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PAINTING THE PERSIANATE WORLD: PORTABLE IMAGES ON PAPER, CLOTH AND CLAY OPENS AT SCMA

Exhibition features thirteenth- to nineteenth-century painted images from Greater Iran and the Indian subcontinent in three mediums



January 25, 2024, Northampton, MA – Smith College Museum of Art (SCMA) will present the exhibition *Painting the Persianate World: Portable Images on Paper, Cloth and Clay* from February 2–July 7, 2024. *Painting the Persianate World* showcases the fluidity and transmission of language and culture through images on manuscripts, textiles and ceramics created between the 1200s and 1800s. This exhibition is supported by the Nolen Endowed Fund for Asian Art Initiatives.

Painting the Persianate World introduces a view of cultures in flux through migration and contact. The movement of people from regions that comprise today's Iran and Afghanistan to present-day Pakistan, India and Bangladesh—and with them the Persian language— formed what has come to be known as the Persianate world. Manuscript illustrations, dye-painted textiles, and decorated ceramics played an important role in binding these regions together. Such highly portable and functional objects visually transported manners of behaving, dressing and eating, as well as storytelling and image making.

This exhibition draws on the combined scholarship of Yao Wu, Jane Chace Carroll Curator of Asian Art at Smith College Museum of Art, and Yael R. Rice, Associate Professor of Art & the History of Art and of Asian Languages and Civilizations at Amherst College. The exhibition highlights a hidden strength of the SCMA collection, along with objects on loan from the Amherst College Archives & Special Collections, the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, Sean Kelly Gallery and the Yale University Art Gallery. Learn more about the exhibition:

https://scma.smith.edu/art/exhibitions/painting-persianate-world-portable-images-paper-cloth-and-clay

The annual Miller Lecture in Art and Art History will be delivered by artist Shahzia Sikander on February 20, 2024 at 5 pm at the Carroll Room, Smith College Campus Center. Two of Sikander's animations—*The Last Post* and *Reckoning*—are featured in the exhibition *Painting the Persianate World: Portable Images on Painting, Cloth and Clay.* Sikander is widely celebrated for subverting Central and South-Asian manuscript painting traditions. Sikander will discuss her contemporary practice—which includes painting, sculpture and animation—and the historical influences that inform her work. Learn more here: https://scma.smith.edu/calendar/miller-lecture-art-shahzia-sikander

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ABOUT SCMA

As a teaching museum affiliated with Smith College, SCMA is dedicated to connecting people to art, ideas and each other by engaging people with firsthand experiences of art, artists and museum practice; collecting,

researching, presenting and preserving an expansive collection of art in the service of learning, teaching and critical dialogue; and by fostering an environment that welcomes diverse perspectives and inspires imagination.

SCMA and the Museum Shop are open to the public year-round Tuesday–Sunday, 11am to 4pm. In SCMA's galleries, classrooms and Cunningham Center for the Study of Prints, Drawings and Photographs visitors experience a world-class collection that includes modern and contemporary art, American and western European masterworks, antiquities, emerging collections of Asian and African art and a comprehensive collection of works on paper.

In 2023, a generous gift from Smith College alumnae Jan Fullgraf Golann '71 and Jane Timken '64 enabled the museum to eliminate all admission fees. Generous support is provided by Art Bridges Foundation's Access for All program. This funding will be used to provide further access to art through a wide range of initiatives. SCMA will invest in access and audience development with extended hours, innovative programming and student outreach.

An accredited member of the American Alliance of Museums and a founding member of Museums 10, a regional cultural collaboration, SCMA is also a member of the College Art Association and the New England Museum Association.

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