



50. Back of a feline

Khurasan, Afghanistan or eastern Iran, eleventh to twelfth century
Cast high leaded brass, chased and engraved (?) decoration

L. max. 15.5 cm; H. 9.3 cm; W. max. 3.4 cm; Thickness min. (edge) 0.5 mm; Thickness max. (edge) 3 mm; Average thickness 1–2 mm; Weight 0.381 kg

Chasing (V-section) W. 0.9 mm

The surface condition is similar to cat. no. 49 and is similarly altered by corrosion. Three tears and gaps are visible on the chest, the hindquarters and at the junction between the base and the back leg. A trace of soldering remains in the centre of the upper edge.

Purchase, (Galerie?) Indjoudjian, 1923; inv. no. OA 7800-2

The relief was probably shaped with lost wax casting, in a direct process. During the casting, an infiltration of the core may have occurred and is visible in the upper portion of the interior. Like the front half, this relief was made by casting and the chasing was probably cold worked after shaping. The treatment is rudimentary and there are no areas of champlévé. The top of the back has a very eroded design, including a vegetal frieze. The hindquarters bear a medallion with a cruciform or knotted decoration and the back leg has an interlace motif. A palm leaf on the front back paw is incised to show the claws (fig. 89). On the flank there is a cartouche with a very worn inscription or a series of letters in floriated Kufic.

51. Partridge (part of an automaton?)

Khurasan, eastern Iran, twelfth century

Cast leaded brass, chased and champlévé decoration, inlaid with black material

H. 14.8 cm; L. 14 cm; W. 6.6 cm; Thickness min. (belly) 2.5 mm; Thickness max. (leg) 11 mm; Weight 0.471 kg

Chasing W. 0.7 mm

The upper part of the beak has disappeared: it was removable and attached by a hinge. The surface is very heterogeneous and grainy, with stable green and red corrosion. The screws of the former mounting of the object, now unremovable, are attached to the legs of the bird (fig. 91). A significant mechanical deformation has dented one of the flanks.

Purchase, Charles Vignier, 1924; inv. no. OA 7819



Fig. 90
Partridge (cat. no. 51): detail of the chased and champlévé vegetal frieze surrounding one of the medallions; the recessed decoration has traces of inlay of a black material.

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The sculpture was cast in one piece with the lost wax process. The thickness of the metal is relatively regular and consistent with the exterior layout, with the exception of the beak and wings where it is thinner (fig. 91). The underside of the tail is very flat and forms right angles with the edges, which suggests that a wax plate was used for this part of the bird when the model was made. X-rays of the interior of the body revealed three metal pins holding the core, the remains of which may still be found inside the bird, near the tail. The core was probably connected to the mould by a fired clay cylinder which would have left an opening in the belly, large enough for its extraction after casting. Traces of joints in the wax are visible at the junction between the upper legs and the body and on

