



From the Ocean of Painting: India's Popular Paintings, 1589 to the Present

Barbara Rossi



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Stretching back over millennia and comprising a myriad of traditions, the art of painting in India is as rich, as varied, and as intriguing as any in the world. Treatments of Indian painting in Europe and the United States, however, have focused mostly on miniatures commissioned by India's emperors and maharajas and have largely ignored the many splendid types of painting prepared for India's common peoples.

Now, in this groundbreaking publication, Barbara Rossi, who has traveled and researched extensively in India, presents 101 works of extraordinary beauty representing twenty-one forms of popular painting and spanning 400 years. Based on a traveling exhibition that Rossi curated, *From the Ocean of Painting* is the first comprehensive overview of this diverse material and is organized around the primary functions these artworks serve, from ritual traditions that lead, through the act of painting, to spiritual and material benefits; to iconic and pilgrimage traditions that supply sacred pictures for worship; to narrative traditions that provide illustrations used in storytelling performances of epics and legends. This volume enables readers to see the folk, tribal, and urban contexts in which these generally unknown forms of painting arose, and to gain a fuller understanding of the representative works, all of which are illustrated and given in-depth commentaries. Introductory essays by Stuart Cary Welch, retired curator of Islamic and Later Indian art, Harvard University Art Museums, and by the late Roy C. Craven, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Indian Art History at the University of Florida, illuminate the connections between popular and sophisticated painting in India and offer an insightful assessment of the scholarship to date on India's popular painting. But the chief pleasure here is, of course, the art itself--a wealth of remarkable pictorial images rendered in vibrantly rich palettes.

Gorgeously illustrated with fifty-seven color and fifty-three black-and-white reproductions, *From the Ocean of Painting* brings us a world of art rarely glimpsed in the West and a stunning collection anyone interested in painting will not want to miss.



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