

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 2007

MEDIA CONTACT: Erin Hogan
(312) 443-3664
ehogan@artic.edu

Chai Lee
(312) 443-3625
clee4@artic.edu

ART INSTITUTE OFFERS RARE GLIMPSE INTO INDIAN COURTLY LIFE

IN NEW TWO-PART INSTALLATION

Splendor and Intimacy Features Objects from Permanent Collection Seldom On View

To celebrate the 60th year of India and Pakistan's independence, the Art Institute of Chicago is mounting a rare exhibition of northern Indian miniature paintings and decorative arts, including jades, jewelry and weapons. This collection of paintings and other objects, which are rarely on view, offers a fascinating, close look into the courtly life of the Imperial Mughals and the different Rajput dynasties from South Asia between the 16th



and the 19th centuries. *Splendor and Intimacy: Mughal and Rajput Courtly Life* illustrates the richness and intricacy of the arts of the court and will be on view, in two parts, from **August 4, 2007 through February 3, 2008, in Gallery 101A.**

The alliance—periodically hostile and fiercely loyal at times—until the arrival of the British Raj—between the imperial Mughal dynasty and the rugged, aristocratic Rajputs (Hindu kings who ruled smaller hereditary states) led to the exquisite fusion of

Persianate Islamic art with native Indian traditions. The centuries of interaction between the Mughals and Rajputs created a truly golden age of art and architecture, seen most magnificently in the Taj Mahal.

The art in *Splendor and Intimacy* is just as emblematic of the wealth and creative vitality of this period of alliance, particularly the miniature paintings on display that reveal the private and public lives of the Mughal and Rajput rulers. Offered here are a magnificent depiction of a Rajput ruler in full procession, formal portraits of rulers and courtiers, intimate scenes within the *zenana* (harem) of a palace—even a maiden at her toilette. From the highly ceremonial and commemorative portraits to the glimpses of courtly life “behind the fortress walls,” the miniature paintings give viewers the full spectrum of court life, serving as both historical documents as well as stunning examples of the techniques and concerns of the artists and craftsmen who made them. The textiles, arms—including a dagger studded with rubies and diamonds—and jewelry also on view in the exhibition are details from the miniatures writ large, showing luxurious materials, and reverence for objects in court life.

Splendor and Intimacy is presented in two parts, with a second installation of paintings and objects in November. This exhibition is a part of a series of events to be presented this summer and fall in celebration of Indian and Pakistani culture at the Art Institute and in commemoration of the 60 years of independence of India and Pakistan.

Splendor and Intimacy: Mughal and Rajput Courtly Life is organized by the Art Institute of Chicago and curated by Madhuvanti Ghose, Alsdorf Associate Curator of Indian and Islamic Art, Department of Asian and Ancient Art, the Art Institute of Chicago.

###

IMAGE CREDIT: Mewar Rajasthan. *Maharana Bhim Singh Riding in Procession*, c. 1820. Everett and Ann McNear Collection.

SUMMER HOURS

MAY 31 TO AUGUST 31

10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

10:30 a.m.–9:00 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Target Free Summer Evenings after 5:00 p.m.

10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday.

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Please check www.artic.edu before your visit.

Admission: Adults, \$12.00; children 12 and over, students, and seniors, \$7.00; children under 12 free; members always free. Free Evenings are free to all, except for certain special exhibitions that may require full or extra admission fee. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Check Us Out" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago. To reach the Art Institute on the World Wide Web, contact us at: <http://www.artic.edu/aic>
The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park.