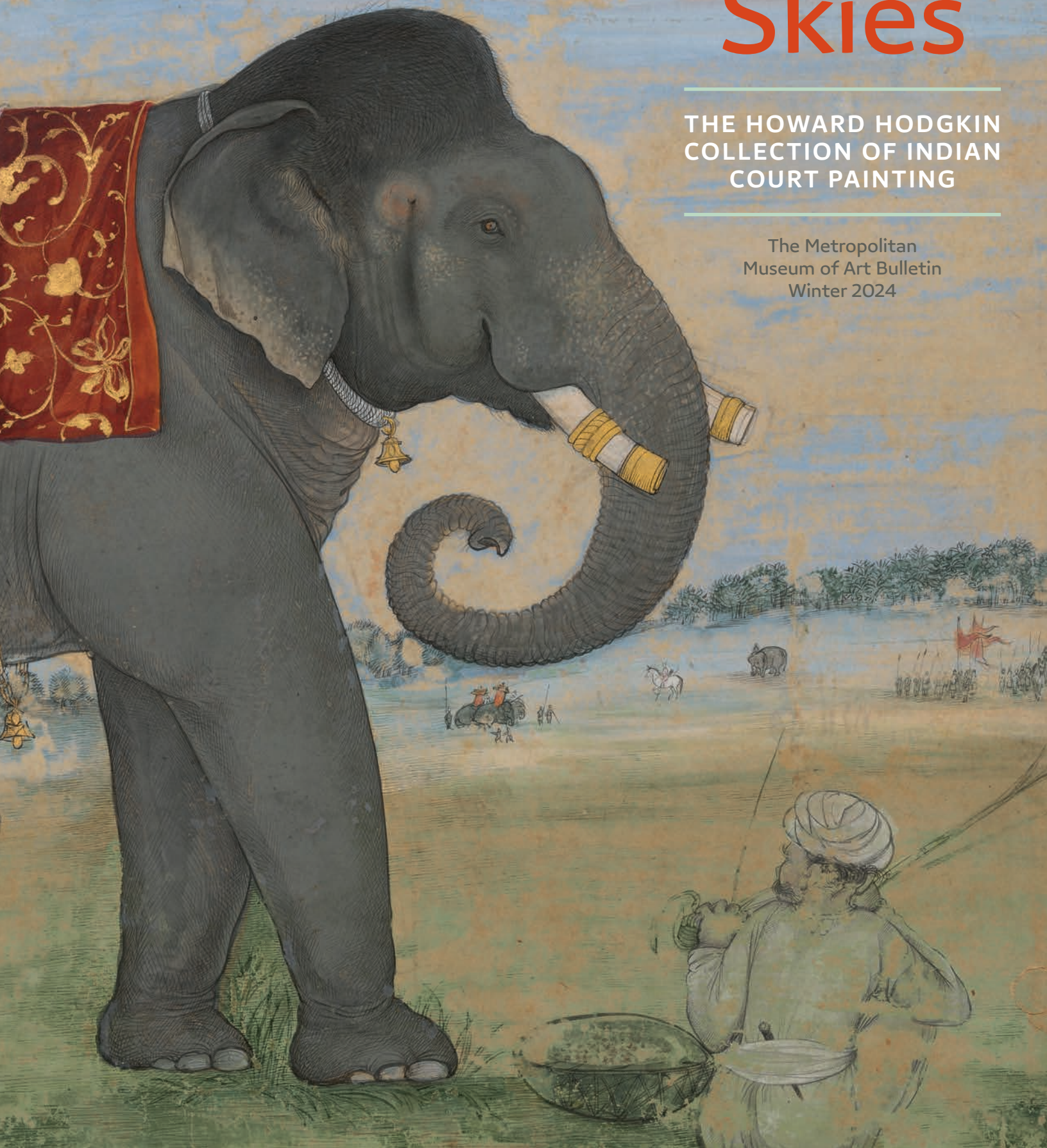


Indian Skies

THE HOWARD HODGKIN
COLLECTION OF INDIAN
COURT PAINTING

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art Bulletin
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THE HOWARD HODGKIN
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John Guy & Navina Najat Haidar



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Director's Note

INDIAN COURT PAINTING HAS ALWAYS ATTRACTED discerning connoisseurs, including artists from diverse global traditions. The British painter Howard Hodgkin (1932–2017) built an extraordinary collection of 122 Indian paintings over a sixty-year period. As Hodgkin's own artistic output continued alongside his collecting, his life was interwoven with his experiences of India and relationships with scholars, painters, and collectors in the field of Indian art. He pursued works with the passionate eye of an artist rather than formal art-historical considerations. The result is an exciting and individualistic assemblage of Indian court paintings, reflecting Hodgkin's deep journey into the subject. In 2022, The Met acquired eighty-four works from this collection to further enhance its strong holdings of outstanding art from the Mughal, Deccani, Rajput, and Pahari courts, becoming one of the main repositories of Indian painting of this time. To celebrate this monumental acquisition, these works will be shown together with the remaining paintings from the artist's collection, on loan from The Howard Hodgkin Indian Collection Trust, thus keeping intact Hodgkin's unique vision of one of the world's great pictorial traditions.

Court painting, both devotional and secular, has a long history in India. From the sixteenth century, the imperial Mughal rulers became keen patrons of art, drawing talented artists from all over the empire trained in different styles, some of which reflected older aesthetics of the region, such as exquisite mural paintings and sensitively rendered manuscript covers created for palm-leaf rather than paper books. These foundations led to the blossoming of court painting across the subcontinent for the next three hundred years. While many individual styles and idioms developed in the hands of Mughal, Deccani, Rajasthani, and Pahari painters, there was also a vibrant exchange across their kingdoms, expressed in shared themes and aims, some of it facilitated by the circulation of artists.

This *Bulletin* was prepared in conjunction with the exhibition *Indian Skies: The Howard Hodgkin Collection of Indian Court Painting*, on view from February 6 to June 9, 2024. The exhibition is made possible by the Florence and Herbert Irving Fund for Asian Art Exhibitions and the Friends of Islamic Art, while the *Bulletin* benefited from the Florence and Herbert Irving Fund for Asian Art Publications and the Friends of Islamic Art. We are grateful to Purnendu and Amita Chatterjee for the generous loan of Hodgkin's oil painting *In Mirza's Room* (1995–98), which will be shown alongside Hodgkin's *Small Indian Sky* (1990), a work that came to the Museum as a gift of Antony Peattie, in memory of his partner. The exhibition was organized by John Guy, Florence and Herbert Irving Curator of the Arts of South and Southeast Asia, and Navina Najat Haidar, Nasser Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah Curator in Charge of the Department of Islamic Art.

The quarterly *Bulletin* program is made possible, in part, by the Lila Acheson Wallace Fund for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, established by the cofounder of *Reader's Digest*. The acquisition of the works by the Museum was made possible by the Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving, by exchange; Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; The Mossavar-Rahmani Fund for Iranian Art; and funds from various donors.

MAX HOLLEIN

Marina Kellen French Director and CEO
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Reflecting Mirrors: Indian Court Painting and Howard Hodgkin

NAVINA NAJAT HAIDAR

THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF INDIAN CULTURE ARE expressed in its painting traditions, especially during the golden era that dawned from the sixteenth century in the Mughal age (1526–1858). The Mughal rulers were refined and elegant patrons, attracting remarkable talents to their glittering court. Their cultural sway extended to the sultanate centers of the Deccan region in the south and to the Rajput courts of Rajasthan and the Punjab hills to the northwest. The workshops in these kingdoms often followed the imperial courtly model but also retained their own unique cultural identities. Painters, calligraphers, and illuminators developed styles (*qalams*) that became characteristic of the court, period, or artistic family with which they were associated, and by which the study of Indian painting is often organized. This was also the age of the artist as, for the first time, the names of individual painters were recorded in inscriptions and their hands identified by contemporary and later connoisseurs. Painters broke new ground as they illustrated ancient and modern texts with fresh visions; created finely observed portraits and nature studies; evoked gods, goddesses, mythological scenes, and musical modes in devotional spirit; and developed virtuosic techniques shared with the artists of Iran and Turkey, and even China and Europe.

For any serious collector to engage with such a wealth of artistic and cultural expression requires supreme confidence, good knowledge, and the decisiveness to seize rare opportunities. And what their collection ultimately amounts to reveals as much about them as it does about Indian court painting. In the case of Howard Hodgkin (1932–2017), we find a collector who approaches this material foremost as an artist, on a deep emotional

level and with a unique eye. Hodgkin's collection of Indian paintings challenges conventional ideas about this material. With his appreciation for scale, he demonstrates that Indian painting breathes large, not "miniature." He proves that elephants can be as majestically portrayed as kings (fig. 18) and with almost greater human characteristics. He amuses us by finding a family of caressing pachyderms (fig. 21) and delights us with a detailed bazaar scene from Mandi (fig. 32). The spirit is stirred by a resplendent Bijapuri king in gold, heroically shooting an arrow (fig. 23), and moved by a tender young bride carried into a mystical dark night (fig. 24). Color speaks its own language, from the cool minty green of Mughal-inspired backgrounds (fig. 33) and the natural shades of tan paper upon which a fine portrait is drawn (fig. 12) to the brilliant blocks of "Indian yellow" and blazing vermilion that evoke the esoteric goddess of the Basohli hills (fig. 48). Hodgkin is firmly committed to the Indian aesthetic, for when Indian painters begin to paint in more European styles for British patrons of the Raj (1858–1947), he loses interest. His collection more or less ends there.

In acquiring the majority of the Hodgkin collection, The Met has imported multiple, layered stories into its own deep fold. During the course of its formation, this collection has had the benefit of extensive scholarly study, provenance research, exhibition, and publication, which has enriched the investigation of Indian and South Asian painting and culture.¹ Each piece has its own tale of discovery and acquisition for the collector and carries meaning from the past into the present for the artist, patron, and viewer. ♦

Howard Hodgkin and India

JOHN GUY

THE BRITISH ARTIST HOWARD HODGKIN WAS INTRODUCED to the world of Indian court painting long before he ventured to India. While at Eton, he took art classes with Wilfrid Blunt (brother of the eminent art historian and infamous Soviet spy Anthony), who shared some Indian paintings that he owned with his students and organized an exhibition at the school of works borrowed from the nearby library at Windsor Castle, which contains some of the greatest Indian paintings known, preserved in the Royal Collection. This early exposure undoubtedly fostered Hodgkin's passion for Indian art. He bought his first Indian painting at this time, a work he later sold as he built his collection and honed his connoisseurship, learning, as he later phrased it, that in collecting, "the best was the enemy of the good."²

These early interests were reignited in 1959 by a chance meeting with Stuart Cary Welch, a scholar and curator at Harvard and a premier collector of Indian paintings, in the office of Robert Skelton, a young curator of Indian art at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, who was rapidly establishing a reputation as a leading authority in the field. Welch's eloquent championing of Indian painting (Hodgkin described it as his "celestial gift of the gab") resonated with Hodgkin and escalated his passion for collecting.³ Welch and Hodgkin became the closest of friends and, on occasion in the auction rooms, the fiercest of rivals.

Hodgkin first visited India in 1964, accompanied by Skelton, who introduced him to leading collectors and contemporary artists. The collector Asha Sheth joined them in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, introducing them to the court cultures of Kishangarh and Bikaner; these experiences later inspired a number of paintings, including a portrait of Asha.⁴ Hodgkin built lasting friendships with artists Tyeb Mehta (1925–2009) and Bhupen Khakhar (1934–2003), among others, and such famed collectors as the Sarabhai family in Ahmedabad and Jagdish Mittal in Hyderabad (fig. 1). India quickly

became a necessary part of Hodgkin's life; he returned there annually like a migratory bird needing to feed from its cacophony of sound and color. His relationship to India was as complex as it was constant. He immersed himself in the country as an impassionate observer, simply experiencing what he termed his "somewhere else." In 1982, he co-curated the exhibition *Six Indian Painters* at the Tate Gallery, London, his tribute to modern Indian art.⁵

Reflecting on the importance of India to Hodgkin, the British travel writer Bruce Chatwin wrote:

India became an emotional lifeline. Each winter he travelled all over the subcontinent, sopping up impressions—of empty hotel rooms, the beach at Mahabalipuram, the view from a railway carriage, the colour of cow dust in the evening, or the sight of an orange sari against a concrete balustrade—and storing them for pictures he would paint at home, in Wiltshire. The influence was India herself, not the India of Indian painting.⁶

As the American writer Susan Sontag famously reported, Hodgkin never sketched or took photographs in India; instead, he concentrated on allowing his eyes to commit to memory all that he saw.⁷ These momentary experiences formed a storehouse of imagery upon which the painter drew in his own work.

Hodgkin did not paint *in* India until relatively late in his career, and then only rarely. A major exception is the suite of works on paper titled *Indian Leaves*, commissioned by Anand Sarabhai in 1978 and completed during a two-week artist's residency at the Sarabhai family compound, The Retreat, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. During this time, he worked in a garden studio in the grounds of the Villa de Madame Manorama Sarabhai, a Le Corbusier-designed house commissioned in the early 1950s by Manorama Sarabhai. Wet-rag paper was delivered to him each morning, and he worked intensely, completing each composition before the sheet dried (fig. 2).⁸ Hodgkin



1. Howard Hodgkin visiting the home of Jagdish Mittal, Hyderabad, 1964. Photo by Robert Skelton. Courtesy Howard Hodgkin archive



2. Howard Hodgkin working on *Indian Leaves* while artist-in-residence at The Retreat, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, 1978. Courtesy Suhrid Sarabhahi

later described this as among the most prolific periods in his artistic life. He characterized the resulting pictures as “a kind of anthology of Indian images.”⁹

Small Indian Sky, from 1990, is one of the many works Hodgkin created in homage to the country he loved (fig. 3). Evoking his memory of India’s landscapes of radiant red earth, exuberant greenery, and skies filled with the looming darkness of rain-laden monsoon clouds, it demonstrates his oft-repeated maxim that he was “a representational painter, but not a painter of appearances.” In his words, he produced “pictures of emotional situations.”¹⁰

Much of Indian painting is also concerned with evoking an emotional landscape. Palaces and hilly landscapes can equally serve as the setting in which the emotions of the protagonists are acted out. Each element, be it a prince or the cushion upon which he reclines, is assigned pictorial and chromatic value equal to those of the others; ornament is as infused with feeling as the face of the nobleman engaged in a dalliance with his lover. Hodgkin used the phrase “amazing actuality” to characterize the essential power and appeal of these compositions. By this he meant that Indian paintings are not romanticized visions of a place abstracted from reality but rather are imagery firmly rooted in the reality of that place—intense, tangible, sensory, and palpable. The emotive power of Indian color dynamics resonated with Hodgkin and his own work. This undoubtedly drew him deeper into the world of collecting Indian art.

As Hodgkin acknowledged repeatedly, his own paintings were enriched enormously by India and the idea of India. Indian paintings are a part of that, but they are not the whole story. Hodgkin’s encounter with India ran deep and left an indelible mark on him, his art, and his collection. As Chatwin noted in 1982, “[h]is collection is an essential part of his life’s work.”¹¹ India and Indian painting were inseparable parts of Hodgkin’s creative endeavor for over fifty years.



3. Howard Hodgkin (British, 1932–2017). *Small Indian Sky*, 1990. Oil on wood, 13 1/8 × 10 3/4 in. (25.7 × 27.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Antony Peattie, in memory of his partner, Howard Hodgkin, 2022 (2022.316)

The Hodgkin collection is distinguished by its strict adherence to his highly personal collecting criteria: quality over condition, radiant beauty over typology, and an almost irreverent disregard for schools and styles. These criteria dictated that a fragment of a masterpiece was deemed superior to a complete secondary example, and a highly developed study more rewarding than a labored finished work. “I never bought paintings or drawings on the tempting but distracting basis of their topography, their school of art, their theme, period or style. I just wanted great art.”¹² This, then, is an artist’s collection, shaped by his distinctive taste and eye for quality as well as for the idiosyncratic. ♦

Paintings of the Mughal and Deccani Courts

NAVINA NAJAT HAIDAR

THE ART OF PAINTING BLOOMED INTO VIBRANT FRESHNESS at northern India's Mughal court during the sixteenth century. The dynamism of Mughal painting was new, just like the nascent empire, and set into motion the development of diverse styles that were to flower at the subcontinent's many royal courts over the next three centuries. The preceding sultanate rulers of the north and early Rajput and Jain patrons had also supported painters, although far less of their work survives. These traditions played a role in shaping the Mughal *qalam*, or style, as artists in the royal workshop (*kārkhānā*) were recruited from a wide range of backgrounds. Mughal painters combined Indian, Persianate, and European visual sources into powerful expressions largely characterized by a shift toward a softly modeled naturalism alongside a retention of profile figures (particularly those of women in formal poses with stylized hand gestures) and areas of flat color—two aspects of previous styles. Embracing many new subjects, Mughal painting included illustrations of literary, historical, and poetic texts; albums of portraits and genre scenes; representations of gods and musical modes; and ornamental drawings and paintings. The Mughal imperial style greatly influenced contemporary and later Rajput and Pahari court artists, but each center also developed its own idioms, leading to a delightful variety of imagery and subjects, such as battle scenes, animal hunts, divine images, landscape studies, and poetic abstractions. By the nineteenth century, Indian artists had come to work for British patrons, mastering different subject matter, representations of scale, and styles. Exploring works drawn from the former collection of the British artist Howard Hodgkin, this essay focuses on the painting styles of the Mughal and Deccani worlds of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which laid foundations for the artistic evolutions at the Rajput and Pahari courts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The rich and unpredictable fusions of Indian aesthetic ideals are implicit in the Hodgkin collection and perhaps most evident in the fertile experimentations of the period of Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605), when artists from diverse backgrounds and training were engaged for projects at the Mughal court.¹³ These included painters from the Safavid court of Shah Tahmasp (r. 1539–43) in Tabriz, Iran, from where Mir Sayyid 'Ali and 'Abd al-Samad joined the Mughal atelier in 1555, ushering in a wave of Persian émigrés for several decades to come. Indian artists such as Basawan, Daswant, Govardhan, and Kesu Das were among those talents with whom Persian-trained masters interacted and whose names are known from mention in the chronicles of the time and from inscriptions in the margins of painted folios. The reign of Akbar also saw increased contact with Europe after the emperor welcomed Portuguese Jesuits and established trade links with the West, eventually paving the way for Dutch and later English merchants, travelers, and adventurers, among others. Gifts, rarities, prints of biblical imagery, and engravings of mythological subjects arrived at the court through these visitors, impacting Mughal painting throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

One of Hodgkin's earliest acquisitions was a folio from the *Hamzanāma*, a foundational series of large Mughal paintings on cloth made for Akbar (only about ten percent of the original 1400 folios survive). The *Hamzanāma* (Story of Hamza) is a fictional account of the adventures of the Prophet Muhammad's uncle Amir Hamza, who fought the enemies of Islam with his band of adventurers. *Mihrudukht Aims Her Arrow at the Ring* presents the beautiful archeress in an atmospheric garden setting where she seeks to repel unworthy suitors by shooting her arrow through a ring that is suspended from the mouth of a golden bird mounted on a tall pole (fig. 4). She desires a husband who can match her prowess: Hamid, the son of Hamza, meets this challenge and wins



4. *Mihrdukht Aims Her Arrow at the Ring*, folio from the *Hamzanāma* (Story of Hamza).
Basawan (active ca. 1556–1600) and Jagan (active ca. 1550). India, Mughal, ca. 1570



5. *Khawaja Umar Saved from Pursuers*, folio from the *Hamzanāma* (Story of Hamza). Attributed in part to Kesu Das (active 1570–ca. 1602). India, Mughal, ca. 1565–70

her hand in marriage. Like many Mughal paintings, the work is not signed or inscribed; however, it has been attributed by one leading scholar to the artists Basawan and Jagan, important figures in the early Mughal atelier.¹⁴

Another dynamic *Hamzanāma* scene—*Khawaja Umar Saved from Pursuers*—depicts Umar, a loyal helper of Hamza, being rescued from his pursuers by a heavenly hand that reaches out to pull him skyward (fig. 5). It has been attributed in part to Kesu Das, who would have been young at the time and may have collaborated with another anonymous artist, as was often the case in early Mughal painting. Unusually for the *Hamzanāma*, this folio displays European influence, seen in the billowing clouds, the impressionistic, blue-tinted forest, and the scattered bones. Kesu was known for adapting features from European prints and engravings that were circulating at court. As with other painted folios of the *Hamzanāma*, the Persian text appears on the reverse.

A Prince Riding an Elephant in Procession, a fragment from a large work executed on cloth, was evidently painted for Akbar at the time he established his

court at the new city of Fatehpur Sikri in the early 1570s (fig. 6). The subject is a procession of warriors, courtiers, elephants, and horses setting out on an expedition from the gate of a crowded palace, which appears in the upper section of the painting, now in the Indian Museum, Kolkata. In this work, the individuality of each person and animal is apparent, in contrast to later more formulaic Mughal compositions. The merit of the image lies not just in the sense of reportage it conveys but in the joyous representation of the scene, right down to the lively baby elephant. Other superbly painted pachyderms, including the main elephant at center, and animated figures populate the scene. Hodgkin's special interest in elephant portraits is evident from the many single elephant studies and group images he collected. Although the main rider is almost entirely lost, it has been suggested that it could represent Akbar himself.¹⁵

Akbar's enlightened rule is demonstrated in the interest and respect he showed toward the spiritual traditions and culture of his Hindu subjects. His policies led to the creation of an inclusive and diverse nobility, the establishment of deep personal bonds across the kingdom through intermarriage with Rajput princesses, and an active engagement with the mythological and literary heritage of ancient India. The *Harivamsa* (Story of Hari) is an illustrated manuscript of about 1590–95 and one of several Hindu epics and mythological texts translated from Sanskrit to Persian and exquisitely illustrated by leading artists as part of an important translation program established by the emperor at Fatehpur Sikri. *Krishna Subduing Kaliya* depicts the blue god dancing upon the multiple heads of the serpent king Kaliya; the painting also provides a glimpse of Indian village life through the rural setting of Braj and its inhabitants (fig. 7). Krishna's figure is presented as an individual icon in a pose almost translated from sculpture but with a lightness and brilliant coloring (including the striking "Indian yellow" of his garments) that come from the sophisticated palette of this anonymous painter. The upper part of the composition is dominated by the kadamba tree from which Krishna has launched himself into the Yamuna River to vanquish Kaliya, whose presence had threatened the villagers and their cows. This victory of good over evil, as well as the recording of Krishna's miracle, is expressed by a Mughal artist for the first time. Notably, it is during this period that Hindu iconography expanded the subject of paintings. Therefore, painters must have relied on their own innovations or unidentified models for their detailed accounts of the episodes. The narrative of this ancient tale is communicated in the expressively posed figures, and the iconography represents the artist's understanding of the drama and details of the story. While the image of Krishna relates to earlier carvings and perhaps wall paintings (now largely lost), the representations of the villagers and the setting are drawn from Mughal conventions, which included



6. *A Prince Riding an Elephant in Procession*. India, Mughal, ca. 1570

European influences, evident particularly in the rendering of the background and architecture. The page size and figures are smaller than those found in earlier examples from Akbar's reign, but the composition retains the dynamism that was introduced in the *Hamzanāma*.

Works from the period of Akbar's successor, Jahangir (r. 1605–27), who is regarded as the greatest aesthete for painting among the Mughal rulers, are somewhat underrepresented in the Hodgkin collection. Perhaps this reflects the collector's preference for experimentation, because under Jahangir's keen patronage, painting settled down to a supremely refined and unified idiom after the emperor whittled down the imperial studio to the painters he regarded as the best (departing artists took the Mughal style to the Rajput and other courts). Jahangir was also interested in the study of nature. During his

reign, birds, animals, and insects were meticulously documented and played an important role in the symbolism of poetry and storytelling, appearing as decorative or illumination elements in manuscripts and albums.

The painting *Two Orioles* is characteristic of the bird and flower studies of the first quarter of the seventeenth century (fig. 8). Harmoniously composed, it places the two birds in diagonal symmetry against a plain ground interspersed with blossoms. The carefully observed creatures can be identified from their unique markings as a golden oriole keenly eying an insect (upper right) and a black-hooded oriole (lower left). They appear alive and energetic but also poetically decorative. In another painting, two mynahs stand silhouetted against a strong red ground; this chromatic feature is unusual for the time, as the Mughal palette was softening into blended



7. Krishna Subduing Kaliya, folio from the *Harivamsa* (Story of Hari). India, Mughal, ca. 1590–95

colors and pale settings and might have been added later (fig. 9). The birds have the animated manner, large eye area, and inquisitive expression characteristic of mynahs, which are known for their ability to copy human voices. This freshness suggests the painting was likely created at this moment of focus on the natural world. *Two Imperial Pigeons* is a lovely and detailed depiction of the creatures from about the middle of the seventeenth century (fig. 10). Skillful brushwork gives the humble pigeons a slightly mystical touch. One of them wears golden anklets, indicating that it belongs to the imperial pigeon cote, where such birds were used in the sport of *kabutar ishq-bazi*, or pigeon flying.

Under Emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58), the art of painting crystalized to yet a greater degree of perfection, particularly in the service of the imperial image and the documentation of the courtly world. *Attendants at an Imperial Durbar* is a fragment of the right-hand side of a double-page composition related to the Windsor *Pādshāhnāma*, or illustrated chronicle of Shah Jahan's reign (fig. 11).¹⁶ In the left-hand page (still unidentified), the emperor would have been receiving the Persian ambassador in full durbar assembly. On the right-hand page are lesser grandees and court attendants, including members of the Persian ambassador's retinue (identifiable by their large turbans), Mughal courtiers, and grooms and attendants for the magnificently painted horses and elephants. An animated group of musicians welcome the party from the *naqqār khāna* (drum house) above the gate, an important feature of Mughal court ritual. The painting contains a small inscription to the artist Hunhar, one of several talents employed at Shah Jahan's atelier, which has been accepted by most scholars as a convincing attribution. Hunhar's careful documentation is a key to Mughal courtly life and history at one of its most glittering times. Of the fifty-two human figures in this scene, many are scaled quite large and rendered without much modeling in a relatively spare setting. Hunhar reserved his most lavish attention for the horses and elephants, which are filled with personality.

Finely observed portraits of royal figures and nobility are an artistic innovation brought about by Akbar in the late sixteenth century, when he flouted religious orthodoxy by directing his artists to create portraits based on the likenesses of individuals rather than on the idealizations of past tradition. From those beginnings, the art of portraiture rapidly developed into various idioms, including highly sensitive head-and-shoulder images, such as a life-size study of Iltifāt Khan, son of Mirza Rustam of Kandahar (fig. 12). Well-connected to the Mughal elite through his own marriage and those of his daughters, Iltifāt Khan is mentioned in Mughal sources as a noted courtier who took early retirement and died in Patna in 1657. The artist is not known but was clearly one of the talents of the imperial workshops. They perhaps made this image in preparation for a larger durbar scene in which the subject would be standing in a court assembly looking upward at the emperor (as suggested by his raised gaze) or for an imperial album in which he would have been shown in full body. Facing right, Iltifāt Khan has an aquiline nose and a shaped beard relieved by tiny curls in the sideburns, the latter a convention borrowed from imperial portraits. His turban is tied in the prevailing fashion, flat topped and close to the head, with a broad headband. The face is delicately modeled, with a carefully articulated ear and shadows around the eyes and nose. This rare Mughal study conveys a sense of the sitter's serious character, with attentiveness and alacrity writ large upon his visage. He wears no jewels or adornments, and it is



8. Two Orioles. India, Mughal, ca. 1610



9. A Pair of Mynahs. India, Mughal, ca. 1620



10. Two Imperial Pigeons. India, Mughal, ca. 1650

the deceptive simplicity of the image and penetrating focus on the face that lend great power to the portrait. Corrections and reworkings by the artist are visible in the outline of the head, the ear, and the profile edge. A Devanagari inscription above identifies the subject and indicates that the drawing was in a Rajput collection at some point in its history.

By about 1640, a distinctive floral style had come to pervade Mughal art and architecture—the image of a single flower naturalistically depicted from root to blossom and often enclosed in repeating cusped arches. This enchanting motif appears in the relief decoration of Shah Jahani buildings, in manuscript illumination, in tent and textile designs, and in single observational studies. A practice sheet of ink sketches from nature by an unidentified artist reveals the meticulous attention that went into such botanical works (fig. 13). Some of the nineteen skillfully rendered flowers can be identified as lily, narcissus, iris, tulip, Persian violet, carnation, poppy, anemone, trillium, and campion. The page reveals the practice of Mughal artists, who went on to create magnificent botanical paintings and inlaid *pietre dura* stonework on edifices such as the Taj Mahal tomb complex.

Shah Jahan's third son and successor, Aurangzeb (later Emperor 'Alamgir, or "World Holder," r. 1658–1707), was a less-active patron of the visual arts. His long tenure as prince and emperor is partly characterized by a drift toward austerity and orthodoxy, leading him to eventually banish painting and music at the court. Some have argued, however, that this imperial disinterest spelled a new freedom for artists, who innovated several

important genres of painting at this time, especially the depiction of landscape and setting. Images of the emperor are known, although far fewer of them were produced than those of his forebears. One rare profile portrait of Prince Aurangzeb was executed by a Mughal-trained artist in the palace workshop at Aurangabad, likely during one of his terms as viceroy of the Deccan (fig. 14). Aurangzeb was stationed in this region as prince and later ruler as part of a long-standing Mughal ambition to seize the kingdoms of the Deccan plateau to the south after the dream of conquering into central Asia was abandoned. Seizure of the Deccan territories became something of an obsession for the emperor, who by 1687 succeeded in subduing the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda but at the expense of the stability of his own empire. This portrait from an earlier period of Aurangzeb's life forms an important bridge between the Mughal and Deccani worlds. The style of the portrait is Mughal, seen in the detailed descriptions of his garments, accoutrements, and figure, down to the hint of eyelashes and whirl of hair at the base of his neck. Yet it has been produced on cloth, a medium more typical of the Deccan during this period. In the clean delineation of his determined facial features, this painting foresees the catastrophic ambition of Aurangzeb, who was to depose his father, Shah Jahan, in 1658 and execute his elder brother Dara Shikoh in the fratricidal war of succession in 1659. Similar poetic profile portraits of a ruler at a *jharokhā* (presentation window) were later produced at the Rajput court, such as an image of Bakhat Singh of Nagaur holding a blossom (see fig. 38).



11. Attendants at an Imperial Durbar. Hunhar (active dates unknown). India, Mughal, ca. 1645



12. Portrait of the Courtier Iltifat Khan. India, Mughal, ca. 1640



13. Nineteen Flower Studies. India, Mughal, ca. 1650



14. Prince Aurangzeb. India, Mughal, ca. 1653-55



15. *Music Party on a Riverside Terrace*. India, Mughal, ca. 1670



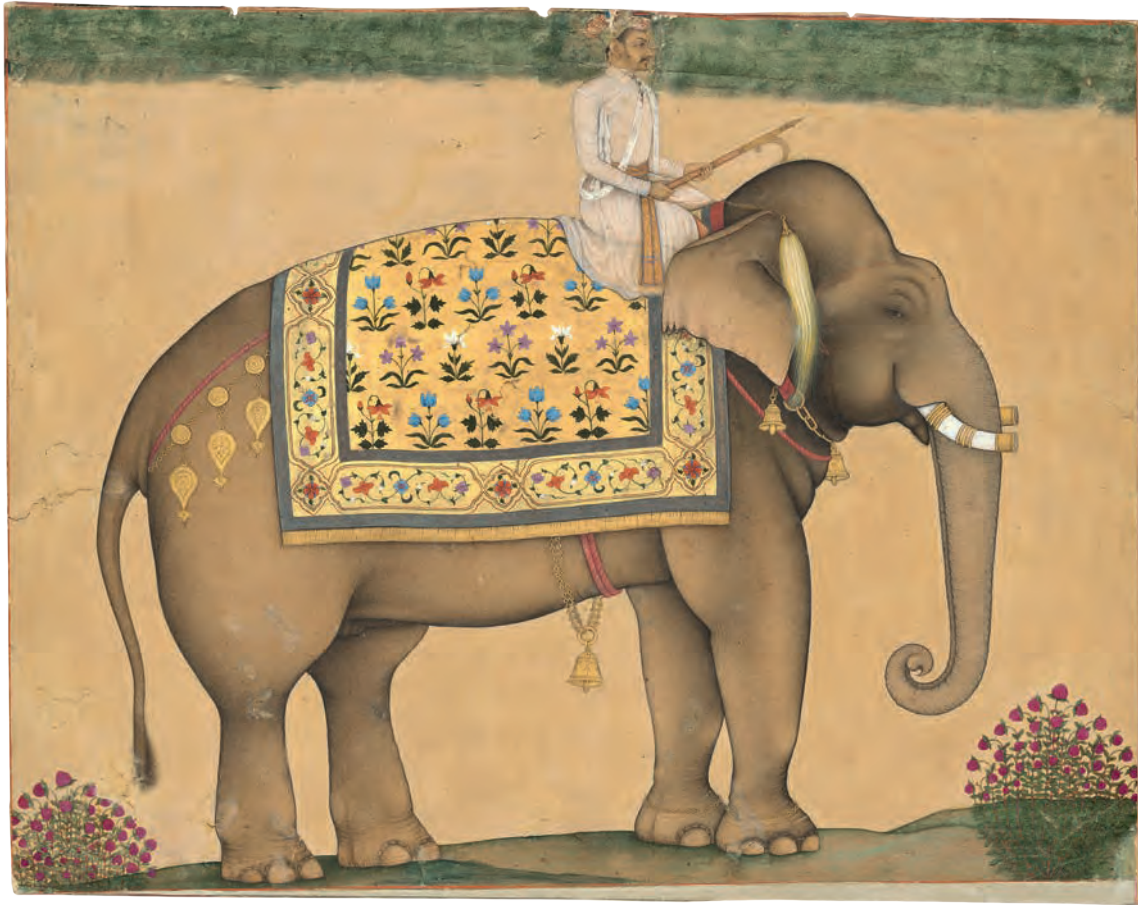
16. *Prince 'Azam Shah Enters Ahmedabad*. Attributed to Chitarman II (Kalyan Das, born ca. 1680, active ca. 1700–45). India, Mughal, ca. 1701

Despite the austerity under Aurangzeb, culture in India continued to flourish at various regional and provincial courts, and to some extent at the Mughal court. Artists and musicians from around the country and beyond were drawn to these centers, and lifestyles evolved to allow for the enjoyment of the arts unified with environment and setting. Artists excelled at capturing the nuance of this ceremonial splendor, conveying the talents of their musical compatriots and the advanced appreciation of their common patron, the ruler. In one scene, a musical party is hosted by the nobleman depicted at center, leaning against a large bolster, entertaining a guest who sits directly across from him. Attendants sit in a row behind the host, while musicians play stringed instruments and drums at lower right (fig. 15). The opulent carpet and attractive objects are somewhat stiffly arranged to create a formal atmosphere. Perhaps cut down from a larger composition, the scene might have been set on the Yamuna River at Agra, offering a view of the riverside mansions that are now almost entirely lost. The two principal figures who face each other and share a floor-spread have a distinctive darkening on the upper portion of their robes, sometimes interpreted as a stylized marking of fragrant unguents upon clothing.

As the eighteenth century dawned, the Mughal imperial authority ruled an enormous state, including newly conquered Deccan territories, and powerful governors were key to the Mughal administration. Prince 'Azam

Shah, who ruled as governor of Gujarat from 1701 to 1705, was the third son of Aurangzeb and the first patron of the Mughal artist Chitarman II, who later went on to serve Emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1719–48). A majestic drawing attributed to Chitarman II captures 'Azam Shah's historic entry into the city of Ahmedabad along with his son Wala Jah in 1701 (fig. 16). Hundreds of figures convey the drama of the moment, including an unruly mob who scramble to gather the coins that have been tossed to them. Shopkeepers, holy men, and various townspeople amass in a thick cluster along the length of the frieze-like building that stretches across the page. Clarity of line and detailed reportage are greatly valued in Mughal art, and here we see them at full strength, not covered up by color. Many figures are rendered with a particular sense of individuality, reflecting close observation and the growing interest in ordinary men, women, and children by certain Mughal artists at this time. Unique in size, subject matter, and immersive detail, the image offers a view into the lives and reactions of the people who watch the princely parade.

Central to Indian culture and ceremony, the elephant played an important role in the courtly world and became a celebrated subject in Mughal and Rajasthani painting. Hodgkin's affinity for these majestic creatures is apparent in his collection; indeed, he saw their portraiture as equal to that of human beings: "my pictures of men and of elephants are almost entirely portraits of individuals, or



17. *Elephant and Rider*. India, Mughal, ca. 1640



18. *The Elephant Khushi Khan*. Indian, Mughal, ca. 1650

variations on the idea of a portrait.¹⁷ Elephants were recorded by name in Mughal court documents and other sources, including paintings, and their individual histories are often known or traceable. Mughal elephant portraits are distinguished for their outstanding observation of these animals, dignifying them to the level of high courtiers by recording every feature with sensitivity. *Elephant and Rider*, from the Shah Jahan period, depicts an imperial elephant in profile surmounted by his rider (fig. 17). The artist has captured the animal's frayed ear and wrinkled trunk, including the gentle spiral of its tip, with care. The body is modeled to convey its volume and texture, contrasting with the flatness of the floral-brocade saddlecloth. The fine detail contributes to the stateliness and seriousness of the representation as an acme of the genre.

Often elephant portraits of the Shah Jahan period were inscribed with the name of the subject, typically in large letters between the animal's legs. We see this in the portrait of the elephant Khushi Khan (Lord of Happiness) (fig. 18). This mottled pachyderm is ornately decorated, and his image is set against a rich verdigris ground, which is a departure from the minty shade that Mughal artists often used for the background in human portraits. The splendid image *Elephant and Keeper* shows an imperial elephant tethered in open grassland, close to a Mughal army encampment (fig. 19). He waits patiently as his keeper strips cane and prepares other greens for his meal. The animal's large form is set against a mellow-colored sky and detailed background. Tiny groups of foot soldiers and cavalry are visible in the distance, as are elephants, camels, and a noblewoman's purdah carriage drawn by bullocks. These elements have led to the attribution of this work to the artist Ilyas Khan Bahadur.¹⁸ The now-flaked inscription below the image may have been written by Shah Jahan himself and has been read speculatively as giving the name of the elephant as Firuz Jang (Victorious in War), a known pachyderm at court. Mughal elephant portraits of this type contrast with the more action-filled images of elephants produced at the Rajasthani court of Kota, which do not aim to capture individual animals but rather to convey a dynamic theme. *Elephant Fight*, for example, depicts a dramatic encounter between two elephants in darkly inked lines with almost no color (see fig. 42). When considered together, the elephant pictures in the Hodgkin collection highlight the multiple approaches and styles that were employed to bring out the character, behavior, and personalities of individual elephants at court, as well as more fantastical evocations of their power and actions.

The Deccan plateau was home to five important and highly cultured kingdoms—Ahmadnagar, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, and Golconda—with a rich artistic legacy from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁹ Deccani painters developed a refined and poetic style, particularly under the inspiration of Bijapur's leading artist,



19. *Elephant and Keeper*. India, Mughal, ca. 1650–60



20. *Sultan Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II in Procession*. School of 'Ali Riza (active ca. 1600–1650). India, Deccan, Bijapur, mid-17th century



21. Composite Album Page with Three Paintings: Standing Figure of Jahangir, Princely Figure Holding Flowers; and An Elephant Family. India, Mughal and Deccan, early to mid-17th century



22. Sultan Muhammad 'Adil Shah and Ikhlas Khan Riding an Elephant. Haidar 'Ali (active dates unknown) and Ibrahim Khan (active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur, ca. 1645

Farrukh Husain. The Deccani courts established their own connections to Iran and other parts of the Middle East, and along coastlines where Europeans and others were making inroads. These points of contact, in addition to the position of the region between the influences of the Mughal court to the north and the opulent art of the deep south, gave Deccani art its unique otherworldly and imaginative character, in contrast to Mughal naturalism. The Hodgkin collection is especially strong in Deccani painting, of which far less survives than Mughal painting.

The Deccani and Mughal worlds meet in a composite album page that contains three separate early to mid-seventeenth-century compositions, likely mounted

together in the Safavid-style gold illuminated margins in Iran later in the century (fig. 21). On the upper left is a standing portrait of the Mughal emperor Jahangir. On the upper right is an unidentified courtier also from the Mughal world. Below, executed in a grisaille technique and probably made at the Deccani court of Bijapur, are a pair of adult elephants with mahout riders atop and an elephant calf. This image of an elephant family is probably the most significant element in terms of artistic importance. While the exacting observation of individual elephants was a hallmark of Mughal painting, Deccani artists were much more interested in their behavior and emotions. The calf reaches its trunk up to its father, while



23. *Sultan 'Ali 'Adil Shah II Slays a Tiger*. Attributed to the Bombay Painter (probably 'Abdul Hamid Naqqash, active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur, ca. 1660



24. *Wedding Procession of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah*. India, Deccan, Golconda, ca. 1650

its mother gently caresses its back with hers; the three elephants are thus interlocked in a circle of familial care and connection to which any human family can relate. The portraits are of the high quality associated with Mughal painting. Jahangir's familiar facial features are recognizable, although the study of his turban is somewhat inaccurate. He wears the double *patka*, or waistband, typical of his period and holds a tall sword, probably European. In the second Mughal image, the courtier clasps narcissus flowers, a long-standing symbol of refinement. It is not clear where this album was made, but its various ingredients demonstrate the permeable boundaries between the Mughal, Deccani, and Safavid empires, and the active circulation of luxury goods.

Sultan Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II in Procession, another delicately tinted scene with elephants, was made for Bijapur's most artistically sensitive ruler, Ibrahim II (r. 1580–1627) (fig. 20). This small painting depicts Ibrahim in a royal parade, seated on the back of an elephant surrounded by attendants riding beside him. The sultan appears in finery, while his attendants carry royal emblems, including a Deccani-style rounded parasol, banners, scarves, and metalwork objects. This miniature is attributed to the school of 'Ali Riza, an important seventeenth-century Deccani artist who was a master of stippling and shading. Filled with movement and a sense of regal gaiety, it powerfully conveys the spirit of Bijapuri painting, particularly in the rendering of the characterful elephants, whose balloonlike bodies are dressed in jewels, bells, and colorful trappings.

Ibrahim's son, Sultan Muhammad 'Adil Shah (r. 1627–56), and his Abyssinian prime minister, Ikhlas Khan, are pictured in a large double portrait (fig. 22). They sit together on a striding elephant, with Ikhlas Khan riding behind the sultan, positioned in an emblematic display of the actual power behind the throne. Ikhlas Khan was born enslaved and called Malik Raihan 'Adil Shah. He served at the court of Bijapur from a young age, and when Muhammad assumed the throne in 1627, Malik Raihan rose alongside him, presenting petitions and later becoming a commander of troops, before eventually being named governor of a province near Golconda. In 1635 he received the title Ikhlas Khan (from the Arabic term for "sincerity"), and he is one of the best-known Africans in the Deccan who ascended from servitude into an official position at court. His portraiture documents the important presence of African and other enslaved people in the Islamic and Indian courts. Notably, the two artists who completed the work, Haidar 'Ali and Ibrahim Khan, signed their names at left.

The Bombay Painter was a powerful force in a later phase of painting at Bijapur, when he captured his patron Sultan 'Ali 'Adil Shah II (r. 1656–72) in several sumptuous works. The artist has been identified as 'Abdul Hamid Naqqash based on the style of a small, inscribed work in the Musée Guimet, Paris.²⁰ In one fragmentary

painting, 'Ali II is resplendent in gold as he draws his bow to discharge a second arrow on a tiger crouching on the rocks (fig. 23). The rising golden finial below is thought to be either from the tail of a griffin or lion stand or an element from a royal barge. Either case would indicate an unusual iconography for such a subject. Sultan 'Ali's opulent facial features include a large and heavy-lidded eye, betelnut-reddened lips, and a dusky skin tone, all characteristic of this artist's vision of his patron. The small size of the tiger suggests hierarchical scaling rather than distant perspective, while the hidden grotesques in the rocks are a throwback to an earlier Persian convention. The work is one of only a few known portraits of 'Ali II. While the painting depicts the ruler engaged in a demonstration of his hunting prowess—iconography meant to illustrate his strength as a leader—in reality the sultan's government was continually infiltrated and undermined by the rival Mughals and Marathas, and eventually he left the affairs of the state to his minister.

The painting *Wedding Procession of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah* is one of the Deccan's most romantically charged visions (fig. 24). The pair is thought to be Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (r. 1580–1612) and Bhagmati, Golconda's legendary lovers. The attendants appear to glow against the dark ground as they carry royal umbrellas above the couple. The sultan and his bride are seated together on a horse—a departure from Indian convention, in which a bride is typically brought to her new home in a *doli*, or separate litter, after the wedding. Perhaps the cart drawn by running cows in the background was meant to carry her; her female attendants certainly ride within it while others follow on foot in the procession.

In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, mainly at the courts of Bijapur and Golconda, Deccani artists practiced the rarefied technique of marbling in their album and book making. This technique involved manipulating floating pigments on the surface of a liquid bath to form designs, which were then transferred to a sheet of paper carefully laid on top. Two craftspeople collaborated on this energetic rendering of an elephant trampling a horse: the artist used the shading technique of *nīm qalam* (half pen) to create the figures, and the marbler employed the technique known as *kāghaz-i ābri*, or just *ābri*, for the background (fig. 25). The artist also skillfully blocked off the areas of the elephant, rider, and horse from the vibrant marbled background before finishing the details of the animals and mahout with fine black ink shading and gold highlights. Works of this type are among the most distinct of Deccani creations.

Illumination in the Form of a Vase is another marvel of Bijapuri painting (fig. 26). The shape of the vase is principally outlined by serrated-edged *sāz* leaves, while Turkmen-style blossoms and other more conventionally styled flowers, such as lotuses and peonies, complete the composition. *Sāz* ink drawings, executed with a reed pen and incorporating the outlines of *sāz* leaves in curving



25. *Elephant Trampling a Horse*. India, Deccan, Bijapur, mid-17th century



26. *Illumination in the Form of a Vase*. India, Deccan, Bijapur, early 17th century



27. Album Page with *Découpé* Calligraphy. Muhammad Hasan (active dates unknown) and 'Ali (active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur or Golconda, 1630–40



28. Album Page with *Découpé* Vase of Flowers, Insects, and Birds. Muhammad Hasan (active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur or Golconda, 1630–40



29. Book Cover with Tree, Birds, and Insects. India, Deccan, Bijapur or Golconda, ca. 1700



30. Book Cover with Tree, Birds, and Insects. India, Deccan, Bijapur or Golconda, ca. 1700

and broken forms, are a hallmark of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ottoman art. The Deccani illuminator must have known this genre, for he successfully produced many of the same effects, such as the thickened line in some strokes and the treatment of the leaves, which weave and interlock in stiff tension. To create a sense of opulence, the illuminator enriched the surface with color and gold that has been pricked and worked. A small, frontally facing mask is visible on the neck of the vase. At the base of the vase, a row of rocks with some plants growing out of them pays a deferential nod to realism, from which this fanciful composition is otherwise far removed. An inscription above the lower border, reading “*gul-i hazār gulhā (?)*” (flower of a thousand flowers[?]), hints at the artistic objective of this virtuosic exercise. This folio may have formed the opening or end of a Bijapuri album of paintings and calligraphy.

A similar sense of fantasy is found in a pair of *découpé* album pages, one of which contains calligraphy and the other a floral vase (figs. 27, 28). The calligraphic folio, composed of cut-out letters, floral motifs, and sinuous arabesques, is a masterful creation of two artists who have signed their work: ‘Ali, the calligrapher, and Muhammad Hasan, the paper cutter. The calligraphy also contains a saying attributed to ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad) upon freeing his slave Qanbar, which became a well-known Shi’a phrase. Here the letters are interwoven with a simple but strong S-shaped arabesque scroll bearing blossoms. The text reads:

yā Qanbar kunta bi’l-amsi lī / wa sirta al-yawma mithlī / wahabtuka li-man wahaba lī / katabahu ‘Alī ‘Alī / qatī’uha Muḥammad Ḥaṣan (O Qanbar, yesterday you were mine / And today you have become like me [free] / I donate you to He who had donated you to me / Written by ‘Ali, ‘Ali / The cutter of the calligraphy is Muhammad Hasan).

In the vase folio, the cut paper, originally brighter, was colored and pressed to shape the springing flowers, buds, thorns, and leaves. Gold leaf was applied to the collar of the fantastical vase, below which is a family of marbled ducks. These folios were most likely created for an album made for Muhammad ‘Adil Shah and have been reunited at The Met after being in two different private collections, one of them Hodgkin’s.

A pair of book covers decorated with opulent flowering scenes on lacquer was made for a manuscript or album that has since been disseminated (figs. 29, 30). Each cover is decorated with a tree filled with plump birds and flanked by auspicious, flower-filled vases. In one panel, blue-patterned urns burst with hillocks of cabbagelike leaves topped with sprouting grass and varieties of ferns and flowers including tulips and lilies, while in the other, oversize vases brim with long-stemmed leafy



31. *Company Officer Receiving a Nobleman*. Eastern India, Murshidabad or Patna, ca. 1760–65

flowers upon which a kingfisher swoops. An odd sense of scaling pervades the compositions: insects appear the same size as birds, and flowers grow to great heights.

Although Hodgkin claimed he did not like Company painting, a depiction of an East India Company officer with an Indian nobleman crept into his collection (fig. 31).²¹ Paintings commissioned by officers of the British East India Company were completed by artists who were often trained in traditional Mughal techniques. In this case, the artist seems to have been from eastern India, possibly Murshidabad or Patna. An unidentified British officer seated at center seems to be receiving two guests—possibly an Indian nobleman and his son—who sit across from him. A group of attendants surround the central figures. In the foreground, gardeners and other workers carry out their business. This detailed tableau lends insight into the hierarchies of colonial India during this period and stands as an end marker of sorts to the historical extent of Hodgkin’s collection. ♦

Paintings of the Rajput and Pahari Courts

JOHN GUY

RAJPUT AND PAHARI COURT PAINTING MAKE UP two-thirds of Howard Hodgkin's collection. These paintings embody within them imagery evoking the blinding light and deep shadows of the Indian subcontinent, as well as its heat, dust, and lush vegetation. From the suffocating humidity to the ecstatic relief of the monsoon rains, all the forces of nature found expression in the concentrated intensity of ink drawing and the emotive power of color and dramatic composition in which this art excels.²²

The corpus of paintings made between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries at the courts of Rajasthan and the Punjab—often termed Pahari (“hill”) painting—constitutes an artistic high point of Indian court painting. Assertively original in both their inspiration and pictorial constructions, these works are also, in part, the products of an intense cross-fertilization that took place between competing loci of power in the later history of South Asia. From the late sixteenth century onward, Indian court painting was impacted in profound ways by the incursions of the Mughals, with their highly Persianate court culture. Mughal paintings prized refined modeling and verisimilitude, conveyed with a subdued palette and linear precision. By contrast, the painting style practiced in western Indian Hindu and Jain settings emerged from older indigenous sources embedded in mural and manuscript traditions, characterized by an emphasis on non-perspectival treatment of pictorial space and a greater focus on chromatic values. This style in turn had been touched by the first waves of Islamic culture coming from the Arab lands early in the second millennium.²³ The codex format, inspired by Qur'an book illumination, had by the fourteenth century displaced the miniaturized landscape format dictated by painting on palm leaf and later mimicked on paper.²⁴ The arrival of Persian-style painting at the court of the Mughal emperor Humayun in the 1550s, along with émigré artists from Iran, marked a moment of radical departure, represented

by the completion around 1577 of the *Hamzanāma* (Story of Hamza), under direction of the young emperor Akbar (see figs. 4, 5).²⁵

Over the course of the seventeenth century, the Mughals extended their power deeper into the territories of the Rajput kingdoms of Rajasthan, and their Persian-inspired culture was increasingly emulated by those under their political sway. The mobility of Mughal-trained artists in search of patronage was a major catalyst for this change, along with the Mughal practice of holding hostage in their capital senior nobles from conquered courts as political ransom. These hostages later brought back knowledge of the culture of their captors to their own kingdoms. This process of assimilation and fertilization is vividly illustrated in *Marriage Procession in a Bazaar*, a painting produced at the Pahari court of Mandi in about 1640–50 (fig. 32). Here, a Mughal-inspired palace scene has been relocated to a hill town bazaar. The ordered procession of courtiers and musicians, observed by bystanders, set against a lime green ground, strongly echoes Mughal compositions, suggesting it may be by an artist trained at a Mughal atelier.

As Mughal power lessened in the following century, those at the peripheries of the empire gradually reasserted greater cultural autonomy. The maintenance of a court workshop-cum-atelier (*kārkhānā*), even for minor fiefdoms, became an important means through which those people under Mughal rule could assert their royal status and give expression to their cultural identity. While such ateliers represented no overt challenge to the status quo that suzerainty under Mughals represented, they simultaneously allowed artists to draw upon conventions from both traditions. The court paintings presented here reflect centuries of both strident local innovation and artistic exchange, much of it fueled by the mobility of artists as patronage and political fortunes waxed and waned.



32. *Marriage Procession in a Bazaar*, folio from a *Rāmāyana* or *Bhāgavata Purāna* series. India, Himachal Pradesh, Mandi, ca. 1640–50

PEOPLE AND PORTRAITS

Portraiture was a favored genre of Rajput artists and their patrons. *Maharaja Dhiraj Singh Riding*, of about 1700, memorializes the second ruler of Raghugarh, in Madhya Pradesh, a lesser Rajput court established in 1673 (fig. 33). Dhiraj Singh (r. 1697–1726) was largely responsible for the construction of the fort there and nurtured a cultivated court culture within. The reputation of the young ruler extended well beyond his domain, and he was favored by the rulers of Mewar and Jaipur, entering into marriage alliances with both their families. In this painting, he is seen seated upright on his beautiful gray stallion, wearing a bright orange turban tied in the Central Indian manner. Both rider and horse are in strict profile, with their elegant contours silhouetted against a monochromatic pale green ground, a device commonly found in Mughal portraiture.

The Rajputs were quick to make the profile portrait their own, not only scaling it up into large paintings but also transposing it into depictions that celebrated their marital prowess, bravery, and chivalry—their veritable

code of honor. Equestrian portraits in outdoor settings were especially popular. A pioneer of this genre was the so-called Stipple Master, active at the Mewar atelier in the capital of Udaipur from about 1690 until 1715 under the patronage of both Amar Singh II (r. 1698–1710) and his successor, Sangram Singh (r. 1710–34).²⁶ *Sangram Singh Hawking*, of about 1705–10, reveals much about the working manner of this artist: the action is presented in a continuous narrative across the composition, with the prince's bird of prey depicted at four moments in time (fig. 34). A subdued use of color in soft tonalities applied with a stippling technique, most evident in the treatment of the horse, strongly evokes the European grisaille technique introduced to India via Mughal art.

Maharaja Raj Singh and His Elephants, of about 1710–15, is an understated yet magnificent study of a royal outing with elephants (fig. 35). Fourteen pachyderms are depicted, from the grand bull who carries the maharaja in his howdah to young calves who trot alongside. This highly finished and sensitively rendered drawing exemplifies the idiosyncratic style of Sawar painting, with its predilection for beautifully controlled

महाराज धीरजी (जसिंघज)



33. Maharaja Dhiraj Singh Riding. Madhya Pradesh, Raghugarh, ca. 1700



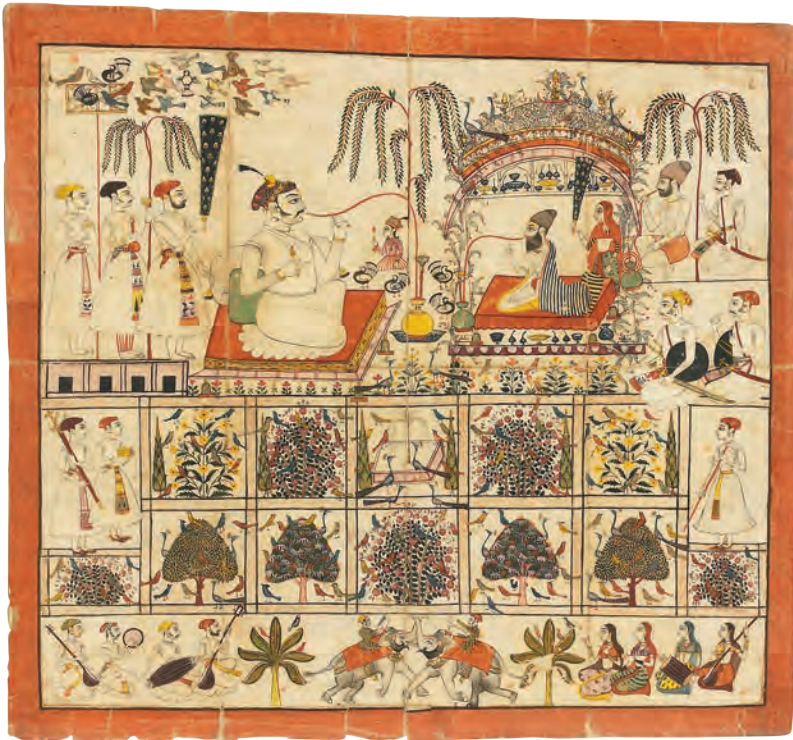
34. *Sangram Singh Hawking*. Attributed to the Stipple Master (active ca. 1690–1715). India, Rajasthan, Udaipur, ca. 1705–10



35. *Maharaja Raj Singh and His Elephants*. India, Rajasthan, Sawar, ca. 1710–15



36. *Maharaja Raj Singh in a Garden Arcade*. India, Rajasthan, Sawar, ca. 1710–15



37. *Maharaja Raj Singh Receives a Yogi in a Garden*. India, Rajasthan, Sawar, 1714.

line and a restrained use of color that sets off a quiet chromatic interplay. The quality of the brush drawing is exemplary, among the very best to be seen anywhere in the Rajput schools. The fiefdom (*thikana*) of Sawar was created within Ajmer in central Rajasthan during the reign of the Mughal emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–27) as a reward for service to the Mughal court. Undoubtedly the work of the artists of nearby Kota and Bundi in eastern Rajasthan had an impact on the treatment of the elephants seen here, but the exceptional linear quality must be credited to an unnamed artist in the Sawar court.

Portraiture was used to record memorable moments that could be reflected upon at leisure and shared with the patron's more intimate circle. Those depicting the sitter in a palace and/or garden setting were the most private images. In *Maharaja Raj Singh in a Garden Arcade*, of about 1710–15, we again witness a fusion of Mughal and Rajput aesthetics at Sawar (fig. 36). The distinctive painting style associated with Sawar is directly linked to the reign of Raj Singh (r. 1705–30), who was renowned for his love of art, music, and the sensory pleasures of his gardens. He was also a trained singer of some accomplishment. Here the arcaded terrace from which Raj Singh overlooks his garden is set against a lime green ground. The spandrels of the arcade are painted in a pink-and-green floral design emulating Mughal inlaid *pietra dura*; the balcony is draped with a red velvet and gold Mughal-style carpet. The picture's subject is that of the inner world of an aesthete. Another painting close in date shows the splendor of Raj Singh's palace garden into which he has received a spiritual teacher during the festival of Diwali, in 1714 (fig. 37). With its inventive use of scale and perspective, this large drawing is a singular composition that stands apart from mainstream conventions of eighteenth-century picture-making.

The popularity of profile portraiture can in large part be traced to the Mughal emulation of European cameo portraits favored as court gifts.²⁷ *Maharaja Bakhat Singh*, of about 1735, is a direct descendant of that tradition (fig. 38). It is one of the finest Rajput portraits of the early eighteenth century from the Nagaur court of the Marwar kingdom of Rajasthan. When appointed governor of Nagaur fort in 1739, Bakhat Singh (1706–1752) constructed a walled pleasure palace within. Here he is seen seated at a projecting audience window (*jharokhā*), with a small flower raised in his hand as a signifier of his sensibilities and connoisseurship. Such large-scale portraits were likely painted in multiple versions to serve as gifts to neighboring Rajput courts. Portrait paintings from other courts routinely appear in the princely collections, supporting the notion that pictures circulated between courts as diplomatic gifts and perhaps as aids to marriage proposals. No doubt they also contributed to the cross-fertilization of styles.



38. Maharaja Bakhat Singh. India, Rajasthan, Marwar, Nagaur, ca. 1735



39. Maharaja Kirpal Pal of Basohli Smoking a Hookah. India, Himachal Pradesh, Mankot, ca. 1690

While the Mughal artists and their patrons sought realism and naturalism, the Rajput and Pahari painters built on traditions that prized formal abstraction and spatial freedom achieved using flat washes of intense colors in dramatic juxtapositions. This is witnessed in two closely related works from the same atelier, created just a few years apart. *Maharaja Bhupat Pal of Basohli Smoking*, of about 1685,²⁸ and *Maharaja Kirpal Pal of Basohli Smoking a Hookah*, of about 1690 (fig. 39), were painted at the small hill court of Mankot. They provide insights into the nature of studio production and painter lineages. Each exemplifies the sophisticated confidence of these artists to employ passages of concentrated pigment that dominate the flat, linear composition and modulate the mood (*bhāva*) of the picture through the emotive power of color.

ON ELEPHANT AND HORSE— THE ROYAL HUNT

Painters at the courts of the Rajput kingdoms were assigned a special role—to “shadow” their patrons, recording their daily activities, pastimes, and pleasurable pursuits, sometimes even their lovemaking. Moreover, they were routinely required to participate in and record military campaigns and royal hunts. As a result of this firsthand experience, their images of hunts, animal combats, and war are unrivaled for their immediacy and compelling drama. Viewing these pictures back in

the private chambers of the palace, the maharaja and his inner circle would marvel at his display of bravery, recorded for posterity. After being denied the autonomy to conduct warfare independent of their Mughal overlords, the Rajput rulers in particular channeled their martial skills into the hunt, elevating it into a ritualized activity that served as a surrogate for displays of valor in combat.

Maharao Madho Singh Hunting Wild Boar, of about 1720, celebrates the fearless Madho Singh (r. 1631–48), the founding ruler of the kingdom of Kota, in a painting executed nearly a century after his death (fig. 40). Representing the embodiment of the upmost Rajput virtues, he is shown dressed in hunting greens, pursuing boars through rugged woodland. He leans precariously from the saddle to thrust his punch dagger (*katar*) into a fleeing boar while another one turns to attack him. This is a dangerous pastime, captured by a Kota painter as high drama. The rugged terrain is rendered in deft brushwork, with tree varieties and plant life distinguished skillfully by an artist intimately familiar with the landscape he is describing. However, while the distinctive terrain was clearly known to the artist, the composition appears to have been derived from a mural in the painted rooms (*citrasāli*) of the raja’s private quarters in the Badal Mahal at Bundi.²⁹

Hodgkin the collector had a passion for paintings of Indian elephants. Some, especially those produced in Mughal and sultanate ateliers, often assume the



40. Maharao Madho Singh Hunting Wild Boar. Attributed to Kota Master A (active dates unknown). India, Rajasthan, Kota, ca. 1720

character of a portrait, and on occasion the animals are even named by inscription. But it was in images of the elephant in action, as exemplified in the art of Bundi and Kota, that this subject found its quintessential expression. Indeed, these two courts elevated the celebration of the hunt to high art. Kota was created in 1624 by the ruler of Bundi, Rao Ratan Singh, who gifted the district of Kota to his son as a separate principality as a reward for military service to the Mughals. During the reign of Rao Chattersal of Bundi (r. 1631–59), an extraordinary flowering of painting occurred at both courts. *A Royal Lion Hunt*, of about 1640, is a tour de force of the Bundi school, animated and bold (fig. 41). While the artists of Bundi and Kota drew directly on Mughal studies of elephants, a much-favored subject, they went far beyond these grand, if somewhat subdued, depictions to make this the most vibrant genre in seventeenth-century Rajput painting. The present scene appears to be the central portion of a larger ink-and-wash study that served as a template for a portion of the interior murals of the palace at Kota.³⁰

Spectacular in scale, *Elephant Fight*, of about 1655–60, is arguably the finest extant drawing of this genre and was undoubtedly a template for a mural painting (fig. 42). Staged elephant fights were an integral part of court life in Rajasthan: more than entertainment, these fights ensured that the royal herd and their trainers were in a constant state of readiness for war. Capturing these mighty animals in drawings and paintings was a task regularly assigned to the court artists. Here we see two mighty elephants locked in combat, their heads butting together and their massive bodies straining to prevail. All is achieved with fine brushed line work and minimal tonal rendering. That this was a staged event is clear: the rider at left wears princely attire, and a foot attendant thrusts a forked pole with a spinning firecracker (*charkha*) close to both beasts to agitate and excite them in a ploy designed to prepare them for the atmosphere of the battlefield.

The Elephant Hunt, of about 1730–40, is a dramatic account of capturing elephants in the wild to be tamed and trained for service (fig. 43).³¹ The professional



41. *A Royal Lion Hunt*. India, Rajasthan, Bundi, ca. 1640



42. *Elephant Fight*. Attributed to the Kota Master (active dates unknown). India, Rajasthan, Kota, ca. 1655-60



43. *The Elephant Hunt*. Attributed to Niju (active 1730–40). India, Rajasthan, Kota, ca. 1730–40



44. *Vibhishana in the Camp of Rama*, folio from a *Rāmāyana* series.
India, Rajasthan, Sawar, ca. 1700

elephant hunters all wear foliage camouflage. Such grand-scale works were intended for display within the palace at Kota, where the nobility of the elephants and the heroism of the hunters could be admired in equal measure. A Kota artist, probably the painter Niju, evokes all the excitement—and dangers—of taking wild elephants captive in order to induct them into the royal stables.³² This painting represents the culmination of nearly a century of elephant painting at the Kota court.

EPICS AND DEVOTION

Exploring the human condition and emotional states has always been a central concern of Indian painters. This focus found its most powerful expression in narrative paintings, especially those associated with the two great Indian religious epics, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* (together with its popular appendix the *Harivamsa*,

devoted to the adventures of the youthful Krishna). So universal were these Hindu epics in their appeal that the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605) commissioned their translation into Persian—the court language of the day—in lavish illustrated editions (see, for example, fig. 7). It was the Hindu courts of the Punjab Hills, however, that most routinely celebrated these epic narratives in paintings, some spectacular in scale.

Vibhishana in the Camp of Rama, of about 1700, is a rare surviving folio of a codex-style painted edition of the *Rāmāyana*, attributed to Sawar (fig. 44). It was likely created by an artist trained in a Mughal atelier with access to imperial illustrated manuscripts housed in the royal library, which likely inspired the vertical format. This highly original envisioning of events described in book six of the *Rāmāyana* recounts Rama's siege of the palace of the demon-king Ravana on the island Lanka, from where the hero hopes to secure the release of his wife Sita, who has been abducted by Ravana. At his war encampment on a hilltop overlooking the island fortress, Rama receives Vibhishana, the virtuous brother of Ravana, who kneels before him.

The *Siege of Lanka* series, which illustrates further episodes from book six of the *Rāmāyana*, is perhaps the most ambitious commission in the history of Pahari painting.³³ It was produced at the court of Guler in Himachal Pradesh during the reign of Raja Dalip Singh (r. 1695–1741), the principal patron of the painter Manaku, to whom the series has been attributed. Along with his younger brother Nainsukh, Manaku dominated Guler court painting in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and the *Siege of Lanka* is regarded as his masterpiece. Each folio in the series has the relevant passages of text written in ink on the reverse to facilitate narration of the epic by a storyteller, recalling the *Hamzanāma*, discussed earlier. In *The Monkey Prince Angada Delivers Rama's Message to Ravana*, a large-scale unfinished folio of about 1725 from the *Siege of Lanka* series, the grandeur of Ravana's formidable golden fortress on Lanka is evoked using multiple vantage points (fig. 45). This innovative representation of architectural perspective allowed the artist to accommodate the complex narrative in his composition.

While employed at the court of Guler in the 1760s, Nainsukh was commissioned to produce a series depicting scenes from the *Mahābhārata*. *The Disrobing of Draupadi* is one of the few surviving pages and an unrivaled work of art (fig. 46). In this disturbing human drama, Dushasana, a prince of the Kaurava clan, has won a game of dice and claims as his prize all that belongs to the Pandava clan, including Draupadi, the beautiful and virtuous wife of the five Pandava brothers.³⁴ The shameless prince attempts to disrobe Draupadi; but, as each robe is torn from her, another one magically replaces it, so protecting her modesty. The sea of discarded robes at her feet is a tour de force of painting.



45. *The Monkey Prince Angada Delivers Rama's Message to Ravana*, folio from the *Siege of Lanka* series. Manaku (active ca. 1725–60). India, Himachal Pradesh, Guler, ca. 1725



46. *The Disrobing of Draupadi*. Attributed to Nainsukh (active ca. 1735–78). India, Himachal Pradesh, Guler, ca. 1760–65



47. *Harihara Sadashiva*. India, Himachal Pradesh, Mandi, ca. 1710–20

Hodgkin rarely acquired purely devotional paintings, but there are two singular examples in his collection. *Harihara Sadashiva*, of about 1710–20, is an extraordinary visualization of Shiva in his syncretic ascetic form as Harihara Sadashiva, which combines the attributes of Shiva (Hara) and Vishnu (Hari) (fig. 47). His ascetic nature is signaled by a necklace of severed human heads, a leopard-skin cloth, braided dreadlocks, and a garland of leaves of the highly hallucinogenic datura plant, sacred to Shiva. His eyes are cast upward in a yogic trance. His distinctive physique likely mirrors that of the image's patron, Raja Sidh Sen (r. 1684–1727) of the hill kingdom of Mandi. Sidh Sen was renowned as a devotee of Shiva and favored yogic meditative practices in his daily worship. This intense personal identification with Shiva, along with other known portraits of the ruler, allows us to suggest that this Sadashiva occupies the bodily form of Sidh Sen himself.³⁵

The second great devotional painting belongs to the so-called *Tantric Devi* series, painted about 1660–70. It originally included about seventy folios, of which less than half are known today.³⁶ These paintings would have been secured in a portfolio and used during private meditations on the goddess. Though small in size, *Bhadrakali, Destroyer of the Universe* has the intensity of a monumental artwork (fig. 48). Bhadrakali is a form of the great goddess Devi and the supreme expression of divine power to her devotees. Her foundational text, the *Devī Māhātmya*, concludes, "I meditate upon Bhadrakali, glowing like new clouds, standing upon a corpse."³⁷



48. *Bhadrakali, Destroyer of the Universe*, from the *Tantric Devi* series. India, Himachal Pradesh, Basohli, ca. 1660–70

This painting allows a worshipper to enter a full visualization of the goddess and is a tour de force of experiential drama. The small, square format and wide border of intense red are two signature features of the Pahari schools of Basohli and neighboring Nurpur.

PLACE AND LANDSCAPE

During the eighteenth century, artists responsible for chronicling royal life at the Mewar capital of Udaipur devised new ways of evoking place and mood (*bhāva*). Representations using aerial perspective and multiple vantage points allowed spaces to open in new ways, providing a bird's-eye view into a private world. Images of the wondrous interiors of the palace at Udaipur Lake, such as *Maharana Amar Singh Enjoying the Company of Women of the Court*, of about 1708–10, are classic examples of this new genre: they are unprecedentedly large in scale, complex, and celebratory (fig. 49). Amar Singh II was an avid patron of the arts and in his twelve-year reign was responsible for contributing a substantial corpus of paintings to the Udaipur palace inventory. Here, he is shown in three sequential scenes: in the upper section, he is entertained by dancers; at center, he bathes with women of the court in a saffron-scented pool; and in the lower register, he immerses himself in the Gulab Bari (Rosewater Garden), where a multitude of figures dissolve into the densely flowered landscape, as if subsumed by its sensory power.³⁸

By the mid-eighteenth century, large panoramic paintings were the norm at Udaipur. For the first time they appear to have been intended for mounting on a wall in the manner of European pictures, a function that no doubt influenced their scale. In the unmistakably grand *Maharana Jagat Singh in a Lake Palace Garden*, of about 1750, Jagat Singh II (r. 1734–51) is seen taking pleasure in the water gardens at the Jagniwas Palace, a private residence he built on a man-made island in Pichola Lake (fig. 50). Completed in 1746, the lake palace became his favorite retreat, offering a temporary respite from the troubling affairs of state. He appears three times in this painting recording a day of royal pastimes. The palace is shown in aerial perspective in an attempt to accommodate the multiple events depicted. On the reverse is a clerical inscription in Devanagari script stating that it was created by the artists Jiva and Jugarsi and inventoried into the Mewar royal collection in 1751. Paintings such as this one signal a retreat into private moments devoted to aesthetic enjoyment, and so celebrate—and record—the patron’s refined connoisseurship.

As seen in the lake palace painting, the arcading of the walkways and terraces at Rajput palaces were hung with roller blinds to shield the interiors from the blistering heat of the sun. A rare survivor of this genre of painting is *A Court Beauty*, of 1805–10 (fig. 51). Attributed to the Mewar painter Chokha, son of the renowned Mewar painter Bagta (discussed later), it is both witty and alluring. The young woman stands provocatively, stretching her hands above her head in a gesture of longing. Her disproportionately large lotus-shaped eye, drawing on a mannerism developed in the nearby Rajput court of Kishangarh, adds to her overt appeal. This painting on cloth was likely produced at the request of Maharana Bhim Singh (r. 1778–1828), probably for a room or a terrace in which he received his courtesans. Bhim Singh was renowned for his hedonistic lifestyle and for fathering a hundred or more children. The boy clinging to the courtesan’s skirt, distinguished by rich jewelry and a crescent-moon mark of rank on his forehead, was thus likely one his progeny. The painting is simply inscribed *phutadya*, or “a beauty.”³⁹

An altogether more refined and restrained depiction of female beauty is seen in *A Lady Singing*, of about 1740–45 (fig. 52). While it has all the qualities of a portrait and was likely modeled after a young woman of the court at the small kingdom of Kishangarh, it was intended to serve as a depiction of idealized beauty. Under the patronage of Maharaja Raj Singh (r. 1706–48) and his son Savant Singh (r. 1748–64), this mannered and stylized figure-type emerged as the signature image of this school. The Mughal-trained artist Bhavani Das was responsible for laying the foundations of this innovation, which was continued by his son Dalchand.⁴⁰ Bhavani Das had arrived at Kishangarh in 1719 after the death of his patron the Mughal emperor Farrukh Siyar (r. 1713–19) and



49. *Maharana Amar Singh Enjoying the Company of Women of the Court.*
India, Rajasthan, Udaipur, ca. 1708–10



50. Maharana Jagat Singh in a Lake Palace Garden. Jiva (active dates unknown) and Jugarsi (active dates unknown). India, Rajasthan, Udaipur, ca. 1750



51. *A Court Beauty*. Attributed to Chokha (active 1799–ca. 1826).
India, Rajasthan, Udaipur, 1805–10



52. *A Lady Singing*. Attributed to Bhavani Das (active 1700s–ca. 1748).
India, Rajasthan, Kishangarh, ca. 1740–45

quickly developed a style that overlaid Mughal fidelity to nature with a romantic flavor drawn from Vaishnava devotionism. Presented in profile following Mughal conventions, this portrait is far removed from Mughal taste. The woman's features are highly stylized, with a pronounced silhouette, a large tapering lotus-shaped eye, and an arching eyebrow. She conforms to a category of ideal heroine known as a *nāyikā*, celebrated primarily in the poetic tradition. She is poised in song, lips slightly parted and one hand raised in the gesture of recitation; with her other she holds a stringed drone instrument, the *tambūrā*, providing her own accompaniment. She may represent a lady of the court role-playing as a *nāyikā* (as a scribal note on the reverse suggests), or perhaps she was understood as Radha in a love-match play with Krishna.⁴¹

Rawat Gokul Das at the Singh Sagar is a unique masterpiece of Mewar painting. It records a hunting excursion of Rawat Gokul Das (r. 1786–1821) to his

private, secluded lake palace Singh Sagar, near Deogarh, in July 1806 (fig. 53). The aerial perspective employed by the artist was informed, in part, by access to European cartography and topographic depictions in circulation in India at this time.⁴² The resulting landscape rendering is both lush and at one with the human presence; harmoniously scaled, it enhances the painting's pleasurable mood. It is assigned by inscription to the eminent Mewar artist Bagta (or Bakhta). The raja appears four times, finally firing his musket at waterfowl in flight over the reservoir. The silvered water has tarnished to a dark gray, but it once would have shimmered with reflected light. Massive rock formations dominate the lower landscape, and richly detailed woodlands are populated with birds, monkeys, crocodiles, and tortoises, all deftly described.

The pictorial solutions arrived at by Mewar painters in the mid-eighteenth century had a lasting impact on Rajasthani painting, as witnessed a century later in



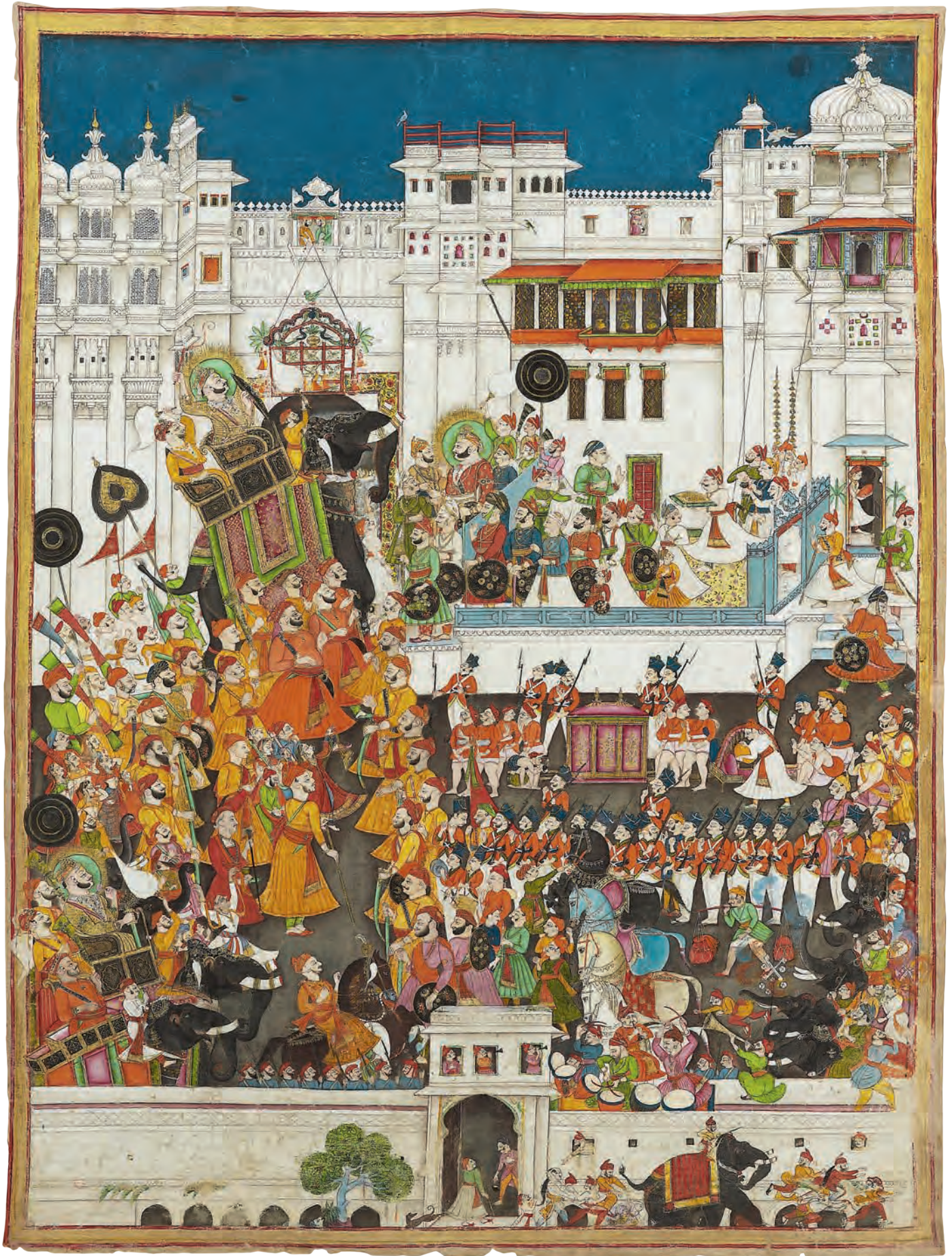
53. Rawat Gokul Das at the Singh Sagar. Bagta (or Bakhta, active ca. 1761–1814). India, Rajasthan, Deogarh, 1806



54. View of Baadi Mahal facade of the City Palace, Udaipur, with principal gate in the foreground, ca. 1895–1905. Gelatin silver print. City Palace Museum, Udaipur

Maharao Ram Singh's Marriage Procession at Udaipur, produced at Kota in about 1851 (fig. 55). This spectacular painting, over three feet in height, represents the culmination of a long tradition of grand compositions that record aspects of royal life in and around the Udaipur palace. It depicts the opening events of a wedding ceremony between the Rajput royal households of Kota and Mewar, performed on March 9, 1851. The mesmerizing composition is rich in observational details, some whimsical in nature, which impart a humanizing quality to this record of a marriage alliance. Palace musicians above the fort gateway strike their kettle drums (*naqqāra*) and blow their shrill trumpets (*shehnāis*), adding a high-pitched musical accompaniment to the occasion. The elevated vantage point and multiple perspectives allow the artist to represent several events within a single composition and to capture the true complexity of the layered architecture. Indeed, a photograph from about 1895–1905 demonstrates just how successful the artist has been in his task (fig. 54).

Maharao Ram Singh's Marriage Procession at Udaipur stands at the cusp of a rapidly disappearing tradition, signaled by the recent arrival of photography in India, which was taken up with enthusiasm by the princely states and marked the demise of the court painting ateliers. The Indian painting collection of Howard Hodgkin, now under the care of The Met, will undoubtedly continue to engage us as we look longingly to an age when paintings served to mirror both the ideals and *réalité* of Indian court life in equal measure. ♦



55. Maharao Ram Singh's Marriage Procession at Udaipur, India, Rajasthan, Kota, ca. 1851

NOTES

1. Andrew Topsfield and Milo Cleveland Beach, *Indian Paintings and Drawings from the Collection of Howard Hodgkin*, exh. cat. (Washington, DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991); Andrew Topsfield, *Visions of Mughal India. The Collection of Howard Hodgkin*, exh. cat. (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2012).
2. Hodgkin Hodgkin, "About My Collection," *Asian Art* 4, no. 4 (Fall 1991), p. 11.
3. Howard Hodgkin, "On Indian Drawing," in Howard Hodgkin and Terence McNerney, *Indian Drawing*, exh. cat. (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1983).
4. *Indian Subject (Blue)*, 1965–69, recalls an evening music recital by the court musician Amar Lal at Kishangarh palace arranged for Hodgkin, Skelton, and Sheth; Asha and Ketaki Sheth, email message to the author, October 19, 2023.
5. Alan Bowness, Howard Hodgkin, and Geeta Kapur. *Six Indian Painters: Rabindranath Tagore, Jamini Roy, Amrita Sher-Gil, M.F. Husain, K.G. Subramanyan, Bhupen Khakhar*, exh. cat. (London: Tate Gallery, 1982).
6. Bruce Chatwin, *Howard Hodgkin: Indian Leaves* (London and New York: Petersburg Press, 1982), p. 14.
7. Susan Sontag, "About Hodgkin," in *Where the Stress Falls: Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001), p. 156.
8. The handmade paper came from Kalamkush, Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad; Suhrid Sarabhai, email messages to the author, August 5–14, 2023. For the technique, see Howard Hodgkin, "Artist's Notes," in Chatwin, *Indian Leaves*, pp. 51–53. Most of the resulting works were exhibited in London in 1982.
9. Hodgkin, "Artist's Notes," p. 52; see also Shanay Jhaveri, "Like as the Waves," in *Howard Hodgkin: Indian Waves* (London: Gagosian Gallery, 2014), p. 12.
10. Quoted in Sontag, "About Hodgkin," p. 156.
11. Chatwin, *Indian Leaves*, p. 11.
12. Howard Hodgkin, "Notes on the Collection: Postscript," in Topsfield, *Visions of Mughal India*, p. 12.
13. Topsfield and Beach, *Indian Paintings and Drawings*, p. 15.
14. John Seyller, *The Adventures of Hamza: Painting and Storytelling in Mughal India*, exh. cat. (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; London: Azimuth Editions Limited, 2002), p. 230, no. 76.
15. Terence McNerney, *Indian Painting, 1525–1825*, exh. cat. (London: David Carrut, 1982), p. 17.
16. The Windsor *Pādshāhnāma* was completed by the author Abdul Hamid Lahori in about 1657. It contains 239 folios and forty-four illustrations. Now part of the royal collection at Windsor Castle, it was presented to King George III by the ruler of Avadh in 1799. Approximately twenty-seven related illustrations are no longer thought to be dispersed folios from this copy but rather works from earlier versions of the chronicle or individual representations of historical episodes in a similar vein, some of which would have been included in the Windsor manuscript. Altogether, these works relate episodes of the emperor's reign.
17. Howard Hodgkin, "Notes on the Collection," in Topsfield and Beach, *Indian Paintings and Drawings*, p. 9.
18. John Seyller, "A Rediscovered Mughal Master," Ananda Coomaraswamy Annual Lecture, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, May 13, 2021, video, 55:43, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8Yk1WrePdE>.
19. Some of the observations on the Deccani works are drawn from my previous writing about them in Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700: Opulence and Fantasy*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), esp. pp. 133–34, 136, 138, 148–51, and 234–37.
20. Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, p. 149; and Mark Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting* (London: Sotheby's; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 143, ill. no. 112.
21. Hodgkin, "Notes on the Collection," p. 10.
22. Milo Cleveland Beach wrote of the collection: "[I]t is undoubtedly one of the most individual and visually exciting. Its main strength lies in the Rajput schools, especially in those intriguing areas where the robust Rajput ethos and the imperial Mughal aesthetic overlapped and interfused." Topsfield and Beach, *Indian Paintings and Drawings*, p. 14.
23. B[r]jindra N[ath] Goswamy, *A Jainesque Sultanate Shahnama and the Context of Pre-Mughal Painting in India*, Rietberg Series on Indian Art 2 (Zurich: Museum Rietberg, 1988); John Guy and Jorrit Britschgi, *Wonder of the Age. Master Painters of India, 1100–1900*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 29–31.
24. John Guy, "From Palm-leaf to Paper: Manuscript Painting, 1100–1500," in Guy and Britschgi, *Wonder of the Age*, pp. 22–25.
25. For more on the artwork, see Seyller, *The Adventures of Hamza*.
26. For the artist's biography, see Catharine Glynn, "The 'Stipple Master,'" in Milo Cleveland Beach, Eberhard Fischer, and B[r]jindra N[ath] Goswamy, eds., *Masters of Indian Painting, Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 48, vol. 2, 1650–1900 (Zurich: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 2011), pp. 515–30; Guy and Britschgi, *Wonder of the Age*, p. 131. For another work attributed to the Stipple Master, see The Metropolitan Museum of Art (hereafter cited as MMA) 2002.177, published in Guy and Britschgi, *Wonder of the Age*, pp. 132–33, no. 65.
27. This occurred most notably in the early seventeenth century during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan; see Andrew Topsfield, "Paintings and the Arts of the Book," in *The Indian Heritage. Court Life and Arts under Mughal Rule*, exh. cat. (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1982), p. 120.
28. MMA 2022.241. See also entry in Topsfield, *Visions of Mughal India*, pp. 148–49, no. 62.
29. Joachim Bautze, "Portraits of Rao Ratan and Madho Singh Hara," *Berliner Indologische Studien*, vol. 2 (Reinbek: Verlag für Orientalistische Fachpublikationen, 1986), pp. 87–106.
30. The central elephant with princely rider seen here is directly echoed in the mural program of the Chattar Mahal royal apartments of Kota palace; see Milo Cleveland Beach, *Rajput Painting at Bundi and Kota* (Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1974), plates, p. CIV, fig. 114.
31. Abu'l Fazl, the biographer of Akbar's reign, writing in the 1590s, provides a vivid description of the capturing and taming of wild elephants, which is mirrored in the scenes described in this painting from the 1730s. Abu'l Fazl Allami, *The Ain-i Akbari*, trans. Heinrich Blochmann, vol. 1 (1873; repr. Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1993), p. 295.
32. *The Elephant Hunt* is not inscribed or dated, but a closely related work in the State Museum Lucknow bears the artist's name "Niju" and the year "1725," which may be taken as a reasonable attribution for the work in The Met collection; see Beach, *Rajput Painting*, fig. 126. Topsfield, *Visions of Mughal India*, pp. 246–47, no. 106.
33. Some forty works survive from this ambitious project, of which only eight are fully finished. Why the series remained unfinished is unknown. It is curious that no confirming documentation appears to have survived, despite searches of the palace archives by Goswamy and others; see B[r]jindra N[ath] Goswamy, *Nainsukh of Guler: A Great Indian Painter from a Small Hill-State* (Zurich: Artibus Asiae, 1997), pp. 11–13.
34. The story of Draupadi recounts one of the few instances of polyandrous marriages in ancient Indian history.

35. This interpretation was first suggested by William George Archer in *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hill. A Survey and History of Pahari Miniature Painting* (London and New York: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), vol. 1, *Text*, pp. 356–57, esp. nos. 15, 18, 20, 21; vol. 2, *Plates*, pp. 267–68.
36. Each folio has a Sanskrit text written in black ink on the reverse; this folio is numbered “47” on the left margin. Terence McInerney, “Mysterious Origins: The *Tantric Devi* Series from Basohli,” in Vidya Dehejia, ed., *Devi: The Great Goddess. Female Divinity in South Asian Art*, exh. cat. (Washington, DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1999), pp. 119–35.
37. Translation by Vidya Dehejia, in Dehejia, *Devi: The Great Goddess*, p. 269, no. 38.
38. Description adapted from Topsfield, *Visions of Mughal India*, p. 230, no. 98.
39. Topsfield, *Visions of Mughal India*, p. 260, no. 112.
40. Navina [Najat] Haidar, “Bhavanidas,” in Beach, Fischer, and Goswamy, *Masters of Indian Painting*, pp. 531–46.
41. As art so often mirrors life, so Maharaja Savant Singh, who was deeply committed to the Vallabhacharya cult of Krishna, abdicated in order to live with his devoted mistress, the singer Bani Thani, in Vrindavan, the holy town of Krishna’s childhood, near Mathura.
42. The decade of this painting also belongs to the Great Trigonometrical Survey project under the direction of Colonel Colin Mackenzie, the first surveyor general of India of the East India Company. For another painting that displays topographic rendering, see *Fortified City of Ranthambhor* (MMA 1996.100.6). Guy and Britschgi, *Wonder of the Age*, p. 181, no. 98; see also Dipti Khera, *The Place of Many Moods. Udaipur’s Painted Lands and India’s Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), p. 43, fig. 1.16.
5. *Khwaja ‘Umar Saved from Pursuers*, folio from the *Hamzanāma* (Story of Hamza). Attributed in part to Kesu Das (active 1570–ca. 1602). India, Mughal, ca. 1565–70. Opaque color and gold on cotton cloth, 25 13/16 × 19 5/8 in. (65.5 × 49.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.171)
6. *A Prince Riding an Elephant in Procession*. India, Mughal, ca. 1570. Opaque color and gold on cotton cloth, 13 3/8 × 15 11/16 in. (34 × 39.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.173)
7. *Krishna Subduing Kaliya*, folio from the *Harivamsa* (Story of Hari). India, Mughal, ca. 1590–95. Opaque color and gold on paper, 11 7/16 × 12 11/16 in. (29 × 32.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.175)
8. *Two Orioles*. India, Mughal, ca. 1610. Opaque color on paper, 6 × 3 3/8 in. (15.1 × 8.6 cm). The Howard Hodgkin Collection, on loan from the Howard Hodgkin Indian Collection Trust
9. *A Pair of Mynahs*. India, Mughal, ca. 1620. Opaque color on paper, 5 3/4 × 3 3/4 in. (14.6 × 9.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.178)
10. *Two Imperial Pigeons*. India, Mughal, ca. 1650. Opaque color on paper, 8 11/16 × 4 15/16 in. (22 × 12.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.179)
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14. *Prince Aurangzeb*. India, Mughal, ca. 1653–55. Opaque watercolor and gold on cloth, 14 11/16 × 10 3/4 in. (37.3 × 27.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.182)
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CAPTIONS

4. *Mihrdukht Aims Her Arrow at the Ring*, folio from the *Hamzanāma* (Story of Hamza). Basawan (active ca. 1556–1600) and Jagan (active ca. 1550). India, Mughal, ca. 1570. Opaque color and gold on cotton cloth, 26 11/16 × 20 1/2 in. (67.8 × 52 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, The Mossavar-Rahmani Fund for Iranian Art, 2022 (2022.170)

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17. *Elephant and Rider*. India, Mughal, ca. 1640. Opaque color and gold on paper, 12 5/8 × 15 15/16 in. (32 × 40.5 cm). The Howard Hodgkin Collection, on loan from the Howard Hodgkin Indian Collection Trust
18. *The Elephant Khushi Khan*. Indian, Mughal, ca. 1650. Opaque color and gold on paper, 10 5/16 × 13 7/8 in. (26.2 × 35.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.185)
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20. *Sultan Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II in Procession*. School of 'Ali Riza (active ca. 1600–1650). India, Deccan, Bijapur, mid-17th century. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 5 5/16 × 4 1/8 in. (13.5 × 10.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.207)
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22. *Sultan Muhammad 'Adil Shah and Ikhlas Khan Riding an Elephant*. Haidar 'Ali (active dates unknown) and Ibrahim Khan (active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur, ca. 1645. Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper, 11 1/4 × 12 5/8 in. (28.6 × 32 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.198)
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27. *Album Page with Découpé Calligraphy*. Muhammad Hasan (active dates unknown) and 'Ali (active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur or Golconda, 1630–40. Gouache on black paper with colored and white decoupage, 16 3/4 × 12 5/8 in. (42.5 × 32 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Florence and Herbert Irving Acquisitions, Harris Brisbane Dick, and 2020 Benefit Funds; Howard S. and Nancy Marks, Lila Acheson Wallace, and Friends of Islamic Art Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and funds from various donors, 2022 (2022.203)
28. *Album Page with Découpé Vase of Flowers, Insects, and Birds*. Muhammad Hasan (active dates unknown). India, Deccan, Bijapur or Golconda, 1630–40. Gouache on black paper with colored and white decoupage, 7 7/8 × 3 7/8 in. (20.1 × 9.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Bequest of Henrie Jo Barth and Friends of Islamic Arts Gifts, 2022 (2022.27)
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43. *The Elephant Hunt*. Attributed to Niju (active 1730–40). India, Rajasthan, Kota, ca. 1730–40. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 18 × 20 1/4 in. (45.7 × 51.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Howard Hodgkin Collection, Purchase, Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving, by exchange, 2022 (2022.217)
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54. View of Baadi Mahal facade of the City Palace, Udaipur, with principal gate in the foreground, ca. 1895–1905. Gelatin silver print. City Palace Museum, Udaipur
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Note to the Reader

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Cover: *Elephant and Keeper*, ca. 1650–60 (fig. 19). Inside front cover: *Maharao Ram Singh's Marriage Procession at Udaipur*, ca. 1851 (fig. 55). Page 2: *A Lady Singing*, ca. 1740–45 (fig. 52). Page 4: *Itifat Khan*, ca. 1640 (fig. 12). Inside back cover: *Mihrudukht Aims Her Arrow at the Ring*, ca. 1570 (fig. 4).

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10028
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