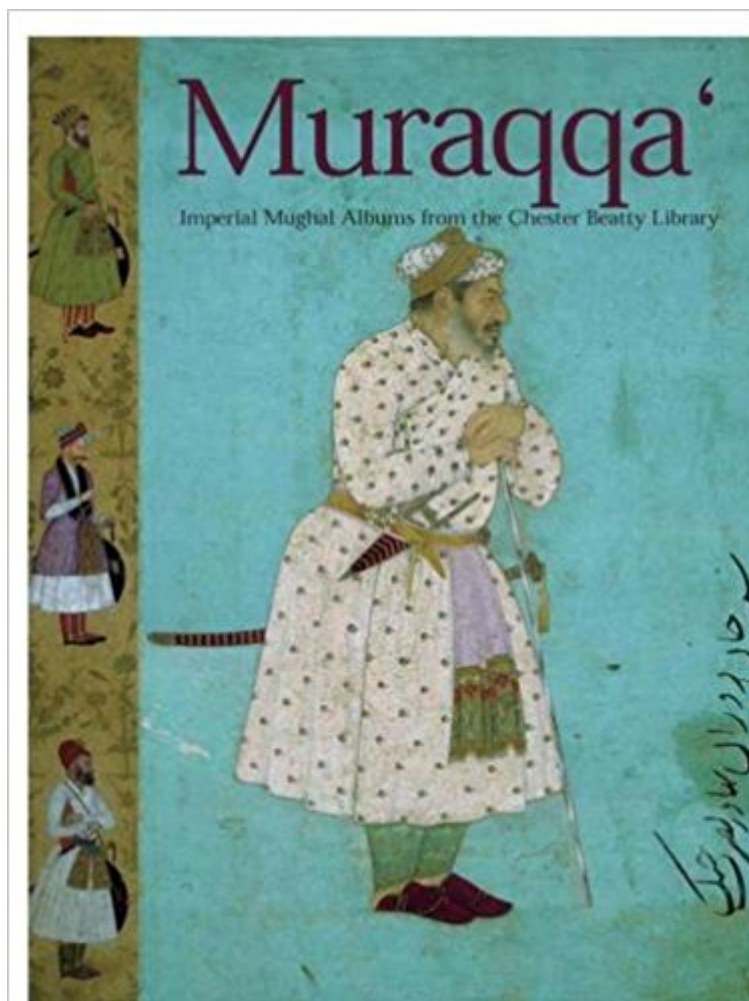


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# Muraqqa': Imperial Mughal Albums From The Chester Beatty Library



## Synopsis

Throughout history, people have assembled albums that record their lives and the world around them. Among the most remarkable of all albums ever created are those made in the years 1600-1657 for the emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The Mughal dynasty ruled India for more than three centuries, but the period of greatest artistic production was that of these two great emperors, and the albums of paintings and calligraphy (called *muraqqa'* in Persian), that they assembled now serve as a window to understanding the history and culture of this important period of Indian history. The paintings in the albums include formal (often symbolic) portraits of the emperors themselves, depictions of members of the royal family in relaxed private settings, portraits of courtiers, Sufi saints and mystics, genre scenes, and natural history subjects. This lavishly-illustrated, color catalogue, contains essays by Elaine Wright, Curator of the Islamic Collections, Chester Beatty Library, Wheeler Thackston, Lecturer, Harvard University, Susan Stronge, Curator Asia Department, Victoria and Albert Museum, and Steven Cohen, Textile Specialist, Independent Scholar and Author, London. Exhibition Itinerary The exhibition premieres at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC (May 3 - August 3, 2008). Subsequent venues include the Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan (August 23 - November 16, 2008); the Honolulu Academy of Arts, Hawai'i (December 17, 2008 - March 1, 2009); and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri (March 21 - June 14, 2009).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This lavishly-illustrated, color catalogue contains essays by ELAINE WRIGHT, Curator of the

Islamic Collections, Chester Beatty Library, WHEELER THACKSTON, Lecturer, Harvard University, SUSAN STRONGE, Curator, Asia Department, Victoria and Albert Museum, STEVEN COHEN, Textile Specialist, Independent Scholar and Author, London, and NAVINA HAIDER, Assistant Curator, Department of Islamic Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Sir Alfred Chester Beatty (1875-1968) was an Anglo-American mining magnate who collected Islamic books during the height of the Gilded Age. During a relatively short period of twenty years, he assembled one of the finest collections of Mughal miniature art. It was a collection that he added onto for the next thirty years. Near the end of his life, Beatty fled high taxation rates in Great Britain and moved to Ireland where he established the Alfred Beatty Library. "Muraqqa", Persian for album, is a very high quality catalogue produced for a travelling American art exhibit. One of the hallmarks of Islamic civilization were the exquisitely executed books that rulers assembled to record their lives and the world they lived in. The art of the book reached one of its high points in the albums produced from 1600-1657 during the reign of the Mughal Emperors. Miniature art during this period reflected the heady mixture of Persian, Mongol, Hindu and Christian influences. "Muraqqa" is an exquisitely produced 500 page study of Beatty's album collection. Every aspect of the book is first rate. The reproductions are beautifully done and the text is well written and easy to follow. My only advice is purchase the hardback edition. This is a collectable book that will be passed down through the generations. Highly recommended.

A rare treasure. It must be owned

This is the most comprehensive collection of Mughal miniatures that I have come across. Visually stunning, with highly readable text, this is a must-have for anyone who appreciates fine art. This is not just a reference book; it is a beautiful volume to browse. Take a trip through Mughal and Indian history with no time machine required!

I loved this book since I browsed for the first time. Just a remark: most of the illustrations are too little to fully appreciate. I can't find a reason why.

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