

TEACHERS' LEARNING RESOURCE: Information and Activities for Teachers

Notes inspired by *The Indian Portrait 1560-1860* exhibition in 2010.
Comparisons between selected works from the exhibition
The Indian Portrait 1560 – 1860 and the National Portrait
Gallery permanent Collection.

Information and Activities for Teachers



**Sultan Muhammad
'Adil Shah of Bijapur
and Ikhlas Khan riding
on an elephant Bijapur**
by Haidar 'Ali and
Ibrahim Khan c.1645
Howard Hodgkin

Information and Activities for Teachers

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Introduction



This resource is designed to support Secondary School art teachers, and teachers of other subject areas, in working with selected portraits from the National Portrait Gallery's exhibition *The Indian Portrait 1560-1860* and to compare them with artworks in the permanent Collection of the National Portrait Gallery. *The Indian Portrait 1560 – 1860*, ran from 11 March – 20 June 2010, and was the first ever exhibition devoted to Indian portraiture, it included 60 outstanding portraits drawn from collections in the UK, USA and Europe. The exhibition set out to show that Indian portraiture, an area of artistic achievement overlooked in Britain, should be seen alongside other outstanding portrait styles from around the world.

This resource draws parallels between certain paintings from the exhibition and the Collection that were made at a similar time, for similar reasons and which share ideas, compositions and techniques. The comparisons have also been selected to draw connections in terms of symbolism, structure, narrative, allegory, themes of royalty, propaganda and domestic life. The resource enables teachers and students to draw comparisons between Indian and Western portraiture in terms of themes, art practice, technique, pose and gesture, iconography and symbolism. A variety of portraits are explored through comparative discussion points and practical activities. What was really remarkable about the works in *The Indian Portrait* exhibition was the fact that we knew who most of the sitters were, as they could be identified by texts and likeness, illustrating their personal histories. Continents and cultures may separate these works, but humanity and art unite them.

As well as considering links between historical works in the Collection and the works in *The Indian Portrait*, this resource also supports study of contemporary approaches and investigation into new perspectives on portraiture. The Singh Twins offer a contemporary response, and their work can be viewed at www.singhtwins.co.uk. The twin sisters are contemporary British artists whose paintings explore issues of social, political, religious and multicultural debate.

This resource was revised after the close of *The Indian Portrait 1560-1860* and *Contemporary Connections: The Singh Twins* to remove selected images with a limited copyright.

Information and Activities for Teachers

How to use this resource



Teachers can use this resource in a variety of ways. This learning material can support offsite and onsite study, including pre-visit preparation for self-directed visits to the Gallery, and post-visit activities and assignments. The resource is also useful if you are unable to visit the Gallery.

The portrait projects suggested are conceived with demands of Key Stages 3 and 4, and GCSE in mind, but are also designed to be adapted by teachers of Primary students and other Secondary subjects, including KS3 Cross-curricular. The intention of the resource is to encourage all levels of debate around the diverse selection.

The information and activities are particularly relevant to these aspects of the Curriculum:

- KS 1&2** Unit 1A Self-portrait
- KS 1&2** Unit 3A Investigating pattern
- KS3** Unit 7A Self-image
- KS3** Unit 8A Objects and viewpoints
- KS3** Unit 9A Life events
- KS3** Unit 10gen Visiting a gallery, museum or site and other specific units from Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, (QCA).

A Level Contextual Study

Making contextual links between past and present across formal elements and exploring visual links.

THE INDIAN PORTRAIT 1560–1860

This exhibition told the story of the Indian portrait from 1560-1860. This story is a fascinating journey, encompassing notions of the real and the ideal, the observed and the imagined. Developing from its origins at the Mughal court under the emperor Akbar, portraiture spread to the Islamic sultanates of the Deccan and then to the small Hindu kingdoms in Rajasthan and the Punjab Hills. In all of these regions, distinctly local styles were overlaid on essentially Mughal prototypes. European influence returns emphatically at the end of the story during the so-called Company period, when Western concepts of realism were applied by Indian artists to local subjects.

The role of the portrait in India is many faceted – as an official chronicle or eye-witness account, and as a means of revealing the intimate moments of everyday life. The portrait as a tool of propaganda is not unusual in the history of art, but its proliferation and mastery in the Mughal and Rajput courts brought it to a new level of artistry and style. The rise of the ‘observed’ portrait, due largely to European influences, enabled the Mughal artist to address realism, and in turn brought about the ‘empathy’ portrait. This depicted the sitter, for the first time in Indian art, as a psychological entity, revealing their fallibility and compassion, or just simply how they really looked.

The Indian portrait is the sophisticated product of indigenous development and foreign influence. The paintings are a record of a rich and complex history, embracing influences from Iran and Europe as well as local Hindu and Muslim traditions. They not only demonstrate a growing self-awareness of how Indians saw themselves, but also how they wished to be seen.

This free exhibition celebrated the beauty, power and humanity of works of art, that showed that the Indian portrait can stand shoulder to shoulder with outstanding examples of portraiture from around the world.

The Indian Portrait 1560-1860 was curated by Kapil Jariwala and Rosemary Crill, Senior Curator, in the Asian Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Discussion Points on Portraiture



General discussion on portraiture



- How do we judge if a portrait looks like the sitter?
- How does an artist achieve this?
- Does a portrait have to look like the sitter?
- How do artists use symbolism, narrative, allegory and iconography to give insights to a sitter?
- What are *your* main facial characteristics?
- Do *you* resemble anyone in your family?
- Are there particular family traits that recur? Like brown eyes and curly hair?
- Take a look at the royal family, identify visual characteristics that are shared by some members. Who looks like whom?

Discussion on Indian portraiture



- What are some techniques used in Indian miniature painting to capture a likeness?
- Which media and materials are used most commonly?
- How else do miniature paintings reflect a sitter's character, physically and psychologically?
- What is the role of framing and setting in Indian portraits, especially miniatures?
- What are some roles of the portrait in India? Some examples are eyewitness accounts, official chronicles, moments in everyday life.
- Research the different periods and styles in Indian portraiture, including Mughal and Rajput courts, and the Company Style. What are the similarities and differences?

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

This section looks at common aspects of the works from *The Indian Portrait* and from the Gallery's permanent Collection using discussion points, activities and project work to draw out shared characteristics and formal and historical differences.

1. Perspective – carpets and surrounds



Raja Bhupat Pal of Basohli smoking a huqqa

Mankot, c.1685
Howard Hodgkin



Akbar holding discussions with Muslims and Jesuit priests

Mughal by Narsingh c.1603-05
© The Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin



Akbar had no intention of converting to Christianity, but welcomed religious discussions. This image is one of the earliest showing a realistic portrayal of Europeans in Mughal art. Mughal artists were influenced by the Flemish paintings that were taken to India by Jesuit missionaries.

Take a close look at the paintings, paying special attention to the way the patterned carpets and spaces are painted and depicted by the artists. Neither the Indian works nor those selected from the National Portrait Gallery's Collection seem to follow accepted 'Western' rules of perspective whereby there is a common vanishing point.

Notice how the paintings are divided up compositionally using straight lines in order to organise the different parts of the image, look closely at the parts where the different sections actually meet. The sections represent different aspects of the stories.

The scale and the position of the people portrayed is also often an indication of their power; Raja Bhupat Pal is large and important, Akbar in yellow stands out by virtue of his black oval cushion and the red-covered awning above him. Edward VI is also on a separate dais-throne, and the political 'equality' of those attending the Somerset House Conference is implied by the way that they sit equally spaced around the carpet-covered table.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

King Edward VI and the Pope

by an Unknown artist, c.1570
(NPG 4165)



The Somerset House Conference

by an Unknown artist, 1604
(NPG 665)



📌 Research perspective

For further information and learning activities about traditional Western perspective go to this National Portrait Gallery webpage and view this learning resource:
<http://www.npg.org.uk/learning/digital/portraiture/perspective-seeing-where-you-stand.php>

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

▼ Perspective – carpets and surrounds

Project A Creating a space



- Analyse the composition of two of the four works in this section, ensure one is an Indian portrait. Describe the composition, especially how the artist has depicted visual perspective in a series of small line drawings.
- Invent a story that involves at least three people, including some event that joins them together in some way. For example; preparing a cake for someone's birthday or practising music in a band or having a meal together.

Outline in pencil, a composition into which you can put (at least) these three people, make them relate to the space in some way. Look at the National Portrait Gallery pictures to give you more ideas. For example, there are five different sections to the scene of Henry VIII on his deathbed (*King Edward VI and the Pope*), with five pieces of text scattered around the picture plane.

The Somerset House Conference has four elements – the tapestries, the carpet, the view from the window and the people at the conference.

- Take a rectangular piece of paper and divide up sections of it into different types of spaces for your composition, look carefully at Akbar holding discussions with Muslims and Jesuit priests, and how the spaces are indoor and outdoor, incorporating architectural structures and floor coverings.
- Now paint your story. Select a limited palette of bright colours and enjoy inventing or reappropriating patterns on the walls and floor.
- Do the exercise: 'Making a perspective drawing' that can be found in the 'Perspective seeing where you stand' learning resource from the weblink on the previous page.

Project B Creating a patterned carpet



- Take a piece of thin paper, and fold it in as many equal ways as you can. When it is too small to fold further, unfold it and follow the lines of the creases with a pencil. Now refold the paper in new ways and repeat the pencil marks, creating a complex geometric pattern of lines and folds.
- Experiment with a variety of lines and mark making to invent a motif (a shape that can be repeated) or look at some portraits in this resource to see if there is anything that you can use to help you find an interesting shape, for example the one in Christopher Hatton's cloak (his image is reproduced in the next section). Use at least 6 to 10 different marks, shapes or lines using repetition to create pattern.
- Make a stamp with a rubber by carving out the space you don't want to print. You could also use thick cardboard or foam board.
- Print your motif into the spaces that are made by the lines of the folds. Colour the backgrounds in different colours, inspired by the works in this resource.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

2. Pictures within pictures



Raja Balwant Singh of Jasrota looking at a painting with the artist Nainsukh Jasrota

by Nainsukh, c.1745-1750
Museum Rietberg Zurich.
Gift of Balthasar and Nanni Reinhardt, Barbara and Eberhard Fischer.
© Museum Rietberg Zurich.
Photo: Wettstein & Kauf



Sir Christopher Hatton

by an Unknown artist,
probably 17th century (1589)
(NPG 2162)



William Hogarth self-portrait

by William Hogarth, c. 1757
(NPG 289)



Detail of the miniature of Elizabeth I that he is holding.



Many paintings include pictures of other images within them, artists do this for a variety of reasons including symbolism, narrative and composition. There were a number of professional European portrait painters, such as Johan Zoffany and Tilly Kettle, who worked in India during the eighteenth century.

Another reason for inclusion of images of smaller artworks within the original work is that paintings (and nowadays many forms of reproduced imagery), exist as part of the context of our lives. We have pictures in our homes, displayed at work and schools and so including them makes the artist's work seem more true to life and reveals clues about the

lives and interests of the sitter. The 'secondary' pictures can contain clues, for example Raja Balwant Singh holds a portrait of the Hindu god Krishna (recognisable by his blue skin) and thus confirms his religious faith and appreciation of art. In England, the same kind of artistic device exists. If we examine the portrait of Sir Christopher Hatton, who was Lord Chancellor in 1587 and a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I, we can see how he indicates his loyalty to the queen, by holding a miniature of her in his hand. Other paintings in the National Portrait Gallery Collection show places or events connected to the sitter, for example William Hogarth depicts himself painting a picture on an easel, this work was painted at almost the same time as the one by Jasrota.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

▶ Pictures within pictures

Project A Pictures within pictures



- Go to the National Portrait Gallery website www.npg.org.uk and into 'Collections'. Find and research these three portraits:

Horace Vere, Baron Vere of Tilbury

attributed to Michiel Jansz. van Miereveldt, oil on panel, 1629. NPG 818

John Belasyse (Bellasis), 1st Baron Belasyse of Worlaby

by Gilbert Jackson, oil on canvas, 1636. NPG 5948

William Hogarth

by William Hogarth, c. 1757. NPG 289

- In your sketchbook, develop some pencil drawings of these three works and at least one work in this resource that features a picture within a picture. Analyse the 'secondary' picture, including its content, placement, scale and how it is incorporated or intervenes into the larger picture.
- Find other examples of pictures within pictures and try to find out the function of the 'secondary' picture within your examples. Why do you think the artist made the decision to include this within the larger image?
- Work up your sketches into a larger work, using the compositional elements to inform the final painting. Paint a portrait of a family member or yourself, and include a 'secondary' picture within it. What will you decide to include? What will this tell the viewer about you and your life?

Project B Inside a home



- How do you think that pictures on the walls of homes tell stories or give clues about the people who live there?
- Take 6 to 10 photographs of rooms in your home or someone else's. Include the pictures or mirrors on the walls, and objects and photographs displayed on surfaces in your photograph.
- Choose one of your images and make a simple line pencil drawing of it onto paper, include the 'secondary' pictures to create a work with pictures-within-pictures.
- Now look for different sorts of pictures in magazines, and try to find ones that are the same scale but not necessarily the same subject matter as those in your original photograph. Cut these out and collage them to your drawing. Colour in the rest of the picture.
- Notice how the change of 'secondary' picture influences the way that you 'read' your picture.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

3. Armour



The death of Khan Jahan Lodi
from the *Padshahnama*,
Mughal by 'Abid c.1633,
The Royal Collection. Folio 94b
Royal Collection © 2010 Her Majesty
Queen Elizabeth II



Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex
attributed to Nicholas Hilliard
c.1587 (NPG 6241)



The death of Khan Jahan Lodi has been described as 'among the most complex and original of all Mughal pictures'¹. This painting shows the moment when Afghan rebel Khan Jahan Lodi's head was severed by Shah Jahan's soldiers in February 1631. It is interesting to consider whether this is a portrait of Khan Jahan Lodi, or of the soldiers who hunted him down after he fled the Mughal court two years earlier. Whereas this portrays a real battle, the image by Hilliard depicts costumed knights ready for an entertainment. Queen Elizabeth I was fond of re-enacting chivalric tournaments. Today's battle dress is completely different from that worn by Elizabethan knights and by warring Mughals. In this time, armour was rigid and only flexible if linked together by plating or chainmail.

Think about the way that armour restricts body movement and consider the body (and horse) parts that remained unprotected. Compare the two paintings illustrated - looking at these images, notice the similarities between clothing, accoutrements and armour. The horses are similarly protected and there is a good deal of decoration on these coverings, look closely at the patterning. Notice how the helmets have plumes attached, perhaps the different colours denote different ranks.

Consult this website for images of soldier and horse armour. In India, elephants also had armour and this can also be seen at Leeds Royal Armouries. <http://www.armouries.org.uk/visit-us/leeds/leeds-galleries/tournament/horse-armour>

1. *The Indian Portrait 1560 – 1860*, ed. Rosemary Crill and Kapil Jariwala, National Portrait Gallery, London 2010, page 96

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

Armour

Project A Design a helmet



- Gather together at least twenty images of heads from magazines and newspapers. Select three images, and enlarge the portrait heads onto A4 or A3 size cartridge paper.
- Using a thick dark felt tip pen, draw helmets on the heads, experimenting with how much of the face you leave uncovered. Do at least one with a nose cover. Concentrate on describing the form through using thickness and direction of line. Choose your favourite drawing.
- To create a 3D sculptural helmet, find and purchase an old hat from a charity shop. Use this as the basic shape for the top of your helmet. Now with some flexible but stiff cardboard, cut out shapes that replicate the drawn helmet. Using a needle and thread (or masking tape) to add your cardboard to the hat base.
- Mix acrylic paint and PVA and use this to colour your helmet. You could experiment with camouflage colours, make a sunset-coloured helmet, or paint it a single dark colour. Consider how the colours or patterns would determine the function of your helmet – is its purpose decorative or for war?
- Another approach is to use brown packing tape to describe a 3D helmet form. Start with paper using a classmate's head as your framework in real life scale, and build up the gummed tape on top of the paper base.

Project B Studying natural form: Armoured insects and animals



- Write down as many insects, animals and crustaceans that you can think of that have some kind of hardened outer protection against predators.
- Good examples of armoured animals include a lobster, a rhinoceros and a wood louse. List their similarities. What is the function of their protective skin or exoskeleton?
- Visually research some of these animals with exoskeletons or protective skin, horns or nails, and annotate your drawings. You could draw directly from life or from displays in museums, or from illustrated books or photographs taken at a zoo.
- Make drawings of three of these animals, zooming in on sections of their form, showing texture, line, tone, colour and pattern in a series of line drawings and tonal sketches. Make drawings of detail including scales, webbing, horns, claws and camouflage patterns.
- Use your drawings to inform a design for a set of human armour that reflects aspects of the natural world. You can be as imaginative as you like, and use colour to enhance your design.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

4. Identity of cloth (East/West clothing, style and woven cloths)



Duleep Singh, Maharaja of the Punjab
by Richard James Lane, after Franz Xaver Winterhalter, lithograph, 1854
(NPG D22439)



Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes
by Sir Henry Moseley c.1850
(NPG 1391)



Clothing influences the way we sit, stand and to some extent how we behave. Consider the pictures in this section in which both European and Indian clothes are portrayed. Duleep Singh and Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes look so elegant in their Eastern-style clothes. Describe the similarity of their poses and how the clothes they wear affect their stance; they almost seem to mirror one other. The swords they hold are in decorated scabbards, they both have pointed jewelled

slippers and in each background we see the shape of domed buildings which may be palaces or mosques. Edwardes's dress is Afghan in style. Duleep Singh was visited by Queen Victoria while sitting for his portrait. Queen Victoria commented, '... We found the Maharajah in his full dress... Winterhalter was in ecstasies at the beauty and nobility of the bearing of the young Maharajah.'²

2. Franz Xaver Winterhalter and the courts of Europe 1830-70, Ormond and Blackett-Ord, National Portrait Gallery publication 1987. p.197.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

Identity of cloth (East/West clothing, style and woven cloths)

Project A Cloth and colour



- Print out two copies of the page with the picture of Duleep Singh, and grid the images to enlarge to A4 or A3 scale. Older students may wish to draw freehand from the image.
- Write notes in your sketchbook to describe the mood and atmosphere of the colour scheme of two works from this section. Use this information to decide on two different colour schemes, which you will use on each copy. Choose colour schemes you find most appealing and which reflect the grandeur of the sitter.
- Work over the images with soft pencil and watercolour. Use varying marks, washes and thickness of line to describe the folds and texture of the fabric of Duleep Singh's clothes.
- Now look at the colours that the Victorian artist Franz Xaver Winterhalter used in his original painting for Queen Victoria. It is still in the Royal Collection, and can be accessed via this link: <http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/egallery/object.asp?maker=12557&object=403843&row=38>
- Do some further research into paintings by Franz Xaver Winterhalter. Notice the portrait of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert dressed in clothing from the time of Charles II. Look also at the portrait of Prince Arthur in a soldier's uniform. Why do you think they wore these costumes for their portraits?

Project B Costume and dress - East and West



- Research the portrayal of British and Indian people in India at a similar time to these portraits. Use the chronology in this resource to assist you. Why do you think that Edwardes adopted foreign dress when abroad? If you have visited another country, have you worn their national clothes or worn aspects of local style and fashion? Why did you do this – was it to do with climate, cultural expectations or other reasons? Take a look at <http://www.npg.org.uk/learning/digital/portraiture/portraits-in-disguise.php>

This shows a number of portraits of people in 'fancy dress' and explores differences between 'normal' attire and the 'new look' worn in the 'disguise portraits'.

- Draw two profiles dressed in modern day equivalents of Eastern and Western clothing. How much has the clothing changed?

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

5. Old age in profile



Fateh Singh, Maharana of Mewar (1849-1930)

by Bourne & Shepherd
carbon print on photographer's card mount, 1920s
(NPG x28802)



Unknown man (probably Swiss)

by Wenceslaus Hollar,
after Hans Holbein the Younger
etching, 1647
(NPG D18028)



We do not know how old the Maharana of Mewar was when this photograph was taken, but we can tell just by looking at him that he is not a young man. Similarly, the etching (after a portrait by the great British, but German-born, portraitist

Hans Holbein) gives the impression of an older man. List the similarities and differences between each work. Try to work out how the images convey the message of old age to us.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

↘ Old age in profile

Project A Pose and positioning



- Look carefully at the two images and study their outline in detail. Notice their headwear and the form of their beards. Describe how the artists use light and shadow in annotations in your sketchbook.
- Notice the way the clothes hang and are constructed. Pay attention to the detail of clothing and their accoutrements. Study the sitters' necklaces and the way these help describe the status of the sitter. Look at and compare the space around each sitter.
- Now get a pencil and fold a piece of paper in half. Cover up the original images and from memory, draw as much of them as you can. Don't worry about getting it to look good, think about the differences and similarities of the originals to help construct your copies.
- Draw three thumbnail sketches of each work, zooming in on details in different parts of the originals, including jewellery, clothing and specific features of the faces.

Project B Looking old



- Research and collect images of faces, including of older people and some in profile. List three ways that an artist can show that someone is old in their portrait.
- Discuss what people do with their appearance in order to pretend to be younger than they are. What are the advantages of looking younger and what are the advantages of looking older? Look at images in magazines to support your research.
- Do you know an older person? Ask someone who is at least seventy years old, what is known as 'three score years and ten', if they would agree to sit for their portrait. Take a piece of A4 paper and with a soft pencil, make a drawing of their profile as accurately as you can. Concentrate on different specific features in detail including wrinkles, eyes and nose. Take some photographs of your sitter and work from the photographs over the next week to develop a body of work.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

6. High Society



King James I of England and VI of Scotland
attributed to Rowland Lockey, after Arnold van Brounckhorst, late 16th century (1574)
(NPG 63)



Raja Raj Singh of Chamba with his children and attendants, Chamba
possibly by Nikka of Guler, c.1785-90
Frits Lugt Collection, Institut Néerlandais, Paris



Before the invention of the gun, British and Indian nobility hunted by engaging in the sport of falconry. James I, aged eight, has a sparrowhawk perched on his hand, suggesting his mastery over the wild bird, despite his young age. Coningsby, who has just turned twenty-one-years-old, holds the lure in his right hand and the falcon's hood in his left. The

inscriptions in Latin and Italian suggest that falconry in this portrait symbolises youth and indiscipline versus maturity and control. Compare these paintings with the image of *Kunwar Anop Singh of Devgarh riding with a falcon* that can be found in section 7.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

Sir Thomas Coningsby

attributed to George Gower, 1572
(NPG 4348)



The Indian portraits are similar in that they show control over their birds, and falconry here also denotes belonging to the upper level of society. In the portrait of *Raja Raj Singh of Chamba with his children and attendants* and that of young King James I, we can see that gauntlets are also worn to protect the hands from the talons of the birds. King James I and Raja Raj Singh are portrayed inside, the former

within a darkened room and the latter on a raised-up alcove surrounded by his children and servants. These works are in sharp contrast, one an essay in light and dark and the other a riot of colour, form and pattern. Raja Raj Singh's head is the highest in a hierarchy, he is the obvious master, despite the fact that his child is playing irreverently with his beard.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

High Society

Project A Handle with care



- Compare and contrast the Indian portraits with the British portraits in this section and the next. List the similarities and differences in their formal qualities. Analyse the style of painting, the backgrounds, the clothing, jewellery, headdress, waistbands, footwear, how the birds are held, the type of expression on their faces and where they are positioned within the picture frame.
- What do you notice about how the men (this was a male sport) hold their birds of prey?
- Hold up your left hand (if you are right-handed or your right if you are left-handed) and pose it in the way that you might were you to have a bird perched on it. Now with your other hand, make a drawing of the shape that your hand makes. Pay attention to line, form, light and shadow.

Project B Rules and regulations



- Notice the type of clothing they wear. Do you think that this is what they really wore whilst hunting? Why do you think they might be portrayed in this way?
- Discuss why you think that only some sections of society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were allowed to hunt with hawks? Are there similar rules within the structure of our society today?
- Make a collection of images you find in magazines and newspapers of men in a variety sporting clothes such as football kit, jockey silks and skiing outfits. Cut these out and collage them together on one page. Notice how the clothing is related to the action of the sport.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

7. Take two pairs of portraits: Formal equestrian portraits and intimate portraits



King Charles I

by an Unknown artist, 1630s
(NPG 4516)



Kunwar Anop Singh of Devgarh riding with a falcon

c.1776. Devgarh, Mewar, Rajasthan
attributed to Bakhta
Museum Rietberg Zurich. Gift of Dr Carlo Fleischmann
Foundation and acquisition © Museum Rietberg Zurich
Photo: Wettstein & Kauf



The two portraits of royalty on horseback are in colour and each has its own particular palette. Charles I is bathed in silvery grey, both the light of the sky, his horse and his clothes appear to glow against a gloomy backdrop of dark trees. In comparison the portrait of Kunwar Anop Singh is much brighter; his clothes are multi-coloured patterned reds and greens, the horse's saddle decorations echo his master's sumptuousness. The landscape is verdant and the sky a deep azure with an opalescent cloud formation. Alone in the

landscape, the sitters dominate the compositions by taking up a significant amount of space. Upright in their saddles, in elaborate costume, a regal power seems to emanate from them as they control their mighty steeds. Portraying royalty on horseback is a standard visual way of enhancing royal prestige and position – literally raising them up above other people. Certain types of hunting were also only the prerogative of nobility.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits



Peter Oliver

self-portrait c.1625-30,
graphite and watercolour on card
(NPG 4853)



Sir Rabindranath Tagore

probably by Jyotirindranath Tagore,
pencil, 30 January 1914
(NPG D20876)



The two portraits above are intimate, small scale images of single figures. Nicholas Hilliard (c.1547-1619) was a miniaturist who wrote a book about the miniature technique entitled *The Art of Limning* (c.1600), these jewel-like paintings were also referred to at the time as 'paintings in little'. Hilliard worked for Elizabeth I and taught Isaac Oliver, whose son Peter's self-portrait is reproduced here. The other image shows Sir Rabindranath Tagore in profile. Likeness is one of the most important aspects of portraiture and may be a key factor in the success of any portrait. Naturalism in Indian portraiture is seen as a product of the interest in the documentation of the world that developed under the Emperor Akbar's successor Jahangir (r.1605-1627), this early twentieth-century drawing continues the tradition but

seems to owe more to Western sensibilities. Both images are delicate, subtle representations with their own particular atmosphere generated by the precise pencil work. The use of monochrome here adds a new dimension, making us concentrate on the specificity of line. The clothes, hair and moustaches are meticulously drawn giving us a really personal view of these private people. The image of Tagore is annotated in a fashion similar to Elizabethan miniatures (like those painted by Peter Oliver) and we can also see the addition of his glasses attached by a string, another personal detail.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

Take two pairs of portraits

Project A Horsepower



- Research this quotation, "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!". Who is supposed to have said this and why? What do you think 'horsepower' is?
- Study the equestrian portraits in this section. If you didn't know that these two men were kings, what might make you think that they could be? Describe the visual clues. Follow this link to see another equestrian portrait of Charles I: <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/server.php?show=conObject.1844>
- Research and draw horses in motion. Watch a recording of a horse race or someone on horseback. If possible, try and 'freeze frame' the action to find the pose of the horses in the portraits. Is this pose realistic? Why or why not? Do some drawings based on the recordings of the horses, or better still, if you know where to find a real horse, draw from this. Make a series of coloured paintings or drawings of the horse in various action poses, considering colour, form, style, content and think about contextual issues of history and place.
- Research artists who have made series of works about horses and movement. Research the photographer Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904) and find out about his 'Animal Locomotion' studies of 1887. The artist Edgar Degas (1834-1917) is renowned for his paintings and drawings of horses in action. Research Degas' equestrian works, select an image that you like and repaint it adding one of the kings on horseback into the composition.

Project B 'Portraits in little' and the art of 'limning'



- Research miniature painting. These web links provide extra information and project work on miniatures. Notice the use of text surrounding the images.
- http://www.npg.org.uk/assets/files/pdf/teachers-notes/NPGTeachersNotes_PracticePortraiture.pdf
See page 24. The Victoria and Albert Museum also has an excellent collection of miniatures. See: <http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/paintings/miniatures/index.html>
- Sharpen three pencils; one 3H, one HB and one 3B. Fold a piece of A4 paper into three, making smaller 'portrait areas'. Now select a portrait image from a newspaper that is the same scale as the paper 'portrait area' (one third of A4). Make three drawings from the portrait image using a different pencil for each and concentrating on thickness and direction of line.
- You could also work from a photograph of yourself to make a self-portrait in miniature.
- Now compare the drawings and analyse the different effects of using the various types of pencils. Do you need to work back into sections of your work or add further detail? You could add colour to the drawing that you think works best.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

8. Musicians

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu with her son, Edward Wortley Montagu, and attendants

attributed to Jean Baptiste Vanmour
c.1717
(NPG 3924)



The painting in the National Portrait Gallery Collection portrays Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wearing a Turkish turban, she accompanied her husband to Constantinople when he was made ambassador in 1716. Her female servant, also in a turban, is seated on a dais playing a Turkish lute, the tambur. For detailed information about what Lady Mary is wearing, follow this link: <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait.php?LinkID=mp03135&rNo=0&role=sit>

The oil painting of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was made around 1717 and if we compare it to the watercolour on paper made in Rajasthan, just eighteen years later, we can observe many similarities. Both women play the long-necked tambur or tanpura on their own, and both support these

instruments on their thighs and pluck the strings with their right hand. They are similarly attired and would have been subject to similar conventions of living in harem (Turkey) or purdah (India). 'Accurate portraits of women drawn from life are notoriously rare in Indian art. Conventions of seclusion and modesty dictate that women are hidden from the gaze of men other than their husbands and immediate family, with the result that almost all depictions of women are merely idealised studies of female beauty. It would have been almost impossible for a male artist to make a drawing from life of a woman of the court, unless she was one who was habitually in the male domain, such as a servant, courtesan or musician.'³ Find out about more the harem, purdah and zenana.

3. *The Indian Portrait 1560 – 1860*, ed. Rosemary Crill and Kapil Jariwala, National Portrait Gallery, London 2010, page 122

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

▼ Musicians

Project A Musical instruments



Detail from **Lady Mary Wortley Montagu with her son, Edward Wortley Montagu and attendants**, c. 1717



A lady playing a tanpura, Kishangarh, Rajasthan, c.1735
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1996 (1996.100.1)
©The Metropolitan Museum of Art



- Research the tambur. Draw a diagram of one. See if you can find this instrument in other works in the exhibition. What do you think it would sound like?
- Take a ruler and hold it in your left hand. Try and mimic the way the hands holding the musical instrument are portrayed in the Indian portrait, and make additional shapes with them, as if you were touching the strings in different ways.
- Now take a pencil and some paper, and draw three of these hand shapes, indicating the straight edges of the ruler and the way that the fingers wrap around it or make shapes in relation to it.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Focus on links between Indian portraits and National Portrait Gallery portraits

↳ Musicians

Project B Theatrical Costume



Camila Batmanghelidjh
by Dean Marsh, 2008
(NPG 6845)



**Sir Sri Kanthirava Narasimharaja
Wadiyar Bahadur Yuvaraja of Mysore**
by Bassano, 24 June 1920
(NPG x83812)



- Look carefully at what the musicians and the other two sitters are wearing in their portraits. Think about what might be called 'appropriate clothing' for playing music or for having your portrait made in the eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Go to the 'Advanced Search' on the National Portrait Gallery website and select, 'DRESS' under the Portrait 'Subjects & Themes', this will help you find many examples of interestingly attired sitters in the collection, such as the images featured here of Camila Batmanghelidjh, who is an Iranian-born psychotherapist and founder of the charity Kids Company and Sir Sri Kanthirava Narasimharaja Wadiyar Bahadur, Yuvaraja of Mysore, a foreign dignitary.
- Ask a friend to model a turban for you. Make a painting of the shapes that the turban makes on their head. Notice where the material is folded in relation to their forehead and their ears. Also where the light falls on it enhancing the shape of the folds and the patterns (if any) on the cloth.
- Do some research into clothing worn by contemporary women who are in the music business. Beyoncé, Lady GaGa, Florence and the Machine are just three contemporary musicians who use dramatic clothing to reinforce aspects of their personalities and their acts.

<http://www.horniman.ac.uk/music/music/classificationsH&S.html>

See also page 14/31 http://www.npg.org.uk/assets/files/pdf/teachers-notes/NPGTeachersNotes_PracticePortraiture.pdf

Information and Activities for Teachers

Contemporary Connections: The Singh Twins

9. The public world of The Singh Twins

Amrit and Rabindra Singh (b. 1966) are identical twin sisters born in London but based in Liverpool. Their artistic practice is influenced by the traditions of Indian miniature painting yet their work explores contemporary connections between British and Indian culture. It seems too simplistic and impossible to categorise their work as either British or Indian, traditional or contemporary. They dispense with such basic classifications, rendering them meaningless with their bombardment of visual cues from both cultures which is achieved through an acute awareness and exploitation of British and Indian history, politics and pop culture.

Exploring the relationship between the worlds of sport, media and celebrity, *From Zero to Hero* comments on the role that the media and the commercialisation of sport has had in turning sportsmen into icons. It refers to a newspaper article in which David and Victoria Beckham and their children were described as 'The New Royal Family'.

The style is inspired by that of traditional eighteenth-century Indian miniature paintings with flat perspective, stylized forms and hierarchical composition. Multiple 'Kali-esque' arms convey different aspects of someone's personality within a single depiction.

The inclusion of everyday objects plays on the image projected by the subjects as being down-to-earth, ordinary people despite their wealth and status. The work celebrates a perceived modern and equal relationship, presenting positive role models who have achieved their success through hard-work, determination and skill.

To view images please see:

www.singhtwins.co.uk

Focus Questions and Activities: The Singh Twins

1. Signs and Symbols



- Look at The Singh Twins work online at www.singhtwins.co.uk. List as many different types of Western and traditional Indian symbols as you can see in their work. What are some of the key messages? What does this tell us about the lives of the artists and their family? Take one section of the work which has a wide variety of symbols and describe the Christian and Sikh iconography. Zoom in to three different sections of one work and do a thumbnail sketch of an area with at least four different symbols.
- In your sketchbook at home, make a drawing of a room in your house, including members of your family doing an everyday activity or ritual like eating dinner, watching TV or celebrating a birthday. If your family member were a symbol, what would they be? What would a drawing or painting of your ideal dinner part or family celebration look like? Do a series of small sketches, using collage or photocopies to explore your ideas.

Contemporary Connections: The Singh Twins

Focus Questions and Activities: The Singh Twins

2. Composition and Patterning



- Study the compositional aspects in paintings by The Singh Twins. How have they used framing, patterning and tilted or flattened perspective in their works? How have they divided up the picture plane into different patterned areas? Do a sketch in black pen to try to describe the way the artists have divided up the space into separate areas.
- Experiment with watercolour or gouache, pencils and fineliner pens (including gold and silver gel pens) to develop a series of drawings of interior spaces. Experiment with unusual viewpoints, such as birds-eye view, or stacking figures to flatten the space.
- Use the composition of the most successful of your patterned works, and introduce a narrative element. First write a short timeline about yourself, a member of your family or another person who is important to you and has an interesting life story, then make a series of sketches to plan how to tell the story using symbols and pattern. Start your painted story from the top left hand corner and work in a clockwise direction.

3. Narrative and Allegory



- *From Zero to Hero* portrays 'Posh and Becks' as religious icons. List the visual clues and symbolism The Singh Twins use to tell us about the lives of David and Victoria Beckham. Describe how the artists use scale to tell the viewer about the status, personality and achievements of the key figures in the painting.
- The work references contemporary news media - can you locate the patterns taken from logos of tabloid newspapers?
- What do you think the painting's title tells us about how The Singh Twins, or the wider media, may feel about the Beckhams?
- Create your own modern-day icon, using collaged images from newspapers and magazines, and referring to paintings in *The Indian Portrait*, and medieval religious icons to inform your work.
- You could also turn yourself into an icon, by drawing a self-portrait from a mirror and incorporating symbols of your life into the final work. Use a range of media, including fineliner pens, pencils and collage, and digitally manipulate the work to create a seamless, flat surface.

Information and Activities for Teachers

Map



Map reproduced by kind permission of Paul Goodhead

Information and Activities for Teachers

Chronology of the Indian Portrait

2nd–1st centuries BC	Ajanta caves excavated and painted (first phase)
1st–3rd centuries AD	Kushans rule parts of central and north-west India
4th–6th centuries	Gupta dynasty rules north India
460–478	Ajanta caves painted (second phase)
12th–16th centuries	Sultanate period in north India
1498	Vasco da Gama discovers sea route to India
1526	Babur enters India and establishes Mughal dynasty
1530–1556	Humayun succeeds Babur as Emperor; in exile in Iran 1540–1555
1556–1605	Akbar rules from Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore
1580–1583	First Jesuit mission to the Mughal court
1600	British East India Company founded
1608	British establish their first trading post in India at Surat
By 1614	Rajput kingdoms are incorporated into Mughal territory
1605–1627	Jahangir rules from Agra and Lahore
1628–1658	Shah Jahan rules from Agra and Delhi
1658–1707	Aurangzeb rules from Delhi
By 1687	Deccan sultanates are incorporated into Mughal territory
1757	Lord Clive defeats Siraj ud-Daula of Bengal at Plassey, and the British take over Bengal
1858	Bahadur Shah II, the last Mughal Emperor, is deposed and goes into exile in Burma

Timeline text from *The Indian Portrait 1560 – 1860*, exhibition catalogue, National Portrait Gallery, 2010

Information and Activities for Teachers

Glossary

Accoutrements An accessory or piece of equipment associated with a particular object, task or role.

Afghan Someone or something from Afghanistan.

Bearing Outward behaviour or posture.

Bravura The skill in creating an artistic effect especially in painting.

Calligraphy Beautiful and artistic handwriting.

Chronicle An account of events told in the order of the sequence in which they happened.

Crustaceans Invertebrate (without a backbone) animal with more than one pair of jointed legs and a hard outer shell.

Deccan The large plateau located in Southern India, extending over eight states.

Dynasty A succession of rulers from the same family.

Facet A part or aspect of something.

Facial characteristics Expressions pertaining to the face.

Fallibility In a position to be liable to make mistakes.

Harem The women's quarters of a Muslim house.

Illuminated manuscripts Handwritten texts with decorative additions, often in gold and silver.

Indigenous Belonging to or being of a particular place.

Limn To draw or paint a picture of somebody or someone in outline.

Lineage Line of descent within a family from an ancestor to a person.

Lure An object attached to a line that is swung in the air to attract a bird of prey to return to its perch.

Maharajah An Indian prince, ranking above a rajah.

Monochrome Using only one colour or black and white.

Mughal Pertaining to a Muslim dynasty of Mongol origin that ruled parts of India between 1526 and 1857.

Narrative Story

Nawab Ruler of a princely state.

Plethora A very large number of something.

Premiss A previous statement from which another is inferred.

Punctuations Visually speaking; specific points of reference. Almost as if marking time within a musical composition.

Purdah A method of secluding women from strangers.

Scabbard A sheath for a dagger or sword.

Sultanates A country ruled by a sultan.

Support Canvas or panel structure to take the paint

Tanpura Also known as the tanbura, is an Indian drone instrument *fretless drone lute* (The New Grove Dictionary of Music)

Visual tropes Images used in a way to persuade or communicate visually.

Zenana The part of a house where high-caste women from Iran or India can live in seclusion

Further Research

Weblinks

The Indian Portrait 1560 – 1860 minisite

<http://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/exhibitions/the-indian-portrait-1560-1860/home-indian-portrait.php>

<http://www.singhtwins.co.uk>

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/microsites/maharaja/>

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/indiaofficeselect/aboutcolls.asp>

<http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/prdraw/asianprintsdrawings/indianminiatures/index.html>

<http://www.indianminiature.org/>