



The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting

Molly Emma Aitken

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The genre of Rajput painting flourished between the 16th and 19th centuries in the kingdoms that ruled what is now the Indian state of Rajasthan (place of rajas). Rajput paintings depicted the nobility and court spectacle as well as scenes from Krishna's life, the Hindu epics, and court poetry. Many Rajput kingdoms developed distinct styles, though they shared common conventions. This important book surveys the overall tradition of Indian Rajput painting, while developing new methods to ask unprecedented questions about meaning.

Through a series of in-depth studies, Aitken shows how traditional formal devices served as vital components of narrative meaning, expressions of social unity, and rich sources of intellectual play. Supported by beautiful full-color illustrations of rare and often inaccessible paintings, Aitken's study spans five centuries, providing a comprehensive and innovative look at the Rajasthan's court painting traditions and their continued relevance to contemporary art.

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