar to the New York audience."

Select items from "The Heirloom Project" are available online but the **fine jewelry** and limited-edition pieces will be available only in stores.

The Met Store also joined forces with Ladurée to create a limited-edition macaron gift box. Designed with an Iznik floral motif inspired by a 17th-century pair of Turkish tile spandrels that are on view in the Islamic galleries, the gift box has six macarons and is a nod to the reimagined Islamic galleries' 10th anniversary. The pastel-colored confections are offered in isphahan — a rose, raspberry and lychee combination — orange blossom and pistachio flavors.

Looking ahead, there aren't currently plans to open more freestanding Met stores. However, the museum is considering bringing back some of the outposts that it previously had in different areas like the Islamic Wing and in Modern and Contemporary, but not in the immediate term. All in all, the plan is "just continuing to find ways to make that connection between what's happening in the galleries and then works that are celebrated through product," Pearce said.



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