



## **ARTS OF MUGHAL INDIA c.1550-1750**

**The course will be held on WEDNESDAY MORNINGS, from 11am-1pm at the Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EP. It will start on 20<sup>th</sup> September and run for five weeks until 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017, and will be led by Ursula Weekes.**

1. **Mughal Power** - This session focuses on how paintings, jewellery and other luxury objects were used by successive Mughal Emperors to project their divinely-ordained authority as rulers of India. We will consider how they visualised their dynastic connections to the Timurids, created visual links to Hindu concepts of kingship and appropriated European symbolism to articulate a vision of their own Messianic rule.
2. **Mughal Palaces** - The Mughals are famous for their architecture of palaces, tombs and gardens. This session covers some of the most iconic buildings of the Mughals, from Agra Fort, and Akbar's palace at Fatehpur Sikri to the Taj Mahal and the garden pavilions of Mughal queens. We will also consider how these buildings were visualised in contemporary Mughal paintings.
3. **Mughal Portraiture** - The Mughals developed a profound interest in realistic portraiture, partly as a response to their engagement with European art, brought by merchants and ambassadors to India from the late sixteenth century onwards. This session looks at the motivations behind Mughal court portraiture and also questions the boundaries between observed likeness and naturalistic stereotype.
4. **Mughal Pleasure** - Pleasure was a serious pursuit at the Mughal court! This session looks at paintings, buildings and objects connected to the Mughal court at leisure, including hunting, celebrating festivals such as Holi, in pursuit of love, or the life of the harem.
5. **Mughal Patchworks** - The Mughals called their albums *Muraqqa*, which literally means 'patchwork'. Mughal albums were beautifully woven together with paintings and calligraphies drawn from a wide variety of sources. This session considers what the Mughals were trying to achieve in their albums. In some cases, they were important sites of art historical memory and aesthetic dialogue between Persian, Indian and European cultures. Other albums served more dynastic functions, while some were tailored to a female audience as marriage gifts.

**Dr Ursula Weekes** is an Associate Lecturer at The Courtauld Institute of Art, where she lectures on Mughal painting. She studied History at Cambridge and took her PhD at The Courtauld Institute of Art. She has taught at the Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in Delhi and has worked as Supervisor of the Print Room at the Ashmolean Museum. Her PhD was published as *Early Engravers and their Public* (Harvey Miller 2004) and currently she is writing a book on *The Great Mughals and the Art of Europe*.