

# Hallie Ford *Museum of Art*

WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

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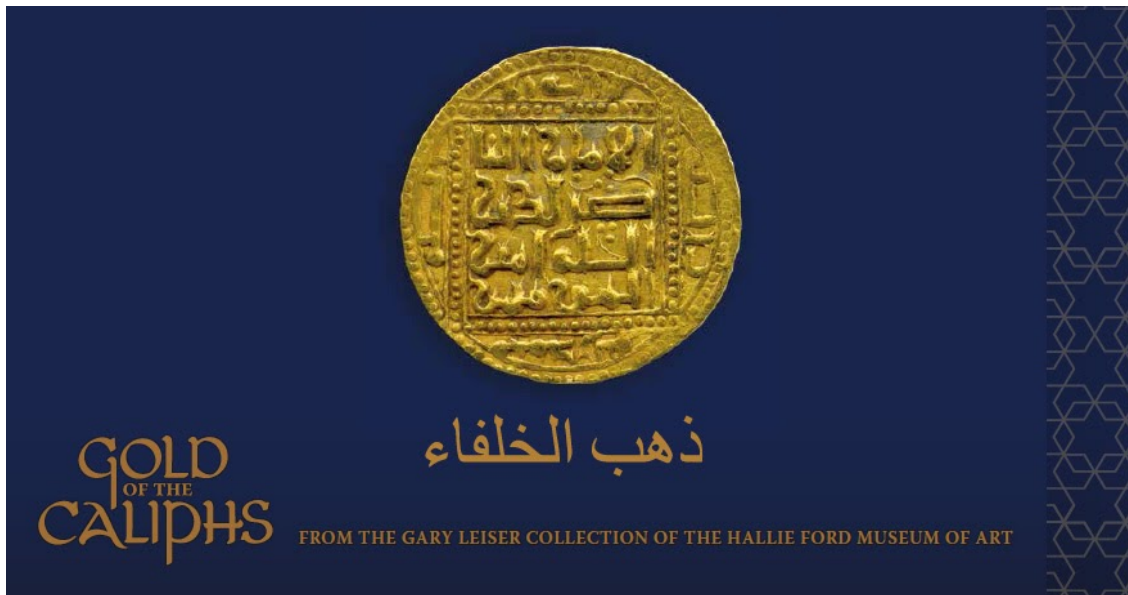
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**Exhibition website:** [willamette.edu/go/gold-of-caliphs](http://willamette.edu/go/gold-of-caliphs)



## Gold of the Caliphs Exhibition Features Medieval Islamic Coins and the World's Oldest Coin

SALEM, Ore. — “Gold of the Caliphs: Medieval Islamic Coins from the Gary Leiser Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art” opens February 25 and continues through August 14, 2021 at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art. This exhibition takes place in the Study Gallery and offers a fascinating glimpse into Islamic art, history, politics, economics, and religious beliefs as reflected in coins minted in locations from Spain to Central Asia. Organized by guest curator Gary Leiser, the exhibition features more than 75 coins of the more than 500 coins that Leiser donated to the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in 2017. Leiser holds a PhD degree from the University of Pennsylvania in medieval Islamic history and is a retired Federal civil servant.

Included in the exhibition will be sections on the development of Islamic coins, monetary denominations, coins as religious documents, coins as political documents, the

iconography of Islamic coins, and the “Lion and Sun” coins of Ghiyath al-Din Kay Khusraw II. As a special feature, the exhibition will include the world’s oldest coin, minted in the 6th century BCE in ancient Lydia on the southwest coast of modern-day Turkey.



World's Oldest Coin, Date: 600 BCE  
Mint: Ancient Lydia, Ruler: King Alyattes (619–560 BCE)

In addition to the coins on display, the exhibition will feature text panels, chat panels, annotated labels that provide interesting information on many of the coins in the exhibition, maps illustrating the major dynasties and mint cities represented in the exhibition, a large photo mural of Cairo based on a hand-colored lithograph by the Scottish artist and traveler David Roberts, and a full-color brochure.

Financial support for this exhibition and its accompanying brochure was provided by a major grant from the Tarbell Family Foundation as well as by general operating support grants from the City of Salem’s Transient Occupancy Tax funds and the Oregon Arts Commission. Advertising support has been provided by the Oregon ArtsWatch Full Circle Fund.

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### **About the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University**

As one of the finest academic art museums in the Northwest, the museum features works by Pacific Northwest and Native American artists, and includes a diverse collection of traditional European, American and Asian art, as well as artifacts that date from antiquity. Frequently changing exhibitions include lectures, special events, tours, artist demonstrations, educational opportunities for children and adults, as well as important

publications.

The museum is located at 700 State St. in Salem. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. The galleries are closed on Sunday and Monday. Timed entry tickets are required and can be purchased online starting Monday, February 22 at [www.willamette.edu/go/hfma](http://www.willamette.edu/go/hfma). General admission is \$6, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for students 18 and older. Students 17 and under and children are admitted free. Admission is free for everyone on Tuesdays, but timed entry tickets are required.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to Covid-19 the museum's hours and guidelines are subject to change as federal and state guidelines evolve. Please check the museum's website for the latest information at [willamette.edu/go/hfma](http://willamette.edu/go/hfma) or call 503-370-6855.

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## **High-resolution Images**

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World's Oldest Coin

Date: 600 BCE

Mint: Ancient Lydia

Ruler: King Alyattes (619–560 BCE)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR,  
promised gift from Gary Leiser.



Silver dirham, Abbasid Dynasty

Date: 777-778

Mint: None

Ruler: Sa'id b. Dalaj (776-778), the Abbasid governor of Tabaristan

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2018.052.023.



Gold dinar, Abbasid Dynasty

Date: 774–775

Mint: None

Ruler: Caliph al-Mansur (754–775)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2017.052.019.

The most valuable coins were gold, based upon weight and purity, rather than a set monetary value. The coin shown above was punched to use as jewelry on a necklace or bracelet.



Silver dirham, Seljuk Dynasty of Rum or Anatolia (modern Turkey)

Date: 1244–1245

Mint: Konya (Central Turkey)

Ruler: Sultan Kay Khusraw II (1237–1246)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2017.052.184.

Used throughout the Muslim world, a silver dirhim was widely accepted as payment for a day of work.



Glass weight, Fatimid Dynasty

Date: None

Mint: None, made in Egypt

Ruler: Caliph al-Hakim (996–1021) or al-Mustansir (1036–1094)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2017.052.482.

Because coins were made by hand, it was difficult to ensure their true weight, and glass weights were devised to help establish that accurate measure.





Gold dinar, Seljuk Dynasty of Rum or Anatolia (modern Turkey)

Date: 1217–1218

Mint: Konya in central Turkey

Ruler: Sultan Kay Kawus I (1211–1220)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2017.052.154.



Gold dinar, Il-Khanid Dynasty

Date: 1292

Mint: Probably Tabriz (Iran)

Ruler: Gaykhatu (1291–1295)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2017.052.391.

Arabic and Mongolian inscriptions in the Uyghur script appear on both the obverse and reverse.



Copper fals, Artuqid Dynasty

Date: 1199–1200

Mint: None

Ruler: Yuluk Arslan, Husam al-Din (1184–1203)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR, Gift of Gary Leiser, 2017.052.350.



Silver dirhams, Seljuk Dynasty of Rum or Anatolia (modern Turkey)

Dates: 1240–1244

Mints: Konya or Sivas

Ruler: Ghiyath al-Din Kay Khusraw II (1237–1246)

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, OR,  
promised gift from Gary Leiser.

**INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES**

Interviews can be arranged with Gary Leiser by calling [503-370-6867](tel:503-370-6867) or emailing [afoust@willamette.edu](mailto:afoust@willamette.edu) to make arrangements.