

GAGOSIAN GALLERY



Indian influence in new exhibit at Aga Khan Museum *Artwork collected by and created by British painter Howard Hodgkin*

Clark Kim



Howard Hodgkin's art piece Indian Summer is on exhibit at the Visions of Mughal India: The Collection of Howard Hodgkin and Inspired by India: Paintings by Howard Hodgkin Wednesday at the Aga Khan Museum.
Staff photo/DAN PEARCE

Two new exhibitions, distinct but connected by one man's passion for India, open to the public starting Saturday, Feb. 21 at the Aga Khan Museum.

One of the exhibitions called the Visions of Mughal India: The Collection of Howard Hodgkin features 60 historical works from the British artist's personal collection.

The other exhibition to be displayed in tandem is called Inspired by India: Paintings by Howard Hodgkin, which features eight of Hodgkin's expressive paintings.

"Be prepared for the visceral punch that each one of these works delivers," said Henry Kim, Aga Khan Museum CEO and director. "It's no exaggeration to say Howard Hodgkin is one of Britain's most important painters."

He added that it's an honour to be the only North American venue to display his paintings along with his collection.

"I hope the Visions of Mughal India and Inspired by India will appeal to a broad range of visitors," Kim said.

Filiz Cakir Phillip, Aga Khan Museum associate curator, shared her excitement in being able to bring both exhibitions to the Don Mills Road and Eglinton Avenue area museum.

“I thought I was the luckiest person in the whole world,” said Cakir Phillip, who flew out to England to meet Hodgkin in late May to select works for both exhibitions.

Cakir Phillip noted that for Hodgkin, creating and collecting art are inseparable activities, which he started doing when he was very young.

The Aga Khan Museum is the first institution to display both his paintings and his collection of works together in one venue, she said.

Cakir Phillip added that she worked closely with Hodgkin and Oxford University’s Ashmolean Museum, the co-organizer of Visions of Mughal India, during the preparation and installation of the two exhibits at the North York-based museum.

“You need trust. Otherwise, it doesn’t work,” she said.

The collection of historical works on display includes elephant portraits, finely detailed drawings of flora and fauna, and illustrations of epics and myths.

The works were produced in the Mughal court, the Deccani Sultanates, and the Rajput kingdoms between the late 16th and early 19th centuries.

Hodgkin himself is expected to visit the museum sometime in late spring to participate in a public talk. Both exhibitions run until June 21.

The Aga Khan Museum is at 77 Wynford Dr. For more information, visit agakhanmuseum.org