

**View the first vibrant survey of world ornament — from ancient to modern cultures — in its original, brilliantly colored edition**

Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*. London: Day & Son, 1856. 13 9/16 inches x 9 3/4 inches (344 x 248 mm), 160 pages, 100 color plates.

*The Grammar of Ornament* is by any standard a remarkable book. When it appeared in 1856, it was the first time that so many illustrations of ornament from such a variety of periods and countries had ever been published in color and collected in one work. It was the concept of a young Welsh architect, Owen Jones (1809–74), who at the age of twenty-three went on his grand tour to visit Turkey, Egypt, Sicily, and Spain. In Granada he became fascinated by the Alhambra Palace, in which at that time visitors could choose their own suites of rooms and take up residence. Jones made detailed drawings of the place, and returned to England carrying not only his drawings, but also an enormous number of casts.

Jones' aim was not to produce general artistic views, but to provide scientific accuracy by making an exact and detailed record of ornaments and colored decorations consisting largely of flat bright colors in geometric patterns. He could not find any printer in London able to meet his requirements; with the help of the lithographic printers Day & Haghe he set up his own lithographic press, trained his own workmen, and published the work at his own expense, having to sell part of his Welsh estate to pay the costs of printing.

*The Grammar of Ornament* contains 111 color pages. Many of the plates contain from twenty to sixty numbered examples, presenting pages of enormous visual excitement. The astonishing range of plates — made directly from Jones' hand-colored drawings — allows the reader to explore designs from ancient Greece to Elizabethan England. The portrayal of detailed ornament from, for example, a Persian tapestry, by the manual process of chromolithography required almost as much labor as that of the original artist; this was the extraordinary achievement of Owen Jones' book.

This copy, from the Cary Graphic Arts Collection at Rochester Institute of Technology, is in a dark reddish purple cloth case binding. The edges of the

front board have a blind-stamped rule with a large gilt-embossed decorative panel in the center with the title. The back board is identical to the front, but with a blind-embossed central panel. The spine, which has received a cloth respining, is smooth and undecorated.

Octavo code: jnsgrm