

GODS, GARDENS AND PRINCES:
INDIAN WORKS ON PAPER



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COVERS: DETAIL NO. 29
INSIDE FRONT: DETAIL NO. 28
INSIDE BACK COVER: DETAIL NO. 14

1. FOLIO FROM AN UNIDENTIFIED AKBAR PERIOD MANUSCRIPT
ISKANDAR BUILDING A WALL AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF GOG AND MAGOG
ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIRANAND
VERSO: FOLIO PROBABLY FROM THE DIWAN OF ANWARI, CIRCA 1620
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1595-1605

Nim qalam drawing, ink, gold and opaque pigments on paper;
the verso with a folio of double-column *nasta’liq*; both sides with
matching black, green and gold rules
11¼ by 6 in.; 28.5 by 15.3 cm. painting
13¾ by 7½ in.; 33.3 by 28.8 cm. folio
8 ¾ by 4 1.8 in.; 21.7 by 10.4 cm. calligraphy

This unusual scene depicts Iskandar overseeing the building of a wall against Gog and Magog, probably from a dispersed copy of the *Khamsa* of Nizami. In a mountainous landscape, Iskandar and his entourage are received by a group of courtiers, one of whom holds a matchlock gun. There is an exchange between Iskandar and the principal courtier, who gestures towards the wall where two men are perched applying mortar. To the right, a group of workmen in loin cloths mix mortar beside a pool. At upper left, two elephants and their mahouts await the royal party behind a rocky outcrop; beyond them is a domed mosque or tomb. A diagonal depiction of the wall dominates the lower part of the composition. Tiny hybrid creatures with animal heads and human bodies, some with wings, appear on the near side of the wall in the lower third of the painting. It is mostly executed in ink with touches of red, and parts of the ground have been coloured brown. This type of drawing is known as *nim qalam* or ‘half pen’ and was prevalent at the Mughal court in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, under the reign of Akbar (r.1556-1605) and for Prince Salim, the future Emperor Jahangir (r.1605-27).

THE SUBJECT
The story of Iskandar building a wall against Gog and Magog originated from the Bible (New Testament, Revelations, 20:8) and is then recounted in the Qur’an, sura 18. There are many tales relating to this subject from different traditions, but most agree they are an immoral, primitive tribe living in a remote location. Later, they appear in the *Shahnama* of Firdausi and the *Khamsa* (quintet) of Nizami (Stoneman, p.208). The story is included in Nizami’s *Iqbalnama*, the second part of the *Iskandarnama*, the final book of his *Khamsa*.

In the Safavid period, an illustrated version of al-Naysaburi’s text in the British Library includes a painting of ‘Gog and Magog’, (see Sims-Williams, p.221, no.105). Here, Iskandar, astride his horse, inspects the building of the wall, just like our drawing, with a diagonal wall towards the lower end of the painting. Another Mughal version of the story of ‘Iskandar building the wall against

the people of Gog and Magog’, from the late sixteenth century, also shows a similar composition, with Iskandar on horseback observing the wall under construction (Rogers, p.89, fig.57, British Library). This painting shows workmen constructing a bronze wall; versions of this text refer to a bronze or iron wall, which explains the golden hue of the wall in the current drawing. Safavid images seem to have provided the model for Mughal versions of this episode, including our painting. However, the people of Gog and Magog in this scene are of unusual form and have no exact precedent.

THE ARTIST
Hiranand worked in Akbar’s ateliers from circa 1595 to 1605 and completed a relatively large number of paintings in this short period (Leach, p.1105). He had a distinctive method of depicting faces with small almond eyes, sometimes with prominent eyelashes, refined eyebrows and a gentle expression. Losty (2013, p.76 cat no. 4) notes, when in profile, Hiranand tended to draw eyes small and pushed forward, leaving a featureless expanse of space on the side of the face. Paintings by this artist can be found in the Mughal copy of the *Nafahat al-Uns* by Jami of 1604 in the British Library (see Losty, 1982, no. 69, pp.92-3 and Leach, pp. 312-316). He was clearly skilled at the *nim qalam* technique, popular with the Mughals in the last years of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The second major illustrated copy of the *Akbarnama* of 1602-3 (British Library/Chester Beatty Library) features numerous *nim qalam* drawings.

Hiranand was responsible for at least two: one inscribed by him in the British Library section (f. 139r) and another dispersed leaf attributed to him (Freer Gallery of Art, Beach, p.72-3, no.10c). The rendering of Iskandar’s horse is particularly close to Humayun’s horse in the former (Or. 12988, f.139r). He also contributed to this copy of the *Akbarnama* (Freer Gallery of Art, Beach, p.75, no.10F).

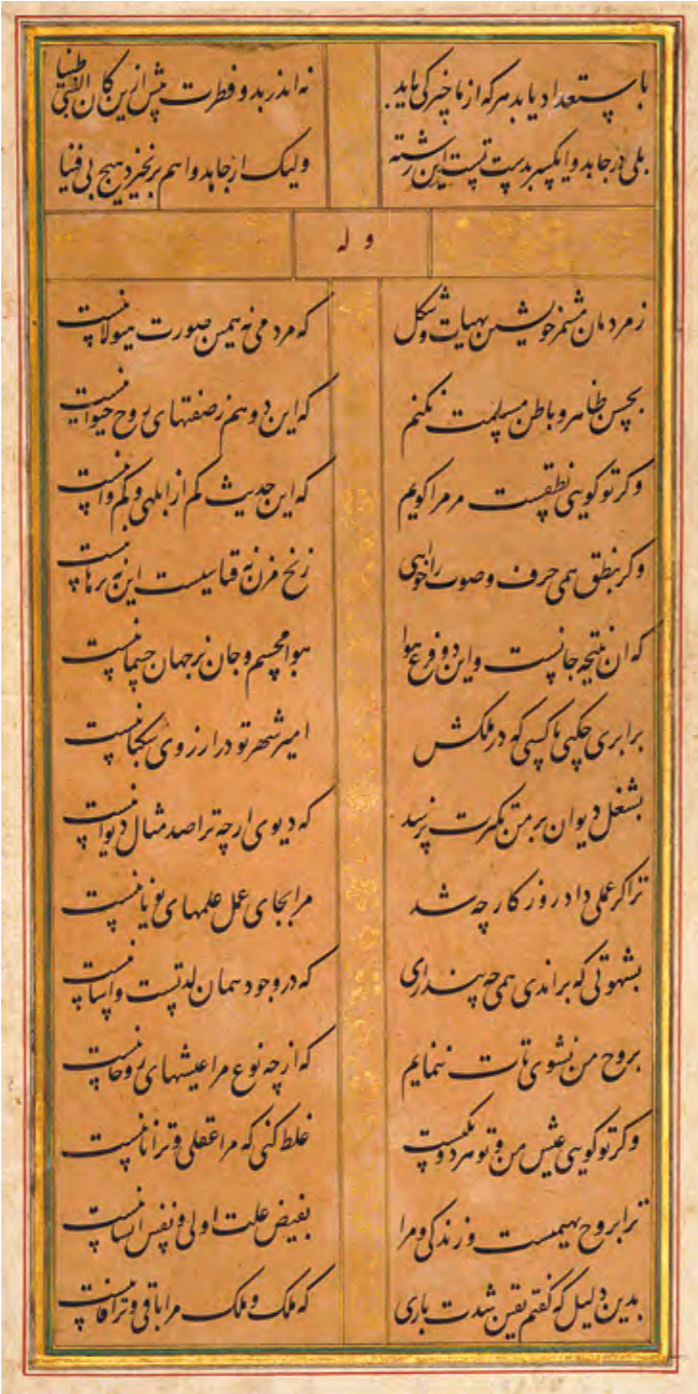
This folio was likely put together by the dealer Georges Demotte prior to his death in 1923 in France. He remounted certain pages of the *Akbarnama*, within the illuminated borders of other manuscripts (Leach, pp.294-300). Notorious for splitting manuscripts, he may also have been responsible for remounting this folio as the *nim qalam* drawing on the recto and the calligraphy on the verso have matching rules in a style that suggests his hand.

Continued





1. details



1. verso



1. detail

FOLIO FROM THE DIWAN OF ANWARI

The text here has been identified as coming from a dispersed copy of the Diwan of Anvari. It is arranged in two columns of fine nasta'liq divided by a vertical illuminated margin with a fine floral design in gold, a similar horizontal margin separating the upper two lines of calligraphy. There is some resemblance to a dispersed copy of the Diwan of Anvari completed in Ajmer for Jahangir in 1616. The frontispiece, with a shamsa signed by the artist Mansur, was sold at Christie's, London (25 June 2020, lot 65), the verso of which has a double column of nasta'liq with comparable floral margins.

The Diwan of Anvari was a popular Persian text. Akbar had a small very fine copy made at Lahore, completed in 1588, which is now at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University (Schimmel & Welch).

PROVENANCE

Probably with Georges Demotte (1877-1923), Paris
Private collection, France, until 2023

REFERENCES

Beach, M. C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court*, Washington and Ahmedabad, India, 2012
Leach, L. Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library*, 2 vols, London, 1995
Losty, J. P., *The Art of the Book in India*, London, 1982
Losty J. P., *A Prince's Eye: Imperial Mughal Paintings from a Princely Collection*, London, 2013
Rogers, M., *Mughal Miniatures*, London, 1993
Schimmel, A. and Welch, S. C., *Anvari's Divan: A Pocket Book for Akbar*, New York, 1983
Seyller, J. 'Scribal Notes on Mughal Manuscript Illustration', *Artibus Asiae*, 48, Zurich, 1987, pp.247-77
Sims-Williams, U., 'Gog and Magog in Tales of the Prophets', in Stoneman, R., *Alexander the Great: The Making of a Myth*, London, 2022
Stoneman, R., *Alexander the Great: The Making of a Myth*, London, 2022
Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book: 1560-1660*, London, 2002

2. FOLIO FROM A RAGAMALA : GAJADHARA RAGPUTRA OF MEGHA RAGA
AN ATHLETE EXERCISING WHILE AN ATTENDANT HOLDS A GARLAND
BILASPUR, CIRCA 1690-1700

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, black rules and saffron border, inscriptions and a Mandi inventory number on the reverse
7½ by 4¾ in.; 18.9 by 11.8 cm. painting
8½ by 6 in.; 21.5 by 15.4 cm. folio

In *Gajadhara* raga, the main figure may be accompanied by one or two attendant figures and, in most examples, he carries a spear with which he does his acrobatic exercises. Here, in a chocolate brown landscape with a flurry of clouds above, the over-sized male figure creates a palpable sense of movement. Standing on his toes he projects his body upwards, his brow furrowed as he thrusts the steel-tipped spear skyward. In the process his diaphanous muslin scarf gyrates around his bare upper body. Wearing saffron shorts, a green silver-edged *patka* and a gilt-striped turban with feather plume, his jewellery includes gold earrings, necklaces and bracelets, tasselled armlets and bells around his ankles. His attendant, in mauve *jama* and *paijamas* and a gilt-banded turban, stands squarely holding a spear and a long jasmine garland.

The palette of this Bilaspur ragamala series is highly distinctive and uses a vibrant range of unusual colour combinations.

OTHER FOLIOS FROM THIS ALBUM

The series is now widely dispersed in private and public collections, see Galloway & Kwiatkowski, pp.54-69 and Sotheby's, 2006-07. Two are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and in private collections including Kronos (McInerney, pp. 142-9, nos. 45-48), Seitz (Losty, pp. 186-7, no.48, pp. 228-33, nos. 60-62) and formerly Moscatelli (Glynn, Skelton & Dallapiccola, pp.52-57, nos. 7-9). The majority bear purple ink stamps and inventory numbers identified as those of the Mandi royal collection.

INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso the raga is described in Takri and *Devanagari*. The Mandi royal inventory number, enclosed in a distinctive bracketed purple ink stamp, reads: 2484

PROVENANCE

Royal collection, Mandi
Private collection, Germany, 1980s
Sam Fogg, London, 2005
Claudio Moscatelli, London, 2005-2015

EXHIBITED

Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, 2012
Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, 2012

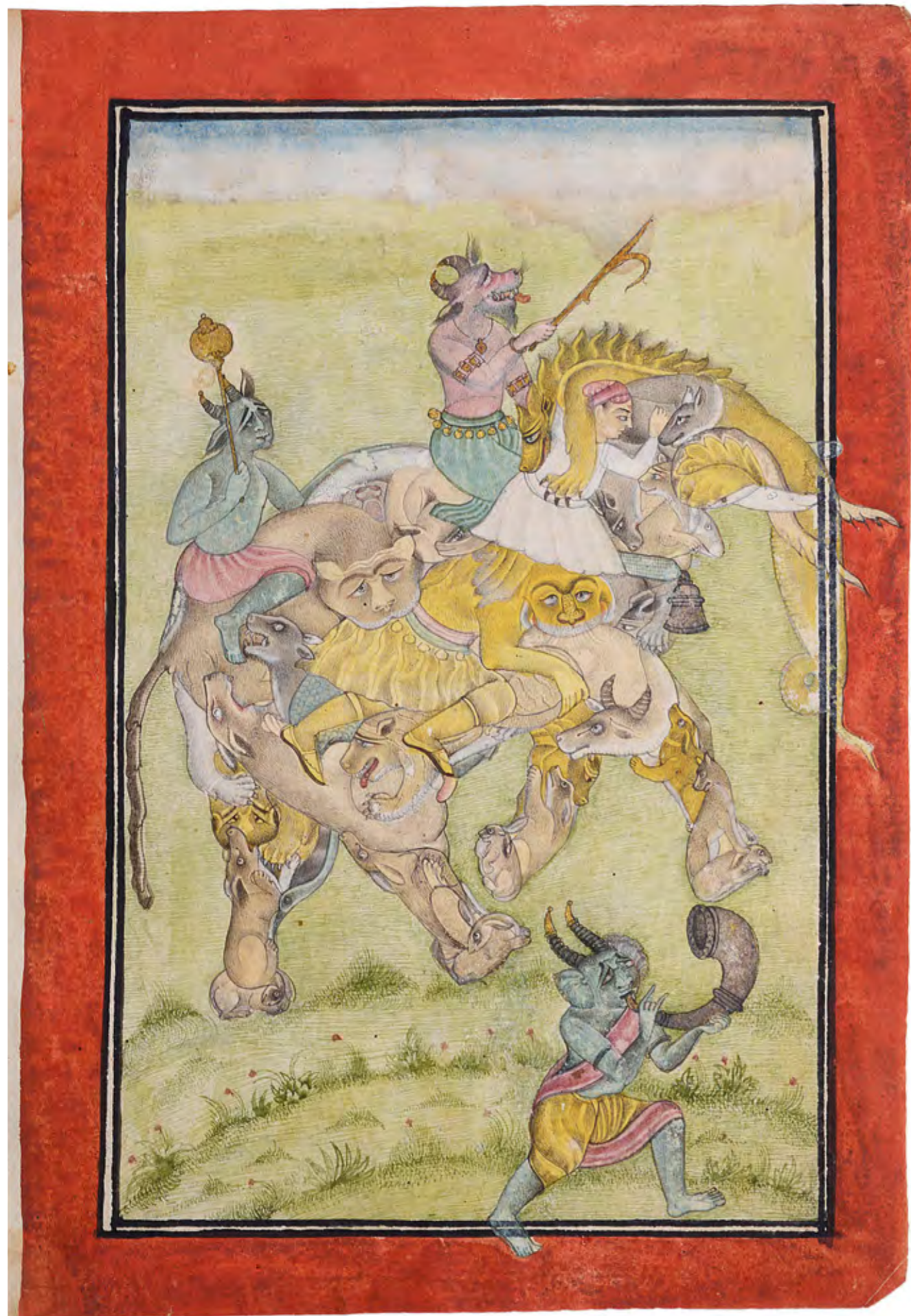
PUBLISHED

Glynn, C., Skelton, R., Dallapiccola, A. L., *Ragamala, Paintings from India from the Claudio Moscatelli Collection*, London, 2011, cat. 9, pp. 56-57

REFERENCES

Galloway, F. and Kwiatkowski, W., *Indian Miniatures from the Archer and other private collections*, London, 2005 (nine folios)
Glynn, C., Skelton, R., and Dallapiccola, A. L., *Ragamala Paintings from India from the Claudio Moscatelli Collection*, London, 2011
Losty, J.P., *A Mystical Realm of Love: Pahari Paintings from the Eva and Konrad Seitz Collection*, London, 2017
McInerney, T., et al., *Divine Pleasures: Paintings from India's Rajput Courts, the Kronos Collection*, New York, 2016
Sotheby's, New York, 29 March 2006, lots 164-172 (nine folios); also 22 March 2007, lots 152-55 (four folios)





3. **COMPOSITE ELEPHANT RIDDEN BY DEMONS (DIV)**
BILASPUR, CIRCA 1690-1700

Opaque colours on paper, with red borders ruled in black, on the verso a purple stamp enclosing the inventory number 2422, as well as 26, both in Indian numerals
7¼ by 4¾ in.; 18.2 by 11.8 cm. painting
8¾ by 5½ in.; 21.3 by 14.9 cm. folio

The elephant strides through a landscape, composed of a boot and tunic-wearing leonine-faced demon, a *mahout*, lion, jackal, rabbit, bull and a dragon forming the trunk, most biting the other, two of the three *divs* astride the elephant holding *ankus* and mace, a third with horn trumpet in the foreground.

The painting is folio 26 from a now dispersed album of paintings from the Mandi royal collection, which included a large *Ragamala* as well as a *Dashavatara* set. The work of the artists of this Bilaspur series is marked by a striking but cool palette and compositional ingenuity with a strong element of fantasy, the latter evident here.

The origin of the div in Indo-Persian culture may go back as far as the Vedas and they were already a demonic force in Ferdowsi's tenth century *Shahnameh*. Grotesque of appearance and imbued with supernatural powers, they are cruel and menacing with a peculiar relish for human flesh. In Indian and Persian painting they are frequently found accompanying these composite animals, the precise meaning of which continues to evade scholars. Such paintings are found in most schools of Indian painting and in both the Hindu and Muslim traditions.

For a note on this series see previous item.

INSCRIPTIONS

The Mandi royal inventory number, enclosed in a distinctive bracketed purple ink stamp, reads: 2422, as well as no.26 in ink

PROVENANCE

Royal collection, Mandi
Private collection, Germany, 1980s

4. TWO CONVERSING NOBLEMEN SEATED ON A TERRACE
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1700

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, laid down in a gold-sprinkled album page, blue border with red, white, black and gold rules; the verso set with an illuminated panel of calligraphy, with two gold-decorated blue and saffron margins
7¾ by 4¾ in.; 39.3 by 11.2 cm. painting
15 by 10¼ in.; 38 by 26 cm. folio
6¾ by 3¾ in.; 17 by 7.8 cm. calligraphy

An intimate portrait of two noblemen in the Mughal court. There is a quiet intensity to the kneeling figures, their knees touching. The figure on the right appears to be a prince, or at least the more senior of the two noblemen. He holds a rose and wears a white turban with an embroidered band tied around it and leans against a large bolster cushion of vermillion and gold cloth. The noble facing him wears a green *jama* with gold floral details and vermillion lappets. He holds his left hand with his palm upwards in conversation and looks directly at his interlocutor.

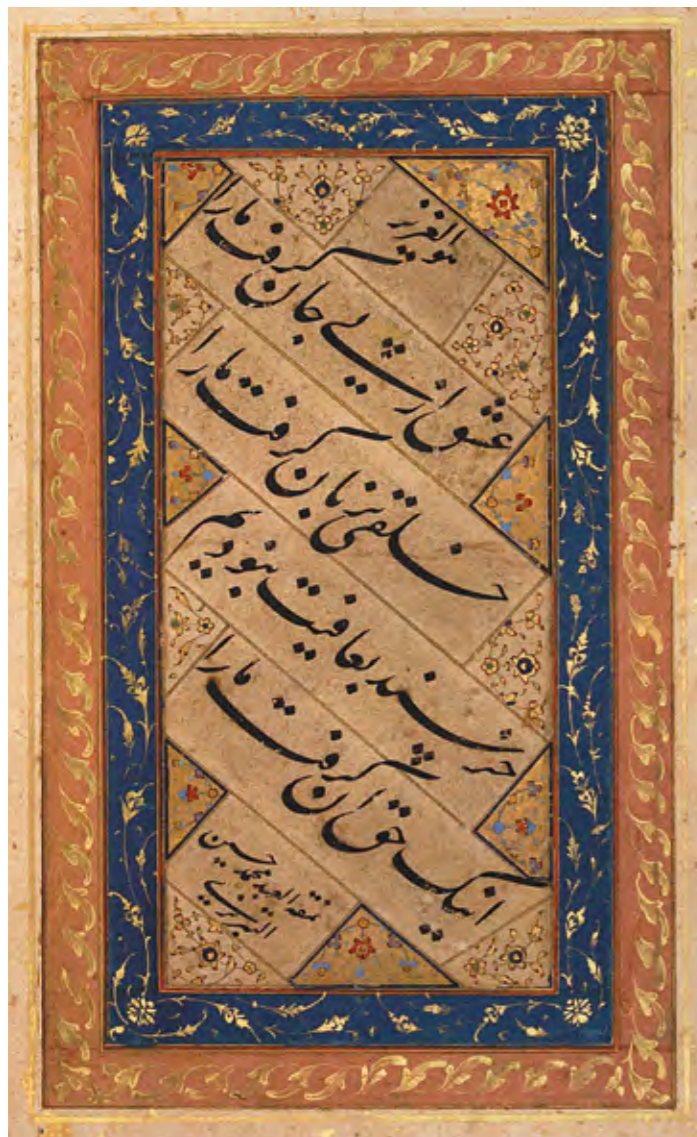
The princely figure is depicted with a neat beard and a single curl on the sideburn. This appears to have been a seventeenth

century court fashion. It was a distinctive feature of portraits of the Emperor Shah Jahan; he wore two curls on his sideburns in his youth, and sported a full, neat beard and a single curl in later years. (Stronge, p.128, pl. 93 & 94). In a portrait of Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam Shah 'Alam Bahadur, who became Mughal emperor as Bahadur Shah I in 1707, he also sports this hair style (Losty & Roy, p.156, fig 97). However, lacking an inscription or other distinguishing features or clothing, our princely figure is yet to be identified.

The contrast between the fully-coloured figures depicted in profile and the relatively plain background was typical of late seventeenth-century portraiture, particularly under Emperor Aurangzeb (r.1658-1707). Here, there is a hint of sky at the upper edge and a white-embroidered 'summer' carpet with floral design. On the carpet are various accoutrements of leisurely court life: a book, a rosewater sprinkler, a *pan-dan*, a wine cup and a vase of roses. Portraits of courtiers would have been assembled in albums (*muraqqa*), with facing pairs of portraits often followed by calligraphy specimens, as in this example.

Continued





4. verso

INSCRIPTIONS

Nammaqahu al-'abd Muhammad husayn al-tabrizi

'The servant (of God) Muhammad Husayn al-Tabrizi wrote it.'

On the recto are verses in *nasta'liq* from a *ghazal* by Amir Khusrau, written by the Persian calligrapher Muhammad Hussein al-Tabrizi (d. A.H. 985/1577 A. D.). He was from a distinguished family, his father being Mawlana 'Inayatullah, the Shaykh al-Islam of Azarbayjan. In Mashhad he studied calligraphy with Sayyid Ahmad Mashhadi and Mir Haydar, perfecting his hand under the celebrated calligrapher Malik Daylami. Engaged to write architectural inscriptions during the reign of Shah Isma'il II, he became highly regarded as a calligrapher. Bayani (pp. 680-683) records various calligraphic album pages, a copy of selections from Sana'i's *Hadiqat al-Haqa'iq* and a copy of 'Abdullah Ansari's *Munajat*, none of which are dated, by him.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Paris, formed between 1975 and early 2000s

REFERENCES

Bayani, M., *Aval va Athar-i Khushnavisan*, reprint in 4 vols, Tehran, 1363/1984

Losty, J.P. & Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire*, London, 2012

Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book: 1560-1660*, London, 2002

E.S.

4. detail



5. **MAHARANA SANGRAM SINGH (1690-1734) HUNTING WILD BOAR**
MEWAR, CIRCA 1725-30

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, black rules and plain border

15½ by 12½ in.; 39.3 by 31.8 cm. painting

17¾ by 15 in.; 45 by 38 cm. folio

In this work, we see depicted a traditional royal sport, boar-hunting, set in the scrubby Mewar hills. The artist has painted a bird's eye view of the scene, giving the painting great charm.

Sangram Singh II (1690-1734) ruled from 1710 until his death in 1734. Considered a “shrewd and competent ruler, with the virtues of rectitude, generosity and strict adherence to the norms of Rajput social behaviour” (Topsfield, p. 141), his judicious rule led to peace and prosperity in his kingdom and his three sons helped to expand territory. Painting under Sangram Singh developed enormously (Topsfield, pp. 141-175) and the large-scale format

that we now associate with this important school of painting was established in the course of his reign.

In the “before” scene at the top of the painting, the royal party, comprising the nimbate Maharana, his son(?) and two courtiers, shelters in an enclosure while watching for the moment when the prey falls into the trap. In the “after” scene below in the foreground the trap itself is depicted: a circular enclosure with two openings, each with a weighted device with foot-trap, chain and bell. To the right a trapped boar has been suspended by the foot and is being shot at by the Maharana, perhaps his son Jagat Singh (b. 1709) and the same two courtiers, an attendant with a quiver proffering arrows behind. All four are dressed in gilt boots, brocade tunics, tan breeches with gilt *patka* and turban with feather plume and *sarpech* – but only the Maharana is nimbate.

Continued





To the left of the trap, eight attendants surround a palanquin including four palanquin-bearers in red, two *chauri*-bearers and a keeper of the quiver. Above them five horses and their grooms wait in attendance.

INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso is a single line of *devanagari*, annotations and inventory numbers

Maharana shri sagaram sikhji ri surat sikar khelta thaka
Painting of Maharana Sangram Singhji; he is engaged in (lit. «he plays») *shikar* (hunting)

PROVENANCE

Art market, London, probably Spink & Son, 1990 (mentioned in Topsfield, p.177, note no.121)
Anonymous sale: Sotheby's, London, 8 June 2000, lot 25
Private collection, London, 2007-13
Christie's, London, 10 June 2013, lot 30

REFERENCE

Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Zurich, 2000

We are grateful to Dr. Andrew Topsfield for his assistance in the cataloguing of this painting.



6. COUNCIL OF EMPEROR MUHAMMAD SHAH
DELHI OR AVADH, CIRCA 1740

Opaque pigments with gold on paper
12¾ by 9¾ in.; 32.8 by 23.8 cm.

A portrait of the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah (r.1719-48) sitting on a terrace with his four chief ministers flanking him. Inscriptions in *nasta'liq* identify each figure. The minister immediately behind Muhammad Shah is Sa'adat Khan Burhan ul-Mulk (c.1690-1739) who is often placed in this position in group portraits of the ruler and his immediate circle, holding a fly whisk. Sa'adat Khan was awarded the role of Governor of Avadh in 1722 and established a hereditary dynasty based in Lucknow (Markel & Gude, p. 16). Opposite the ruler is the *wazir* Itimad ud-Dawla Qamaruddin Khan (d.1748). He appears in several portraits with the ruler, including one of him standing before Muhammad Shah by Govardhan II in the *Karnama-i-ishq*, written by the Hindu poet Mukhlis in 1738-9 (Dalrymple & Sharma, p.21, fig.4). The other two are Nawab Khan Daran, appointed as the *mir bakshi* in 1719, and Roshan ud-Dawla. The same four ministers are depicted standing beside a pool with the seated Muhammad Shah in a painting in the Bodleian Library (Losty & Roy, p.23, fig.F).

Muhammad Shah revived the court atelier that, under previous decades, had lacked an enthusiastic patron (Roy, p.17-23). Paintings during his reign are characterised by a stillness with vivid colours set against cool white buildings or terraces. The figures here all wear white muslin robes, standing on an ornate, floral carpet behind them in jewel-like colours. Behind them is an expanse of water painted in grey tones, and on the horizon are some green hills with a tower and a domed building. Above their heads is a vermillion canopy with gold edging. The figures are depicted in profile following a well-established tradition of royal Mughal portraiture.

COMPARABLE WORKS

This scene is typical of portraits of Muhammad Shah, where the artists focus on small groups with the ruler and his most prominent nobles, creating more intimate scenes than those of his predecessors (Dalrymple & Sharma, p.82, no.10). In some paintings, the ruler is enthroned, and in others, he is carried in a palanquin. The well-known painting in the Museum of Fine Art in Boston, attributed to Chitarman II, shows Muhammad Shah viewing his garden from a palanquin while holding a falcon with an outstretched index finger (Guy & Britschgi, p.144, no.73). This pose of the ruler with a falcon perched on his hand is repeated in the current painting. Depicting a Mughal ruler accompanied by a falcon was not unusual, but the particular pose and European-

style chair are distinctive. An earlier precedent for this type of chair is a large painting of Jahangir by Abu'l Hasan, completed in 1617 (Crill & Jariwala, pp.76-7, no.14). Here, Jahangir sits on a similar chair with a square-shaped frame. A gathering of princes of circa 1710 features six princes on European-style chairs of similar form (Dalrymple & Sharma, p.5, fig. 3). Portraits of the emperor seated with a falcon were a popular subject later in the eighteenth century; a painting sold at Sotheby's, London, (7 October 2015, lot 283) is a near copy of our painting showing the ruler sitting with a falcon on a chair.

INSCRIPTIONS

Recto: Persian inscriptions above the canopy 'Muhammad Shah Badshah' and above each minister to identify them from right to left: Nawwab Qamar al-Din Khan, Nawwab Khan-Dawran, Sa'adat Khan and Rawshan al-Dawla

On the verso an ink inscription in English, in an eighteenth century copper-plate hand, names each of the sitters

- No. 1. Muhammad Shah Badshah Emperor of Hindostan
- No. 2. Sa'adat Khan a Nobleman of the court
- No. 3. Nawab Khan Daran
- No. 4. Nawab Qamar al-Din Khan
- No.5. Roshan ud-Dawla

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England
Bonhams, London, 5 April 2011, lot 243
Private collection, Paris, 2011-23

REFERENCES

Crill, R. and Jariwala, K., (eds) *The Indian Portrait 1560-1860*, London, 2010
Dalrymple, W. and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-1857*, New Haven and London, 2012
Guy, J. and Britschgi, J., *Wonder of the Age: Master Painters of India 1100-1900*, New York, 2011
Losty, J. P. and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire*, London, 2012
Markel, S. and Gude, T.B., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow*, Los Angeles, 2011
Roy, M., 'The Revival of the Mughal Painting Tradition during the Reign of Muhammad Shah', in Dalrymple, W. and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-1857*, New Haven and London, 2012

7. **MAHARANA JAGAT SINGH II AND THAKUR SIRDAR SINGH STALKING DEER**
MEWAR, INDIA, DATED V.S. 1800 / 1743 A.D.

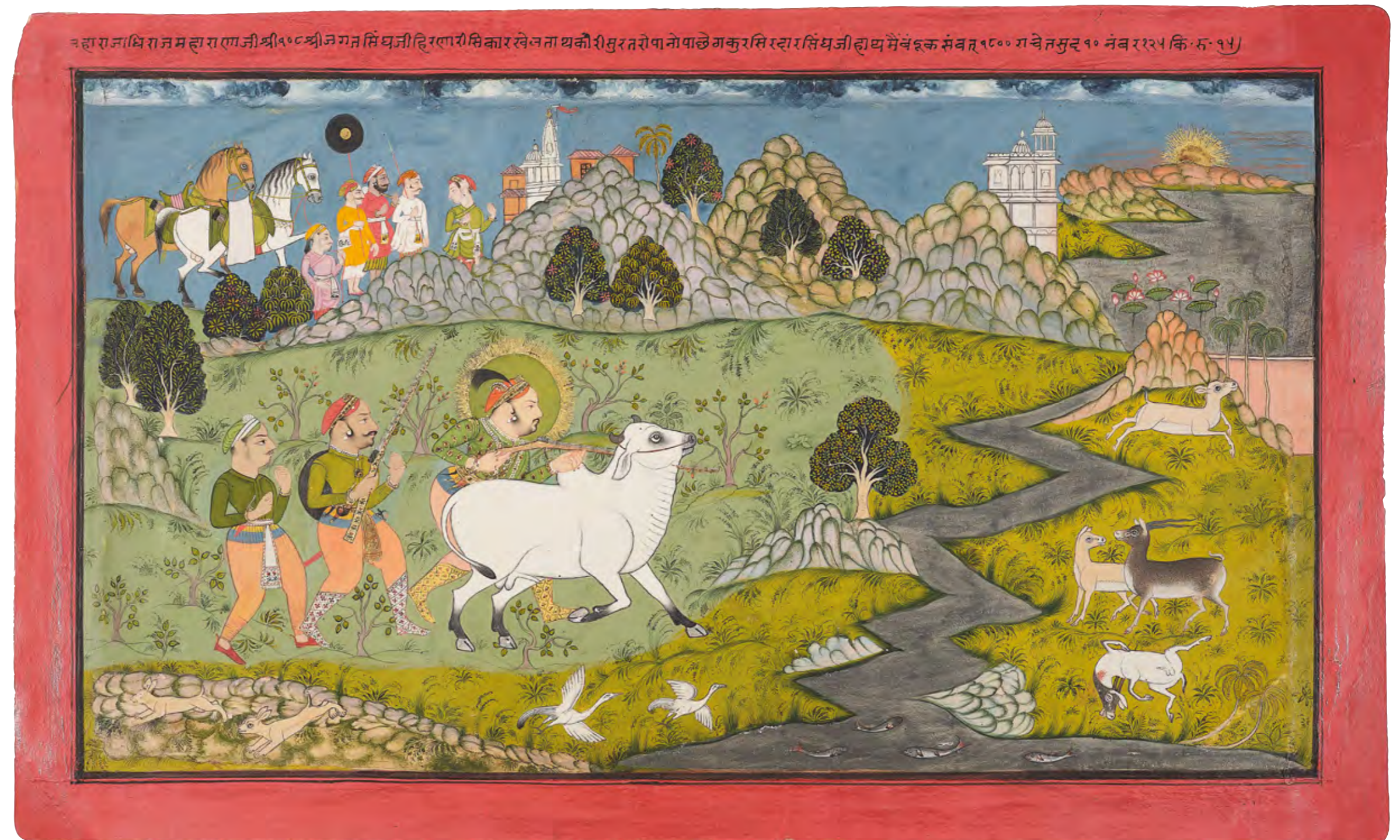
Opaque colours with gold on paper, black rules and an attached red border, inscribed on the upper border in *devanagari* and on the reverse in ink and pencil, with inventory number and paper label numbered 239
 9½ by 16¾ in., 24 by 42.3 cm. painting
 11¾ by 18½ in., 28.8 by 47 cm. folio

In this large and engaging painting the nimbate Jagat Singh (r. 1734-51) is crouching, matchlock poised, behind a large white bullock acting as a decoy, while Sirdar Singh and another courtier follow behind, the former with gun raised and sword at his side. The two wear floral boots, flat Mewar turban and pearl earrings, bracelets and necklaces. A brace of crane and two hares scatter as they shoot one of four buck dead. Above at right two stallions and five attendants await the victorious return of the royal party.

The scene is set in an exotic landscape where the skilful artist has used colour, detail and pattern to great effect whilst simultaneously providing quirky details to divert the eye. A two-toned green landscape dotted with miniature trees and sprigs of foliage is dramatically divided by a zig-zagging silver river beyond which lie two stags, one dead, and two doe. Above is a range of rocky hills, dotted with flowering trees, a lakeside temple and other buildings beyond.

For another Mewar painting, by Naga, circa 1765, depicting Maharana Ari Singh using a bullock as decoy, in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, see Topsfield, p.122, no.176.

Continued





INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the back:

*sri / sri mharajadharaja mharanaji sri jagat sikhji / hirana ri sinkar
khailai hiran maryo / pachai thakur sirdar sikhji / hath me banduk [...
then the date VS 1800 Chaitra sud 10]
Maharana Jagat Singh is hunting and killing blackbuck. Thakur
Sirdar Singh is behind him, with gun in hand*

These details are repeated nearly verbatim in the later
nineteenth century inscription on the upper border of the picture.

PROVENANCE

British Rail Pension Fund, London, before 1978: Sotheby's,
London, 26 April 1994, lot 36
Kapoor Galleries, New York, 1994-2011

EXHIBITED

A Sterling Collection of Indian and Himalayan Art, Kapoor Galleries,
New York, 2011, no. 23

REFERENCES

Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Rajasthan in the National Gallery of
Victoria*, Melbourne, 1980

We are grateful to Dr. Andrew Topsfield for his assistance in the
cataloguing of this painting.

8. ILLUSTRATION TO A BHAGAVATA PURANA SERIES:
KRISHNA TRIUMPHING OVER THE SERPENT KALIYA
MANKOT, CIRCA 1750

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, portion of border inscribed in *devanagari* above, an ink sketch of Rama and Sita on the reverse
9¼ by 5½ in.; 24.2 by 15 cm.

The image recalls the famous quelling of the serpent Kaliya by Krishna (Kaliyadamana/Kaliyamardana), a well-known episode from the *Bhagavata Purana*, (10.16). It depicts the precise moment in which Krishna dances victoriously on the vanquished body of the venomous snake Kaliya, while his three wives (and a child) beseech him to spare the life of their husband. Kaliya was the serpent who poisoned a pool of the river Yamuna, with dire consequences for the herdsmen, cattle, birds, and other living beings. Krishna then jumped in the river, fought with Kaliya and defeated him, but having spared him he was banished forever

from Vraj. This is one of the many incidents in the life of Krishna among the *gopas* and *gopis* of Vraj, his home on the Yamuna river near Mathura.

The blue-skinned god squats in triumph on top of the ten-hooded snake arching up from a lotus-filled river, a bamboo mallet in his right hand, a lotus in his left. Three snake wives (*nagini*) and a child flank Kaliya, pleading with Krishna to spare his life, their coiled bodies speckled, each wearing jewellery, a *choli* and translucent *odhni*, their hands hennaed.

PROVENANCE

Maggs Bros., Bulletin 36, no.29, London, 1983 (*illustrated*)
William S. Reece (1955-2018), bibliophile, New Haven, Connecticut



9. HOLYMEN IN A LANDSCAPE

GULER, CIRCA 1760

Opaque pigments on paper, black and red rules on a sprinkled pink border
8 by 5¼ in.; 20.2 by 13.4 cm. painting
9 by 6¼ in.; 23 by 16 cm. folio

Four holymen stand round a tree with luxuriant foliage in a hilly landscape with a broad silver river and setting sun beyond. They are attended by a boy holding a begging bowl, each with long hennaed hair and wearing dervish cloaks, three with rag necklaces, three also holding staffs, the central figure holding the leash of a dog, the upper part of a sixth figure in the foreground. Each figure has an other-worldly expression, distant and preoccupied.

Distinguished by a palette of greens, salmon pink and grey, this finely painted scene has a lyrical quality given credence by the dervishes finely detailed facial features and slender hands and legs. They lack the subdued indolence of many Indian depictions of holymen, this elegant group exudes energy and one feels they are prepared and ready to take part in an important event.

PROVENANCE

Dr. Oscar Leneman (b. 1937)
Christie's London, 13 April 2010, lot 290
Francesca Galloway, London, 2010

PUBLISHED

Carré, P., *Dieux, tigres et amours: Miniatures indiennes du XVe au XXe siècle: Collection d'Oscar Leneman*, Spain, 1993, p. 104-5





10. detail

10. SIX SAGES VISITED BY A NOBLEWOMAN AND HER SEVEN ATTENDANTS FAIZABAD, CIRCA 1760-70

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, laid down in an album page with ten rules in black and white and four cream gold-splashed borders, ink seal impression on verso
12¾ by 9 in.; 31.4 by 23 cm. painting
15¾ by 12¾ in.; 39.5 by 30.6 cm. folio

In a hilly landscape with birds in the sky six holymen sit beneath a copse of trees. The chief sage sits on a tiger-skin, in turban, shawl, jama and gold jewellery, while a servant fans him with a peacock-feather *morchhal*. He receives a kneeling noblewoman who presents gifts of wine and fruit in gold dishes. She and her seven attendant ladies are wearing elaborate court dress: flaring skirts and *patkas*, *odhnis* and jewellery. In the foreground a fire burns beside a natural lake where pairs of ducks, guinea-fowl and cranes lurk.

The palette is distinctive of the period: a landscape of browns and muted greens showing the influence of Mir Kalan Khan (Losty & Leach, no. 25 & 31) and contrasting with the figures mainly in white and pale pastels. The style of the ladies' dress is typical of the Awadh and other eastern Indian schools of the second half of the eighteenth century. The clothing of each of the sages differs but betrays their occupation by the presence of tiger-skins, matted hair, beards and henna-dyed hair.

A night painting of similar subject (and album page) in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, has a related landscape with pool in the foreground, see: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O109185/painting/>. For a discussion of the period, see Losty, pp.35-55.

INSCRIPTIONS

The ink seal impression reads:

wazir al-mamalik asaf al-dawla asaf jah bahadur 1190 17
'Vizier of the Realms Asaf al-Dawla Asaf Jah Bahadur 1190' (1776 A.D.) (regnal year of Shah 'Alam II) 17'

PROVENANCE

Asaf al-Dawla (1748-97), Nawab of Awadh
Christie's, London, 10 June 2013, lot 148

REFERENCES

Losty, J.P. and Leach, L.Y., *Mughal Paintings from the British Library*, London, 1998
Losty, J.P. "Towards a New Naturalism: Portraiture in Murshidabad and Avadh, 1750-80" in Schmitz, B., ed., *After the Great Mughals: Painting in Delhi and the Regional Courts in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Mumbai, 2002

E.S.



11. LADIES FEASTING IN THE ZENANA
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1770

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, laid down in an album page with gold on ivory floral decoration, dark blue border and rules, the verso with two large square ink stamps in *devanagari* 9¼ by 6¾ in.; 23.4 by 16.2 cm. painting
16¼ by 12¾ in.; 41.2 by 31.6 cm. folio

A group of carousing ladies from the royal zenana or harem is seated on a palace terrace enjoying a feast. Before them is a carpet with slender bottles of wine, *pan-dans*, trays with food and covered stem-cups. At the centre, set slightly apart from the others a princess receives from her closest companion a cup of wine, as they gaze into each other’s eyes. Nearby a standing attendant waives a peacock fan, indicating that the central figure is royal. To their right an elegant but aloof princess raises her hand to her conical Chagatai hat, of a type favoured at the Mughal court with Turkish or Mongol origins (Quintanilla, p.256, fig. 4.107). A figure to her right, in a dark shawl, looks down in dejection, while in the lower right corner two ladies sing and pay the *tambour*.

Some way into their revelry, six ladies to the left drink while reclining on bolsters, one cups the chin of her companion in her inebriation. Beyond is a rose garden where a lone female attendant stands behind the parapet waiving a fly whisk. The ladies are all, apart from the servants, wearing court dress, comprising ropes of pearls, mostly striped brocade or fine muslin skirts with long *patkas*, and diaphanous *cholis*. Most have a cloth of gold *odhni* draped over their hair.

This scene is an almost exact copy of a Mughal painting, circa 1630 of royal women in the harem, now in the Museum of Fine Art, Boston (66.140, Cummins, p.32). This painting shows the same arrangement of figures, including the woman standing behind the parapet. Even the stylised carpet of flowers is replicated. The only difference is in the portrayal of faces and specific clothing details. The Boston painting has a subtle tonality to the faces, showing it to be the earlier of the two. Our painting

was likely completed in the 1770s when many copies of earlier Mughal paintings were made. The composition and subject matter also bring to mind a series of paintings of women from the *zenana* celebrating the Hindu Festival of Holi. The earliest of these shows Jahangir celebrating Holi, now in the Chester Beatty Library (see Diamond, p.101). Motifs from this original painting were later disseminated to Rajput and Deccani workshops, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Diamond, pp. 104 & 106).

INSCRIPTIONS
Two unusual ink stamps on the verso measuring 4.5 cm. square, with both Persian and *devanagari* script. Dated A.H. 1257 (1841-2 A.D.), the first line of the *devanagari* reads ‘Maharawat’, the title used by chiefs of the Pratapgarh Estate in Uttar Pradesh who paid tribute to Holkar, the Maratha rulers of Indore, central India.

PROVENANCE
Major D.I.M. Macaulay (1871-1934): Sotheby’s, London, 24 June 1941, lot 8
Maggs Bros., London, 1940s
Far Gallery, New York, before 1972
Private collection, Boston

Major Denzil Macaulay, who served in the 1st Duke of York’s Own Lancers, Skinner’s Horse, was born at Bankura, Bengal and was of Indian-British stock. His “small but very choice” collection comprised over 100 Persian and Indian paintings and included a portrait of a dove, signed by the great Mansur.

REFERENCES
Cummins, J., *Indian Painting: From Cave Temples to the Colonial Period*, Boston, 2006
Diamond, D., “Holi in the Zenana: Genre, Style and Sociability”, in Aitken, M.E., ed., *A Magic World: New Visions of Indian Painting*, Mumbai, 2016, pp. 100-115
Quintanilla, S.R., *Mughal Paintings: Art and Stories*, Cleveland, 2016
E.S.





12. LAYLA AND MAJNUN BUNDI, CIRCA 1770

Opaque pigments with silver and gold on paper, laid down on card

9¼ by 6⅞ in.; 23.2 by 16.2 cm. painting

9¾ by 6¼ in.; 23.7 by 17 cm. folio

The startling palette and stylistic idiosyncrasies of this painting immediately place it in Bundi, the remote Rajasthani kingdom known for its unique school of court painting.

The story of the lovers Layla and Majnun is of Arab origin and is said to be about the seventh century poet Qays ibn al-Mulawwah and Layla bint Mahdi. It passed successively into the literary traditions of Persia, Turkey and India and has been taken up by all the great poets, notably Nizami. The story relates how Majnun, whose real name was Qays, fell in love with Layla at a young age and began to write poems about her, but she was forbidden to marry him by her father. She is forcibly married to a rich merchant and Qays wanders in the desert distraught with love but still writing of his devotion to her. He is therefore known as “Majnun” or one possessed by the Jinn. Tragically they both die having never been reunited.

The scene here is placed at a happier moment where Layla has arrived by camel with a servant to visit an already emaciated Majnun. It is set in a lush landscape with stylised rocks, a large tree and a shimmering lotus-strewn silver lake beyond which lies Layla’s palace. Refreshments are set in front of them and Majnun hands his beloved one of his poems. He wears shorts and simple gold jewellery, his hair curled, a fakir’s crutch under his arm, while Layla in contrast wears a rich assortment of brocade, pearls and gold. Majnun’s companions are set about him: pairs of dogs, tigers, partridges and cranes, as well as a single bird on his shoulder. The only turbulent note is the sky – a flaming mass of scrolling clouds below a darkening edge that may indicate all is not well.

PROVENANCE

Dr. Oscar Leneman (b. 1937)

Christie’s London, 13 April 2010, lot 297

Sam Fogg Ltd., London, 2013

PUBLISHED

Carre, P., *Dieux, tigres et amours: Miniatures indiennes du XVe au XXe siècle: Collection d'Oscar Leneman*, Spain, 1993, p. 48-49

13. JUXTAPOSITION OF THE ROYAL AND THE TRIBAL HUNT

LUCKNOW, CIRCA 1780

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, a panel of *nasta'liq*
calligraphy on the reverse

8¾ by 12¾ in.; 22.5 by 31.5 cm. painting

18½ by 22¼ in.; 47 by 56 cm. folio

6¾ by 10¾ in.; 17 by 27 cm. calligraphy

In a night scene a prince on horseback and his entourage wait in a shadowy mountain landscape, while *bhils* hunt black buck and an army is massed in the plains below. The prince is attended by two courtiers, a groom and a guide with torch and mirror(?), whilst a man squats below them with cupped hands, a lighted torch beside him. To their right a *bhil* man shoots an arrow with a distant group of black buck are lured and lighted by his wife's bell and torch.

This painting belongs to an eighteenth century group which all copy the scene from an original dated 1691 in the Keir Collection, London, see Qureshi de Unger, p. 154, no.111. Another version, with additional figures at left, was sold at Christie's, London, 27 April 2023, lot 60: https://www.si.edu/object/deer-hunting-night:fsg_F1907.210. A third, dated 1700-25, is in the Freer-Sackler Gallery, Washington D.C., and it is this that ours is probably a version of, as the position and the number of figures is close, see https://www.si.edu/object/deer-hunting-night:fsg_F1907.210

This genre of painting showing a nocturnal hunting scene became popular in the eighteenth century and provided a vehicle for the exploration of European *chiaroscuro* techniques. It also shows a Mughal interest in the indigenous tribal people and admiration for their efficient techniques in hunting black buck and other game. For variations of the type and a full discussion of the role of the *bhils*, see Qureshi de Unger, pp. 151-166.

PROVENANCE

Árpád Szenes (1897-1985), a Hungarian artist resident in Paris from 1947

Marie-Helena Vieira da Silva (1908-1992), Paris

Maria Rosário de Oliveira, by descent

Sotheby's, London, 8 October 2014, lot 201

REFERENCES

Qureshi de Unger, A., *The Hunt as Metaphor in Mughal Painting (1556-1707)*, Zurich, 2022



14. FOLIO FROM A DEVI MAHATMYA SERIES
**DEVI VANQUISHES THE DEMON NISUMBHA
AND HIS ARMIES**
GULER, PUNJAB HILLS, CIRCA 1780

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, the pink-flecked border with a blue-ground margin with gilt foliage, number 46 inscribed in Indian numerals on the upper border
6¾ by 9 in.; 17.7 by 22.8 cm. painting
12½ by 10¼ in.; 25 by 30.5 cm. folio
8 by 12¼ in.; 20.2 by 31 cm. text sheet

In this dramatic scene from one of the ancient Puranas, the *Markandeya (Devi Mahatmya)*, the goddesses Devi and her female allies descend on the two brothers Sumbha and Nisumbha and their demon army. In Hinduism the greatest warrior deities are goddesses and this text celebrates the deeds of the goddess Devi in her warrior manifestations.

Under the crest of a hill, with an evening sky and grassy foreground, an intense and bloody battle takes place. At the centre, descending with speed on her tiger is the ten-armed goddess Durga/Chandi who decapitates one of the brothers: a ten-armed blue-headed green-bodied demon, a human body emerging from his neck. Meanwhile, directly below, Devi has created the terrifying four-armed goddess Kali who “falls upon the demons slaying and devouring them” (Dehejia, p. 238). Dressed only in a leopard-skin around her dark grey body, Kali lunges at the demons and grasps Raktabija by the ankle, shown simultaneously being devoured, his diminutive red legs protruding from her mouth.

Behind and above the goddess an army of other warlike goddesses go on the attack. Directly behind Kali stands the lion-headed goddess Yami, to the left of whom is Kartikeyyi on a peacock; above her is the three-eyed Mahesvari on the bull Nandi, her arms raised to aim a spear, and in the upper left the six-armed Vaisnavi descends on Garuda, his tail feathers wavering. To her right is Brahmi on a goose and Aindri riding the white elephant Airavata. Below them and to the right a tangle of shorts-wearing animal-headed demons cringe, are wounded or attempt to flee in the melee.

DEVI MAHATMYA SERIES
This folio seems to belong with another of the same subject in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, see Dehejia, pp.238-9, no. 15. Dated to circa 1780, it bears the number 34 in Indian numerals in the upper border – as does our example - and is close in dimensions with similar gilt-decorated margin and border. This painting is also published in Archer, vol.I, p. 164, no.61 (ii), illustrated in vol.II, p. 117.

Continued



A number of other Pahari series of this subject were made in the period 1780-1820. In Goswamy & Fischer (2011), p.691, notes 14-16b, a chronology of these series is suggested. For a discussion of these and a 'plain borders' folio with close iconography, circa 1780, see Losty, pp. 86, no. 30. Another series, divided between the Lahore and Chandigarh Museums, is dated 1781, see Aijazuddin, pp. 29-33, no.41 Guler. For other examples see Goswamy & Fischer (2017), p. 74, no.34; Bautze, pp.69-71, no.20 and Poster, pp.257-8, no.208 & 209.

PROVENANCE

W.G. Archer (1907-1979), London
Private collection, England: Sotheby's, London, 7 July 1980, lot 144
Private collection, London, 1980-2024

EXHIBITED

Indian Miniatures From the Collection of Mildred and W.G. Archer, London, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., 1964-65, no.54
Romance and poetry in Indian Painting: A loan exhibition of Indian miniatures from the collection of Mildred and W.G. Archer, exhibition catalogue, Wildenstein, London, 1965, no.49

15. A RAJA AND HIS MISTRESS IN AN INTERIOR
GULER, CIRCA 1780

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, with red rules and a border filled with dot-and-circle motifs
8½ by 6 in.; 22 by 15.2 cm. painting
9 by 6⅞ in.; 23 by 16.8 cm. folio

A loving couple sits enveloped in the nobleman's striped shawl as he bows to accept a cup of wine from his beloved who lies in his arms.

The artist has constructed the painting so the viewer is somewhat voyeuristically looking into a very private scene. Within a white marble arch with rolled blind flanked by lotus columns, we gaze into a heavily shuttered room with a grey wall of niches and a window covered in a matching blind. The couple sits on a cushion-strewn gilt-footed cream throne decorated with repeating lotus flowers standing on a striped *dhurrie*, a domed lamp and a table with gilt flask of wine, cup and *pan-dan* in front. The beloved, wearing a gilt-speckled pale mauve *sari*, jewellery and an *odhni* over her hair, stares intensely at her lover who wears a chevron-decorated turban bound with gold cord.

PUBLISHED

Indian Miniatures From the Collection of Mildred and W.G. Archer, London, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., 1964, no.54 (illustrated)
Romance and poetry in Indian Painting: A loan exhibition of Indian miniatures from the collection of Mildred and W.G. Archer, exhibition catalogue, Wildenstein, London, 1965, no.49

REFERENCES

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, 1973
Bautze, J., *Lotosmond und Löwenritt*, Stuttgart, 1991
Dehejia, V., *Devi: The Great Goddess*, Washington, 1999
Goswamy, B.N. & Fischer, E., *Masters of Indian Painting*, vol.II, Zurich, 2011
Goswamy, B.N. & Fischer, E., *Pahari Paintings: The Horst Metzger Collection in the Rietberg Museum*, Zurich, 2017
Losty, J.P., *Ivory and Painting*, exhibition catalogue, Francesca Galloway, London, 2011
Poster, A., *Realms of Heroism: Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum*, New York, 1994

A detail is illustrated on the inside back cover

The palette is a distinctively cool combination of white, grey, saffron and yellow making ample use of motifs popular in eighteenth century Pahari painting such as gilt details, stripes, chevrons and reticulated floral motifs.

This painting is one of a small group of paintings said to depict Raja Bhup Singh of Guler (r. 1790-1826) dallying with one of his ranis. A near identical painting, down to the details of the room and even the striped shawl, was sold at Sotheby's, New York, 20-21 September 1985, lot 434 and another is in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, see Archer, p.115, no.58 or: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O433007/painting-unknown/>.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England

REFERENCES

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, vol. II, London, 1973



16. PRINCE HUNTING IN A LANDSCAPE
MUGHAL INDIA, LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, laid down in a gold-sprinkled pale blue album page, with navy and gold borders ruled in red, white and black, ink inscription in *nasta’liq* on the verso 8¾ by 4½ in.; 22.5 by 11.5 cm. painting 15½ by 11¾ in., 39.5 by 28.7 cm. folio

In the centre is a prince on horseback on a hunting expedition. A scout holding an axe is striding ahead of him, presumably to clear the way. Behind and slightly to the horse’s right is a second attendant holding a falcon perching on a black glove in his right hand. A saluki dog accompanies the group. In the foreground, a buck, four doe and a fawn have come to drink from a stream. Behind is mountainous terrain with trees populated with various birds and animals, including a brace of cranes and a pair of jackals. To the far left is the top of a turreted fort with three figures standing on the roof.

Elements of the composition resemble Mughal court painting from the late 1580s and 1590s; the modelled rocks, the distant turreted building with diamond-shaped slits in the wall, and the neat figures in a three-quarter view (Stronge, p.87). However, other aspects of the painting suggest this is a later version of an earlier work: the dull tone of some of the colours, dark shades on the faces of the figures and details of the prince’s turban. Therefore, it can be dated to the late eighteenth century when copies were made of earlier works.

The painting is mounted in an album page flecked with gold. It is unclear if the scene copies an illustration of a text or if it was initially intended to be a single-page painting. On the reverse is a later Persian inscription mentioning Khusrau hunting, but there

is no original text to corroborate this assertion. However, the subject of Khusrau hunting appears in certain illustrated copies of the *Khamsa* of Nizami. Abkar’s copy of the *Khamsa*, dated A.H. 1004/1595 A.D., includes a painting of Khusrau hunting (see Brend, p.21, no. 12). Our painting was possibly planned for an illustrated version of this text. However, like the painting in Akbar’s *Khamsa*, it lacks narrative content. The subject of royalty on horseback, often accompanied by falcons, prevalent under the Mughals, and many single-page paintings were produced (Losty & Roy, p. 145).

INSCRIPTIONS

At lower left of the recto is an illegible inscription with the possible date of A.H. 1145 / 1733-4 A.D. The inscription on the verso reads: *waraq-i shikar-i shahzada khusraw* ‘Leaf of a (painting of) the hunt of Prince Khusraw’

PROVENANCE

Major D.I.M. Macaulay (1871-1934): Sotheby’s, London, 24 June 1941, lot 41 (see note to catalogue no. 11) Maggs Bros., London, 1940s Far Gallery, New York, before 1972 Private collection, Boston

REFERENCES

Brend, B., *The Emperor Akbar’s Khamsa of Nizami*, London, 1995
Losty, J.P. & Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire*, London, 2012
Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book: 1560-1660*, London, 2002

E.S.





17. ILLUSTRATION TO A VISHNU-AVATARA SERIES
BALARAMA DIVERTS THE RIVER JAMUNA
CHAMBA, LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque pigments and gold on paper, broad red border
6¼ by 8¾ in.; 16 by 22.1 cm. painting
8¼ by 10½ in.; 20.9 by 27 cm. folio

Balarama as Krishna’s brother had a large part of Vishnu’s essence and is regarded as the eighth avatar of Vishnu by those devotees who regard Krishna not as an avatar but as Vishnu the Supreme Godhead himself. Here in one of his most independent actions, Balarama is depicted with his club over one shoulder and wielding his ploughshare in the other, diverting the course of the River Yamuna. His brother and a *gopi* are nearby, she is giving him a *lota*, perhaps preparing him for bathing. The scene is set on the slope of a hillside with a shrine-topped mountain peak being the source of the river spurting from its ridges. Balarama had wanted to bathe in the river and called upon the river goddess to come to him. On her refusal he used his ploughshare to divert the river’s course to a more convenient place. The episode takes place in the *Bhagavata Purana* so the solitary girl with Krishna is not necessarily Radha.

Our painting seems based on an earlier Chamba version. A painting of the scene, 1740-50 (Archer, Chamba no. 16), shows Balarama, the ploughshare, the mountain and the river in essentially the same composition as our version. The energetic pose of Balarama, advancing to the right while looking back to the left where he drags his ploughshare, is common to both versions. In another version also from Chamba 1760-65 (Poster, no. 201), Balarama’s whole body is turned towards the left, not just his torso. Krishna is playing his flute under a tree while a *gopi* brings him a dish with betel chews. The treatment of Balarama’s crown, club and *dhoti* is similar in both. The strongly upright branching tree with white star-like flowers is also something of a Chamba feature. For similar references in our painting to earlier Chamba work, see Archer, Chamba, nos. 30-34. These references show the long-continued use of artist’s drawings even

in different states. This painting has previously been attributed to Garhwal but while Archer cites possible influence from other states on Garhwal, Chamba is not among them (*ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 101). While acknowledging the Garhwali high curved eyebrow in our painting, it seems best at the moment to place the painting in Chamba after its painting style had been transformed by the arrival of Guler artists such as Nikka and Ranjha at the court of Raj Singh (see Ohri, pp.98-114). The power of the earlier Chamba work has been diluted perhaps in favour of a sweeter and more harmonious style as found in the *Usa-Aniruddha* and *Sudama carita* series.

Another version of this subject with a very similar composition, in which the goddess Yamuna appears in the river to beg Balarama’s pardon, was sold at Sotheby’s, London, 6 July 1981, lot 143, there called Basohli, circa 1765.

PROVENANCE
Sotheby’s, London, 26 April 1991, lot 162
Sotheby’s, London, 29-30 April 1992, lot 278 (*unillustrated*)
Professor John L. Enos (1924-2013), Oxford, 1992-2015
Private collection, Singapore, 2015-24

EXHIBITED
Losty, J. P., *Indian Painting 1590-1880*, Asia Week New York, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., London, 2015, no.21

REFERENCES
Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New York and Delhi, 1973
Ohri, V.C., ‘Nikka and Ranjha at the court of Raja Raj Singh of Chamba’, in Ohri, V.C., and Craven, R., ed., *Painters of the Pahari Schools*, Bombay, 1998
Poster, A.G., et al., *Realms of Heroism:Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum*, New York, 1994

18. KRISHNA DANCING ON THE NAGA KALAYA FLANKED BY HIS PLEADING WIVES

PROBABLY TIRUPATI, ANDHRA PRADESH
SOUTH INDIA, LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Gouache heightened with gold on paper, red pointed arched border with blue banding and black and white rules, a line of *devanagari* on recto and verso
10¼ by 6⅞ in.; 26.1 by 17.5 cm. painting
10¼ by 7½ in.; 27.4 by 19 cm. folio

This striking image depicts the beloved Hindu blue-skinned child-god Krishna. It was painted in Andhra Pradesh, probably at Tirupati, north-west of Madras (Chennai), in the hill country of Chittoor district, where an ancient temple devoted to the god has for centuries been a centre of pilgrimage, as it continues to be today. The school of painting developed around the Vishnu temple that occupies one of the seven hills of the town, so pilgrims could buy a portable image of the temple's namesake and of his avatars such as Krishna. The style of painting is distinctly Dravidian: unlike the north Indian traditions the figure here is painted in an almost three-dimensional frontal style on a colourless ground with a predominant palette of blue, black, red, yellow and gold. White highlights and use of shadow give the deity an immediacy that fulfil its purpose as a religious icon.

The image recalls the famous quelling of the serpent Kaliya by Krishna (Kaliyadamana/Kaliyamardana), a well-known episode from the *Bhagavata Purana*, (10.16). It depicts the precise moment in which Krishna dances victoriously on the vanquished body of the venomous snake Kaliya, while his wives beseech him to spare the life of their husband. Kaliya was the serpent who poisoned a pool of the river Yamuna with dire consequences for the herdsmen, cattle, birds, and other living beings. Krishna then jumped in the river, fought with Kaliya and defeated him but having spared him he was banished forever from Vraj. This is one of the many incidents in the life of Krishna among the *gopas* and *gopis* of Vraj, his home on the Yamuna river near Mathura.

OTHER EXAMPLES

Tirupati paintings can be found in the following collections: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: Vishnu Venkateshvara and Krishna Rajagopalaswamy: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search?q=tirupati>
British Museum, two examples, see Dallapiccola 2010, pp. 154-55, nos. 12.2 & 12.3. *The late Paul F. Walter (1935-2017)*: Christie's New York, 21-28 September 2017, lot 642. For four sold by Simon Ray, London, see Dallapiccola 2014, pp. 109-121.

INSCRIPTIONS

The *devanagari* inscriptions read:

Shri Kalinathanaji (recto)

Kalinaji (verso)

Shri Kalinathanaji, is perhaps a local epithet of Krishna while *Kalinaji*, could be a corruption of *Kaliya naga*.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England

Toby Falk (1942-97), Surrey

Private collection, by descent, 1997-2023

REFERENCES

Dallapiccola, A. L., *South Indian Paintings: a Catalogue of the British Museum Collection*, London, 2010

Dallapiccola, A. L., "Tirupati Paintings and Srikalahasti Cloths" in Dallapiccola, A.L., Michell, G. and Verghese A., *Rayalaseema: The Royal Realm - Architecture and Art of Southern Andhra Pradesh*, Mumbai, 2014

We are grateful to Professor Anna Dallapiccola for her assistance in the cataloguing of this painting.



19. A GROUP OF FAKIRS IN A GRAVEYARD
POSSIBLY MURSHIDABAD, LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque pigments on paper, laid down in a blue album page with gilt floral border and black and white rules
7 by 10¼ in.; 17.5 by 26 cm. painting
11¾ by 14¾ in.; 28.8 by 37.4 cm. folio

A group of fakirs is resting under a large tree in a graveyard. The tree dominates the composition, with a thick trunk in the centre and the leaves spreading across the entire width of the page in the upper section of the painting. Behind the tree to the right is a hut with a straw roof, and tombstones are in the foreground to the left. Under the tree in the centre are the five fakirs. The figure to the left is hugging his knees to his body, with a dog beside him. His eye-lids are half closed, as if in meditation or deep repose, his upper body and feet are bare, and he has a thick beard and wild-looking hair. In the centre are two further seated figures facing each other with bowls ar ranged between them, in one of which they are sieving *thandai*, a cannabis (*bhanga*) drink. The thick hoop earrings these two ascetics wear denote that they are from a Nāth Yogi lineage. The dog and clubs also suggest these figures are yogis of this affiliation. However, due to the type of grave, the shrine must be Muslim. The two figures standing behind them are likely smoking cannabis in a *huqqa*.

The painting dates to the late eighteenth century in terms of watercolour style, with sketchy drawing, thin washes of colour, and earrings in the ear lobes of the ear (Mallinson, pp.74-5). By the early nineteenth century, yogis began to wear them in the cartilage. Depictions of yogis in Mughal paintings are found in Akbar’s earliest illustrated copy of the *Akbarnama* (Stronge, pp.52-3) and also the *Babarnama* (Mallinson, p.71, figs. 2 & 3), both dating from the 1590s. An early example of yogis wearing an earring through the cartilage is in an illustration for the *Tashrih al-Aqvam* (Account of Castes) by James Skinner (1778-1841), a copy of which is now in the British Library (S. Sharma, p.36).

The painting’s place of production remains unclear, but Murshidabad, or a city in Eastern India, is a possibility. The large format of the page, the subdued watercolour palette and the subject fit with the series of paintings produced for the East India Company and for European individuals, such as the Fraser album (Dalrymple, 146, fig. 40). However, our painting appears more akin to the series of figure types prevalent in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

PROVENANCE
Fernand Prévost, former Minister of France in Persia
Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 2 and 3 June 1932, lot 261
Private collection, Paris



REFERENCES
Dalrymple, W., et al., *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019
Mallinson, J., “Yogis in Mughal India,” in *Yoga: The Art of Transformation*, Washington D.C, 2013

Sharma, S., “James Skinner and the Poetic Climate of Late Mughal Delhi”, in Dalrymple, W. and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi 1707-1857*, New Haven and London, 2012, pp.33-9.
Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book: 1560-1660*, London, 2002

E.S.



20. FOLIO FROM THE MACARTNEY ALBUM
GROUP OF TWELVE GYMNASTS AND A DRUMMER
TANJORE, LAST QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque pigments with gold on laid paper marked J WHATMAN, with black rules and orange borders
10¼ by 16¼ in. painting; 35.9 by 41.3 cm. painting
11¼ by 17¼ in.; 28.8 by 44.6 cm. folio

The stark distinctively Dravidian palette contrasts a sky blue ground with an orange border with the skin-tones and whites of the women’s *dhotis*. The figures comprise seven men, three women and a nude male and female child. The male figures are all moustachioed and wear gold earrings and pendant, orange shorts with flaring white sash, and have a red *tilak* mark. The women wear gold jewellery, a *dhoti*, *choli* and *odhni*. The drummer wears a distinctively shaped Tanjore tie-died turban.

TANJORE AND TRICHINOPOLY PAINTINGS
Dating of Tanjore and Trichinopoly painting is an uncertain area as so few works have inscriptions or detailed provenances. In this case we know that these two (with item no.20) paintings were in the collection of Lord Macartney and in all likelihood collected or commissioned during his tenure as Governor of Madras, 1781-85. We know he declined the offer of Governor-General of India and returned to Britain in 1786 which makes it all the less likely that he acquired the paintings subsequently.

In terms of comparison, a late eighteenth century album of Tanjore watercolours in the British Museum (Asia 1974, o617) has figures with various similarities, particularly in dress and turbans, see Dallapiccola, 2010, pp. 165-177. One of these, depicting a “Trooper of the 4th Madras Native Cavalry” holds a rifle inscribed ‘Harrison 1779’, which supports the late eighteenth century dating of the album.

THE MACARTNEY ALBUM
The original album comprised thirty watercolours, recorded as such in Sir Thomas Phillipps’s catalogue (confusingly dated 1837 but as a private publication it was subsequently added to). It is recorded that Lord Macartney’s heirs sold a group of papers, including this album, to Sir Thomas in 1854. The album was still intact when sold at Sotheby’s in the Phillipps sale in 1974, where it was purchased by Maggs Bros. who subsequently dispersed the album in separate folios.

The album itself appears to have been English, with marbled boards, likely made for Lord Macartney, and according to Sotheby’s 1974 catalogue entry it was inscribed inside the cover:

“Paintings exhibiting a great variety of attitudes, feats of Activity... performed by sets of Mendicant people a remarkably expert company of which at Trichonopoly the proprietor hired to remain with his painters for some weeks to enable them to take sketches of all their Attitudes.”

For a single folio from the Macartney album see Dallapiccola, 1978, p.69, no. 61

PROVENANCE
George Macartney (1737-1806), 1st Earl Macartney, Governor of Madras, 1781-85
Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872)
Acquired by Sir Thomas in 1854, when Macartney’s heirs sold many of his papers to him
Sotheby’s, *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, London, 27 November 1974, lot 774
Maggs Bros., London, 1974
Marguerite Littman (1930-2020), London, the voice coach to Hollywood, socialite and AIDS fundraiser. Truman Capote is said to have based most famous character, Holly Golightly, in *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*, on her.

PUBLISHED
Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Bibliotheca D. Thomas Phillipps, 1837 (with later additions), nos.13405, 13416 & 14169: “A Collection of Paintings of Indian Tumblers at Trichinopoli, numbered 35 to 65 inclusive” (*private publication*)

REFERENCES
Dallapiccola, A. L., *Princesses et Courtesanes à travers les miniatures indiennes*, Galerie Marco Polo, Paris, 1978
Dallapiccola, A. L., *South Indian Paintings. A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection*, London, 2010

We are grateful to Professor Anna Dallapiccola for her assistance in the cataloguing of this painting.





21. detail

**21. FOLIO FROM THE MACARTNEY ALBUM
FIVE POLE-CLIMBING FEMALE GYMNASTS WITH AN INSTRUCTOR,
A DRUMMER AND FOUR MALE ATTENDANTS
TANJORE, LAST QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

Opaque pigments on laid paper marked J WHATMAN, with black rules and orange borders
16¼ by 10¼ in.; 41.4 by 35.4 cm. painting
17½ by 11¼ in.; 44.6 by 28.6 cm. folio

On a grassy ground four attendants hold guy-ropes pegged to the ground securing a tall central bamboo pole while a drummer plays and an instructor calls out orders to the five women suspended above. Each of the men wears gold earrings, shorts and a broad-brimmed Tanjore turban, that of the instructor tied. The latter with moustache and goatee beard, a sword at his side and a plumed and tasselled staff in his left hand. The raven-haired women each have a red tilak mark and wear a short pink dhoti, mustard choli, diaphanous white odhni and gold earrings, necklaces and bracelets.

See note to catalogue no. 19

PROVENANCE

George Macartney (1737-1806), first Earl Macartney, Governor of Madras, 1781-85
Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872)
Acquired by Sir Thomas in 1854, when Macartney's heirs sold

many of his papers to him
Sotheby's, *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, London, 27 November 1974, lot 774
Maggs Bros., Bulletin no.24, London, December 1975, no. 263 (illustrated)
Marguerite Littman (1930-2020), London, the voice coach to Hollywood, socialite and AIDS fundraiser. Truman Capote is said to have based most famous character, Holly Golightly, in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* on her.

PUBLISHED

Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Bibliotheca D. Thomas Phillipps, 1837 (with later additions), nos.13405, 13416 & 14169: "A Collection of Paintings of Indian Tumblers at Trichinopoli, numbered 35 to 65 inclusive" (private publication)

REFERENCES

Dallapiccola, A. L., *Princesses et Courtesanes à travers les miniatures indiennes*, Galerie Marco Polo, Paris, 1978
Dallapiccola, A. L., *South Indian Paintings. A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection*, London, 2010

We are grateful to Professor Anna Dallapiccola for her assistance in the cataloguing of this painting.

22. THE HOLY FAMILY DESCENDS FROM MOUNT KAILASH
KANGRA, CIRCA 1810

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, black border
6¼ by 4½ in.; 17.5 by 11.5 cm. painting
7½ by 5 in.; 19 by 12.8 cm. folio

In this very charming and idiosyncratic painting, Siva sits at sunrise on the bull Nandi with his sons Ganesh and Kartikeya, while Parvati has dismounted to pour milk for the bull who is eagerly lapping from a small gilt dish. The rat and peacock, vehicles of Ganesh and Kartikeya respectively, flank them in mid-air against a dramatic mass of tree-fringed rocky mountains. Siva, holding a trident and drum, has a third eye and horizontal Siavite markings on arms, neck and forehead, a crescent on his brow. He wears a snake necklace, skull garland and a leopard-skin over his left shoulder. Parvati glances up towards him wearing a pale mauve skirt and a gold *odhni*. Nandi wears a gold-edged red blanket adding a shock of colour to focus an otherwise pastel palette. In the foreground a tiger slouches past.

There is a marked Pahari delicacy to the treatment of the facial features and limbs and the combination of a quiet palette and the transcendental expression on the God's face gives the painting a tranquil atmosphere. The dangerous journey over the mountains is done and now the God must address the purpose of his visit: to oversee the welfare of his devotees on earth.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, U.S.A., 1970s
Prahlaḍ Bubbar, London, 2014-2018

EXHIBITED

Bubbar, P., *Masters of the Mughal and Rajput courts: Indian Paintings 1590-1860*, London, 2014



23. KRISHNA AND RADHA ENTHRONED
GULER OR KANGRA, CIRCA 1810-20

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, with a gilt floral navy-ground margin, red rules and a pink-sprinkled border
8½ by 6¼ in.; 22 by 16 cm. painting
11½ by 8¾ in.; 29 by 22.4 cm. folio

In this very charming romantic scene, set on a white marble palace terrace, the couple is seated below a cusped pointed arch in a gem-set gold throne surmounted by a pearl-fringed parasol. Flanked by delicate flowering prunus trees, the bare-chested Krishna turns to his beloved who, enthralled, raises a forefinger to her mouth.

The nimbate Krishna wears a gem-set gold crown and jewellery, and a yellow brocade dhoti. Radha wears ropes of pearls and gold

earrings, nose-ring, hair ornaments, armlets and bracelets, and a purple brocade sari with gilt-edged odhni. For another Pahari painting with similar cusped arch see Archer, p.84, no.46

PROVENANCE

Wolfgang Messmer (1948-2014), Germany, 1970s
Private collection, Germany, 1970s-90s
Private collection, Hong Kong, 1990s-2024

REFERENCES

Archer, W.G., *Visions of Courtly India: the Archer Collection of Pahari Miniatures*, London, 1976





24. GREY HERON (ARDEA CINEREA)
COMPANY SCHOOL, CALCUTTA, CIRCA 1810-20

Opaque watercolour on paper, with pencil, pen and grey ink, watermarked J WHATMAN, inscribed in Persian with the name of the bird, *anjan*
26¾ by 19½ in.; 68 by 50.5 cm. cm.

A large and finely painted image that in many ways epitomises the triumph of Company School painting. When Lady Impey’s ornithological albums, commissioned by her in Calcutta in the 1770s, were seen by the scientific community in England following her return around 1808, they caused a sensation. Never before had such realistic images been seen and their reception was rightly lauded. Here, perhaps forty years later, the tradition has been perfected by artists responding to decades of British patronage. However, the political and economic scene was about to change and within ten years the genre had declined and would soon vanish.

THE SPECIES
The grey heron is well known throughout the Indian subcontinent, where it wades in shallow water with its bill poised to catch fish or frogs. They are not migratory birds but rather resident where born, whether in Europe, Asia or parts of Africa. Herons are masters of the forward strike. Their excellent binocular vision that enables them to judge distances perfectly and to focus sharply even through water. The distinctively kinked neck – a single elongated bone that articulates at right angles with its neighbours – that acts like a trigger mechanism, allowing the bird to thrust its head forward at lightning speed.

ORNITHOLOGICAL PAINTING IN CALCUTTA
Following the example set by Lady Impey in the 1770s many artists were commissioned by individual British patrons who, as here, would have supplied English paper. In the 1780-1820 period, remarkable collections were formed, many now in the British Library, London, including those of Marquis Wellesley (1760-1842) a former Governor-General and Lord Clive (‘of India’), see Archer, pp.2-14. For a watercolour of a Purple Heron, circa 1806, painted by Gurudayal, an artist employed by the Barrackpore Menagerie, see Archer, pl. 4. Another keen enthusiast of natural history painting was George Annesley, Viscount Valencia (1769-1844), who visited India on his travels in 1802-06 and while in Calcutta formed a highly regarded album of his own, now dispersed. For three of his birds, see Welch, pp.58-59, no.18.

PROVENANCE
Sold at auction in Lincoln, 1970s
Private collection, England, 1970s-2014
Simon Ray, London, 2014
Private collection, Singapore, 2014-24

REFERENCES
Archer, M., *Natural History Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1962
Welch, S.C., *Room for Wonder: Indian Painting during the British Period 1760-1880*, New York, 1978

25. DEMOISELLE CRANE (ANTHROPOIDS VIRGO)
COMPANY SCHOOL, CALCUTTA, CIRCA 1810-20

Opaque watercolour on paper, with pencil, pen and grey ink, watermarked J WHATMAN, inscribed in Persian with the name of the bird, *kakara*
24½ by 18½ in.; 62.5 by 46.6 cm.

A large and finely painted image that in many ways epitomises the triumph of Company School painting. When Lady Impey’s ornithological albums, commissioned by her in Calcutta in the 1770s, were seen by the scientific community in England following her return around 1808, they caused a sensation. Never before had such realistic images been seen and their reception was rightly lauded. Here, perhaps forty years later, the tradition has been perfected by artists responding to decades of British patronage. However, the political and economic scene was about to change and within ten years the genre had declined and would soon vanish.

THE SPECIES
The exquisitely elegant Demoiselle Crane, with its black neck and white crest, was named by Queen Marie-Antoinette of France for its maidenly charm. It is one of the smallest crane species and its appearance and habits have earned it a prominent place in Asian culture and folklore. It is often known locally as the *koonj*, simply meaning crane.

Native to India and Central Asia, the Demoiselle Crane is migratory. Twice a year many thousands of cranes gather to perform one of the most arduous, high altitude migration feats of any bird, all the more so as they need to cross the Himalayas. In order to maintain contact with the rest of the flock during migration, cranes produce a sonorous trumpeting call, amplified by an extraordinarily lengthened windpipe that is coiled within the walls of their breastbone.

In their breeding grounds, the flocks disperse into tightly-knit pairs, mating for life. They are known for their elaborate mating ‘dance’, though they do so at other times as well and their chicks

do so at an early age. Although superficially similar to the longer-billed storks an herons, cranes are not closely related to either.

ORNITHOLOGICAL PAINTING IN CALCUTTA
Following the example set by Lady Impey in the 1770s many artists were commissioned by individual British patrons who, as here, would have supplied English paper. In the 1780-1810 period, remarkable collections were formed, many now in the British Library, London, including those of Marquis Wellesley (1760-1842) and a former Governor-General and Lord Clive (‘of India’), see Archer, pp.2-14. Another keen enthusiast of natural history painting was George Annesley, Viscount Valencia (1769-1844), who visited India on his travels in 1802-06 and while in Calcutta formed a highly regarded album of his own, now dispersed. For three of his birds, see Welch, pp.58-59, no.18.

A stork by a Calcutta artist, circa 1803, painted on Whatman paper, was published by Hobhouse, no. 15. For another image of this species from the Impey album, ‘Painted stork eating a snail’, by Shaikh Zain ud-Din, dated 1781, see Dalrymple, p.58, no.21.

PROVENANCE
Sold at auction in Lincoln, 1970s
Private collection, England, 1970s-2014
Simon Ray, London, 2014
Private collection, Singapore, 2014-24

REFERENCES
Archer, M., *Natural History Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1962
Dalrymple, W., et al., *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for East India Company*, London, 2019
Hobhouse, N., *Indian Painting for the British 1780-1880*, London, 2001
Welch, S.C., *Room for Wonder: Indian Painting during the British Period 1760-1880*, New York, 1978



**26. KRISHNA WITH RADHA ON AN ISLAND IN THE RIVER JUMNA FLANKED BY FOURTEEN GOPIS
GULER, CIRCA 1820**

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, enclosed by a grey-ground
rosette margin with pink-sprinkled border
9½ by 6¼ in.; 24 by 17.3 cm. painting
11½ by 9 in.; 29.2 by 23 cm. folio

The blue-skinned god stands in classic pose, cross-legged and
fluting, on a hexagonal gold stool, the edge of which Radha
clasps in prostration. Each group of *gopis* is moving almost as
one towards the god, flirtatiously reaching out variously to touch
him, fan him with a *chauri*, pull at his jasmine garland and offer
him everything from a lotus flower to *paan* to food in gold dishes.
Cows and a piebald calf appear in between the *gopis*. In the
foreground and beyond a river swirls with intermittent fish. The
scene is dominated by two conjoined trees, their luxuriant green
foliage filled with blossom and birds.

For a Guler painting with near-identical subject, of rectangular
format, now in a private collection in Asia, see Losty, no.13. For
another version, circa 1790, see Archer, p.80, no.44.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England
Christie's, London, 25 May 2017, lot 56a

REFERENCES

Archer, W.G., *Visions of Courtly India: the Archer Collection of
Pahari Miniatures*, London, 1976
Losty, J.P., *Court Paintings from India and Persia*, Asia Week New
York, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., London 2020

27. THE KING OF AFGHANISTAN ZAMAN SHAH Durrani LEAVING LAHORE
LUCKNOW, CIRCA 1820

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, inscribed above the king's head in *nasta'liq* script: *Zaman Shah*
13½ by 16½ in., 33.3 by 42.2cm. painting
14½ by 17¾ in., 36 by 45 cm. folio

The Shah, wearing a coat of mail, is riding out of a city, presumably intended for Lahore, along the banks of a river. He is wearing the tall peaked jewelled cap associated with Nadir Shah but has adorned it with *sarpeches* of four eagle feathers compared with Nadir Shah's one (e.g. Dalrymple & Sharma, no. 17). He is preceded by two guides and followed by a close-packed crowd of horsemen, mostly wearing characteristic Afghan tall-peaked caps. The city is depicted naturalistically with a mosque and a palace arising out of a sea of trees inside its walls. A great tree on the left is right up against the picture plane while another tree on the right helps to frame the action from across the river.

ZAMAN SHAH DURRANI
Zaman Shah Durrani (c. 1770-1845), son of Timur Shah and grandson of the conqueror Ahmad Shah Durrani, was King of Afghanistan 1793-1800. He was able to overcome his older brothers to seize the throne in 1793, seeking to emulate his grandfather's exploits in India. Lahore and much of the Punjab had been under Sikh domination since the death of Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1767, but Zaman Shah invaded it and captured Lahore in 1798. He confirmed the young Ranjit Singh as Governor of Lahore in 1799, but Ranjit soon threw off his allegiance. Alarmed by the threat of a renewed Durrani presence in India, the British encouraged Fath 'Ali Shah of Persia to attack Zaman Shah's kingdom from the west, which he did by encouraging Zaman Shah's eldest brother Mahmud Shah to rebel from his base in Herat and dethrone Zaman Shah in 1800. He fled towards Peshawar but was captured, blinded and imprisoned in the Bala Hissar in Kabul until his death in 1844.

A portrait of Zaman Shah, in the British Museum (1989.0819.0.1, unpublished), shows him seated a peacock throne under imperial canopies but surrounded by women. His appearance is similar to that in our painting except that his hat is more modestly adorned with just one eagle feather. By an otherwise unknown late Mughal artist, named Ghulam Mustafa, and dated A.H. 1214/1799-1800 A.D., probably at Lahore, Zaman Shah's appearance is similar. The style here is a provincial version of that practised by Ghulam Murtaza Khan and similar artists in Delhi 1800-10 (Dalrymple & Sharma, nos. 30-32). Our painting is in a much more naturalistic style under considerable European influence and

Continued





could not possibly have been done at Lahore at that time. The great tree up against the picture plane to the side is a *repoussoir* device borrowed from English picturesque painting and much used by Murshidabad and Lucknow artists in the early nineteenth century (e.g. Archer, 1972, pl. 53).

RELATED WORKS

The ranks of crowded horsemen resemble those in the processional scene of Ghazi al-Din Haidar in Lucknow, circa 1820, in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (Markel & Gude, no. 56) or those of the hangers-on at Ghazi al-Din Haidar's banquet for Lord and Lady Hastings in Lucknow in 1814 (Archer, 1972, pl. 54). Amongst those ranked behind the mounted courtier and nobles is a figure in the distinctive Avadh fur hat favoured by Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula (r.1754-75). In another painting, *Sa'adat Ali, Nawab of Oudh, meeting the British Resident*, Lucknow, circa 1815, thought to have been copied from a work of circa 1800 by George Place, various courtiers also crowd the scene, see Archer 1979, no.228. In a fourth Lucknow work, circa 1820, sold at Christie's, London, on 21 September 2000, lot 326, a grand elephant procession, including Sa'adat Ali Khan (r.1798-1814) and Lord Wellesley, approaches the great Teele Wali Masjid built by Aurangzeb.

Perhaps Lucknow around 1820 is the best place to fix this intriguing painting at the moment. An interesting comparison may be made with the painting in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (14.646, Coomaraswamy, pl. LI, no. clv) showing Nadir Shah on horseback in the foreground beside a large tree and the sack of a city proceeding in the distance. This is now thought to be Persian, mid-eighteenth century, with European influence coming from the other direction.

PROVENANCE

Professor Gerhard Ewald (1927-97), Cologne, Germany
Private collection, Singapore, 2015-2024

EXHIBITED

J.P. Losty, *Indian Painting 1590-1880*, Asia Week New York, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., London, 2015, no.26

REFERENCES

Archer, M., *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1972
Archer, M., *India and British Portraiture 1770-1825*, London, 1979
Coomaraswamy, A. K., *Catalogue of the Indian Collections in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Vol. VI: *Mughal Painting*, Cambridge, Mass., 1930
Dalrymple, W., and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-1857*, New York, 2012
Markel, S., and Gude, T.B., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow*, New York, 2010



28. **A NIGHTINGALE IN A ROSEBUSH AND AN OWL HIGH IN A ROCKY EYRIE**
PERSIA, FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Opaque pigments on paper, later gilt ascription and date to Muhammad Zaman in *nasta'liq* at l.r., watermarked [...]&M 7¼ by 4¾ in.; 18.3 by 10.6 cm.

On a single sheet of paper, the artist has painted two vignettes, a nightingale on a flowering branch and, unusually, an owl. In a palette of blue, pink, black and white, the first shows the bird perched on the branch of an exuberantly flowering rose bush, his traditional habitat in Persian literature. He has all the traits of the Eastern Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos golzii*), native to Persia: the dark eye and short, sharp yellow beak, the plumage with dark head and pale breast, the distinctively long tail and lower body blushed in pale brownish-pink. The artist has captured the bird in mid-song, his head turned with beak ajar, the contours of the body stippled with considerable skill. In the second an owl perches on one of two diminutive rocky mountains, his head and back with brownish-grey plumage, his underbody whitish-grey. He occupies a desolate landscape of rocky mountains with ruined buildings and half-withered trees.

GOL-O-BOLBOL IN PERSIAN ART
The motif of the rose and nightingale (*gol-o-bolbol*) is traditional in Persian poetry and manifests itself in art in the pre-Safavid period. According to Langer, p.231, it derives from China's tradition of bird and flower painting, a Song dynasty genre that reached Persia via Central Asia. During the Safavid period it became a recognised theme, and its popularity spread not only in painting but in other media such as textiles and ceramics. It became an essential subject for the master artists of the seventeenth century, to the extent that Shafi' 'Abbasi (1642-66), son of the famous Riza (c.1565-1635), devoted himself exclusively to natural history subjects.

In 1739 the notorious plundering by Nadir Shah of the Mughal treasury in Delhi brought thousands of imperial and other paintings to the Persian court and provided the impetus for the assembly of the great St. Petersburg Album in 1740-50.

Combining Mughal and Safavid masters, court artists including Muhammad Hadi, Muhammad Baqir and Muhammad Sadiq painted the extraordinarily exuberant and idiosyncratic flower-and-bird borders that form its album pages, see Akimushkin, p. 20, pl.69, 71, 73 and 78.

In the nineteenth century, one of the most famous painters was the Shiraz-born Aga Lutf 'Ali (A.H. 1222-1288/1807-75 A.D.). As well as portraits, he was known for his exquisite bird and flower paintings and many of his signed works survive. For a number of related *gol-o-bolbol* watercolours, bearing dates from the 1850s and 60s, see Aghdashloo, pp. 150, 168, 174 and 175. One of the artist's hallmarks was his skilled use of stippling (*pardaz*), often heightened in blue and red.

WATERMARK
The presence of a partial watermark in the paper, reading [J]&M, below a Prince of Wales feathers emblem, enables us to identify it as a watermark by Jones and Mather, Wales, whose logo "J&M" was used from 1816-30. Most of their paper was sent to London from where it was shipped to India and the Middle East via the East India Company.

PROVENANCE
Mrs. Parvin Shaybani, London, 1978
Private collection, by descent, Düsseldorf, Germany, to 2023

REFERENCES
Aghdashloo, A., *Aqa Lotf 'Ali Suratgar Shirazi*, Tehran, 1977
Akimushkin, O.F., *The St. Petersburg Muraqqa'*, Lugano, 1994
Hapsburg, F., ed., *The St. Petersburg Muraqqa'*, Lugano, 1996
Langer, A., ed., *The Fascination of Persia*, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 2013

We are grateful to Dr. Eleanor Sims for her assistance in the cataloguing of this painting.

29. FOLIO FROM A COMPANY SCHOOL ALBUM OF BOTANICAL PAINTINGS
MANGO (*MANGIFERA INDICA*)
INDIA, CIRCA 1830

Watercolour on paper
17 by 22 in.; 43.2 by 56 cm.

This mango tree specimen has narrow, deep green leaves, with upright white flowers to the left and a branch bending with the weight of five mangoes to the right. Two mangoes are unripe and green, and the others have warm shades of orange and yellow. A sixth mango is depicted detached from the tree and cut open to reveal the flesh inside, with its fibrous central stone beside it. The detail of the branch node, the leaf veins, the mottled skin of the mangoes and the texture of the stone are all painted with considerable attention to botanically accurate details. This watercolour was commissioned by a European as part of an album, seven surviving folios of which were sold at Christie’s, London, in 2005. Some of the seven bore Whatman watermarks dated 1826, enabling a date of circa 1830 for this and the following watercolour.

PAINTING FOR PRIVATE PATRONS AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
By the late eighteenth century, local artists in India were employed in significant numbers by the East India Company and individuals amassing private collections to create sets of watercolours of natural history subjects. These paintings often served a practical or strategic purpose, made to record useful and profitable plants. Many of the commissioners were doctors working for the East India Company. Botany was then an integral part of medical training as most drugs were still plant-based (Rix, p.60). A Scottish surgeon, Dr James Kerr, was the earliest British patron to commission botanical drawings, some of which he first sent back to Scotland in 1773 (Noltie, p.79).

The Calcutta Botanic Garden was founded in 1786 by Colonel Robert Kyd, a Scottish surgeon. He instigated the idea of recruiting artists reasonably quickly, but it was William Roxburgh, also a Scottish surgeon and botanist, who established and built up a group of artists working at the garden. Roxburgh would become the first paid superintendent of the Botanic

Garden in Calcutta from 1783 to 1813. He had settled in Madras in 1776, where he commissioned local artists. When relocating to Calcutta, he brought at least one of his artists; others were recruited locally. Roxburgh focused mainly on plants that would be economically useful for medicine or dye for cloth, overseeing the production of thousands of paintings.

Amongst Kerr’s collection is watercolour of a spray of green mangoes, now in the Natural History Museum (Dalrymple, p.86). Recording the flora and fauna was certainly strategic for some British patrons. Others were privately interested in expanding their knowledge of the natural world. Commissions were often made in series of plants, birds or animals. Fruit trees were a popular subject. This watercolour was part of a set that included breadfruit (previous image), coconut, durian, plantain, clove and nutmeg (Martyn Gregory Gallery, pp.106-7).

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Kent
Worsfolds Auction Room, Canterbury, Kent
Christie’s, London, 15 July 2005, lot 247
Martyn Gregory Gallery, London
Jill and John Fairchild, Chalet Espérance, Gstaad, Switzerland, 2006-23

EXHIBITED
Martyn Gregory Gallery, *Catalogue 81*, Hong Kong, 2005-6, p.106 (b)

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E.S.



30. FOLIO FROM A COMPANY SCHOOL ALBUM OF BOTANICAL PAINTINGS
BREADFRUIT (*ARTOCARPUS INCISA*)
INDIA, CIRCA 1830

Watercolour on paper
17 by 22 in., 43.2 by 56 cm.

This watercolour depicts a branch of a breadfruit tree with four broad leaves, a catkin flower and two round fruits. A third fruit to the left is shown cut with its seeds displayed. The leaves spread across the width of the page, a glossy deep green with a lighter green underside. The veins on the leaves are meticulously rendered, and the depiction of the skin of the breadfruit is particularly appealing. This watercolour was commissioned by a European as part of an album, seven surviving folios of which were sold at Christie's, London, in 2005. Some of the seven bore Whatman watermarks dated 1826, enabling a date of circa 1830 for this and the previous watercolour.

PAINTING FOR PRIVATE PATRONS AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
The burgeoning number of natural history images mainly commissioned by East India Company patrons from artists during the period 1770-1840, are usually termed 'Company painting'. Natural history paintings were also collected by private individuals. One of the first and most important was Lady Impey, wife of the Chief Justice of Bengal, Sir Elijah, in Calcutta, who formed a unique album of 326 folios in 1774-82. Three of her most prolific and talented artists Shaikh Zain al-Din, Bhavani Das and Ram Das trained as court artists in Murshidabad and Patna. The Impey paintings are now scattered in international collections; for a recent survey of the work of these artists see Topsfield, pp. 39-76.

Watercolours series of plants, birds and animals were produced, life-size where possible, on large sheets of Whatman paper brought from England. Working closely with their European patrons, local artists created a new genre of painting that combined Indian sensibilities with true-to-life European drawings of natural history specimens, resulting in striking and beautiful works of art. The earliest Mughal precedent for natural history subjects came 150 years earlier when Emperor Jahangir (r.1605-27) commissioned his artists to depict animals, birds and plants, including the master artist Mansur, known as "Wonder of the Age" (Stronge, pp.133-7).

This painting was from a series of fruit trees, others in the series were coconut, durian, plantain, clove and nutmeg (Martyn Gregory Gallery, pp.106-7). Breadfruit is not indigenous to the Indian subcontinent but was introduced to the Calcutta Botanic Garden in 1794, where artists working at the garden would have

Continued



been able to view it. The majority of artists employed by the East India Company were Indian. However, patrons likely also had Chinese drawings in their collections. This drawing bears some resemblance to drawings made in the Malay Peninsula, named the ‘Straits School’ by Noltie (pp.78-103, note 1). However, the Chinese connections need further research to ascertain the extent and scope of their involvement in botanic drawings for the British based in India.

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Kent
Worsfolds Auction Room, Canterbury, Kent
Christie’s, London, 15 July 2005, lot 247
Martyn Gregory Gallery, London
Jill and John Fairchild, Chalet Espérance, Gstaad, Switzerland, 2006-23

EXHIBITED
Martyn Gregory Gallery, *Catalogue 81*, Hong Kong, 2005-6, p.106 (a)

REFERENCES
Noltie, H.J., ‘Indian Export Art? The botanical drawings’ in Dalrymple, W., (ed) et al., *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019, pp.78-103
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31. **EQUESTRIAN PORTRAIT OF MAHARANA JAWAN SINGH RIDING THE STALLION EKLING BAGAS MEWAR, CIRCA 1830-35**

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, black and double white rules with red border
13 by 8¾ in.; 32.5 by 22.6 cm. painting
13¾ by 9¼ in.; 35.8 by 25 cm. folio

In this dramatic and action-packed scene set in what appears to be an evening landscape with crescent moon, the Maharana is poised in the saddle in mid-canter, his steel-tipped spear poised with his eyes fixed in total concentration on a distant target. Birds scatter over a darkening sky. The stout ruler wears the yellow distinctively Mewar forward-pointing turban, wrapped under the chin, a matching pathka, pearls and gem-set gold jewellery, red slippers and a white *angarka* over printed cotton *pajjamas*. A cobalt gilt-rayed halo defines the intensity of his face. The sturdy royal stallion is appropriately caparisoned, two large *chauris* suspended from the saddle.

Jawan Singh (1821-38), only son of Maharana Bhim Singh, ruled as minor for the decade 1828-38, dying at the age of seventeen. He was a poet writing under the name of Brijraj.

INSCRIPTIONS
The *devanagari* inscription in black ink reads:
Maharaja Dhiraja Maharana ji Shri Jawan Singh and names his stallion as Ekling Bagas

PROVENANCE
Doris Wiener Gallery, before 2000
Charles W. Banta, former director of the Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, New York: Christie’s, New York, 23 March 2010 lot 199
Private collection, Paris, 2010-2023

EXHIBITED
Indian Miniature Painting, Albright-Knox Gallery, New York, 16 March-5 June 1994

We are grateful to Dr. Andrew Topsfield for his assistance in the cataloguing of this painting.



32. PORTRAIT OF EMPEROR AKBAR SHAH II (1760-1837)
DELHI, CIRCA 1840-50

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, gold margin with black border ruled in white
9 by 5¾ in.; 22.8 by 14.9 cm. painting
10¾ by 5¾ in.; 27.5 x 19.5 cm. folio

A portrait of the penultimate Mughal Emperor, Akbar II (r. 1806-37), sitting on a terrace holding a rosary in his right hand and the velvet-sheathed snake of a *huqqa* pipe in his left. Although the painting lacks an inscription, the sitter can immediately be identified as Akbar II due to his countenance and attire. He has a steady gaze, a slightly pursed mouth, an upper lip dipping down in the centre and a neat white moustache and beard. Encircling his vermillion turban is a brocade band secured at the front with a gem-set *sarpech* with a pearl-fringed *turra* to the left. The emperor wears a near identical *sarpech* in a formal portrait of him enthroned with his sons and courtiers gathered around, attributed to Ghulam Murtaza Khan, circa 1811-15, in the Cincinnati Museum (Dalrymple & Sharma, pp.108-9, no.32). He is usually shown frontally, rather than in the strict profile view of his predecessors.

Shah Alam II, Akbar II's father, re-entered Delhi in 1772 after having been exiled for over a decade. He re-established the royal atelier, and painting thrived once more under his son. One of the key portraitists, Ghulam Ali Khan, worked as both a court and Company painter (Sharma, p.41-51). In 1827, he was commissioned to paint Akbar II on the occasion of the visit of Lord Amherst, Governor-General of Fort William. The resulting painting, now in the Royal Ontario Museum, shows the ruler sitting alone in a European-style chair, evoking elegant civility rather than imperial power (Sharma, p.45). Our painting derives from this more informal portrait of the ruler. The ruler looks opulent and imperial

with his halo, crown, elaborate robes and jewellery, but it records a thoughtful private moment rather than a formal audience.

The terrace setting was a typical backdrop for royal portraiture throughout the eighteenth century. The expanse of cool, white tones recalls earlier portraits under Muhammad Shah (see entry no. 6). Both the low railing with its intricate *jali* design and the blue sky with white sketchy clouds along the upper edge of the picture resemble a portrait of a young prince by Khairullah, circa 1806-11, produced in Delhi and now in the San Diego Museum of Art (Dalrymple & Sharma, p.107). Akbar II continued the *darbar* traditions of Mughal Emperors, but relations with the East India Company were strained, and after 1818, his title was reduced to King of Delhi (Hannam, p.32). His successor, Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837-58), would be the last Mughal Emperor.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England
Cotswold Auctions, Gloucestershire, 25 January 2022, lot 296
Shapero Rare Books, London, 2022
Private collection, France

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33. **DIV RIDING A COMPOSITE ELEPHANT**
COMPANY SCHOOL
INDIA, CIRCA 1830-50

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, black borders with single rule
 6½ by 6¾ in.; 16.6 by 16.7 cm. painting
 8½ by 10 in.; 20.5 by 25.5 cm. folio

Striding through a wooded landscape the elephant is composed of animals, two of whom play musical instruments. The animals include a mythical green *makara* forming the trunk, as well as nilgai, buffalo, monkeys, bears, sheep, tigers, fish, a rhinoceros and a goose forming the tail.

The *div* plays a gilt serpent held in his right hand, he has horns and outlandishly large ears, he is curl-headed and wears shorts, jewellery and *naga* necklace and armlets, a further snake in his left hand.

The origin of the *div* in Indo-Persian culture may go back as far as the Vedas and they are already a demonic force in Ferdowsi's tenth century *Shahnameh*. Grotesque of appearance and imbued with supernatural powers, they are cruel and menacing with a peculiar relish for human flesh. In Indian and Persian painting they are frequently found accompanying these composite animals, the precise meaning of which continues to evade scholars. Such paintings are found in almost all schools of Indian painting and in both the Hindu and Muslim traditions.

PROVENANCE
 Major W.A. Spowers (1925-2009), London
 Antonia Spowers (1934-2020), Wales



34. **COMPOSITE OX**
COMPANY SCHOOL
INDIA, CIRCA 1830-50

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, black borders with single rule
 6½ by 6¾ in.; 16.6 by 16.7 cm. painting
 8½ by 10 in.; 20.5 by 25.5 cm. folio

Trotting through an autumnal landscape with a tree at left, the beast is composed of animals, birds, fish and two humans comprising a seated prince in turban and jewels and the head of a curl-headed European boy. The former includes a crocodile, horse, elephant, mule, cow and even a rhinoceros, as well as tigers, rabbits hares and a cobra forming the tail.

PROVENANCE
 Major W.A. Spowers (1925-2009), London
 Antonia Spowers (1934-2020), Wales

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Detail, no.14





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