

Afternoon lectures

The Asian Art Society in the Netherlands (Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst, VVAK)

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Auditorium Rijksmuseum

Title and affiliation

Amélie Couvrat Desvergnés

Paper conservator-Atelier Gebouw-Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

Title

Pahari paintings and drawings from the Rijksmuseum: techniques of production and approach to conservation.

Abstract

The Rijksmuseum Collection owns about 45 painting and 5 drawings from the Pahari schools in India. Pahari art found patronage in Rajput princedoms located in the foothills of the Himalayas, which stretches from in Jammu-Kashmir in the West, to Himachal Pradesh in the East. The various schools developed in the second half of the 17th century and flourished until the mid-19th century. The Rijksmuseum paintings constitute a representative survey of the production in terms of depictions and styles, from the Chamba, Mankot, Guler or Kangra states.

The presentation will explore the techniques and the materials of the Pahari painters. The drawings embody the making process involved. From pounce to colour application, relevant details such as annotations, colours indications and corrections, allow to better understand the elaboration of a composition and the various steps of production which are not seen while looking at a complete painting. Close-up images of some paintings will also reveal interesting features. Finally, the presentation will address some questions related to the conservation of such objects. Aside wears in the support such as tears, holes and creases and invasive old repairs, the paint can be affected by pigment loss or flaking which is caused by several factors combined together. Suitable treatments should therefore be implemented to contribute to the preservation of these objects.

Bio

Amélie Couvrat Desvergnés-MA- is a book and paper conservator specialized in Islamic and Indo-Islamic manuscripts and paintings. She worked at the Museum of Islamic Art in Qatar and more than ten years as free-lance conservator in France. At present she works the paper atelier of the conservation department at Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. She has conducted several research projects in the field Technical Art History and Materiality and she is now focusing her interest in Pahari drawings and paintings from the Rijksmuseum.