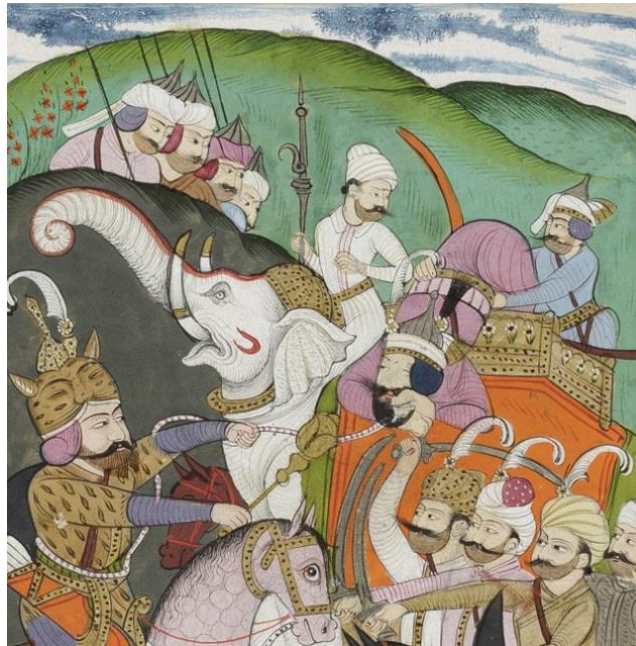


Press Release
New Exhibition
October 9, 2014 to January 18, 2015

Into India

South Asian Paintings from the San Diego Museum of Art



Parc des Champs-de-Bataille
Québec (Québec) G1R 5H3

418 643-2150
1 866 220-2150

mnbaq.org

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Québec City, Wednesday 8 October 2014 ✕ A land of colour, mystery and refinement, India fascinates. The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec is pleased to present an exclusive North American exhibition that will take viewers into the unique world of Indian painting, from 9 October 2014 to 18 January 2015. *Into India: South Asian Paintings from the San Diego Museum of Art* offers a magnificent overview of seven hundred years of history and artistic creation, from the 12th to the 19th centuries, through a hundred works from the prestigious Edwin Binney 3rd collection of the San Diego Museum of Art. Extremely rare sacred illuminations, Mughal paintings inspired by Persian culture and its heroes and finely-wrought illustrations of the native flora and fauna demonstrate the amazing eagerness with which Indian artists yielded to the most diverse foreign tastes without ever sacrificing the quality of their work or the indisputably Indian signature of their execution.

Musée national
des beaux-arts
du Québec

Québec 

The Musée receives funding from the Ministère
de la Culture et des Communications du Québec

To help visitors discover and enjoy this finely-wrought and refined art, the exhibition is organized into four themes: *Sacred Illuminations*, *Lyric Visions*, *Unfolding the History of Mughal Painting* and *In the Company Manner*.

The design of the exhibition, evoking a palace library with its decorative motifs, takes visitors to the heart of this culture dating back several millennia. The first alcove, entitled *The Imperial Mughal Atelier*, has been designed to enable visitors to demystify the art of Indian painting by seeing close up the raw materials used at the time, such as paper, pigment, gum arabic (a binding agent) and brushes. Another space, the *Music Salon*, is an alcove for relaxation and contemplation. The walls, covered in Indian motifs through the use of lighting effects, create the perfect ambience for consulting a selection of books accompanying the exhibition suited to both adults and children, and for listening to Indian music.

Finally, a whole range of inspired activities – yoga, classical Indian dance, jazz concerts, public talks, a film festival, workshops for everyone – provide an opportunity to explore the 1,001 facets of India this fall at the MNBAQ. *Namaste!*



Indian Painting in Four Movements

Sacred Illuminations

This first theme provides us with an opportunity to appreciate the oldest works, many of them painted on palm leaves. These paintings depict subjects having to do with the three main religions before the arrival of Islam in India: Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. For the most part these are devotional images from northern India, accompanied by texts in Sanskrit.

Lyric Visions

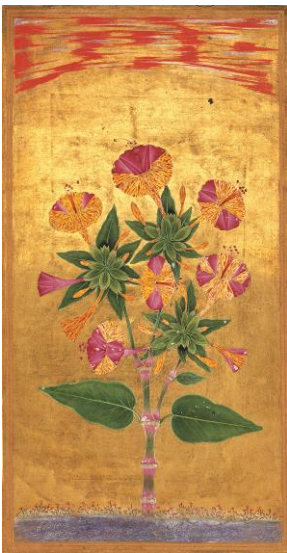
This section of the exhibition is made up of paintings illustrating two extremely important books in Persian culture. The first is the *Book of Kings (Shahnama)* by Firdousi, a book that traces the principal epics of the Persian Empire and in which appear the heroes Rustam and Esfandiar, and also Iskandar (Alexander the Great). The second is entitled the *Quintet (Khamsa)*; its author, the poet Nizami, is often seen as the “re-inventor” of Persian literature.

Unfolding the History of Mughal Painting

This part of the exhibition brings together paintings created during the reign of the major emperors of the Mughal dynasty, the central Asian conquerors who established themselves in India in 1526. Following in the footsteps of his father Humayun, the second Mughal emperor, Akbar encouraged the development of books and the arts. His son Jahangir and grandson Shah Jahan – who commissioned the Taj Mahal – continued along this path. Along with several portraits of these sovereigns shown seated on the Peacock Throne or in scenes of everyday life, this section includes paintings based on European models, including Christian paintings offered as gifts to the Mughal emperors by the Jesuits and secular Dutch engravings also presented as gifts. The narrative aspect of the images and the highly decorative quality of the borders that frame them attest to the painters’ exceptional skills. The Mughal dynasty came to an end in the mid-nineteenth century when Bahadur Shah was deposed by the British in 1858.

In the Company Manner, from 1710 to 1890

The title of this final part of the exhibition is a reference to the importance of the British East India Company, which had been established in India in 1600. Unlike the paintings in the two previous sections, the plates on view here are not from books but are instead independent works which illustrate the flora and fauna of the country in a highly naturalistic manner produced for English partners.



Edwin Binney 3rd: Portrait of a Collector

A specialist of Romance languages, a ballet dancer and the grandson of the inventor of Crayola crayons, Edwin Binney 3rd did not appear destined to establish one of the finest collections of South Asian paintings in the world. This remarkable distinction is due in the end to his passionate curiosity. Born in 1925, Edwin Binney 3rd studied the classics and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree with a specialization in French from Harvard University. He followed that up with a doctorate in Romance languages, writing his dissertation on Théophile Gautier and ballet. During this period he also studied ballet with Alicia Langford, whom he married, and began to collect works of art. In 1958, he decided to focus on Indian and Islamic art, which were still affordable at the time. These were to become his principal interests for more than twenty-five years. Edwin Binney 3rd carried out in-depth study of Indian painting at a time when the topic interested few historians of Western art.

The author of numerous catalogues and the curator of several exhibitions in the United States, he was an active and highly respected member of the board of directors of the San Diego Museum of Art to which, upon his death in 1986, he bequeathed his collection of Indian paintings and manuscripts, considered one of the most amazing in the field anywhere in the world.

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Page 1 – *Rustam Lassoos the Khaqan of China and Drags Him from His White Elephant* (detail), from a *Shahnama* (*Book of Kings*), Kashmir, India, ca. 1790. Opaque watercolour and gold on paper, 25.7 cm x 14.3 cm. Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, The San Diego Museum of Art 1990.555. www.sdmart.org

Page 2 – *The Emperor Muhammad Shah, Equestrian, in the Hunting Field* (detail), India, ca. 1720. Opaque watercolour and gold on paper, 29 x 20.5 cm. Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, The San Diego Museum of Art, 1990.384. www.sdmart.org

Page 3 – *Four o’Clock or the Marvel of Peru*. Opaque watercolour and gold on paper. India, ca.1640, 21.3 x 11.3 cm. India, ca.1640. San Diego Museum of Art. Museum purchase, 1992.66. www.sdmart.org

Credits

The exhibition *Into India: South Asian Paintings from the San Diego Museum of Art* is organized by the San Diego Museum of Art in collaboration with the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. Institutional support for the SDMA is provided by the Members of the San Diego Museum of Art, the County of San Diego Community Enhancement Program and the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

Curatorship

Sonya Rhie Quintanilla

Marika Sardar
Associate Curator of Southern
Asian and Islamic Art, SDMA

Exhibition Design

Jean Hazel
Designer, MNBAQ

Graphic Design

Sophie Lafortune, Klaxon

Coordination

Jean-Pierre Labiau
Exhibition Curator, MNBAQ

Reyna Aguiar
Former Associate Director of
International Relations, SDMA

Concept of

The Imperial Mughal Atelier
Marie-Hélène Audet, in charge
of family programs, MNBAQ

The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec is a state agency funded by the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec.

Around the Exhibition

**Special visit accompanied by
Jean-Pierre Labiau**
Wednesday 15 October, 7:30
p.m.



Concert
Jazz Meets India
With Neelamjit Dhillon
and Adrian Vedady
Saturday 1 November, 8:00 p.m.

Yoga at the Musée
In partnership with Ôm Yoga
Sunday 26 October, 9:00 a.m.

Gods and Goddesses!
*Bharata Natyam – Indian
Classical Dance*
Saturday 8 November, 8:00 p.m.

Cinema
Indian Film Festival
20, 21 and 22 November

FOR
THE FAMILY

Workshops for everyone
Saturdays and Sundays,
11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:15 p.m.
and 3:30 p.m.

Indian manuscript
Assemblage and drawing
workshop
4 - 26 October

Indian motifs
Collage workshop
1 - 30 November

Celebration of Light
Drawing workshop
6 - 21 December



General Information

OPENING HOURS OF THE MUSÉE

Until 31 May 2015

Tuesday to Sunday,
10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Wednesdays till 9:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays (except 13
October and 29 December)
Closed 25 December

Open Wednesday 24 and 31
December until 5:00 p.m.

ADMISSION

Adults: **\$18**
Seniors (65 and over): **\$16**
Ages 18 to 30: **\$10**
Ages 13 to 17: **\$5**
Children 12 and under: **Free**
Families: **\$40** (2 adults and 3
children 13 to 17)
Members: **Free**
Wednesdays from
5:00 to 9:00 p.m.: **Half-price**
Reduced rates for groups

CONTACT US

418 643-2150 or
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