



# Writing the Word of God: Calligraphy and the Qur'an (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston)

*David J. Roxburgh*

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The art of Islamic calligraphy developed from the 7th to the 14th century, beginning in western Arabia, spreading south to Yemen and north to the Near East, and continuing east and west to Iran, Egypt, North Africa, and Spain. This handsome book demonstrates the breadth and beauty of Islamic calligraphy across centuries and continents, as seen in rare early folios of the Qur'an.

Noted scholar David J. Roxburgh begins by discussing the Qur'an, which Muslims believe to be the written record of a series of divinely inspired revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. He then analyzes Kufic script, the preeminent vehicle for writing early manuscripts of the Qur'an; reforms of calligraphy in the 10th century; and the great master Islamic calligraphers, in particular Yaqut al-Musta'simi. The beautiful reproductions of folios and bifolios validate Roxburgh's conclusion that "the miracle of the text of the Qur'an found its equal in the technical mastery of the calligrapher's practice, a miracle in its own right."

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