

**PIERCED WINDOW SCREEN**

Made in red sandstone, this type of jaali or pierced screen work was done in hand by the artisans and craftsmen in the Mughal period, which was characterised by the intricate floral and symmetrical patterns that provided the look and feel of royalty as well as performed a practical purpose, such as providing for proper ventilation as well as lighting as electric bulbs or tube lights were not prevalent back in the days. The use of lamps was mostly in the night and I feel that the patterns and symmetry filter the light and let only a little or sufficient amount of light to enter the room. In the course of the day, the movement of the sun as well as the patterns in silhouette across the floor would enhance the pleasure of their intricate geometry.

Found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
Dated second half of the 16th century

Devika Singh FYS E



### **INK POT OF THE EMPEROR JAHANGIR**

Made in nephrite stone and gold, this ink pot was very sturdy, monumental, artfully rounded, richly adorned and so well balanced, that it could hardly be overturned. This dignified ink pot was seen as a poetic visual symbol of the empire inherited by Jahangir. There can be seen detailed stone carving of flowers, calligraphy as well as some motifs on the ink pot which show the craftsmanship of the artisans. The carving is seen to be very detailed and intricate, which is visible in the detailed calligraphy. The lid can be seen having etching work of uniform tiny flowers along the perimeter. I believe they used the gold metal as the lid of the pot because of its non corrosive properties and to provide that elegant and royal touch to the ink pot.

Found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
Dated 1618-19 AD

Devika Singh FYS E



**CARPET WITH PALM TREES, IBEXES, AND BIRD SLATE**

I think the carpet shows how the bigger animal eats the smaller one and hence, the balance in the ecosystem. OR the tiger/lion attacking the prey depicts power. Also the various kind of, short and long, trees and plants tell me that it's a scene from a forest or jungle. The border also has flowers on it of various shapes. The use of various elements and too many details seek close attention. The eye does not rest on one particular element of design, shape and even the background colour of the field. The observer can't say one particular motif as the most important one. Showing animals and flowers was the most common element shown in Mughal art.

Dated 16th–early 17th century

Niharika Arora FYS E



### **BRACELET**

The use of gold was the symbol of prosperity for Mughals. And the flowers and the elephants show royalty, these were also the main aspect of Mughal art. The intricacy of the work shows that it was done manually. The use of flowers and animals was very common in Mughal art. Almost every work has these two elements, so does this bracelet. It probably belonged to some one who had a higher status because of the detailing work and colours.

Dated 18th–19th century

Niharika Arora FYS E



**JEWELLED CASKET WITH BIRDS**

19<sup>th</sup> century

Medium- Nephrite; inlaid with gold and precious gems

Kept at- MET museum

This is a jewellery casket from the Mughal era, adorned with various precious gems such as diamonds, sapphires, rubies, pearl and mother of pearl. This object is a great example to show the exemplary work of the Mughal artisans. The intricacy in the elements of the box show how highly skilled the artisans were. There are motifs of birds and flowers throughout this object. As for Mughal art, the use of flowers and birds was an important element and is commonly seen through different objects and paintings, was mainly for a visual purpose or could have been a way to document what they saw around them, so that people could visualise what they saw around them. Floral motifs formed a huge part of Persian art and architecture and Mughals being Persians continued to use the same motifs. The profuse use of gold was another common feature of Mughal art; all the various elements in this box have been beautifully highlighted with gold paint, the use of gold in the Mughal era was a symbol of prosperity and thus were used in abundance. Mughal art was mainly a fusion of Persian and Indian art forms and I believe this jewellery casket captures both art forms perfectly.

Dipannita Chowdhury FYS F



Flower- style box with drawers

17<sup>th</sup> century

Medium- Wood

Kept at- MET museum

This is a small box with drawers made of wood. The motifs on the entire box are divided as per the sections and the drawers vary in size. Mughal art was a fusion of Indian and Persian elements and were brought to India by the rulers. The basic foundation remained the same with the motifs developing over the years. Most Mughal art consisted of basic elements such as floral motifs, borders and gold naqashi. The box too has the above mentioned elements with the bifurcation of the drawers shown with borders. The drawer has handles on the two sides, making it portable. This proved to be useful since the emperor and his courtmen were constantly on the move.

Dipannita Chowdhury FYS F

### Mango Shaped Flask



The above picture is taken from the Met Museum a flask shaped like the fruit mango . The flask's main material looks like glass with gold plated patterns and precious pearls . The pearls make the whole flask aesthetically appealing to see . The use of mango here is I think maybe the Mughals loved mangoes more than any other fruit while the golden patterns are a key feature in all Mughal art and artefacts .

The use of colourful pearls is again a Mughal culture as they loved making their arts vibrant with bright colours .

At the top , the flask's cap is exactly similar to the Mughal turban or a crown which the emperors wear . It has the same colours and features to that of an emperors crown .

Lastly , all of the above elements make it sure that the flask is from a Mughal period .

: Tanushree Himmatramka ( FYS-F)

## Footed Bowl



The above picture is taken from the Met Museum which shows a bowl taken from the Mughal era . The bowl according to me would have been in use for keeping fruits or maybe flowers at the dining table .

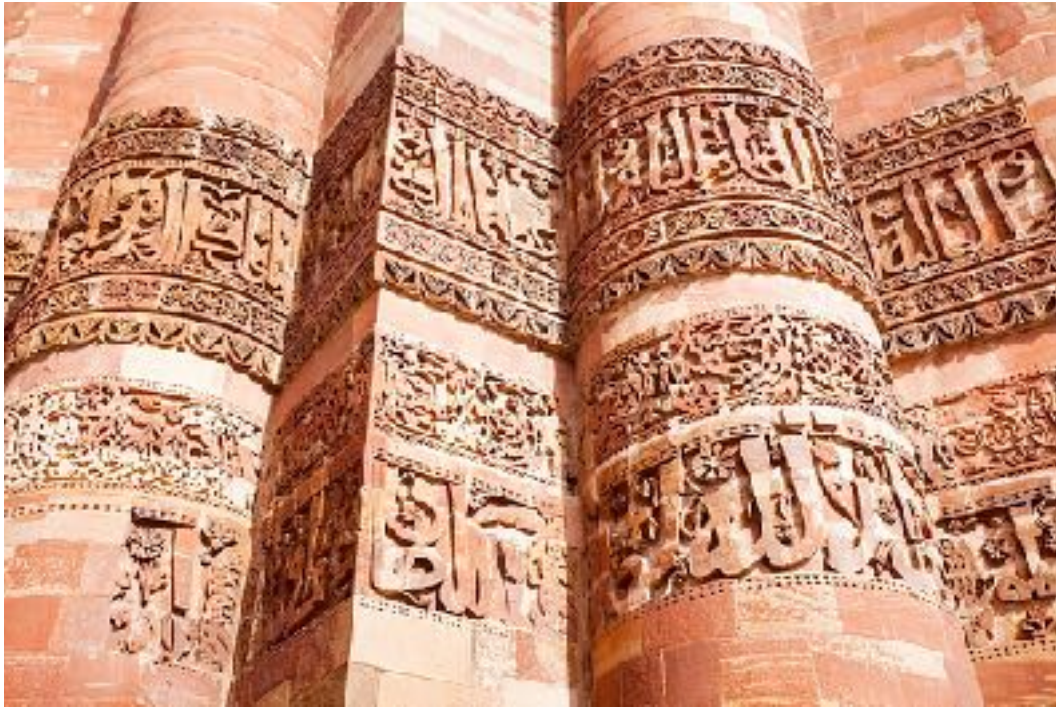
The carving here as we can see is of gold and silver which is something typical of Mughal era . The use of gold and silver in its art and culture was something very prominent in Mughal era . The form of the bowl here looks like a lotus to me , the below one being an inverted one though .

The patterns are also enclosed in an oval area and inside that we can see flowers and leaves being made.

The ovalish carvings with the use of gold and silver as the prime colour scheme makes it a fully Mughal dominant object .

:Tanushree Himmatramka (FYS-F)





### MUGHAL INSCRIPTIONS

The Qutub Minar is the tallest building in the world made of bricks, Qutub Minar is a 73-meter high tower that consists of five storeys and a spiral staircase with 379 steps.

Built-in red sandstone, Qutub Minar is a real masterpiece of Mughal Islamic craftsmanship. The design is based on the Minaret of Jam located in Western Afghanistan, which marks where the ancient city of Firuzkuh once stood.

The translation of the line reads: "This mosque was built by Qutbu-d-din Aibak. May God have mercy on him who should pray for the faith of this good builder."

It was art in itself as it was written all over the Qutub Minar at different levels and acted as a part of the decoration of the tall building. It was built in a very beautiful manner which signified the beauty and made a statement of victory .

Dylan Lopez FYS E



**DAGGER WITH SCABBARD( DAGGER ART )**  
1605-27

The hilt of the dagger is constructed of heavy sections of gold over an iron core and its scabbard mounts are of solid gold. All the intricately engraved surfaces are set with gems and colored glass finely cut with floral forms. The designs closely parallel those in Mughal painting of the early seventeenth century, suggesting the dagger dates from the reign of Emperor Jahangir (1605-27), whose deep love of nature, especially flowers, is well documented in his memoirs, the "Tuzuk." The blade is forged of watered steel. The daggers handle seems to have taken days and days in the making. It is simply beautiful to look at and definitely beautiful to hold within your hands. The art on the daggers handle also signifies the beauty in the Mughals art of that time and how they focused on such intricate details within any piece of object they added art to.



**DANCING CELESTIAL DEITY (DEVATA)**

The Dancing Celestial Deity is a sandstone sculpture of 12th century India. The sculpture is trying to depict the traditional dance form of that period and the culture revolving around the traditional dance form. The lady in the sculpture is filled with ornaments from top to bottom. It shows the rich culture of dance and the people who performed it. The lady has no arms or legs but still manages to depict a position that would be difficult for most people having arms and legs. The Dancing Celestial Deity is a sandstone sculpture of 12th century India. The sculpture is trying to depict the traditional dance form of that period and the culture revolving around the traditional dance form. The lady in the sculpture is filled with ornaments from top to bottom. It shows the rich culture of dance and the people who performed it. The lady has no arms or legs but still manages to depict a position that would be difficult for most people having arms and legs. According to me, the sculpture is trying to depict the flexibility and the rich heritage and culture that revolved around dance in Ancient India. According to me, the sculpture is trying to depict the flexibility and the rich heritage and culture that revolved around dance in Ancient India.

Maanya Shah FYS E



**TIPUS TIGER**

This is a life-sized wooden tiger mauling a Caucasian figure in European clothes. This piece is kept in the British Museum. This piece is called Tipu's tiger. Tipu's Tiger is an eighteenth-century automaton or mechanical toy created for Tipu Sultan, the Muslim ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in India. The carved and painted wood casing represents a tiger savaging a near life-size European man. Mechanisms inside the tiger and man's bodies make one hand of the man move, emit a wailing sound from his mouth and grunts from the tiger. In addition a flap on the side of the tiger folds down to reveal the keyboard of a small pipe organ with 18 notes.

According to me the tiger basically stands for Tipu and the fact that the tiger is killing a British man shows his hatred for the British of the East India Company who ruled India at that time. Through this piece the hatred and intentions of Tipu trying to kill and free India from the British are very evident.

Maanya Shah FYS E



**PAIR OF FLOWER STYLE DOORS (A.D. 1600–1800)**

The flower style made in the second half of the 17th century associated with the height of Mughal aesthetics and refinement finds expression in this pair of carved wood doors. The depiction of complete flowering plants, carved in low relief and placed in a symmetrical arrangement, is the hallmark of this style, which had its genesis in the reign of the Mughal emperor Jahangir (1605–27). In accordance with their patrons' interests, artists of this period studied European herbals, borrowing the techniques of combining front and side views and infusing the petals and leaves of the plants with a sense of movement. During the reign of Jahangir's son Shah Jahan (1627–58), and especially from the 1630s on, the plant studies were transformed into decorative motifs, arranged in rows to cover textiles, objects, and architectural spaces. As they were incorporated into stylized, symmetrically balanced compositions like those on the carved dadoes and inlaid panels at the Taj Mahal

Sushmita Mahajan FYS E



**BASE FOR A WATER PIPE (HUQQA) (LATE 17TH CENTURY)**

This huqqa base, with irises and other flowers, would have originally been fitted with a long stem supporting a brazier and a pipe through which the smoker would have inhaled.

Many of the known examples of huqqa bases from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were made in the Deccan and decorated with the type of metal inlay known as bidri, in which the base metal of the object is darkened through a chemical process in order to highlight the inlaid metal of the ornament.

Sushmita Mahajan FYS E



**BRASS MUGHAL WRITING BOX, INDIA, LATE C19TH**

This brass Mughal writing box is an excellent example of its kind, featuring as it does a pen box (kalamdan) with two tubular pen cases, an ink well (roshandani) and a further affixed compartment, possibly for the storage of sand for ink drying. Writing boxes were used throughout the Islamic world, their form varying considerably between Persia where, by the period of our piece, they were frequently made of lacquered or painted wood or papier mache as well as metal, the Ottoman lands where silver was a more common medium and Mughal and British India. In the early Mughal period, remarkably ornate, jewel encrusted, gold writing boxes were a feature of courtly life. Whilst this form of pen box was relatively early, as with our example, brass later became the more popular medium, though bronze and silver are also known. Such writing boxes were used by scribes, merchants and similar professions, were sometimes given as gifts within aristocratic and well-to-do families at the time of the recipients' first writing lessons and were also known to have been used by some European employees of the East India Company.

Vinay George FYS F



**MUGHAL BRASS RIBBED FLASK, INDIA, C17TH**

This simple, long necked water flask (surahi) is a most elegant example of its kind. Such objects were an early and prominent development of Mughal metalwork. In addition, representations of surahi were frequently used as a motif in architectural decoration, featuring in the wall panels of Mughal mausolea such as the Agra tomb of Itimad-ad Daula and in royal palaces, a striking example being the Jai Mandir mirror hall at Amber.

Michel offers excellent illustrations of this phenomenon (p.32-33). Extraordinary jewelled surahis of gold, such as those shown in Zebrowski (p.68, p.70), were made for the Mughal court from the C17th onwards. More frequently, examples are found in silver and a variety of bronzes and brasses. Given its light and reflective appearance, this example may be of formerly tinned brass.

This piece stands firmly on a short, splayed foot, rising into a well rounded, slightly ovoid, vertically ridged body, suggesting a segmented fruit-like form of everted gadroons, a pattern described as 'melonate' by Zebrowski. These segments gather at the base of a slightly flaring, faceted neck above a simple decorative band. The neck is balanced by a further circlet at its topmost point.