











# INDIAN COURT PAINTING

TEXT BY J.P. LOSTY

OLIVER  
**FORGE**

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FRONT COVER: DETAIL FROM NO.17  
INSIDE FRONT COVER: DETAIL FROM NO.4  
INSIDE BACK COVER: DETAIL FROM NO.9  
BACK COVER: DETAIL FROM NO.13

## 1. KAI KAVUS ASCENDS TO THE SKY ON HIS FLYING THRONE FOLIO FROM A SHAHNAMA BIJAPUR, CIRCA 1610

Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on gold-sprinkled paper, verso with two captions in red on gold ground; and a further detached folio, unillustrated, each with four columns of *nasta'liq* divided by gold rules; re-margined

5 $\frac{1}{5}$  by 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.; 13.2 by 7 cm. painting

8 by 4 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.; 20.3 by 12.1 cm. folio

The theme of this painting is 'Kai Kavus ascends to the sky', which is taken from the story of a king who while hunting was approached by a devil (*div*), disguised as a handsome youth, who declared that such was his might that he should reign from the heavens. Kai Kavus got his servants to build him a golden throne, in which he ascended to the skies, but disaster struck when the birds tired and the throne crashed to the ground.

Here we have depicted the glorious moment when the throne was being borne skyward. Bearded, Kai Kavus is depicted in a hexagonal throne with four bell-shaped feet visible, its perimeter fringed in red silk, wearing a brocade robe with red undergarment and gilt crown. Behind him two male attendants wearing turbans haul the throne upwards by grasping its poles. Its foliate finials are baited with large pieces of meat impaled on them to lure the four large flanking eagles upwards, and thus propel the throne heavenward. Below them is a landscape with trees and buildings with tiered and domed roofs and a red sandstone *iwan*.

### A BIJAPUR SHAHNAMA

Approximately two dozen folios are known (see Weinstein, 2017, pp. 371-2) from this apparently unique manuscript, which depicts traditional Shahnama themes in a distinctively Bijapur style. As a colophon has not been found, its patron is unknown, but it has been suggested that such is the lavishness of the decoration that it may have been a member of the Bijapur royal family.

All the known folios were re-margined in a distinctive brittle brown paper, as here, the original paper being thin, cream-coloured and gold-sprinkled. Below the illustration are four columns of *nasta'liq* with gold rules, the script enclosed in cloud bands on a gold ground. The palette, with its use of turquoise, red, mauve, orange, pink, purple and green on a lavish gold ground is familiar from other Bijapur works on paper, as is the style of trees, foliage and architecture.

### OTHER FOLIOS

Weinstein (2017) provides a full discussion of the manuscript and its known folios, both illustrated and unillustrated, and records those in: the San Diego Museum of Art, the Williams College Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco and the Cleveland Museum of Art, as well as private collections in the USA and UK.

In addition, four folios from this manuscript are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, see Weinstein, 2015, p.106-9, nos. 34-37 and

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/453265>. Two further folios were sold at Christie's, New York, 19 March 2015, lot 227, one illustrated with Akvan carrying Rustam, which were acquired at Spink & Son, London, in 1980.

Other depictions of this scene appear in various Persian Shahnama manuscripts, for instance in the Shah Tahmasp/Houghton Shahnama, 1525-30, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/452130>

### PROVENANCE

Spink & Son, London, 1970s

D.B. Robertson, London, 1970s-90s

Private collection, London, by descent until 2018

### REFERENCES

Weinstein, L., in Haidar, N.N. and Sardar, M., *Sultans of Deccan India 1500-1700*, New York, 2015, pp. 106-9

Weinstein, L., "The Shahnama in the Deccan: A Dispersed Bijapur Shahnama of ca.1610", in Melville, C. and van den Berg, G.R. *Shahnama Studies III*, Leiden, 2017, pp. 347-72











**2. RUSTAM BEFORE KAI KAVUS HAVING  
KNOCKED DOWN TUS  
FOLIO FROM A SHAHNAMA  
BIJAPUR, CIRCA 1610**

Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on gold-sprinkled paper; and a further detached folio, unillustrated, with two captions in red on gold ground and one on its verso; each with four columns of *nasta'liq* divided by gold rules; re-margined  
5⅓ by 3 in.; 13.5 by 8 cm. painting  
8 by 4¾ in.; 20.5 by 12.3 cm. folio

This folio is set in a sumptuous royal interior, with an enthroned king in front of whom Rustem appears, wearing a plumed bearskin headdress and fully armed with a sword in his right hand, a bow and quiver of arrows, and a dagger at his belt. In front of him a courtier in a golden robe lies prostrate, an attendant to the left. The scene

takes place in a palace chamber with gold spandrels, a medallion carpet and walls of mauve decorated with interlacing gold foliage, interrupted with two green-ground panels each containing a gilt ewer. Above are four rows of *nasta'liq* enclosed by cloud bands and with gold rules.

For a note on this Shahnama and references, see previous entry, no.1.

**PROVENANCE**

Spink & Son, London, 1970s  
D.B. Robertson, London, 1970s-90s  
Private collection, London, by descent until 2018







### 3. A PRINCELY MUSICIAN VISITING A HOLYMAN MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1680

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in an illuminated Persian manuscript page, circa 1600, the ivory-ground margin with gold rules, laid down on card

4 by 2¼ in.; 10 by 5.5 cm. painting

1½ by 7¾ in.; 31.5 by 19.7 cm. folio

The precedent for such scenes is provided by Nanak, the first Sikh guru (d. 1539), who had a minstrel named Mardana. Our two figures are perhaps derived from an earlier and larger Shahjahani painting, circa 1650, of a saint and musician in a landscape (see Losty, pp.4-5, no. 1). For another contemporary version of the same theme, see Falk & Archer, no. 116.

This splendid illumination is from a late sixteenth century Shiraz manuscript. Originally our page had a companion page with a Safavid drawing set into the facing page of illumination (Colnaghi, no. 39). These Shirazi illuminated pages or similar designs were copied in the Mughal studio, slightly simplified but on an enlarged scale, for the opening pages of the great imperial projects, such as the emperor's own albums in the 1630s (Welch et al., no. 3) and also for Shah Jahan's *Padshahnama* manuscript, circa 1657, enclosing miniatures of Timur and of Shah Jahan (Beach, Koch & Thackston, figs. 3-4; Hannam, no. 28).

#### PROVENANCE

Rothschild Collection, Paris, early twentieth century  
Colnaghi, *Persian and Indian Painting*, London, 1976, p. 218, no. 108  
Private collection, France, until 2018

#### REFERENCES

Beach, M. C., Koch, E., and Thackston, W., *King of the World, the Padshahnama*, London, 1997  
Colnaghi, P. & D., *Persian and Indian Painting*, London, 1976  
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981  
Hannam, E., *Eastern Encounters: Four Centuries of Paintings and Manuscripts from the Indian Subcontinent*, London, 2018  
Losty, J.P., *Indian Painting 1650-1900*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch, New York exhibition, London, 2010  
Welch, S.C., Schimmel A., Swietochowski, M.L. & Thackston, W.M., *The Emperor's Album: Images of Mughal India*, New York, 1987







#### 4. ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: VARVALA RAGAPUTRA OF MALKOSH RAGA NURPUR, 1680-85

Opaque watercolour on paper, red borders, inscribed on upper margin, a number at lower left

6⅓ by 6⅓ in.; 17 by 16.8 cm. painting

8¼ by 8⅕ in; 21 by 20.8 cm. folio

Varival, one of the sons of Malkos *raga*, is described in Ksemakarna's *ragamala* system as being "handsome like a love-god, wearing a colourful garment, gold earrings and a *champaka* garland - he is the delight of women", while the sound of the *raga* is compared to that made by a kite (Ebeling, p.72). The artist has ignored these prescriptions entirely, as they often did in the Pahari region, and shows the handsome bearded prince with a body chain of pearls holding out his hands to a younger man, who is grasping one of them. They exchange a gaze of some intensity.

"This dispersed series, which became known only in the last thirty years, includes some of the most appealing of early Pahari *Ragamala* paintings on account of their wonderful imagery, of the intensity and combination of their colours and of the portrayal of the emotions of the characters." (Losty, 2017, p. 220)

Glynn, p. 47, writes of this painting that it:

"show[s] the vibrant and dramatic effect achieved through the use of limited compositional elements magnified to fill the picture space. The yellow background pulsates, providing the perfect backdrop for the artist to depict coloured and patterned textiles as ornaments for his subjects."

##### A NURPUR RAGAMALA SERIES

The folios are nearly square in format with vivid red borders and with *takri* inscriptions naming the *raga* or *ragini* and his/her family in the top left corner. Hitherto suggested dates of the series range between 1680 and 1695 with provenance in Basohli or Nurpur, but a date found on the reverse of Suhavi *ragini*, from the series in the former Seitz Collection (Losty, 2017, no. 59), gives a *terminus ante quem* for this painting of 1688, and hence a date of about 1680-85 for the whole series. Certain features of the paintings point to Basohli, as in the First and Second *Rasamanjari* series, and also to the 1695 Third *Rasamanjari* by Devidasa of Nurpur. There is also more than one artist involved showing influences from either Basohli or Nurpur, hence the differences in scholarly attributions.

##### OTHER FOLIOS FROM THIS SERIES

Pages from this series are in public collections such as the Fondation Custodia, Paris (Gahlin, no. 36), the Freer Gallery, Washington D.C. (Galloway, 1998, no. 8), the Cleveland Museum of

Art, and the Museum Rietberg, Zurich. Others are in private collections including those of Sir Howard Hodgkin (Topsfield, nos. 53-57), and Praful and Shilpa Shah, see Losty, 2019 (forthcoming). Yet more have appeared in various sale catalogues (listed in Glynn et al., p. 46). See also Francesca Galloway sale catalogues: 1998, no. 8; 2000, nos. 34-35; 2003, no. 10; and 2004, nos. 21-22.

##### INSCRIPTIONS

In *takri*: *Raga Viraval Malkas putra*

A number inscribed on the border at lower left

##### PROVENANCE

Sam Fogg, *Divine Pursuits*, London, 2003, p. 47, no. 37

Claudio Moscatelli, London, 2003-15

Private collection, Europe, 2015-18

##### EXHIBITED

*Ragamala Paintings from India from the Claudio Moscatelli Collection*, Museum and Art Gallery, Brighton, 2011-12 and Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, 2012

##### PUBLISHED

Glynn, Skelton & Dallapiccola, 2011, pp. 46-49, no. 5

##### REFERENCES

Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973

Fogg, S., *Divine Pursuits*, London, 2003

Gahlin, S., *Couleurs de l'Inde: Nouvelles acquisitions de la Collection Fritz Lugt*, Paris, 2002

Galloway, F., *Indian Miniatures Asian Textiles*, London, 1998

Galloway, F., *Asian Textiles, Indian Miniatures and Works of Art*, London, 2000

Galloway, F., *Indian Miniatures and Works of Art*, London, 2003

Galloway, F., *Asian Textiles, Persian and Indian Miniatures*, London, 2004

Glynn, C., Skelton, R. & Dallapiccolo, 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

Losty, J.P., *Indian Miniatures in the Tapi Collection*, Mumbai, 2019 (forthcoming)

Topsfield, A., *Visions of Mughal India: The Collection of Howard Hodgkin*, Oxford, 2012



माधववलाभलकसमुद्र





## 5. ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: MALKAUS RAGA BILASPUR, 1690-1700

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, red borders with black and white rules

7¼ by 4⅞ in.; 18.6 by 12.5 cm. painting

8½ by 6⅞ in.; 21.5 by 15.5 cm. folio

The painting is folio seventy-eight from a now dispersed album of paintings once in the Mandi royal collection, which included a large *Ragamala* and a *Dasavatara* set.

The boy Krishna, peacock-crowned, bejeweled, garlanded and with white talismanic emblems on his dark skin, crouches on a large lotus that arises from a lotus lake flanked by two women. He is helping himself to a *laddu* or rice ball from a gold dish held out by the woman on his right, while the other waves a *chowrie* and holds a white cloth. At the feet of the first woman stands a goat with a snake in its mouth. The dark background gives way above to a strip of tumultuous sky.

Like most of the paintings in this large dispersed series, the inventive iconography is underpinned by beautiful details. The eagerness of the boy Krishna as he leans forward to grab the sweetmeat is suggested by the ends of his diaphanous *dupatta* fluttering out behind him. The *laddu*-bearing lady wears the same diaphanous material as an *ornhi* over her jade green skirt and orange bodice, colours which are reversed in the garments of her opposite number, who also sports a lime green cloak over her head and falling down her back, decorated with flowers along the bottom hem as is the hem of her skirt. Both wear copious amounts of jewellery.

### MALKAUS RAGA

The compiler of the album, like most Pahari painters, used Ksemakarna's *ragamala* system in which the six *ragas* each have five wives and six sons. Ksemakarna gives visual clues as to the appearance of the *raga* or *ragini* and then adds the sound to which the music is compared. Malkaus *raga* is meant to be a dark-skinned man dressed in a yellow garment and holding a flute. The artist has interpreted these prescriptions as another form of Krishna, perhaps between Yashoda and Rohini. Ksemakarna likens the sound of the *raga* to that of a goat, represented standing here by one of the women (Ebeling, p. 72).

### THE BILASPUR RAGAMALA

This brilliant series is heavily influenced by Mughal and/or Deccani painting with modelled, naturalistic forms, three-dimensional eyes, a distinctive and diverse palette and a strong sense of fantasy, all elements perhaps brought into Pahari painting through Deccani artists fleeing north after 1686-87.

The series has been published as both Bilaspur and Chamba (see Galloway & Kwiatkowski, nos. 21-28; Glynn et al., nos. 7-9;

McInerney et al., nos. 45-48; and Losty, pp. 226-33). It seems that the best place for this series is between the earliest of the seventeenth century *ragamalas* from Bilaspur, 1680-90, and the flatter and more obviously Rajput *ragamalas* in the new century.

### OTHER FOLIOS FROM THIS MANUSCRIPT

The series is now widely dispersed in private and public collections, after more than twenty folios appeared on the market in 2005-07, see Galloway & Kwiatkowski, pp.54-69 and Sotheby's, 2006 & 2007. Paintings from this manuscript can be found in public collections including two in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and in private collections including Kronos (McInerney et al., pp. 142-9, nos. 45-48), Seitz (Losty, pp. 186-7, no.48 & 228-33, nos. 60-62) and formerly Moscatelli (Glynn et al., pp.52-57, nos. 7-9). For Raga Agada, now in a New York private collection, see Losty, 2018, no. 13. The majority bear purple ink stamps and inventory numbers that have been identified as being those from the Mandi royal collection.

### INSCRIPTIONS

On the reverse in *takri* and in *devanagari*: *Raga Malkausa*  
Above in *takri*: *prathama raga Malkausa ka* 'first [of the group] of Malkaus raga', with a Mandi royal inventory stamp and number and the folio number 78

### PROVENANCE

Royal collection, Mandi, inventory no. 2504

Private collection, Germany, 1960s-2000s

Private collection, Europe, 2011-19

### REFERENCES

Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973

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., *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

Losty, J.P., *Indian and Persian Court Painting*, Oliver Forge & Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2018

McInerney, T., Kossak, S.M., and Haidar, N.N., *Divine Pleasures: Paintings from India's Rajput Courts, the Kronos Collection*, New York, 2016

Sotheby's, *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*, New York, 29 March 2006, lots 164-172 (nine folios)

Sotheby's, *Indian Art including Miniatures and Modern Paintings*, New York, 22 March 2007, lots 152-55 (four folios)







## 6. ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: ABHIRI RAGINI BILASPUR, 1690-1700

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, red borders with black and white rules

7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> by 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.; 18.7 by 12.1 cm. painting

8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> by 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.; 21.2 by 15.5 cm. folio

The painting is folio sixty-six from a now dispersed album of paintings once in the Mandi royal collection, which included a large *Ragamala* and a *Dasavatara* set.

A lady, seated against a bolster in a blue-carpeted pavilion, is feeding one of four snakes, entwined round three tiered globular pots, from a footed gilt cup. She is wearing gold jewellery and a short red *choli*, orange skirt and diaphanous *ornhi*, all decorated with diminutive white floral motifs. Behind her stands a maid waving a *chauri* over her head. The roof of the pavilion has two *chhatris* with gilt finials and is decorated with pink foliate motifs and a band of chevrons above the parapet.

The vibrant palette employed in this visually exciting series, along with the Bilaspur artists' ability to interpret a particular *raga* or *ragini* in an entirely unique manner, gives this *Ragamala* great piquancy.

### ABHIRI RAGINI

Ksemakarna gives visual clues as to the appearance of the *raga* or *ragini* and then adds the sound to which the music is compared. Aheri or Abhiri *ragini* (possibly derived from Ahir, a tribal people) is meant to be a dark-skinned woman dressed in a linen garment with rings on her fingers and holding a mirror, reciting in a room (see Ebeling, p. 72). Our artist has ignored these instructions and interpreted the *ragini* according to the sound, which is meant to be that of a snake.

For a note on the Bilaspur *Ragamala*, other folios from this manuscript and references quoted see note to previous entry, no. 5.

### INSCRIPTIONS

Devanagari: *ragini Aheri Hindole di bharya* 'Aheri ragini wife of Hindola'

In *takri* at top: *Hin. ragani Aheri. 5 ..* 'Aheri ragini 5<sup>th</sup> [wife of] Hindola'  
Below in *takri*: *ragani Aheri*

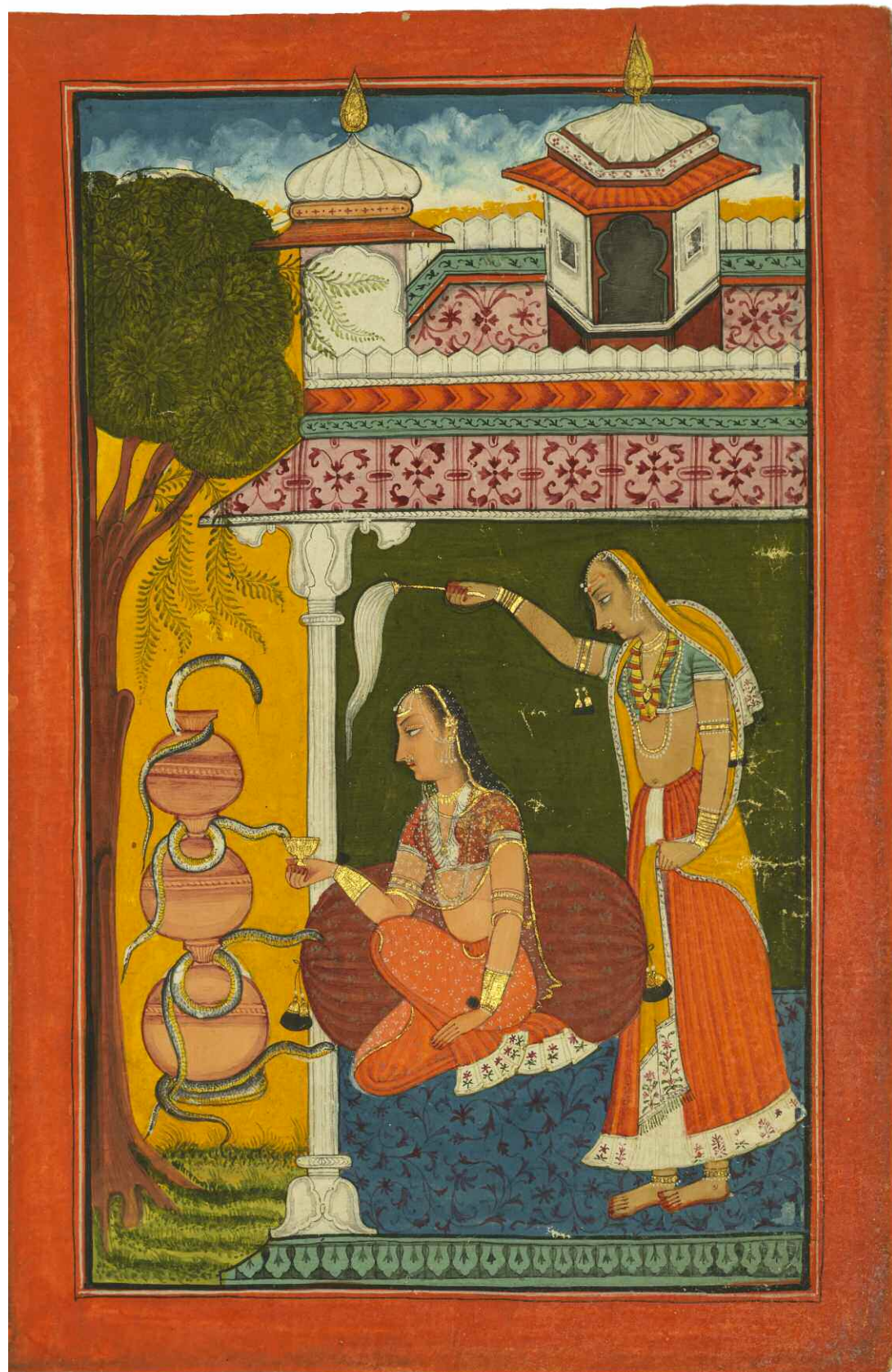
With a Mandi royal inventory stamp and the folio number 66

### PROVENANCE

Royal collection, Mandi, inventory no. 2482

Private collection, Germany, 1960s-2000s











## 7. PORTRAIT OF SULTAN 'ABDALLAH QUTB SHAH GOLCONDA, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in an album page with flowering plants, insects and birds in gold on an ivory ground, with scroll-decorated margin and red, gold and black rules; the verso with signed and dated Mashad calligraphy  
6½ by 2¾ in.; 16.4 by 7 cm. painting  
13¾ by 9 in.; 35 by 22.7 cm. folio

In describing another portrait of 'Abdallah, circa 1675, in the Khalili Collection, Leach, pp. 234-5, no. 69, writes: "Abdallah's mature public image – restrained, emotionless and costumed in the finest Deccani textiles of brilliant green, gold or black – could be understood by the Mughals because it was symbolic in the same way as their own state portraiture." It was under 'Abdallah's rule that the Deccan finally became a Mughal protectorate, and political and cultural changes brought with them new influences in painting.

Sultan Muhammad 'Abdallah Qutb Shah of Golconda (reg. 1626-72), a polyglot and connoisseur of poetry and music, is here depicted standing facing right, holding a sword in his right hand and reaching with his left to the dagger that is in his cummerbund. He has a slightly drooping moustache and his somewhat bony face has begun to develop jowls. He wears the heavy Mughal-inspired clothes of the later Golconda period, when the sultans had abandoned the diaphanous robes worn by his father and grandfather. These comprise a dark green *jama* with floral designs and a brocade *patka* with pin-prick decoration. On his head is a close-fitting turban with a wide crossband and heron feathers. The artist has given him a gem-edged diaphanous shawl (*dupatta*), worn in his ancestors' manner draped over his shoulders, with two ends dangling in front of his chest. Multi-coloured flowers at his feet and a blue background complete the portrait.

### OTHER PORTRAITS OF 'ABDALLAH QUTB SHAH

The portrait seems to be based on a very similar earlier one from Golconda, around 1660, in the Musée Guimet, that shows him in exactly the same attitude and with the same features and moustache (Haidar & Sardar, no. 131). Other similar portraits from the Sultan's reign, when he was older, include those in the Victoria & Albert Museum and former Ehrenfeld Collection (Zebrowski, p. 184, figs. 150-51), where the shawl is wrapped round his body. There are some differences however in these that are puzzling for portraits of 'Abdallah. Although clearly based on the Guimet portrait, the close-fitting turban with its wide crossband and heron feathers is different and seems to be in an earlier style, similar to that worn by his father Muhammad Qutb Shah (r. 1612-26), although he does not have feathers (Zebrowski, figs. 142-43) and he himself has a much shorter moustache.

Another puzzling portrait, in the Goenka Collection, perhaps can solve the problem (Goswamy & Bhatia, no. 57). This is a portrait

from the Late Shah Jahan Album of a ruler identified in the hand possibly of Shah Jahan as Qutb al-Mulk and with an attribution to the Shahjahani artist La'Ichand. The Mughals did not recognise the Qutb Shahis as reigning sovereigns and the identification tout court surely suggests that this is the contemporary ruler 'Abdallah Qutb Shah. The Goenka catalogue however takes it to be 'Abdallah's predecessor, Muhammad Qutb Shah, but this is extremely unlikely since he is wearing the same Mughal-inspired costume as our portrait, including the close-fitting turban with heron feathers. Our portrait then is based mostly on the Guimet one but there must have been another similar portrait of the ruler wearing the earlier style turban.

### INSCRIPTIONS

Recto:

In Persian, around the borders: "88" at upper right; and below: "Shapur" (?) and "871. Number 25" (?)

The Russian stamp reads:

"Mamed Kerimov", and above it, in Persian: "number 14"

Verso:

The main verses, in black *nasta'liq*, wish good fortune to a king

The smaller hand in between and below:

*dar shahr-i mashhad-i muqaddas-i mu'alla fi sana 1064 qalami shud*  
"It was written in Mashhad the sacred, the exalted, in year 1064"  
(1653-54 A.D.)

In the band of floral scroll beneath the calligraphy:

*hasb al-taklif aqa nasira surat-i tahrir yaft dhurra-yi bi-miqdar ghiyath al-din muhammad*

"It was written out of duty for Aqa Nasira. The worthless speck, Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad." The scribe is apparently unrecorded. At top right corner "87"

### PROVENANCE

The presence of nineteenth century Russian ownership stamps on the album page would suggest it left India possibly as early as the eighteenth century and was taken to Persia. In the nineteenth century, many Indian and Persian paintings in the royal collection were presented as diplomatic gifts from the Persian state to Russia. Private collection, Greece, until 2018

### REFERENCES

Goswamy, B.N., and Bhatia, U., *Painted Visions: the Goenka Collection of Indian Paintings*, New Delhi, 1999

Haidar, N., and Sardar, M., eds., M., *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687*, New York, 2011

Leach, L.Y., *The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, vol. VIII: Paintings from India*, London, 1998

Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London and Los Angeles, 1983



## 8. AN ILLUSTRATION FROM A COSTUME ALBUM: A YOUTH IN A HAMMAM SMOKING A PIPE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, PROBABLY CONSTANTINOPLE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Gouache on paper, laid down in a sage green marbled album page with inner borders ruled in blue and gold, a pencil inscription in French on the verso

6<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.; 17 by 9 cm. painting

10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.; 26.2 by 17.4 cm. folio

The mop-headed youth wears wood clogs (*nalın*) and a long cotton cloth (*pestemal*) around his lower body, while smoking from an elongated *chibuk* in his right hand and holding an embroidered cloth bag in his left. He stands in the chamber of a *hammam* entirely tiled in green with floral motifs.

The interest in portraits of single figures for inclusion in costume albums began in the early seventeenth century and continued throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The albums were commissioned by the imperial court, high ranking officials, ambassadors and visiting dignitaries. *Hammam* scenes with single figures such as brides displaying their trousseaux and youths enjoying past times were often included in these albums. However, the portraits of youths are rare. Such portraits sometimes belonged to manuscripts or albums such as the *Huban Nameh*, or 'Book of Beauties', in the Binney Collection, San Diego, by Enderuni, dated 1800-01, which is illustrated with male types ('Elegant Gentlemen') by nationality. Folio 34r depicts the attendant in a bath house, see Binney, pp. 117-123, no. 78.

The two leading artists of the period were Levi (d. 1732) and 'Abdallah Bukhara (active first half of the eighteenth century). The latter is responsible for an album of twenty-two portraits executed between 1726-45, which includes a portrait of a naked woman pouring water over her body and hair. Bukhari pays great attention to details of clothing, headgear and the different types of footwear, see Bağcı et al., p. 277, ill. 235.

For single portraits and costume albums, see *Topkapi à Versailles*, pp. 240-41, no. 200, Stchoukine, pls. 78 – 82 and Binney, pp. 98-99, no. 62. A similar *hammam* pouch is found in a costume book depicting a veiled bride, 1645-48, in the Deniz Muzesi (Naval Museum), Istanbul, see Bağcı et al., p. 240, ill. 198.

### PROVENANCE

Mallett, London, 1970s

Captain Jan Vlug (1918-76)

Baron Michel Pilette de Kinnear, Belgium, by descent, 1976-2018

### REFERENCES

Bağcı, S., Çağman, F. and Renda, G., *Ottoman Painting*, Istanbul, 2010

Binney, E., *Turkish Treasures from the Collection of Edwin Binney*, 3rd, Portland, 1979

Stchoukine, I., *La Peinture Turque d'après les Manuscrits Illustres*, 2 partie, Paris, 1971

*Topkapi à Versailles: Trésors de la Cour Ottomane*, Paris, 1999







## 9. AN ALBUM PAGE WITH FOUR PORTRAITS MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1700

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, the ivory-ground gold-sprinkled album page with foliate margins and gold, blue and black rules; the verso with a signed and dated quatrain in *nasta'liq*  
3⅓ by 5½ in.; 14 by 8.6 cm, each painting  
16½ by 11½ in.; 42 by 29.1 cm, folio

Though dating from the end of the reign of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), this album page and its portraits follow the established seventeenth century tradition of imperial albums (*muraqqa*).

### THE PORTRAITS

Shakar Khan, at upper left, is mentioned briefly as a middle ranking official in Aurangzeb's reign. He stands facing right against an eau-de-nil ground holding a jewelled staff in his right hand and the hilt of his sword in his left. Facing him is a grey-bearded Shah Jahan in the familiar pose of holding a sword over his shoulder, standing against a green ground. He wears a plumed red and green turban with pearl-fringed gold band, striped *pajamas* and a diaphanous *jama* of fine muslin. His floral brocade *patka* encloses a gem-set *katar* at the waist, wearing ropes of pearls with gem-set pendants and an armlet, his red shoes embroidered in gold.

Below are two idealised female studies, one of a girl playing with a yo-yo and standing on a *chauki*, the other of another girl standing beneath a tree in a landscape carrying a flower garland and a flower wand, representing possibly Kakubh or Gauri *ragini*. Female studies in Mughal India, originally fairly rare (see Losty & Roy, fig. 74 for four female studies on the one album page), were increasingly important in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as attention in Mughal painting shifted from representing the powerful to portraying an idealised world removed from contemporary troubles.

### MUGHAL ALBUMS (MURAQQA)

Assembling smaller paintings onto the one page was a usual practice in seventeenth century Mughal albums (*muraqqa*), see Wright, p. xvii. While Jahangir's Album could have paintings of different sizes assembled together, by Shah Jahan's time the format was more regular, as here. For an example in the Kevorkian Album, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, showing four smaller

portraits together, which must originally have been in a small format album of portraits, inscribed with Jahangir's handwriting identifying the sitter and sometimes the artist, see Welch et al., no. 26; Crill & Jariwala, no. 16.

### INSCRIPTIONS

The *nasta'liq* inscription above the painting on the upper left says "Lashkar Khan Bahadur"

The inscription on the right says:  
"Shah Jahan Padshah"

On the back is a line in Arabic in praise of God and a Persian quatrain in praise of God by Nasir 'Ali Sirhindi (d. 1696). It is signed by the calligrapher 'Abd al-Rahim and dated 1142 (1729-30). Neither of these is apparently recorded.

### PROVENANCE

Dr. Fred Olsen (1891-1986), Connecticut  
Olsen Foundation, Bridgeport, Connecticut, 1960s  
Joe (1911-2001) and Helen (1915-2018) Darion, New York

### EXHIBITED

Olsen Travelling Exhibition, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 1962, loan number TL.62.10.102

### REFERENCES

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Welch, S.C., Schimmel A., Swietochowski, M.L. & Thackston, W.M., *The Emperor's Album: Images of Mughal India*, New York, 1987  
Wright, E., *Muraqqa: Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library* Dublin, Alexandria, Virginia, 2008







# 10. SHAH JAHAN AND HIS SONS IN AUDIENCE WITH A HOLYMAN NORTHERN DECCAN, PROBABLY AURANGABAD, 1710-20

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, gilt foliate margin with blue border and black and white rules

11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.; 29.5 by 21 cm. painting  
13 by 9 in.; 32.9 by 22.8 cm. folio

This scene would appear to recall the visit of Shah Jahan and his young sons to the retreat of the famous Sufi saint Mian Mir (c. 1550-1635) in Lahore, before the saint's death. A Qadiri Sufi who was a direct descendant of the Caliph Omar, Mian Mir was revered by Jahangir and his funeral oration was read by Dara Shikoh (1615-59), eldest son and heir of Shah Jahan.

In a dramatic setting on a rocky plinth, the emperor kneels in front of the halo-wearing saint outside his hut, beneath a tree, accompanied by his four sons and a nobleman possibly intended for Shah Jahan's minister Sa'dullah Khan, while a boy attendant waves a peacock-feather fan over the saint's head. All offer homage through their hand positions to the emaciated and white-haired dervish who is accompanied by four ascetics, some nearly naked and presumably Hindu. In the foreground are a guard leaning on his staff, a princely attendant holding a domed food vessel and a bearded groom in a striped turban attending the emperor's elaborately caparisoned horse. A lake beyond the plinth leads to distant precipitous hills and what appears to be a range of snow-clad mountains, perhaps suggesting Kashmir, while in the upper right are the emperor's distant elephants and cavalry.

This highly unusual work employs a distinctive palette, and its schematic landscape and condensed spaces suggest a Mughal-influenced style in the northern Deccan at Aurangabad. For another painting that may be taken from the same model, said to be of Shah Jahan and his sons visiting Pir Muhammad, see <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-shah-jahan-511592-2211666-mughal-emperor-of-india-1627-1658-scene-48714186.html>

The sentiments expressed in the verses are similar to those written on the well-known painting in the Freer Gallery, Washington D.C., of Jahangir preferring a Sufi Shaykh to Kings (Beach, no. 22c).

## INSCRIPTIONS

Above Shah Jahan:

*shah-i farrukh fal*

"The king of auspicious fortune"

Above the prince:

*shahzada-i niku siyar*

"The prince of excellent qualities"

At the top of the page are Urdu verses praising spiritual riches above earthly ones:

"When you put the fortune of blessed poverty (*fakr*) in place of empire, at that moment, as they say, the phoenix is as a crow." Also, Persian verses: "Without pomp or ceremony the king is a dervish, and that for him is sufficient. Before his own good fortune he kneels, and that, for him, is sufficient."

On the back are:

A library inspection note and twice what appears to be a

reference to a regnal year: *bi-sal-i 16* "In year 16"

*muraqqa'-i tasavir va qit'ha*

"Album of paintings and calligraphic specimens."

There is also a *raqam*, a type of numeral used for administrative purposes.

The inspection notes and comment on the album's contents would seem to be eighteenth century, in which case the regnal year 16 would presumably be that of Muhammad Shah (1735) or - less likely - that of Shah 'Alam (1775).

## PROVENANCE

Private collection, New York, 2006

Kapoor Galleries, New York, 2010

Private collection, Europe, 2010-19

## PUBLISHED

Linroth, 2006, p.405, no.95

## REFERENCES

Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court, revised and expanded edition*, Washington, Ahmedabad, 2012

Linroth, R., *Holy Madness: Portraits of Tantric Siddhas*, New York, 2006



فی تحف شاه در پیش اندویش  
در سپرد دولت خویش امر و کار

دولت نوری حضور کردی جای سلطنت  
کشتی بن پیمان جسی مایه نظیرین باغی









## 11. PORTRAIT OF AN INDIAN ROLLER MEWAR, CIRCA 1710

Opaque watercolour with silver on paper, red borders  
9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> by 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.; 23.3 by 16.7 cm. painting  
10<sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> by 8 in.; 26.5 by 20.2 cm. folio

Though resembling a kingfisher, it has been suggested by the ornithologist Katrina von Grouw that, based on the colour of its plumage, it is more likely an Indian roller (*coracias benghalensis*). However, rollers do not make their habitat near water but in open grassland and scrub forests. In addition, rollers do not have yellow eyes but this could be an instance of artistic license, bearing in mind that the portrait would probably have been done from a pelt and not from life.

The bird is depicted, fish in bill, on a green promontory surrounded by a distinctively Mewari swirling silver sea full of fish and lotuses. For two seventeenth century Mughal paintings of kingfishers, in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, see Topsfield, p. 36, no.9 and <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/53286/>

<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/53379>.  
For an early eighteenth century Mewar painting of a parrot, see Falk, p.15, no.11.

### INSCRIPTIONS

Mewar state inventory no. 23/14, section no. 23, dedicated to bird and animal subjects.

### PROVENANCE

Mewar royal collection, Udaipur  
Art Passages, San Francisco, 2012  
Private collection, Europe, 2012-19

### REFERENCES

Falk, T., *Elephants of Fame and other animals in Indian painting*, London, 1987  
Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Rajasthan in the National Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne, 1980







## 12. SHAH 'ABBAS I OF PERSIA RECEIVING THE MUGHAL AMBASSADOR KHAN 'ALAM MUGHAL INDIA, EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque watercolour and gold on paper, the margins with floral gilt cartouches on a blue ground with orange rules, laid down on card  
12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> by 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.; 31 by 21.4 cm. painting  
12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> in.; 32.6 by 23.3 cm. folio

The scene is an imaginary recreation of a gathering at the court of Shah 'Abbas I of Iran (1571-1629), to whom Jahangir had sent an embassy in 1613 led by Khan 'Alam.

### JAHANGIR'S EMBASSY TO SHAH 'ABBAS I IN 1613

Jahangir's favourite portraitist, Bishndas, was sent with the embassy to Persia in order to take the Shah's likeness. Portraits of the Shah and Khan 'Alam and various Iranian courtiers survive, as well as a record of the two meeting, some of them perhaps from Bishndas's own hand rather than slightly later copies. Bishndas seems to have depicted the Shah as large of head but small and thin of body, as here, with Jahangir overwhelming him physically, as in the two famous paintings in the Freer Gallery, Washington D.C. (Beach, 17 b & c).

Here the Shah and Khan 'Alam, on the Shah's right, are depicted in the same poses as in their portrait out hunting from the Late Shah Jahan Album now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Das, pl. 55; Beach, no. 36). The Shah's moustaches lengthened in later Indian depictions of him, for example in a standing portrait in the British Museum (Rogers, fig. 72).

This is however an imaginary gathering, since some of the characters could not possibly have been portrayed together. Khan 'Alam's embassy to Persia lasted from 1613-19. Rustam Khan Sipahsalar was imperial field-marshal under Shah Safi and Shah 'Abbas II and was executed in 1643, while Mirza Tahir Vahid Qazwini (d. 1708) rose to prominence under the latter ruler, of whose reign he wrote a history, and became vizier to his successor Shah Sulaiman.

Such imaginary historical scenes become common at the beginning of the eighteenth century. See for example two versions of Bazajet being brought before Timur, in the Gentil Collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Hurel, no. 150), and in the Brooklyn Museum, New York (Poster et al., no. 45).

### INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso with 'Shah Abbas of Persia (Iran) with his courtiers' as well as a Malayalam inscription

The identity of each of the figures or groups is inscribed in black *nasta'liq*, only the Shah's name being inscribed in gold:

Clockwise from above the musicians in the lower left corner:

"Portrait of Latifa Luli and with him [i.e. her] a band"

The kneeling courtier in gilt hat and grey *jama* above musicians:

"Portrait of Mirza Beg Khan"

The two turban-wearing men facing the Shah: "Portrait of Khan 'Alam, the Indian Ambassador" and "Portrait of a Haji, companion of Khan 'Alam"

Above the Shah in gilt *nasta'liq*: "Portrait of Shah 'Abbas the ruler of Iran and the rest of the great emirs"

Above the boy in turban waving scarf: "Portrait of Islam Quli"

Above the greybeard below him: "Portrait of Muhammad Tahir Khan Vahid, Vizier"

On the figure holding a rosary next to him: "Portrait of Shaykh Yusuf"

Above the hat of the standing boy in *jama* smelling a rose: "Portrait of Ikram Quli"

Beside each of the two courtiers below him: "Portrait of Mir Haydar" and "Portrait of Agha Mirza"

On hilt of the dagger of kneeling man in green robe and boots:

"Portrait of Field-Marshal Rostam Khan"

Beside the greybeard man at lower right: "Portrait of Isma'il Khan"

### PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland, 1970s-2011

Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York: see Losty 2011, pp. 58-61, no. 2

Private collection, New York, 2011-19

### REFERENCES

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Poster, A.G., Canby, S.R., Chandra, P. and Cummins, J.M., *Realms of Heroism: Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum*, New York, 1994



### 13. THE EMPEROR BAHADUR SHAH I RAJASTHAN, PERHAPS KISHANGARH, CIRCA 1720

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, buff borders with gold margin and black rules  
9 $\frac{1}{5}$  by 6 in.; 23.2 by 15.1 cm. painting  
12 $\frac{1}{3}$  by 8 $\frac{1}{5}$  in.; 31.5 by 20.7 cm. folio

The nimbate Emperor is depicted standing holding a jewel in his left hand and the hilt of his straight sword in his right. He is amply bejewelled with several necklaces of gems and pearls wound round his neck and turban, and wears a richly-brocaded short coat over his *jama*. His feet are firmly planted on a clearly defined ground with clumps of flowering plants, while the ground behind is left blank, enlivened at the top with streaks of gold, pink and blue. The Emperor's stance is derived from a contemporary Mughal portrait now in the National Museum, New Delhi, but in mirror reverse (Schimmel, pl. 19), where his beard is still black.

#### BAHADUR SHAH I

Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam (1643–1712) was the second son of the Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1656-1707) and was appointed to many senior posts in the latter's reign. He was awarded the title of Shah 'Alam Bahadur on 15 October 1676 for his role in the expedition to Kabul. His birth and titles were of no avail when he was misled by his closest officers during Aurangzeb's final assaults on Bijapur and Golconda in 1686-87, and he was charged with holding secret consultations with the rulers of Golconda. Aurangzeb reluctantly had him imprisoned from 1687-94. After his release, he governed the north-west from Lahore and then Kabul, during the period when Aurangzeb remained permanently in the Deccan. After his father's death in 1707, he claimed the throne, as the eldest surviving son, and defeated and killed his brother 'Azam Shah at Jajuwan in 1707 and another brother Kambakhsh at Hyderabad in 1708. After a brief reign in which rebellions and dissensions among the nobility heralded the oncoming disintegration of the empire, he died in 1712, and was buried beside the beautiful white marble mosque he had built in Mehrauli, near the tomb of Qutb Sahib.

#### OTHER PORTRAITS OF BAHADUR SHAH I

Portraits of Bahadur Shah are difficult to identify with certainty, since in his youth he so resembles his father Aurangzeb (Hurel, no. 84 for example) and one of his sons 'Azim al-Shan (Losty & Roy, fig. 97), while portraits of him as emperor are rare. What is probably the safest identified portrait of the young Bahadur Shah is that in the Gentil Collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Hurel, no. 109), painted about 1675, although even now that portrait is sometimes confused with the young Aurangzeb. There the prince appears to be about thirty years old. The standing portrait in Delhi (Schimmel, pl. 19) would seem to be of him just before his accession in 1707, with the background and halo added later.

In the so-called accession portrait of Bahadur Shah I, circa 1707, attributed to Bhawani Das, (formerly Gahlin Collection: Sotheby's, London, 6 October 2015, lot 31) and now in the David Collection, Copenhagen, his beard is very grey - as it is here; see Beach, Koch & Thackston, fig. 21.

On stylistic grounds our portrait seems to have been done in Rajasthan rather than being actually a Mughal work. Kishangarh is a likely candidate, as Mughal artists such as Bhavani Das and Dalchand are known to have worked there, possibly introduced through one of Bahadur Shah's wives, Amrit Bai Sahiba, the daughter of Maharaja Rup Singh of Kishangarh. For other portraits of Mughal emperors done or added to at Kishangarh, see Galloway, no. 31 (of Aurangzeb) and *ibid.*, no. 13 of Bahadur Shah (also Ehnbohm, no. 28). A portrait of Farrukhsiyar from the Bourelier Collection, Paris, ascribed to Bhavani Das and almost certainly executed in Kishangarh, has a similarly worked background and sky, see Losty 2015, pp. 26-7, no. 12.

#### INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the verso in *devanagari*:

*Syah Alam Padshah /1/ suta Bahadur Syahji /1*

'Shah 'Alam Padshah [Emperor]; the son Bahadur Shah', (the writer being clearly confused, perhaps writing Shah 'Alam instead of 'Alamgir for Aurangzeb)

In Persian:

*Bahadur Shah Badshah*. Beneath this is a price in *siyaq* numerals.

#### PROVENANCE

Comtesse Lillan Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (1914-2008), Switzerland  
Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2013, see Losty 2013, pp. 30-31, no. 15  
Private collection, New York, 2013-19

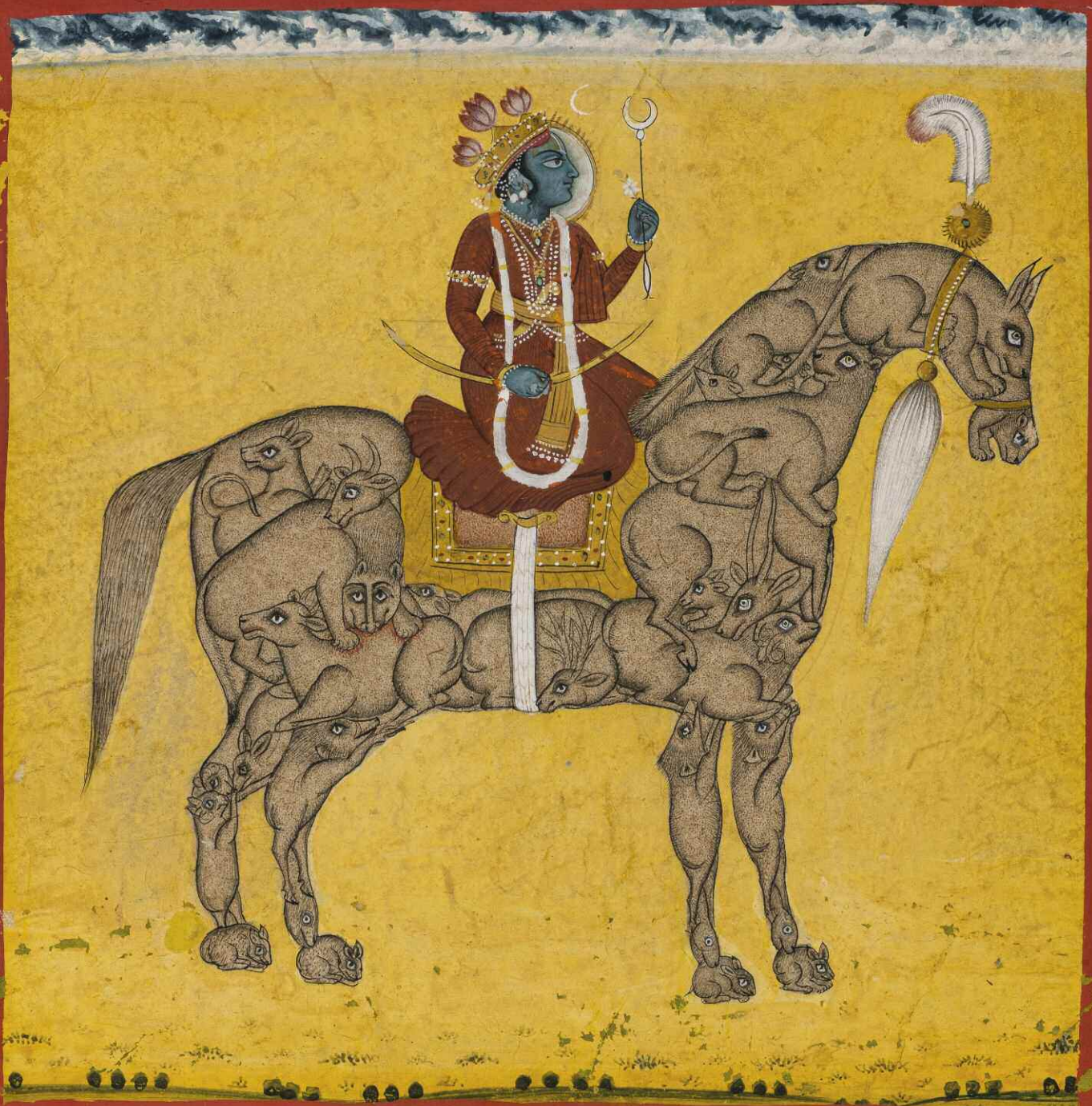
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Ehnbom, D., *Indian Miniatures: the Ehrenfeld Collection*, New York, 1985  
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Losty, J.P., *Indian Painting 1580-1850*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2013  
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Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012  
Schimmel, A.-M., *The Empire of the Great Mughals, History, Art and Culture*, New Delhi, 2005











**14. THE GOD OF LOVE KAMADEVA RIDING A  
COMPOSITE HORSE  
NURPUR, CIRCA 1730**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, red borders  
7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 7<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> in.; 19.8 by 19.5 cm.

Kamadeva is kneeling astride a horse composed of animals including rabbits, rats, mice, cows, deer and boar, their bodies stippled to imitate hair. His skin is blue, as Pradyumna, son of Krishna, was his incarnation. Wearing a rust-coloured *jama* with gold sash, he holds a bow in his right hand and an arrow and flower in his raised left hand. His jewellery includes a long jasmine garland, pearl necklaces, armlets and bracelets and a gold crown with three lotus finials, a halo behind. The horse stands on a yellow ground with a band of sky above and a suggestion of landscape below, wearing a feather plume and a fly-whisk hanging from his neck.

Here the style of painting clearly shows the legacy of Devidasa (fl. 1680-1720), in the flat background, the narrow strip of tangled clouds and sky at the top, the large staring eye, curved eyebrow, and the three-lotus crown.

Paintings depicting composite animals have long been associated with the Deccan but Pahari examples are rare. For a discussion of Deccan influences on early Pahari painters, see Seyller, p. 64 *et seq.*, where he illustrates a Chamba painting of 1710 (p. 66, no. 3), with similar yellow background and red border, depicting a composite animal led by a demon. For other examples see Del Bonta, p. 76, no.8.

**PROVENANCE**

Christie's, New York, 20 March 2009, lot 1325  
Private collection, Europe, 2009-19

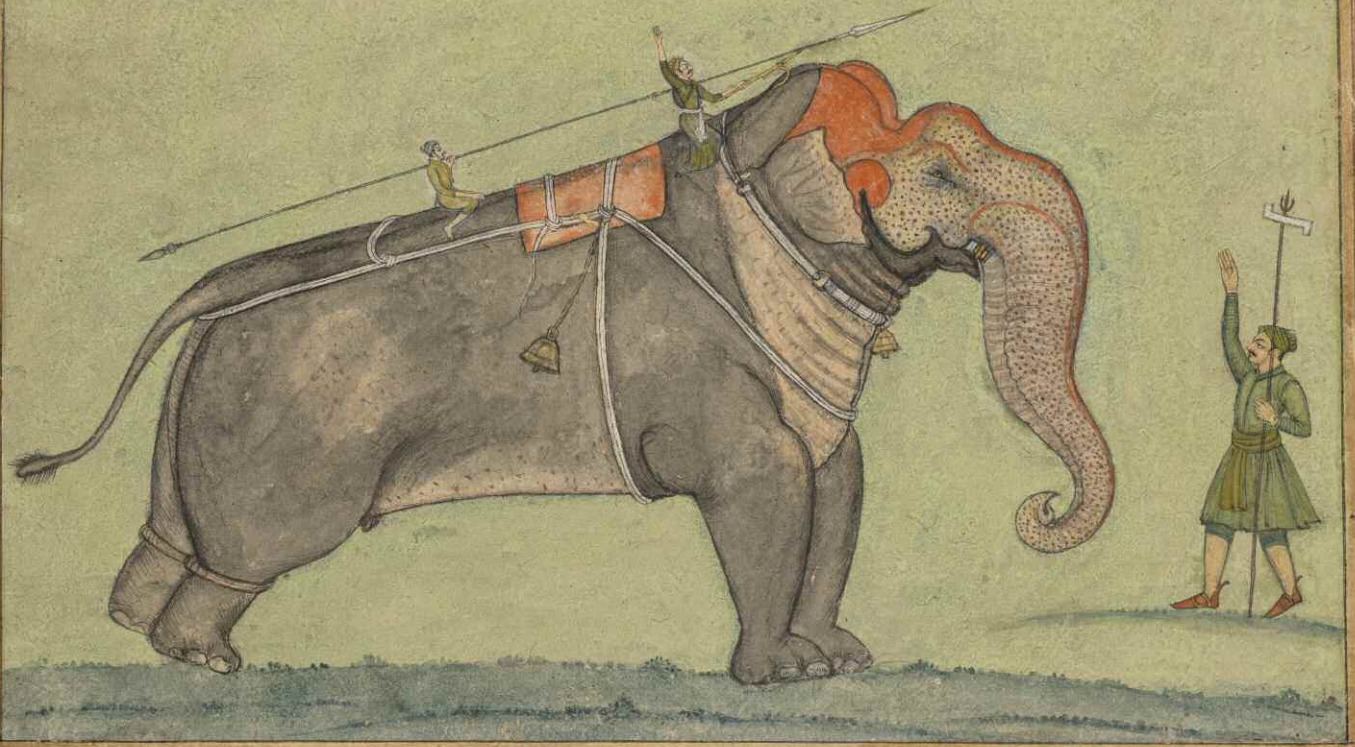
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Seyller, J., 'Deccani Elements in Early Pahari Painting' in Haider, N., and Sardar, M., eds., *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687*, New York, 2011, pp. 64-81



فيلی کی، جہاں الجوار سے کوئی ہم نہیں ملتا  
پر قہر سے یہاں لڑنے ہزاروں ہتھیار

सरदार नाराज श्रीपति द्विजी को  
तथीने घेलेरल ॥ प्रोदः अगईस हजार ॥१॥





15. **RUP SINGH'S ELEPHANT MEGHAVARNA  
AND HIS TRAINER**  
**KISHANGARH, CIRCA 1740**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, pale orange borders with black rules, *nasta'liq* and *devanagari* inscriptions above  
8 by 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.; 20 by 28.8 cm. painting  
9 by 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.; 23 by 31.7 cm. folio

In a pale green landscape, a large elephant stands in front of his trainer who is dressed in a short green *jama* and carries a staff. The elephant is depicted with a massive elongated body, in the Kishangarh manner, ridden by two *mahouts* who carry a single long spear. He is engaged in obeying an order from his trainer, moving towards him and causing one of his two bells to sway. The area round the must gland on the elephant's temple, which secretes *mada* or must when the bull elephant is in rut, is highlighted with red paint. See Falk, p. 10, for this practice.

This would appear to be an eighteenth century copy of a painting dating from the reign of Rup Singh of Kishangarh (r. 1643-58). Another portrait of Meghavarna, dating from the early nineteenth century, sold at Sotheby's, New York, 19 September 2008, lot 222, is also inscribed with both his name and that of Rup Singh. <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2008/indian-southeast-asian-works-of-art-no8499/lot.222.html>

Large elephants were in demand at the court of Kishangarh as elsewhere in India, where they were among the most valuable possessions of a ruler. The grandeur of this animal is best demonstrated by comparison with the small-statured *mahout*, as in a painting of another Kishangarh elephant from the Heil Collection similarly decorated and humped, see Losty, p. 36, no. 16. Kishangarh artists did, however, tend to exaggerate the curvature of the spine of both humans' and horses' backs, so this may be such a feature of artistic license (Haidar, figs. 11-12).

**INSCRIPTIONS**

The inscriptions here appear to have been copied from the seventeenth century original and have been in places mistranscribed 'Sardar' is very unusual in that position and is perhaps a misreading of *shikar*, hunting, which is itself possibly a misreading of *sarkar*, the lord or governor.

The *devanagari* reads:

*Sardar Maharaja Sri Rup Singh ji kau hathi Meghavarna. Kharid agai'is (reading athai'is) sahazar*

'The elephant Meghavarna (cloud-coloured) of Lord Maharaja Rup Singh. Price twenty-eight thousand'

The Persian reads:

*fil-i shikar-i maharajah rup singh-i jamu bi-ism-i meghabaran bi-qaymat-i bist u hasht hazar rupiyah kharid shud*

"The hunting elephant of Maharaja Rup Singh of Jammu of the name Meghabaran. It was bought for the price of 28,000 rupees."

On the reverse:

*qaymat-i musavviri du rupiyah in'am alawa*

"The price of the painting is two rupees extra as a gratuity."

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Europe, 2012-19

**REFERENCES**

Falk, T. *Elephants of Fame*, London, 1987

Haidar, N., 'Bhavanidas', in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 531-46

Losty, J.P., *Indian Paintings from the Heil Collection*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2016







## 16. PORTRAIT OF A STALLION KISHANGARH, CIRCA 1740

Brush drawing with colour and gold on paper  
6½ by 9 in.; 16.6 by 22.6 cm.

The drawing shows the stallion in profile facing right; his mane is simply plaited and a small forelock falls down between his ears. He is fully saddled and ready for his rider. The lower parts of the horse are painted and a row of delicately depicted flowers marks the division between upper and lower parts.

The stallion is sensitively modelled, the head especially, and was clearly done at a studio dependent to some extent on Mughal models such as at Kishangarh. He is short-headed and powerful of neck, similar to those paintings of horses from Kishangarh in the 1730s attributed by Navina Haidar to Bhavani Das (Haidar, no. 21, illustrated by Heeramanek, pls. 74-75). However, he is somewhat shorter of body and has not developed the exaggerated dip in its withers associated with other equestrian portraits by this artist.

For another Kishangarh early eighteenth century drawing of a stallion, see McInerney, p. 64, no. 26.

### PROVENANCE

Mallett, London, 1970s

Captain Jan Vlug (1918-76)

Baron Michel Pilette de Kinnear, Belgium, by descent, 1976-2018

### REFERENCES

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Heeramanek, A., *Masterpieces of Indian Painting formerly in the Nasli M. Heeramanek Collection*, Verona, 1984

McInerney, T., *Indian Painting 1525-1825*, London, 1982



## 17. PORTRAIT OF SA'ID AHMAD KHAN SAULAT JANG SMOKING ON A PALACE TERRACE MURSHIDABAD, CIRCA 1750

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, the ivory-ground borders with gold rules

16¾ by 13½ in.; 42.5 by 34.3 cm. painting

19¼ by 14⅓ in.; 48.8 by 36.4 cm. folio

This large and splendid portrait shows Saulat Jang seated on a rug and smoking from a hookah. He sits under a canopy held up by silver poles on a grand white marble palace terrace, while two attendants hold *morccals* and another a gold staff. His beard is just turning grey, indicating a date of about 1750 for the painting, in line with other portraits (Losty, 2017, figs. 23 and 28; Victoria & Albert Museum, figs. 31 and 32). Another contemporary portrait is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Hurel, no. 195). Our painting shows the same sumptuous accoutrements, the great state of the sitter on his terrace seen against a rich gold sky, the clouds coloured red and orange in the evening by the setting sun, and the dark clouds above which have lost the light. Ours additionally has some beautiful marble *jalīs*, forming the parapets of the terrace on either side, as well as fountains, the water from which cascades down the rippled marble channel into a parterre of flowers.

### SA'ID AHMAD KHAN SAULAT JANG

Saulat Jang (d. 1756), and his brothers Shahamat Jang (d. 1755) and Zainuddin Ahmad Khan (d. 1748), were murdered in Patna along with his father Haji Ahmed. Nephews of 'Alivardi Khan, Nawab of Bengal (r.1740-56), they owed their rise to power and fortune entirely to him, especially after the three brothers each married one of the nawab's three daughters. Given various titles by the emperor and the nawab, Saulat Jang was rewarded with governorships of the various provinces that formed eighteenth century Bengal, which also included what is now Bihar and Orissa.

Two Murshidabad group portraits in the Victoria & Albert Museum, dated 1750-55, include images of Saulat Jang with 'Alivardi Khan, his uncle, see Losty, 2013, nos.1 and 2 or 2017, nos. 31 and 32: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O74119/nawab-aliverdi-khan-painting-unknown>.

### EARLY MURSHIDABAD PAINTING

Our knowledge of early court painting in Murshidabad has recently expanded with the publication of the Swinton Collection of paintings, currently on loan to the National Museum of Scotland (Losty, 2017). These include court portraits of the nawab and his two nephews and his two great nephews. Zainuddin Ahmad Khan's two sons Siraj al-Daula and Ikram al-Daula were adopted respectively by their great uncle and by their uncle Shahamat Jang in 1748 and the Swinton paintings commemorate this and the immediate aftermath. Saulat Jang had a son of his own, Shaukat Jang, who succeeded him briefly in 1756, in his last posting as governor of Purnea, north Bihar, and was killed in his rebellion against Siraj al-Daula that same year.

### INSCRIPTIONS

On the back of the painting:

"Saulat Jang"

*panjah rupiyah*

"Fifty rupees"

### PROVENANCE

Private collection, California, 2000s

Christie's, New York, 23 March 2010, lot 184

Private collection, Europe, 2010-19

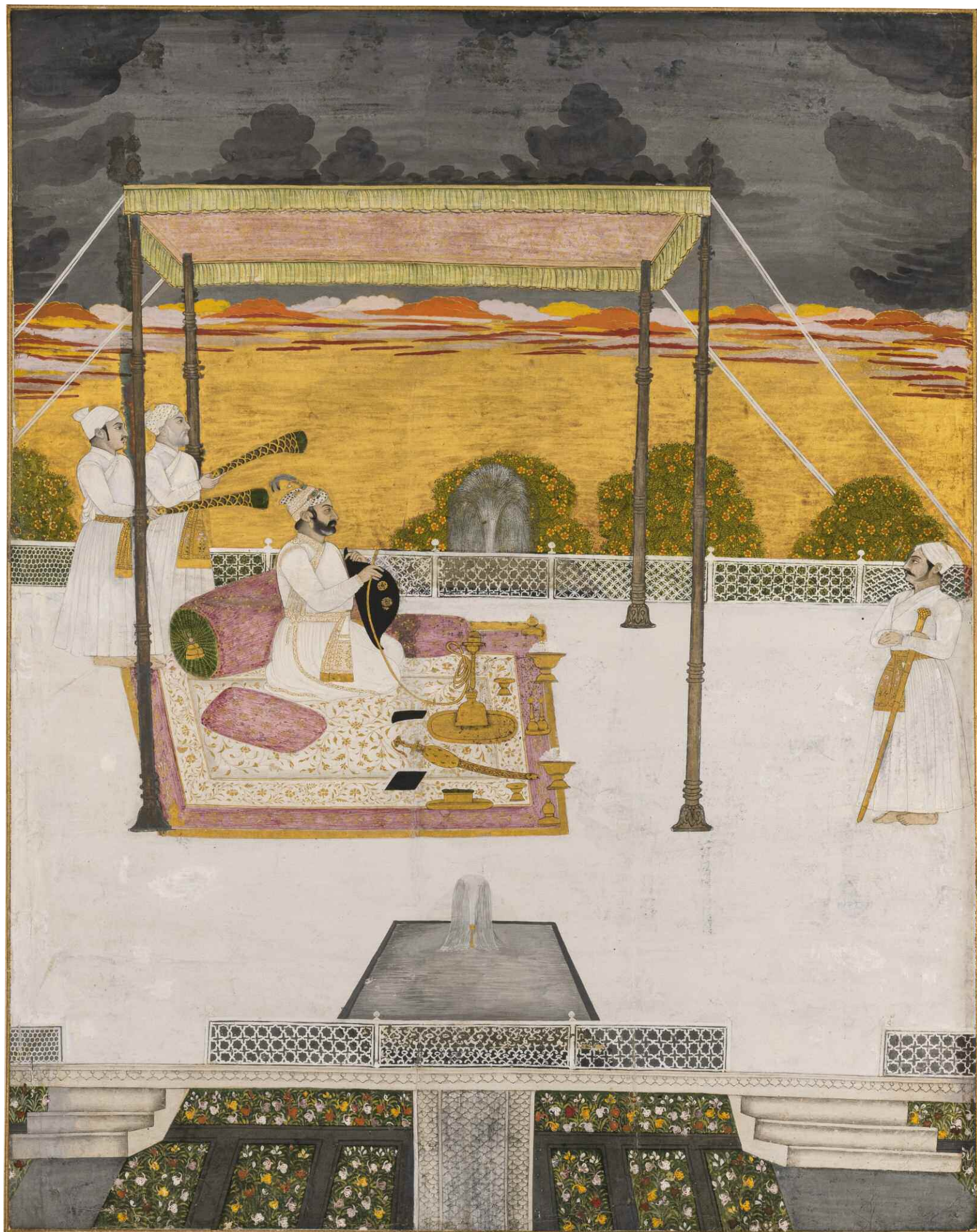
### REFERENCES

Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011

Losty, J.P., 'Eighteenth-century Mughal Paintings from the Swinton Collection', *The Burlington Magazine*, London, vol. CLIX, October 2017, pp. 789-99

Losty, J.P., 'Murshidabad Painting 1750-1820' in Das, N. and Llewellyn-Jones, R., *Murshidabad Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, Mumbai, 2013, pp. 82-105











## 18. PORTRAIT OF A PRINCESS

### MUGHAL INDIA, 1750-60

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in a buff album page with margins of pale pink and gold-sprinkled blue, with gold and blue rules; pencil annotations, ink numbers and a defaced *devanagari* inscription on the reverse

4<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> in.; 11.7 by 8.1 cm. painting

13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.; 33.6 by 24 cm. folio

The princess is depicted kneeling on a white marble terrace with parapet behind, holding a gold wine-bottle in her right hand and a shallow cup in her hennaed left, against a pale green ground. She wears a serious if contemplative expression, her lustrous black hair cascading down her back. Both her gem-set plumed turban and *patka* are made of cloth of gold, her orange *paijamas* with gilt foliate motifs, a transparent gauze-like upper garment cascades to the ground. Her jewellery includes gold necklaces, ropes and bracelets of pearls.

#### PRINCESS ZEB UN-NISSA

Though it may be fanciful, the inscription identifies the subject as Zeb-un-Nissa (1638-1702), daughter of Aurangzeb. The princess was a poet who wrote under the pseudonym of Makhfi ('Hidden One') and her work, comprising four hundred and twenty-one *ghazals* and

several *ruba'is*, was collected posthumously as *Diwan-i-Makhfi*, the 'Book of the Hidden One'.

The eldest and favourite child of Aurangzeb, as well as speaking Persian, Arabic and Urdu, she was highly educated in other subjects including philosophy, mathematics, history, music, astronomy and literature. Though born a Suni Muslim, her style of writing was mainly influenced by Sufi thought. Unmarried, she developed an extensive library and commissioned works, but, accused of palace intrigue she spent the last twenty years of her life as a prisoner in Salimgarh, Shahjahanabad, old Delhi.

#### INSCRIPTIONS

Faintly inscribed on the upper margin: "Zeb al-Nisa' Begum"

#### PROVENANCE

Margaret Tyler, London, 1980s

Private collection, England, 1990-2019

#### REFERENCES

Krieger-Krynicky, A., *Captive Princess: Zebunissa, Daughter of Emperor Aurangzeb*, Oxford, 2005



Palace of Zib-un-Nissa, Aurangabad, by Deen Dayal, 1880

© The British Library Board (430/6(52))



## 19. THE PRINCELY BARD NOKAR RECITING A POEM KISHANGARH, 1750-75

Ink and colour with gold on paper, inscribed in *devanagari*  
on the verso  
6 by 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> in.; 15.6 by 10.7 cm.

This fascinating and enigmatic drawing shows a young garlanded bard, apparently named Nokar, reciting some kind of play or ballad based on the story of the horse Chetak. The bard would normally be accompanied by musicians, as in a drawing from the Fraser Album (Archer & Falk, fig. 81). The inscription names him and calls him a *bhandavamsa*, of the race of bards, but he seems dressed more like a prince with jeweled pendants and jewels in his brocade turban band, an embroidered *patka* over a *jama* finely striped in gold, and a garland of jasmine. He is named as from the court of Nawab Azam Khan, but precisely who this may be is a little problematic. A Nawab Azam Khan, son of Nawab Amir Khan, is recorded as owning a *haveli* in Delhi near the Jama Masjid in the time of Muhammad Shah (Blake, p. 80), but nothing seems to be known of him or his connection with Rajasthan or Kishangarh.

### BALLAD OF PRATAP SINGH OF MEWAR'S HORSE CHETAK

Chetak ('illusion' or 'magic') is the name traditionally given to the horse ridden by Maharana Pratap Singh of Mewar (1540-1597) at the Battle of Haldighati, fought in June 1576 between the Mughal forces and those of Mewar. Chetak, although wounded, carried Pratap safely away from the battle, but then died of his wounds. The story is recounted in court poems of Mewar from the seventeenth century onwards. The horse is first named "Chetak" in an eighteenth-century ballad, *Khummana-Raso*, that was translated in the first volume of James Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* in 1827.

The drawing is exceptionally intense as the young bard concentrates on the telling of his story using his hands to emphasise his points. He is isolated in space as a preparatory but finished drawing. For comparable single-study drawings from Kishangarh, see Goswamy & Bhatia, nos.138 and 139, a prince and a Vaishnava, and Welch & Masteller, no. 65, a prince proceeding to worship.

### INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso in *devanagari*:

*Natak Chetaka / Bhandavamsa Nokar Sarkar Navab Azam Khan ji kai*  
'the play Chetak. The bard Nokar of the court of Nawab Azam Khan'

### PROVENANCE

The Arcade Gallery, London, 1978

Private collection, London, 1978-2018

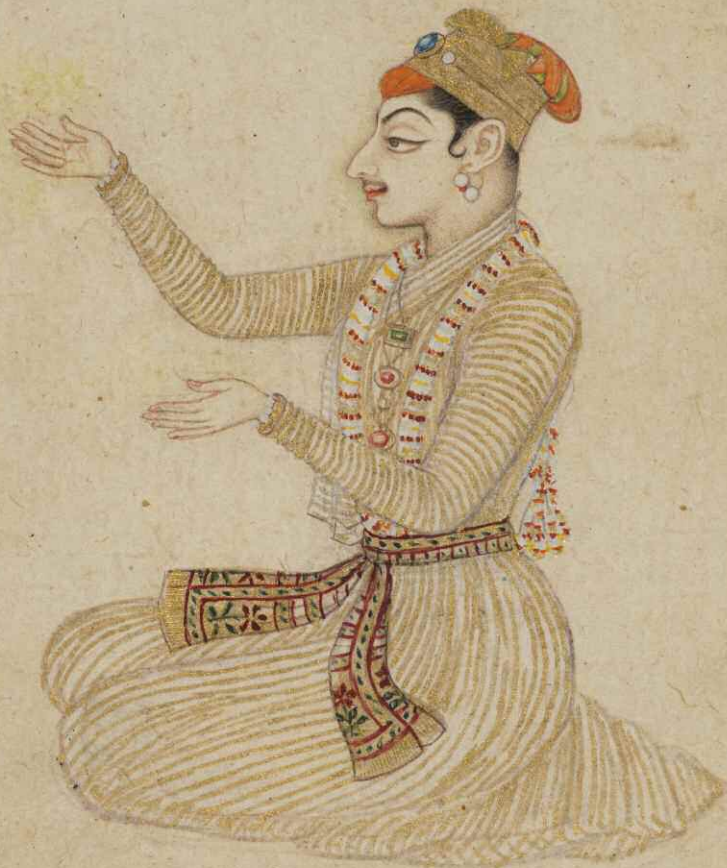
### REFERENCES

Archer, M., and Falk, T., *India Revealed: The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser 1801-35*, London, 1989

Blake, S., *Shajahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India*, 1991

Goswamy, B.N., and Bhatia, U., *Painted Visions: The Goenka Collection of Indian Paintings*, New Delhi, 1999

Welch, S.C., and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart and Hand: Persian, Turkish and Indian Drawings from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection*, New Haven, 2004





**20. MAHARANA ARI SINGH SHOOTING A TIGER  
ATTRIBUTED TO THE ARTIST JIVA  
MEWAR, CIRCA 1761-62**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, inscriptions on the reverse, red borders

8¼ by 16½ in.; 20.8 by 42 cm., painting

10 by 18½ in.; 25.3 by 46.7 cm., folio

The maharana crouches with four companions, including Rao Ram Chand, Raja Ragho Dev and the attendants Sambhu Das and Laksmi Das, in a small tower in the forest shooting at a tiger who has been lured by the tethered buffalo. The tiger is depicted twice, once mauling its prey and again rearing after being shot in the centre of its forehead. The scene is by night with the full moon rising over the nearby lake. For a note on Ari Singh see note to following item, no. 21.

Painting under Ari Singh (r. 1761-73) became very prolific and somewhat repetitive, (Topsfield, 2002, pp. 198-201), but this painting from the very beginning of the reign rises very much above the general norm.

It is distinguished particularly by its dramatic landscape. It is remarkable for its alternation of dark and light groups of leaves interspersed with tall feathery plants, all clinging to misty grey-green rocks. This is a calling card of the artist Jiva to whom is also attributed a similar picture of Ari Singh bear-hunting, now in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, (Topsfield, 1980, no. 165). The attribution is based on a painting dated 1749, by Jiva, of a tiger hunt made in Jagat Singh II's reign (Topsfield, 2002, fig. 172).

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Rajasthani in *devanagari* script with the details of the event and the date of receipt into the royal collection as *Samvat 1818 Jyestha sudi 15* [1761-62 A.D.]

**PROVENANCE**

Mewar royal collection, Udaipur, 1761-62

British Rail Pension Fund, 1970s-94: Sotheby's, London, 26 April 1994, lot 42

Private collection, California, 1994-2010

Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2010, see Losty, pp. 26-27, no.13

Private collection, Europe, 2010-19

**REFERENCES**

Losty, J.P., *Indian Painting 1650-1900*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2010

Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Zurich, 2002

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









॥ महाराजधिराज महाराजाजी श्रीरक्षक विराट्  
योगीश्वरीश्वर



**21. PORTRAIT OF MAHARANA ARI SINGH  
RIDING THE HORSE KHASACHINI  
BY THE ARTIST SUKHA LUHAR  
MEWAR, CIRCA 1761-62**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, red border with black and gold rules, inscriptions on recto and verso

17 by 13 $\frac{1}{3}$  in.; 43.1 by 34 cm. painting

19 $\frac{2}{3}$  by 15 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.; 50 by 39.5 cm. folio

A grand procession with no less than thirty-three courtiers accompanying Maharana, this painting must have been commissioned very shortly after Ari Singh ascended the throne in 1761. The inventory notes on the back state that it entered the royal collection in 1761-2. He rides in state, his head nimbate, wearing a long brocade *jama* and gold *patka*, a plumed turban and ropes of pearls, raising his left hand in a gesture of reassurance.

His courtiers are painted in detail, each an individual portrait, dressed in court robes but minimal jewellery, holding a variety of objects including a gold parasol, a fly-whisk, fans, staffs and many with swords wrapped in gold brocade. A dark-skinned boy holds a falcon at right, below are two saluki hounds wearing brocade blankets.

**THE PAINTER SUKH LUHAR**

Sukh Luhar, son of the painter Amar, was active during the reigns of Jagat Singh II (r. 1734-51) and Ari Singh (r. 1761-73). Topsfield, p. 200, note 118, refers to this painting amongst other equestrian portraits of around the same date, and also illustrates another work by him (p. 187, fig. 162) in the Fondation Custodia, Paris, dated 1750, of Jagat Singh II and nobles in an interior.

**MAHARANA ARI SINGH**

The “arrogant and irascible” Ari Singh (1724-73) succeeded his nephew, Raj Singh II (r. 1754-61), whose demise, according to Topsfield, he may have had a hand in. His twelve-year rule was brought to a bloody end when he was murdered while hunting “by a treacherous lance-stroke delivered by Ajit Singh of Bundi, with the collusion of the disaffected Mewar nobles” (Topsfield, p. 193).

**INSCRIPTIONS**

The inscription on the front of this painting appears to read: *maharajadhiraja maharanaji sri arasihaji ri sabi?* (mutilated)

*goro kasandini? asavar*

Portrait of Maharana Ari Singh riding the horse Kasandini [?]

On the back:

Entered into the collection in late 1761 or beginning of 1762, inventory number is 3/73. *maharajadhiraja maharanaji sri arasihaji ri surat ro pano ghoru khasa chini asavar / kalami citra sukha luhar ro ki do / ori jama pos vid 5 samat 1818 varshe*

The same inscription as on the front but here the horse is identified as ‘Khasachini’ [?]. By the artist Sukha Luhar.

**PROVENANCE**

Mewar royal collection, Udaipur, 1761-62, inventory number 3/73

Spink & Son, London, 1986

Private collection, Germany, 1986-2019

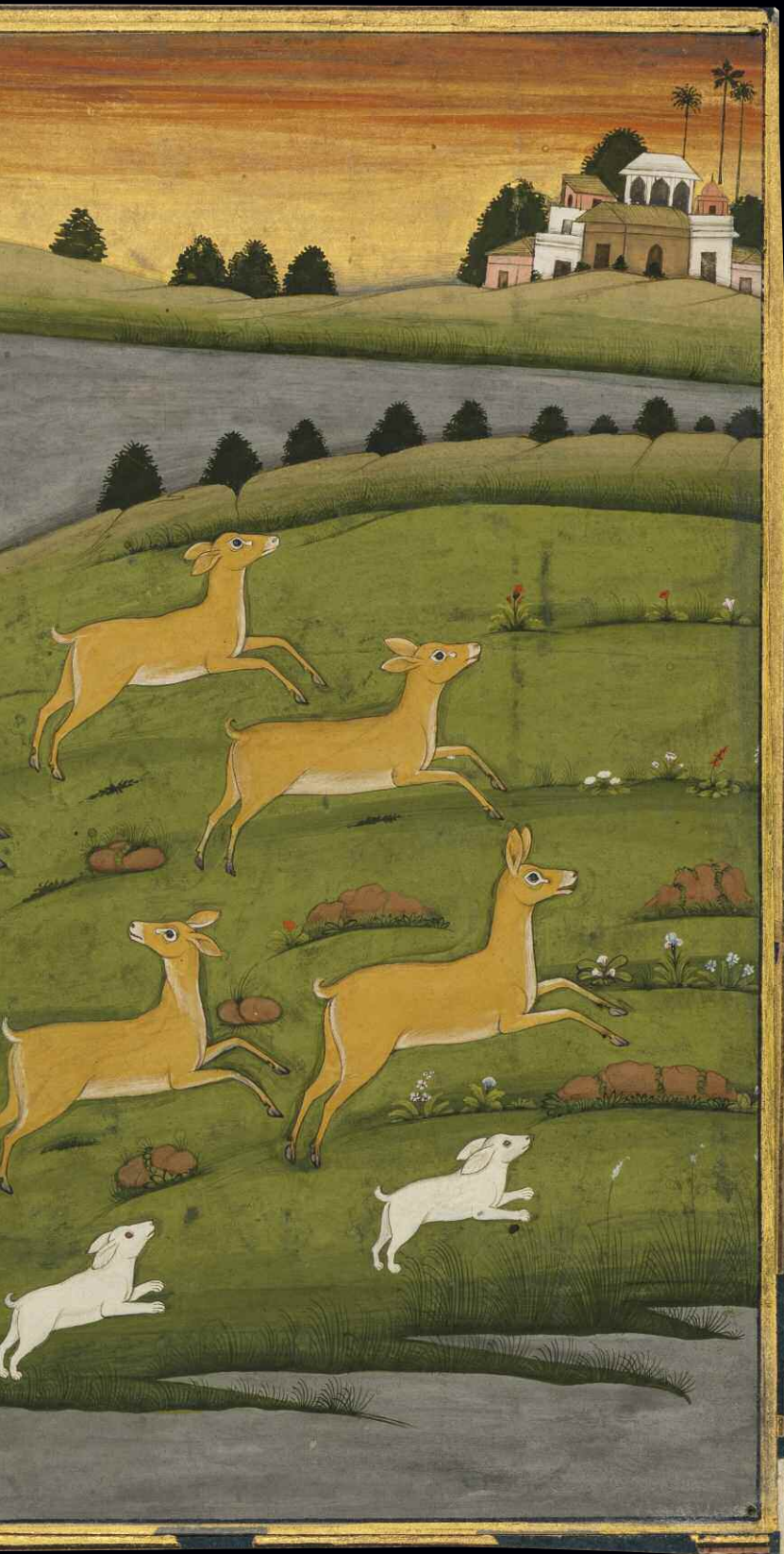
**REFERENCES**

Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Zurich, 2002









## 22. BAZ BAHADUR AND RUPMATI HUNTING ANTELOPE MURSHIDABAD, 1760-70

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down on card, with gold borders and black rules  
6<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 10 in.; 16.7 by 25 cm.

The subject shows the couple out riding together as usual, but here hunting a blackbuck and his does with bows and arrows and a saluki. Rupmati has leaned forward on her horse and managed to place her strung bow over the neck of the buck, who rears up in surprise. One of his does looks back at him in alarm, but her days seem numbered since Baz Bahadur is aiming his arrow at her. The other does are in full flight, along with a couple of hares, through the verdant countryside past a lake. It is evening and the sky has turned golden. For a contemporary Murshidabad version showing the pair in more loving guise, see Falk & Archer, no. 372, and for Murshidabad painting at this time, *ibid.* nos. 367-73, and Losty, 2013.

### SULTAN BAZ BAHADUR OF MANDU

Sultan Baz Bahadur of Mandu (r. 1555-62) was the last ruler of one of the most cultured courts of Sultanate India. He was himself a renowned musician who kept company with singers and dancers, one of whom was his fabled lover Rupmati. In Akbar's imperialist quest to conquer most of India, Mandu was the first previously independent sultanate to be attacked and conquered by the Mughals in 1561-62. Baz Bahadur fled elsewhere for some years but ultimately surrendered to Akbar and joined his service, where he became renowned for his skill in singing. His Hindu mistress Rupmati is supposed to have killed herself rather than fall into the hands of the Mughals. They became fabled lovers in Indian lore and many paintings in various Mughal and Rajput styles of the eighteenth century show them out riding together. A particularly fine Mughal version, circa 1730, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Topsfield, no. 52), shows the pair trotting through a ghostly landscape lit only by the crescent moon and stars. This perhaps served as the sort of model that inspired our artist, while a Pahari version, attributed to Nainsukh, circa 1760, is in the Seitz Collection (Losty, 2017, no. 86).

### PROVENANCE

Art Passages, San Francisco, 2015, see Del Bonta, p. 28, no.12  
Private collection, Europe, 2015-18

### REFERENCES

- Del Bonta, R.J., *The Feminine Mystique in Indian Art*, San Francisco, 2015  
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981  
Losty, J.P., 'Painting at Murshidabad 1750-1820' in Das, N. and Llewellyn-Jones, R., eds., *Murshidabad: Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, Mumbai, 2013, pp. 82-105  
Losty, J.P., *A Mystical Realm of Love: Pahari Paintings from the Eva and Konrad Seitz Collection*, London, 2017  
Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Mughal India*, Oxford, 2008



23. ILLUSTRATION FROM A MAHA  
LAKSHMI SERIES  
A BOAR RUNS RIOT IN A WALLED GARDEN  
GULER, 1760-70

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, black margin with  
splashed pink border

6⅓ by 9⅓ in.; 16 by 23.6 cm. painting

8¼ by 11½ in.; 21 by 29 cm. folio

A bucolic scene has been shattered by a wild boar who has invaded a garden and created mayhem, uprooting the trees and plants and digging holes. Two gardeners run for their lives and outside the gate of the garden three armed guards lie sprawled, trampled on by the boar as it entered the garden. The composition is taken from a high viewpoint looking over the white wall of the garden, seen at an acute angle showing the Guler artists' penchant, as Archer (vol. 1, p. 159) remarks for "widely-ranging straight lines and for brusque far-flung angles".

The page is from a series with two paintings in the Victoria & Albert Museum and one in the Lalbhai Collection in Ahmedabad (Archer, Guler 45, i-iii). In the Lalbhai painting the gardeners are making the garden ready, in a composition taking much the same viewpoint as our painting, looking over a white wall with small trees interspersed with cypresses and a long row of blossoming trees. In the V&A paintings, a prince has arrived at a palace and a festival of Lakshmi is being celebrated. For another Guler garden painting of this date, see Losty, pp.24-5, no. 12. The text from which this series comes has yet to be identified.

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the verso with a title *Sri Maha Lakshmi* and five verses, numbered, plus a half verse in Sanskrit describing the incident as the boar uproots the trees and kills the guardians of the place.

PROVENANCE

Said to have been acquired in India in the 1920s

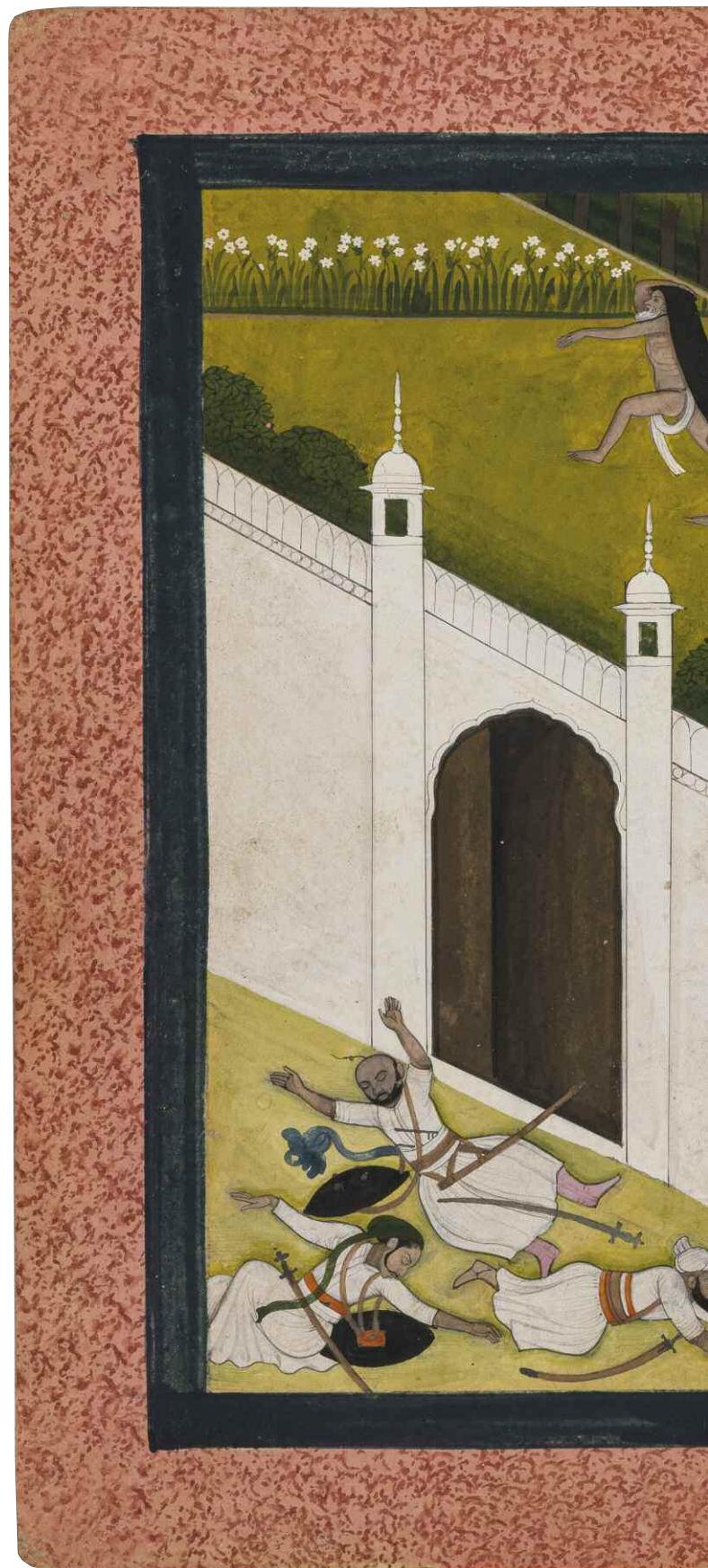
Private collection, Sussex, 1920s-2015: Bonham's, Knightsbridge,  
9 June 2015, lot 439

Private collection, Europe, 2015-19

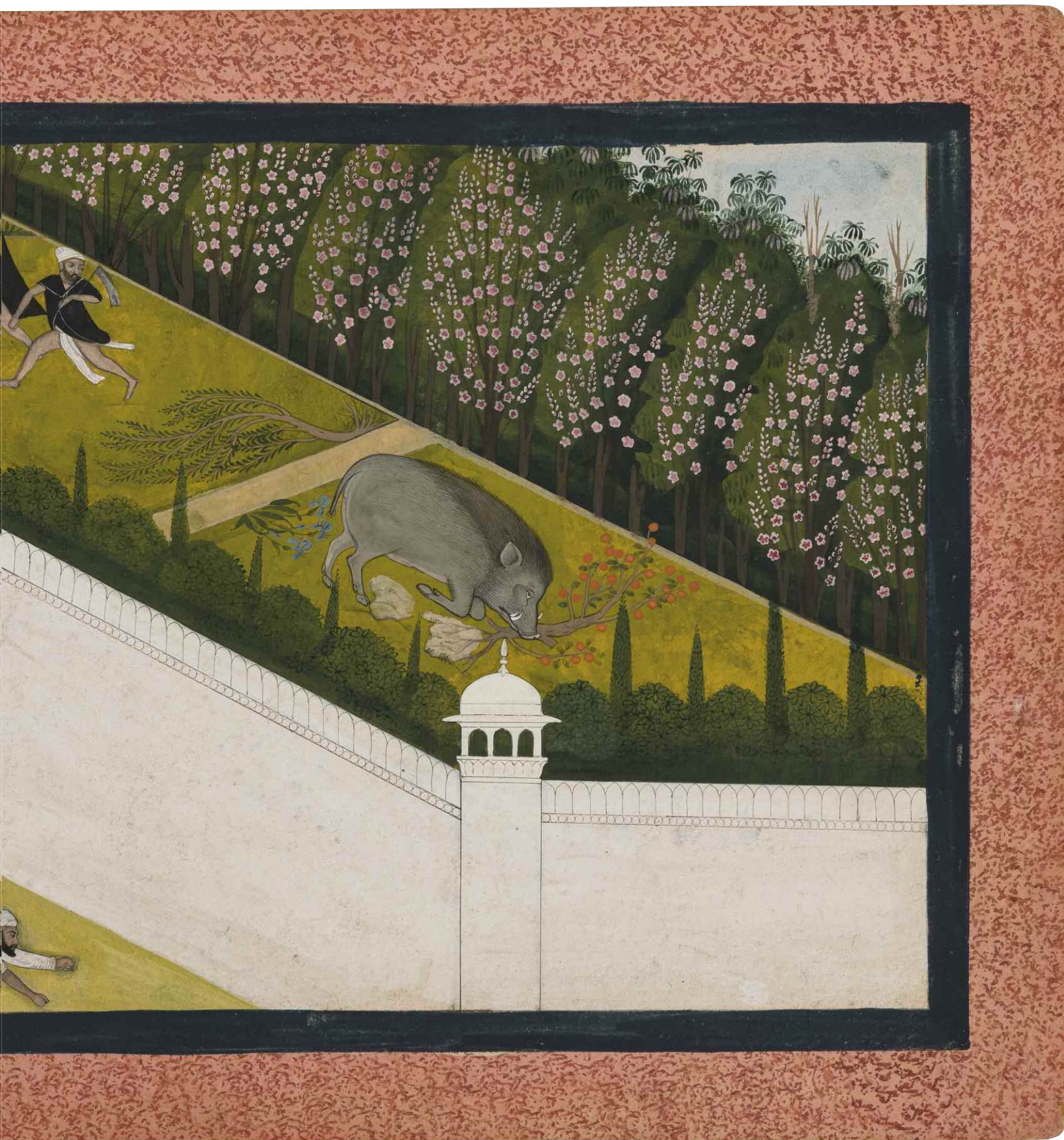
REFERENCES

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New York and  
Delhi, 1973

Losty, J.P., *Indian Painting 1600-1870*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd.,  
New York, 2012









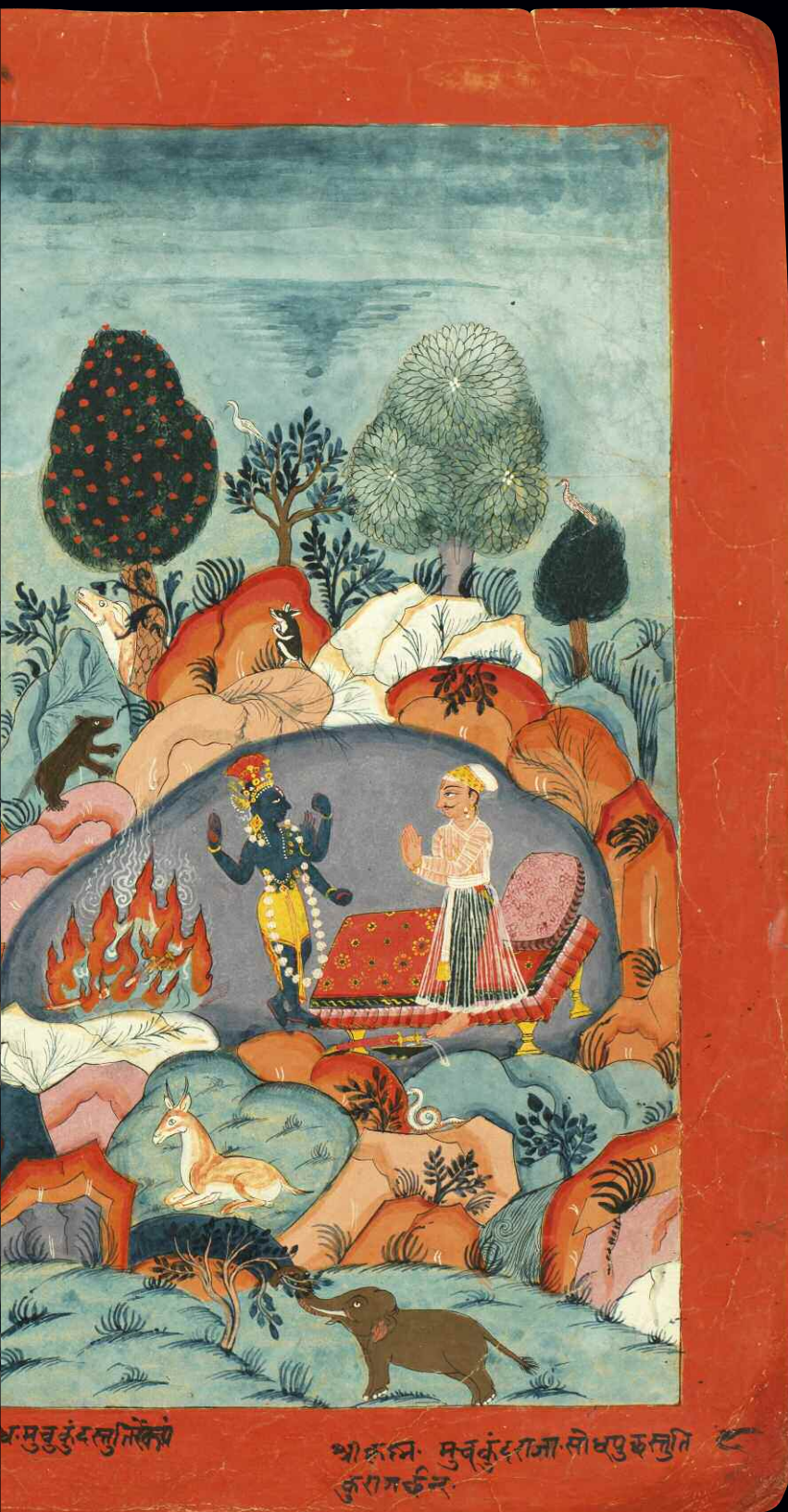
श्रीराममुकुन्दराजीसुखाका बाउसा बांछले का लजबन लार पुयासापछि  
 मुकुन्दराजीकाहेही सातेवनउकन



मुकुन्दराजी

रीतिभागवतेमहापुराणेदशमस्कंधेचमनवध  
 वाशतमोऽध्यायः





**24. ILLUSTRATION TO THE  
BHAGAVATA PURANA:  
MUCHUKUNDA KILLS THE  
WARRIOR KALAYAVANA  
NEPAL, CIRCA 1775**

Opaque watercolour on paper, the red borders inscribed above and below

12½ by 19¼ in.; 31.7 by 49 cm. painting

14½ by 21 in.; 36.8 by 53.4 cm. folio

A seemingly unique version of the Bhagavata Purana was produced in Nepal in the 1770s. This folio comes from the tenth book which was dedicated to Krishna.

A number of different events are depicted here. At far left, Krishna is pursued by Kalayavana; then in a cave at left Kalayavana appears encircled in flames having been set alight by Muchukunda, observed from above by Krishna; the final scene shows Muchukunda paying homage to Krishna in another cave. The whole is set against a background of variously coloured rocks, with intermittent speckled trees and bushes and in the foreground birds and animals including boar, antelope, tigers, bears, snakes and elephants.

The theme here is the story of Muchukunda (BP. X.51), the great sage who helped the gods to defeat demons. After the battle, he was overcome with sleep and the gods granted him a boon so he would "sleep long and soundly, and whoever disturbs you shall be instantly burnt to ashes by fire emanating from your body". When, centuries later, Krishna was being pursued by King Kalayavana, in the scene here depicted, he hid in a cave where Muchukunda lay in the darkness. The king mistook the sage for Krishna and kicked him, whereupon he was reduced to ashes by the sleeping man's gaze, the latter here depicted reclining on an elegant bed. Finally, Krishna is depicted receiving obeisance from Muchukunda.

Other folios are in the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the late Paul Walter, Carter Burden and Edwin Binney III, see Archer & Binney, pp.64-66, no. 49 and Pal, no. p.35 (a-b).

**INSCRIPTIONS**

The inscriptions, in Nepali, give a description of the events taking place; the number eight appears twice.

**PROVENANCE**

Anonymous private collector, New York, 1970s

Sotheby's, New York, 18 March 2009, lot 58

Christie's, New York, 16 September 2009, lot 849

Private collection, Europe, 2009-19

**REFERENCES**

Archer, W. and Binney, E., *Rajput Miniatures*, Portland, 1968

Pal, P., *Art of Nepal*, Los Angeles, 1985





**25. PORTRAIT OF A PRINCESS DRINKING WINE  
AVADH, CIRCA 1770**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in a gold-sprinkled album page with inner border of gold trefoil foliate motifs on an ivory ground, sage green margin  
4 $\frac{1}{3}$  by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.; 11 by 8.8 cm. oval painting  
17 by 12 in.; 43.2 by 30 cm. folio

The princess is reclining on a gold bolster decorated with floral sprigs, wearing striped *paijama* and diaphanous upper garment, her jewellery including a gem-set pendant, ropes of pearls and an elaborate gem-set brocade turban with aigrette plume. Her luxuriant hair cascades down her back with scrolling terminals. She gazes into the middle distance with a fine somewhat melancholy

eye, the neck of a gold wine bottle held in her right hand, a footed cup in her left, the fingers hennaed.

Similar oval portraits from Lucknow are found in the Polier and Warren Hastings albums, formerly in the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt., sold Sotheby's, London, 27 November 1974, lots 750, 756, 804 & 805.

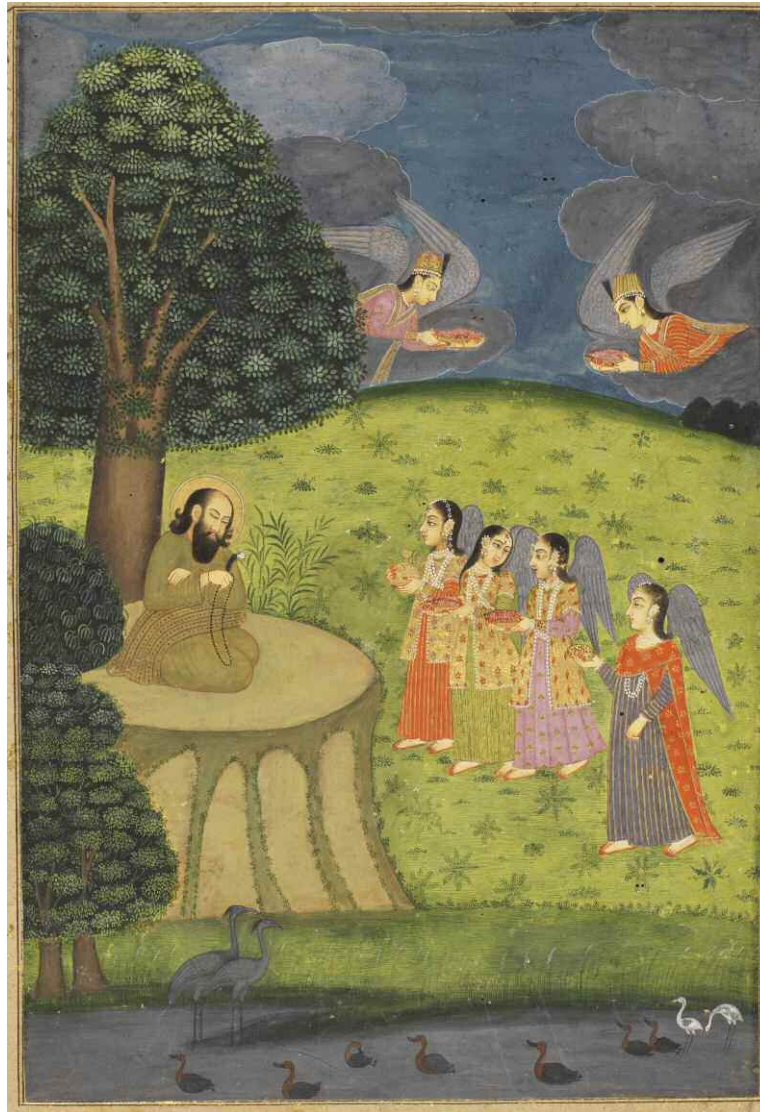
**PROVENANCE**

K. John Hewett (1919-94), Kent  
Private collection, London, 1970s-2017

**REFERENCES**

Sotheby's, *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, part XI: *Oriental Manuscripts, Indian and Persian Miniatures*, London, 1974





## 26. IBRAHIM ADHAM WORSHIPPED BY ANGELS LUCKNOW, CIRCA 1780

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in a gold-splashed ivory ground album page with gold and black rules; a panel of *nasta'liq* in gilt cloud bands with gold-sprinkled blue border on the reverse

9<sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> by 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.; 24.5 by 16.5 cm. painting

14<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 10 in.; 37.5 by 25.5 cm. folio

The long-haired nimbate 'Abraham son of Adam' is dressed in green robes kneeling on a verdant mound surrounded by trees, supported on his fakir's crutch and holding a rosary. Four angels in courtly dress approach him to bring food in gold dishes. Two further angels appear in the clouds above. The scene is set in a landscape with a bird-filled lake in the foreground.

### IBRAHIM ADHAM

Ibrahim Adham was an eighth century King of Balkh who sought God but, after several spiritual visitations, he surrendered his kingship to become a wandering dervish. He is one of the most celebrated Indian sufis and achieved semi-mythical status. The subject of this painting illustrates one of the most popular stories

about him and was frequently depicted in eighteenth century Mughal India. For examples from Avadh and Murshidabad, see Falk & Archer, nos. 325 and 367 respectively; Kühnel, pl. 140, and Topsfield, no.80 (both from Avadh), and Hurel, no. 211, (Murshidabad).

### INSCRIPTIONS

Below the painting:

"Ibrahim Adham"

On the reverse is a Persian quatrain in praise of "Mir Shihab al-Din" signed by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Harawi. This scribe is apparently unrecorded.

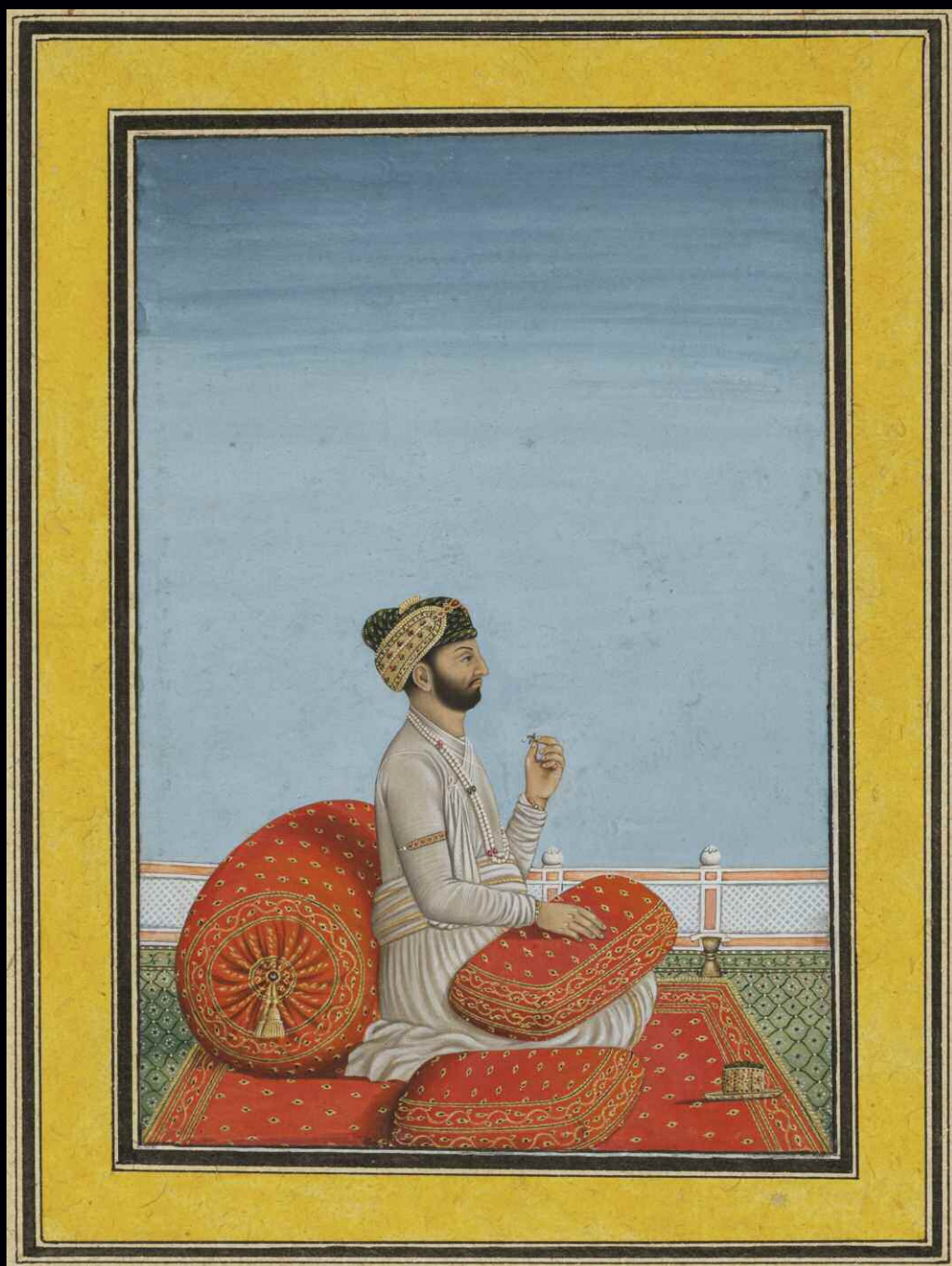
### PROVENANCE

Aaron Vecht and Mary Vecht-Stodel, Amsterdam, 1930s-60s  
J. Vecht, Amsterdam, and by descent to 2018

### REFERENCES

- Kühnel, E., 'Mihir Tschand, ein unbekannter Mogulmaler', in *Berliner Museen*, 43, Berlin, 1922
- Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
- Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011
- Topsfield, A., ed., *In the Realm of Gods and Kings: Arts of India*, London, 2004







## 27. PORTRAIT OF AHMAD KHAN BANGASH MURSHIDABAD OR FATEHGARH, CIRCA 1790

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in a plain buff album page with yellow margin and black rules, English inscriptions and the Manley Collection stamp on the verso

5<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 4 in.; 14.4 by 9.8 cm. painting

13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> by 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> in.; 34 by 28.3 cm. folio

Farrukhabad, in western Awadh, was a city founded in the reign of Farrukhsiyar (r. 1713-19) by the Afghan Muhammad Khan Bangash, and named after the emperor. It maintained a precariously independent existence from Awadh through the second half of the eighteenth century, especially so under Muhammad Khan's son Ahmad Khan Bangash (r. 1750-71), under whom a school of painting developed (Falk & Archer, pp. 189-91). The school's attributed portraits of the nawab show him with a full but relatively short beard, as here (Falk & Archer, no. 363; Binney, no. 104). He wears an Awadhi style dark blue turban with a brocade band, strings of pearls and gold armlets, but otherwise a simple white *jama* and cummerbund. His matching red and gilt-decorated bolster, cushions and carpet are in contrastingly bright colours. In front of him are a spittoon and gem-set *pan-dan*, the terrace's pierced white marble *jali* parapet beyond.

Another very close portrait of him is found in a Murshidabad album from the 1780s, showing him likewise seated on a terrace with bolster and cushions, with similar somewhat exaggerated modelling and rhythmical folds of drapery. The album, in the British Library, contains similar portraits of other contemporary or nearly contemporary rulers (Archer, no. 30, xxiv, unpublished, see pl. 29 for the format), but all done in a light watercolour and wash style. None of them of course is taken from life but all must follow earlier models. Fatehgarh is a few miles from Farrukhabad, where the

painting was obtained in 1794, and was an important military station of the East India Company's army. It would seem a draftsman trained in the Murshidabad style may have been stationed there, who could paint portraits but who added some more colour to this one in accord with local taste.

### INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso in ink:

"Portrait of Aimut Cawn (*sic.*) Bangaish, Nabob of Furruckabad, father to the present Nabob Muzzuffer Jung – 1794. Futtugur [Fatehgur] 2<sup>nd</sup> Novr."

### PROVENANCE

Acquired by an English collector at Fatehgarh in 1794

Dr. W.B. Manley (1885-1972), Guildford, Surrey: Sotheby's, London, 14 July 1971, lot 114

Private collection, London, 1971-2017

### REFERENCES

Archer, M., *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1972

Binney, E., *Indian Miniature Painting from the Collection of Edwin Binney*, 3rd: *the Mughal and Deccani Schools*, Portland, 1973

Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981



**28. RAJA RATAN SINGH AND HIS MISTRESS  
PLAYING HOLI  
LUCKNOW, CIRCA 1800**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, buff borders with red margin and black rules, *nasta'liq* inscription on upper border  
8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> by 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.; 20.7 by 27.6 cm. painting  
9 by 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> in.; 23 by 29.1 cm. folio

In a celebration of Holi, the Hindu festival of spring, twenty-nine court ladies surround the embracing royal couple, variously occupied, some throwing coloured powder, others syringing water from a pool, still more playing musical instruments. The scene takes place on a brilliant white marble terrace with a garden beyond, all below a pale blue sky.

For another Lucknow rendition of this scene in the British Library, attributed to Nidhamal, see Losty & Roy, p. 187, no. 129.

**INSCRIPTIONS**

The Persian inscription on the margin reads:

*shabih-i rajah ra[ta]n (?) singh*

“Likeness of Raja Ra[ta]n (?) Singh”. Ratan Singh may be a reference to the legendary hero Rana Ratan Singh of Mewar.

**PROVENANCE**

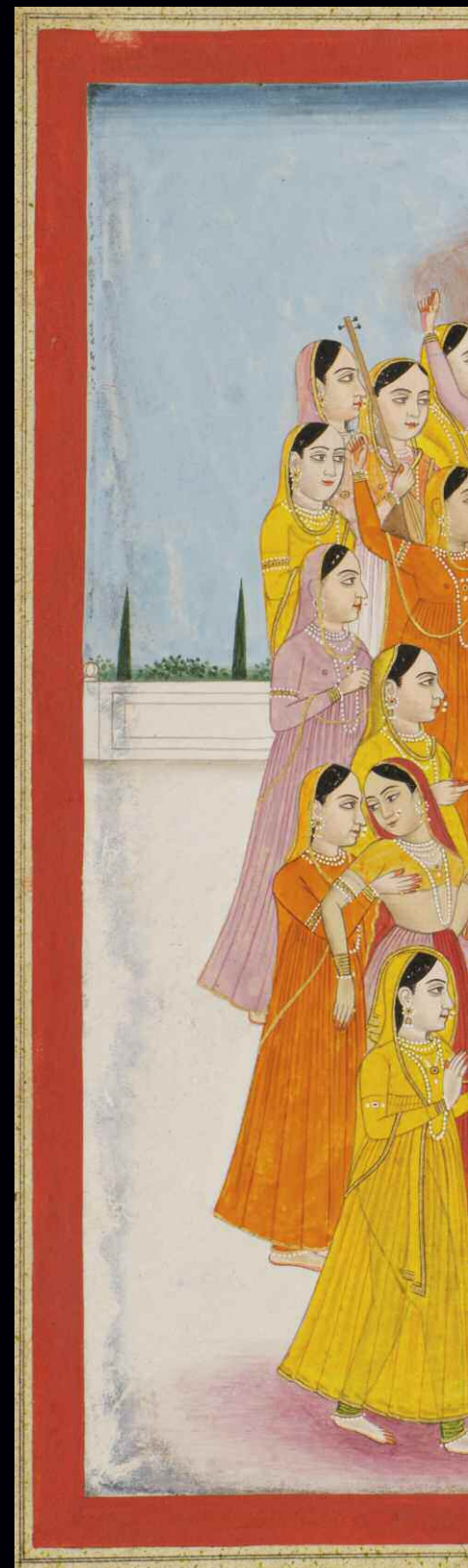
Mallett, London, 1970s

Captain Jan Vlug (1918-76)

Baron Michel Pilette de Kinnear, Belgium, by descent, 1970s-2018

**REFERENCES**

Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012















**29. AN ILLUSTRATION TO THE RAMAYANA:  
RAMA AND LAKSHMANA BEING  
ENTERTAINED IN THE FOREST BY  
THE MONKEYS  
CHAMBA, 1800-10**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, pink border with a black-ground floral inner margin and red rules

7 by 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.; 18 by 26 cm. painting

9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> by 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> in.; 24.4 by 32.3 cm. folio

In this lyrical scene, Rama and Lakshmana sit ever watchful and on guard, their bows at the ready, as the monkey chiefs both entertain them with music (flute, cymbals and drum) and offer food. The scene is set on a green sward under flowering trees beside a lotus lake with distant hills beyond. The two brothers have come to Kiskindha in their search for the missing Sita and allied themselves with Sugriva and his chiefs.

The style of the painting can be linked to work at the Chamba court in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The brothers' distinctive profile, with their large nose, protruding upper lip, and somewhat receding chin, is rather different from that seen in Kangra painting at this time, but can be seen in Chamba work such as the Ramayana series published by Ohri in 1983 as 1780-85. One of its pages was published by Archer in 1973 (Chamba, no. 58), with an erroneous date of 1840-45, but with its delicate treatment of the trees and its overall alertness and competence is demonstrably earlier, as shown by Ohri. That style continues in another Ramayana book from Chamba, 1800-10, (Ray, pl. 13), and this painting would seem to be a contemporary production from a similar atelier.

**PROVENANCE**

Sotheby's, New York, 19 March 2014, lot 11

Private collection, Europe, 2014-18

**REFERENCES**

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New York and Delhi, 1973

Ohri, V.C., *The Exile in the Forest*, New Delhi, 1983

Ray, S., *Fifteen Paintings depicting the Adventures of Hanuman on Lanka from the Ramayana*, introduction by J.P. Losty, London, 2016



**30. ILLUSTRATION FROM THE FRASER ALBUM:  
PORTRAIT OF EMPEROR AKBAR II'S  
ELEPHANT MAULA BAKHSH  
DELHI, CIRCA 1814**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper  
12¼ by 16½ in.; 31 by 42 cm. painting

Ridden by a *mahout* brandishing a goad, the stately animal stands caparisoned in a heavy orange ceremonial blanket of silver and gold, embroidered and woven with floral motifs, with green silk fringing. Long jasmine garlands hang from his ears and gold rings decorate his shortened tusks. An overlapping banner and head-cloth match the blanket, the former with the traditional protective shield. The *howdah* is decorated with rows of leaves on a gold ground, with two bows, a rifle and a pair of pistols suspended from it.

A large scroll painting in the British Library, *The procession of the Mughal emperor Akbar II through Delhi to the 'Idgah*, (Losty & Roy, pp. 212-7, figs. 152, a-d), 1815-25, depicts the emperor seated on a royal elephant with closely related *howdah* and accoutrements.

**A LAST FLOWERING OF MUGHAL CULTURE UNDER AKBAR II**

The reign of Akbar Shah II, the penultimate Mughal emperor, 1806-37, flourished culturally with not only imperial but British patronage of artists and poets. A circle with intellectual interests including Sir Charles Metcalfe and Colonel James Skinner was active and fascinated by everything from ancient Indian languages, to the Sufi shrines of Delhi and the latest poems of Mumin Khan or Ghalib; see Sharma, pp. 33-39. However, it was in 1806 – the year of Akbar Shah II's accession - that William Fraser arrived in Delhi and, stimulated by the ruins of ancient dynasties across the city, he sought to “consort... with the grey beards of Delhi” (Dalrymple & Sharma, p. 9).

**THE FRASER ALBUM**

Already collecting manuscripts, Fraser went on, once his brother James joined him in Delhi in 1815, to commission the album that bears the brothers' name. Dispersed at auction in 1980, the watercolours and drawings it comprises are recognised as the most remarkable document of its type and period and the quality of the individual works is superlative. “Technically these drawings surpass all other known Company pictures for their delicate realism, characterisation and subtle composition...” (Falk & Archer, p. 40)

**INSCRIPTIONS**

In the top left-hand corner

“Maula Bakhsh”

The pencil inscription:

*janab maula bakhsh khassa-i huzur-i wala*

“His honour Maula Bakhsh, servant of His Exalted Highness”

**PROVENANCE**

Commissioned by William (1784-1835) and James Ballie Fraser (1783-1856)

By descent to Malcolm Fraser, Scotland: Sotheby's, London, 7th-8th July 1980, lot 16 (unillustrated)

H.P. Kraus, New York, 1980s

Ismail Merchant, (1936-2005): Christie's, London, 7 October 2009, lot 139

Simon Ray, London, 2016

Private collection, Europe, 2016-19







#### PUBLISHED

Falk & Archer, p.110, no. 98

#### REFERENCES

Dalrymple, W. and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-1857*, New York, 2012  
Fraser, K., *For the Love of a Highland Home: the Fraser Brothers Indian Quest*, 2016

Falk, T. and Archer, M., *India Revealed: The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser 1801-35*, London, 1989  
Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012  
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 York, 2012, pp. 33-39





**31. PORTRAIT OF A HINDU NOBLEMAN  
HUNTING WITH A FALCON  
RAJASTHAN, PERHAPS BUNDI, CIRCA 1800**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, red border with margin of yellow and black

9 by 7¼ in.; 23.2 by 18.5 cm. painting

11 by 9 in.; 28 by 23 cm. folio

A Hindu nobleman wearing a gold-decorated white *jama* and an orange turban stands in a landscape, holding a falcon in his gloved right hand, a young attendant holding a *morchhal* behind him, with various animals at his feet.

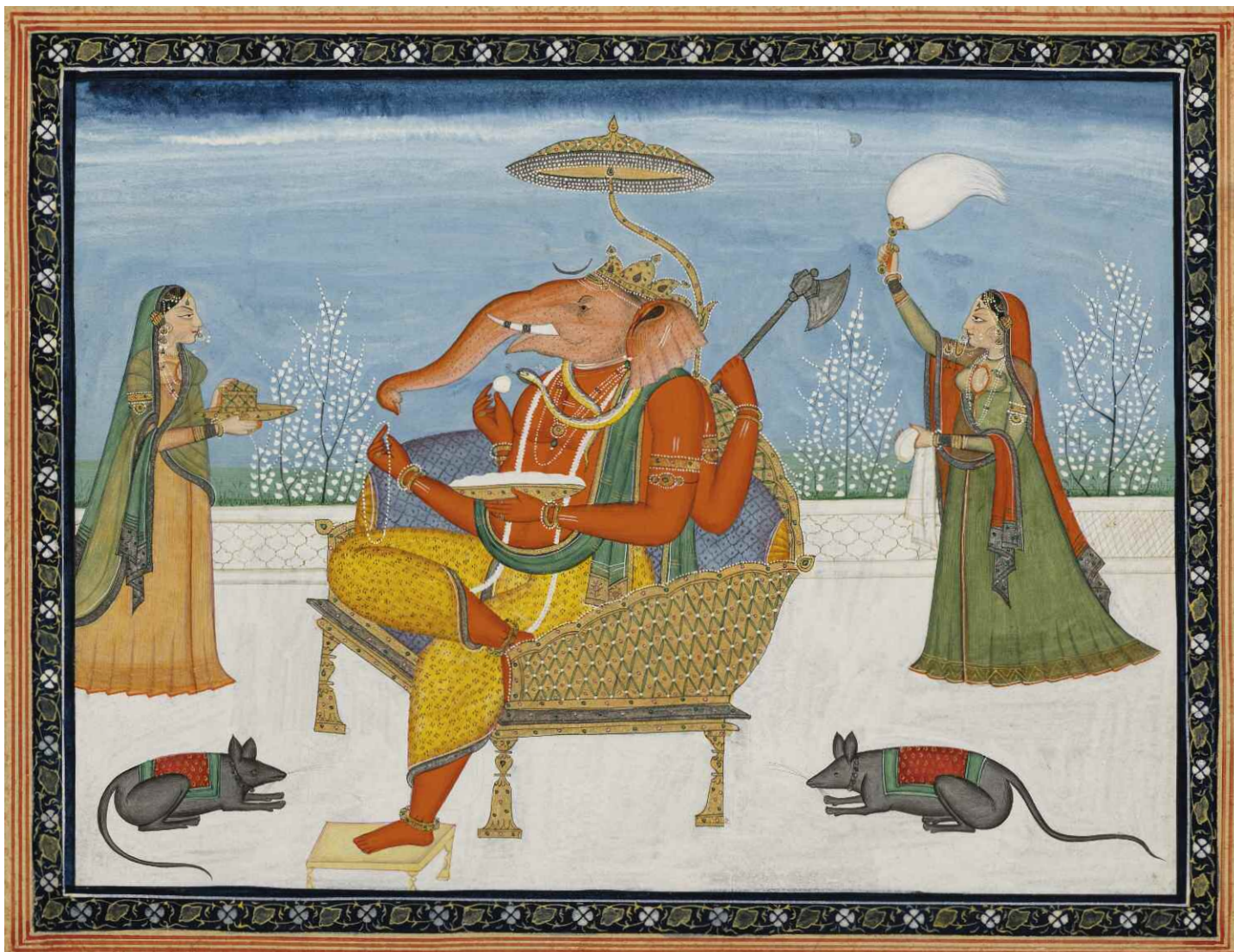
**PROVENANCE**

Mallett, London, 1970s

Captain Jan Vlug (1918-76)

Baron Michel Pilette de Kinnear, Belgium, by descent, 1976-2018





**32. GANESH FLANKED BY HIS TWO WIVES  
RIDHI AND SIDHI AND TWO RATS  
KANGRA, CIRCA 1825**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, pink marbled border with  
blue-ground floral inner margin and red rules  
7 by 9½ in.; 18 by 24.3 cm., painting  
9½ by 11¼ in.; 24.1 by 30.2 cm., folio

**INSCRIPTIONS**

A librarian's note forming a line of cursive *devanagari* on the verso,  
mentioning this as no.1 of a series. The Mandi inventory number is  
enclosed in a distinctive purple stamp.

**PROVENANCE**

Royal collection, Mandi, inventory no. 1421  
Christie's, New York, 20 March 2009, lot 1316  
Kapoor Galleries, New York, 2010  
Private collection, Europe, 2010-19



**33. ILLUSTRATION TO THE BHAGAVADA GITA:  
ARJUNA'S COSMIC VISION OF KRISHNA  
AS VISHVARUPA  
GARHWAL, CIRCA 1850**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, black borders with white rules

10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.; 26 by 16.5 cm., painting

10<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> by 7<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.; 27.6 by 20.1 cm., folio

This painting takes as its theme a scene from the Mahabharata, where Krishna reveals himself as Vishvarupa to the Pandava prince Arjuna who, inspired by this flamboyant divine vision, is henceforth able to continue his fight in the war against the Kauravas. That Arjuna, the great warrior, is granted a theophany is an extraordinary honour for which he is given divine vision, so terrifying and dazzling is the apparition of Vishvarupa.

In this arresting scene, Arjuna, his chariot on the right, pays homage to the vision confronting him. Krishna's ferocious multi-headed multi-limbed incarnation as Vishvarupa dominates the painting, standing in a turbulent sea with landscape and saffron sky beyond. Wearing a leopard skin, he brandishes weapons including mace, hatchet, sword, ploughshare and elephant-goad as well as banner, shield, conch, snake, bell and lotus. On his distended belly is depicted the birth of Brahma, the god issuing from the navel of the recumbent Vishnu.

For other paintings depicting Vishvarupa, see Cummins, pp. 218-221, nos. 131-33.

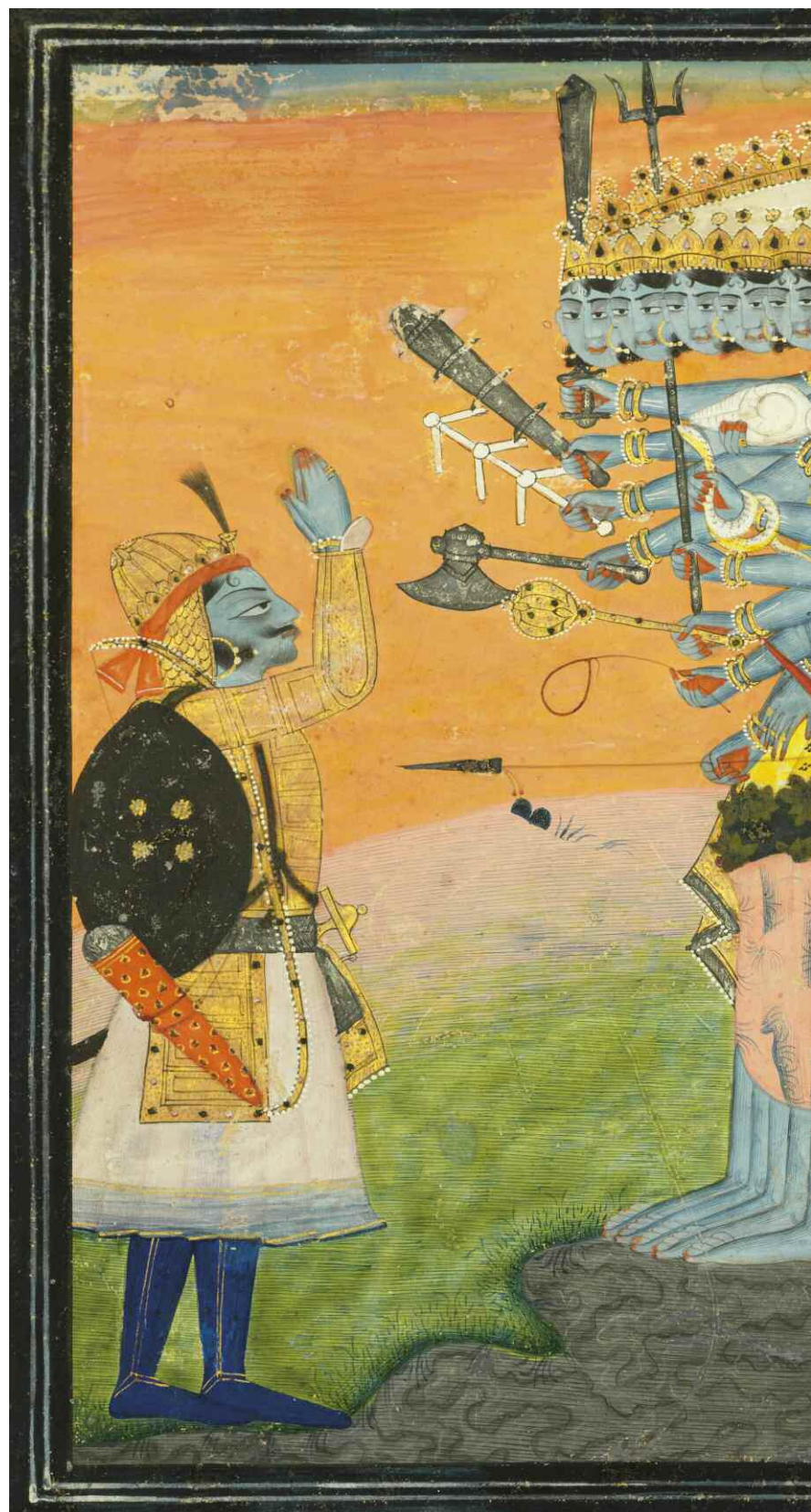
**PROVENANCE**

Anne and Jacques Kerchache: Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 12-13 June 2010, lot 102

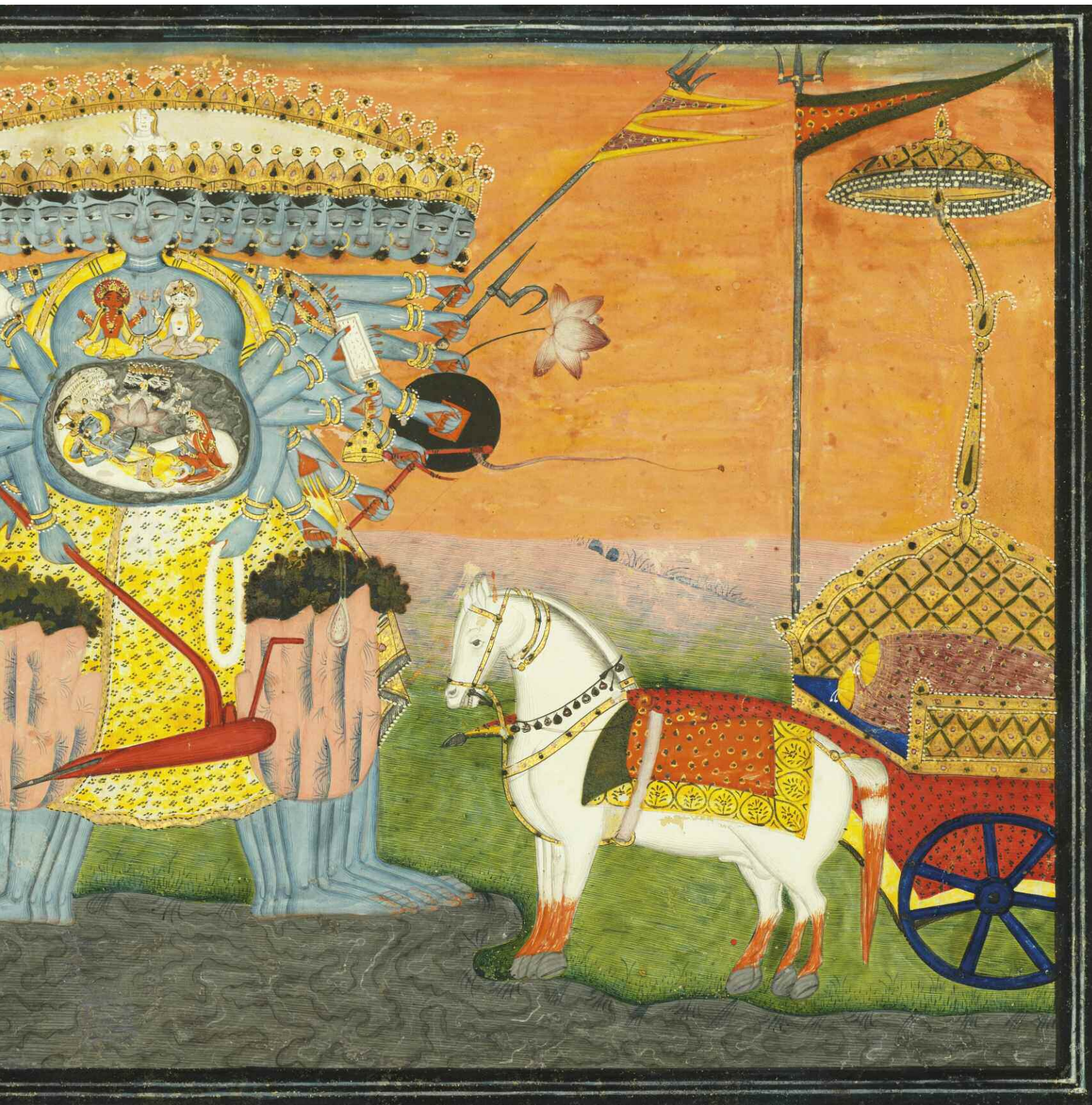
Private collection, Europe, 2010-19

**REFERENCES**

Cummins, J., *Vishnu: Hinduism's Blue-Skinner Savior*, Ahmedabad, 2011









**34. PORTRAIT OF A STALLION AND  
HIS SIKH GROOM  
DELHI, OR POSSIBLY PUNJAB, CIRCA 1850**

Opaque watercolour on laid paper, black margin and rules  
8 by 13 in.; 20.2 by 33.4 cm. painting  
10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 16<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> in.; 26 by 42.2 cm. folio

A stallion is being held by its bridle by a groom who, rather unusually, has most of his back to us. The leading rein is attached to the bit, from which it runs directly to a ring on its back leading to a crupper beneath the horse's tail. The groom is holding a flywhisk to keep flies off the horse. His turban and bangle (*kara*) suggest he is most likely a Sikh.

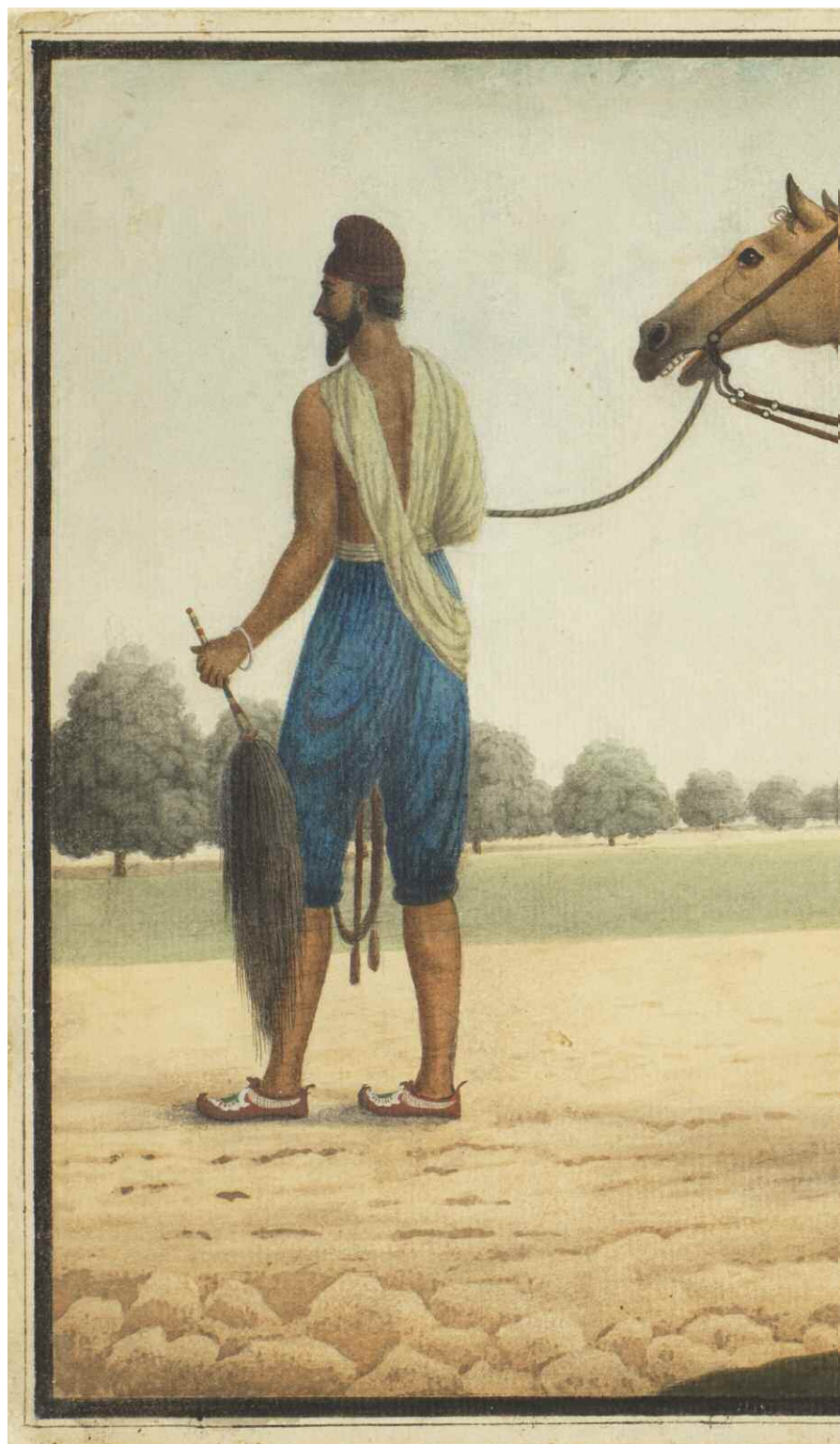
The composition is eastern, as found in Calcutta paintings of the first half of the nineteenth century (Archer, 1972, pls. 29-30; Archer, 1992, n. 81, i). The tree acts as a *repoussoir* device first found in earlier Murshidabad painting (e.g. Archer, 1992, no. 74, 3), casting shadow across the foreground in the 'Picturesque' manner, while the black frame around the painting also suggests Bengal. The horse and the groom, however, seem more to be Delhi work in the continuing Mughal tradition, presenting an overall picture of a horse, rather than a study of the surface of the horse and its veins and muscles in the Calcutta manner. Eastern artists did of course find their way to this part of India, as witness no. 27 in this catalogue, and following Sita Ram's visit to Delhi in 1815 (Losty, 2015), Delhi artists painted their topographical subjects in a more 'Picturesque' manner.

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Paris, until 2018

**REFERENCES**

- Archer, M., *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1972  
Archer, M., *Company Paintings: Indian Paintings of the British Period*, London, 1992  
Losty, J.P., *Sita Ram: Picturesque Views of India – Lord Hastings's Journey from Calcutta to the Punjab, 1814-15*, New Delhi, 2015 (co-published as *Sita Ram's Painted Views of India*, London, 2015)









35. **A PROPHET BEING CARRIED THROUGH  
THE SKY**  
**LUCKNOW, CIRCA 1850**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, gold borders with green, black and white rules, with three cursive *devanagari* inscriptions  
8¾ by 12½ in.; 22.2 by 31.9 cm. painting  
9½ by 13½ in.; 24.1 by 33.5 cm. folio

In this wonderfully eccentric painting, one of the holy figures in Islam is being transported through the sky in a golden palanquin borne by angels. He is preceded by animal-headed creatures (*djinns*) bearing banners and playing musical instruments, and followed by *peris*, two of them on horseback. A *simurg* flies above leading the way. Two cherubs pour gold over the bearded prophet who has a flame halo and is telling his beads, angels with *morchhals* and a jewelled gold parasol above. A vast scroll-snouted dragon issuing flames has inserted itself into the procession before the palanquin, but the henna-handed angels, who wear long tunics, fur-trimmed hats and jewellery, seem to be flying through it. Various birds including parakeets, crows and a peacock and large exotic insects are part of the cavalcade. The sky is blue and white clouds are massed above, as they fly over a landscape depicted through masses of rock on either side. A lake beyond has fish, ducks and cranes while deer run through the land beyond.

The Prophet of course was carried aloft on the steed Buraq but this seems unlikely to be him, since the figure is not veiled as was usual in depicting him. Otherwise it might be intended for the prophet Idris or Enoch, who too was carried bodily into heaven, but the inscription *Aveman Bhagmar* is at present mysterious. Oddly the language of the inscription seems more Rajasthani than Awadhi but it is possible that it was added later.

Of course, many literary figures are carried by *djinns* aloft in palanquins, such as Saif al-Mulk and his beloved Badi-al-Jamal, and also in earlier Awadhi painting from Farrukhabad. For a painting in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, depicting the former see Topsfield, no. 72. Nineteenth century painting under the last Kings of Awadh has not been much studied, but see Losty, 2003 and Roy, 2010.

**INSCRIPTIONS**

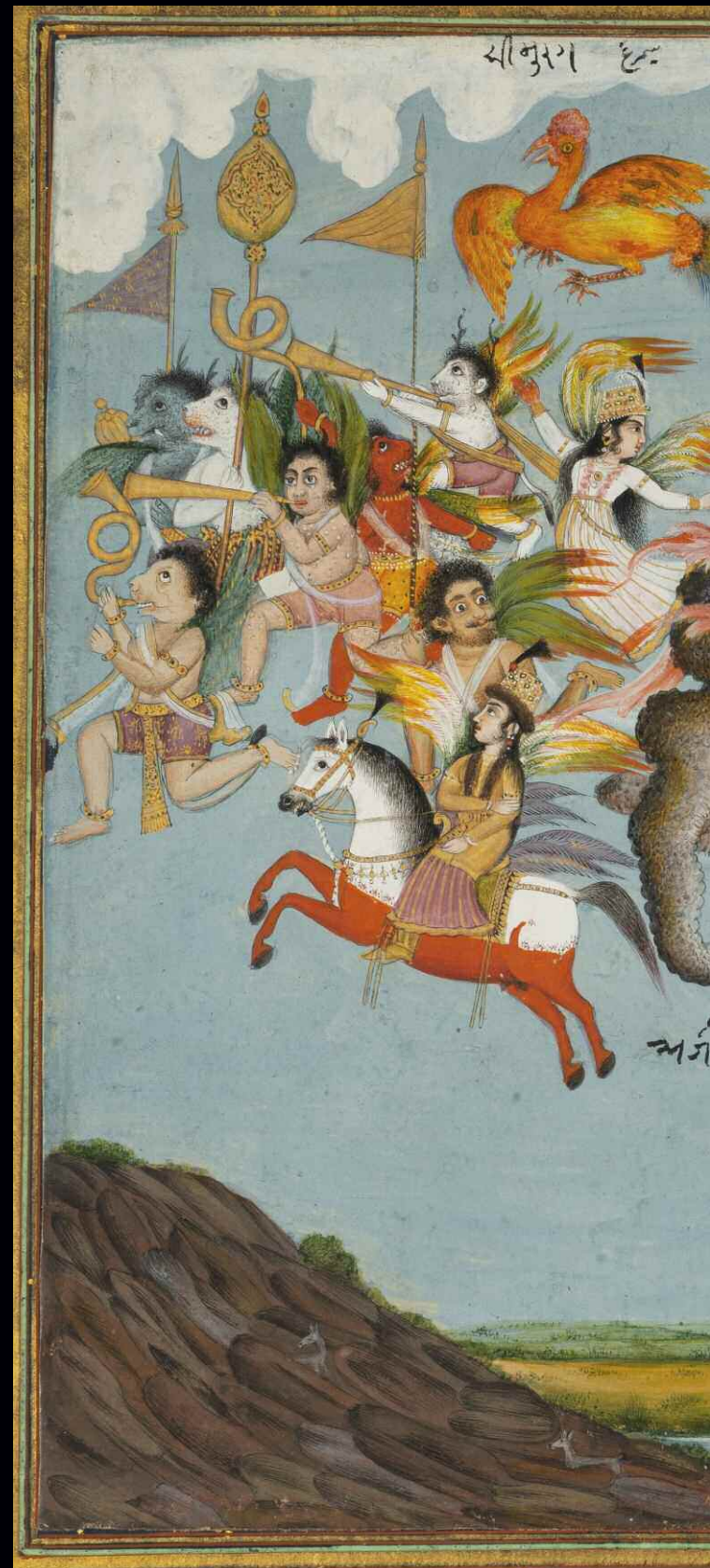
Inscribed in Rajasthani/Gujarati above the central figure *hazrat Aveman Bhagmar ki tasvir cha* and above on left *simurg* and in *nasta'liq*, *simurgh*; below the snake in *Devanagari ajdaha* ('python') and in *nasta'liq azdarha* ('dragon')

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Germany, 1980s-2019

**REFERENCES**

Losty, J.P., 'Painting at Lucknow 1775-1850' in Llewellyn-Jones, R., *Lucknow Then and Now*, Bombay, 2003, pp. 118-33  
Roy, M., 'Origins of the Late Mughal Painting Tradition in Awadh' in Markel, S., and Gude, T.B., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow*, New York, 2010, pp. 165-185  
Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Mughal India*, Bodleian Library, Oxford, 2008





This miniature painting, likely from a Rajasthani manuscript, depicts a celestial or divine assembly. At the center, a bearded man in white robes, possibly a deity or a royal figure, sits on a throne, surrounded by attendants. To his right, a group of figures, including a blue-skinned deity and a white bull, are shown in dynamic poses. The background is filled with various birds, including peacocks and swans, and a large, dark, rocky formation at the bottom. The scene is set against a blue sky with white clouds.



**36. SARUP SINGH AT TARGET PRACTICE IN A GARDEN  
BY THE ARTIST TARA  
MEWAR, CIRCA 1855 A.D.**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, acid yellow border with white margin and black and red rules, inscribed in *devanagari* on the reverse  
8¼ by 12 in.; 21 by 30.5 cm. painting  
10 by 14 in.; 25.9 by 35.5 cm. folio

A number of works by Tara show Sarup Singh, Maharana of Mewar, (r. 1842-61), doing target practise, either with a gun, as here, or with a spear as in a larger work of 1844-45, formerly in the collection of the British Rail Pension Fund (Topsfield, 2002, p. 256, no. 228; Losty, p. 30, no. 15). Here he aims and shatters one of two glass spheres held pendant by a servant at the window of a building opposite.

**THE ARTIST TARA**

Tara was one of the most distinguished and prolific nineteenth century artists at the Mewar court, where he was active under the patronage of Maharana Sarup Singh. As Topsfield (2002, p. 253) writes "The basis for this last... flowering of the Mewar school was laid by the steady hand of Tara..." Topsfield's essay on him (*op. cit.*, pp. 255-67) reveals an accomplished artist who though following the established Mewar tradition was not afraid of innovation, if largely inspired by the ruler himself. Spanning the period 1836-70, his larger and more detailed earlier works developed to favour more pared down backgrounds and the European green ground found here is a hallmark of his style. It is found in the 1851 copy of William Carpenter's famous portrait of Maharana Sarup Singh, see Topsfield 2002, p. 264, no. 239 and in another depicting the Maharana shooting boar from an elephant, circa 1855, in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, see <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O433400/maharana-sarup-singh-of-udaipur-painting-tara>. Another such scene, from the Paul Walter Collection, was sold at Bonhams, New York, 19 March, 2012, lot 1213: <https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/20176/lot/1213>

One of Tara's most famous works, *Maharana Sarup Singh inspects a stallion*, is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, see <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/61429>

**INSCRIPTIONS**

As well as the artist's name and date it entered the royal collection, Samvat 1912 / 1855 A.D., the inscriptions record the names of the Maharana and his nobles:

In front of him: Rawat Kuman Singh of Asind  
Kala (uncle) Chandji holding a gun; Dhikarya Udai Ram; Dhikarya Tej Ram holding the fan and Dhabhai Chamano.

**PROVENANCE**

Mewar royal collection, Udaipur, 1855  
Private collection, North Carolina, until 2018

**REFERENCES**

Losty, J.P., *Indian Painting 1650-1900*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, 2010  
Topsfield, A., *The City Palace Museum Udaipur: Paintings of Mewar Court Life*, Ahmedabad, 1990  
Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Zurich, 2002















**37. MAHARAJA SOVAN SINGH PLAYING PACHESI WITH CHUNDAWAT SARUP SINGH MEWAR, CIRCA 1868 A.D.**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, mauve border with dark brown margin and black rules, inscribed in *devanagari* on the reverse

8¾ by 12 in.; 22.3 by 30.3 cm. painting

10 by 13⅓ in.; 25.6 by 33.9 cm. folio

Maharaja Sovan Singh of Udaipur, (r. 1862-74), is seated in a white marble pavilion with vibrant yellow background playing *pachesi* with Chundawat Sarup Singh. Each has his sword in front of him. A cruciform cloth games-board with coloured pawns divides them. The maharaja sits on a red cushion with bolster behind, dressed in an elaborate white *jama*, mauve turban and jewellery, behind him a barefoot servant waves a fly-whisk. He is about to throw three dice in his right hand but appears to reprimand his companion who already has a pawn in his extended left hand.

A Mewar Thakur and close royal relative of that name, 'Kaka' (uncle) Sovan Singh, appears riding in procession with Maharana Shambhu Singh (r. 1861-74), in a large painting of 1868 by Shivalal in the City Palace Museum, Udaipur, see Topsfield, 1990, no. 35.

**THE ARTIST AMBAV**

Ambav (fl. c. 1851-76) is considered a follower of the artist Tara. Two large scale hunting scenes by him, dated 1851 and 1853, are in the City Palace Museum, Udaipur, see Topsfield, 1990, pp. 88-93, nos. 31 & 32. He is also known for his 1852 copy of William Carpenter's famous portrait of Maharana Sarup Singh, see Topsfield, 2002, p. 265, no. 240.

**INSCRIPTIONS**

With the names of the *thakurs*, that of the fan-bearer, Purushottam, the artist's name Ambav and the date the painting entered the royal collection (Samvat 1925 / 1868 A.D.).

**PROVENANCE**

Mewar royal collection, Udaipur, inventory number 35/108  
Private collection, North Carolina, until 2018

**REFERENCES**

Topsfield, A., *The City Palace Museum Udaipur: Paintings of Mewar Court Life*, Ahmedabad, 1990  
Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Zurich, 2002



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