

EXHIBITION
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RELEASE

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CULTURE AS A LIVING CONDITION EXPLORES THE CONTINUITY OF
19th and 20th-c INDIAN ART AT THE DAVIS MUSEUM

Wellesley, MA — *Culture as a Living Condition*, now on exhibit in the Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College, examines the continuity of South Asian artistic traditions by looking at Classical Indian miniatures, 19th-century colonial photography and the vivid and sensually colored paintings of contemporary Indian artist Bhupen Khakhar. This installation explores class and social standing, spirituality and sexuality, colonial conventions of portraiture, and figure and landscape painting as expressed in contemporary and 19th-century colonial India. The exhibition continues through June 17.

The exhibition was curated by Assistant Professor Geeta Patel of the Women's Studies Department at Wellesley College and Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow Anne Collins Smith.

“Contemporary artist Bhupen Khakhar takes his visual iconography from photography, miniatures, early Indian sculptural traditions, local religious artifacts, and European modernism,” notes Ms. Patel. “Khakhar maintains strong Indian cultural and artistic traditions though the influence of western artists can be seen in his work,” adds Ms. Smith.

Each semester, the Davis Museum works with professors to develop a thematic installation in the Print Study Corridor using works from the Museum's permanent collection. *Culture as a Living Condition* was developed by Mellon Curatorial Fellow Anne Collins Smith with Assistant Professor Geeta Patel and her Women's Studies course, “Gender and Writing in South Asia.” The installation is cosponsored with [the Kathryn Wasserman Davis '28 Fund for World Cultures and Leadership](#).

Bhupen Khakhar's works are shown courtesy of a loan from the Herwitz Collection, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA.

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The following programs, held in conjunction with Culture as a Living Condition, are free and open to the public:

April 20, 12:30 – 1:30pm Women’s Study Lounge, 422 Founder’s Hall

Kiran Nagarkar

Readings

Nagarkar recently won the Indian equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize for his novel—Cuckold. He has published short stories, novels, and novellas. He writes plays and movie scripts.

April 24, 1:30 – 3:00pm English Department Lounge

Kiran Nagarkar

Workshop on Writing

April 25 12.30-2.00 pm--Collins Cinema

Dr. Debra Diamond

“Nineteenth Century Rajasthani Art”

Dr. Diamond is the Assistant Curator for South Asian and South East Asian Art at the Freer, Sackler Galleries in Washington, and works on various nineteenth century styles of Rajasthani art.

April 27, 12.30-2 pm--Collins Cinema

Susan Bean

“How Does One Read Contemporary Indian Art?”

Susan Bean curated the recent exhibition "Timeless Visions: Contemporary Art of South Asia," at the Peabody Essex Museum and arranged for the loan of works by Bhupen Khakhar to the Davis Museum.

May 8, 1:30-3pm, Print Corridor, Davis Museum and Cultural Center

Geeta Patel, Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies

Open Classroom Session

The Davis Museum and Cultural Center, located at 106 Central Street in Wellesley, Mass., is open Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday from 11-5, Wednesday and Thursday from 11-8, and Sunday 1-5. Admission is free and free parking is available. Recorded information about Museum exhibitions, events, and directions is available by calling 781-283-2051.

An architecturally acclaimed museum designed by Rafael Moneo, The Davis Museum and Cultural Center exhibits its permanent collection of over 7,000 objects spanning 3,000 years of art. The Museum presents provocative and nationally recognized exhibitions and educational programs throughout the year.

This year Wellesley College celebrates its 125th anniversary, its special place in liberal arts education and the world, the accomplishments of its alumnae, and the significance of

the college, its historic beauty and the continuing legacy of the landscape and architecture.

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