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[FREE] King of the World: The Padshahnama

King of the World: The Padshahnama

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"The Padshahnama (History of the Emperor)", written by Abd al-Hamid Lahori, is one of the greatest works made for the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, the builder of the Taj Mahal. The volume in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle documents the first ten years of the Emperor's rule. It has seldom been exhibited and the majority of pages remain unpublished. The Royal Library is making it available for an exhibition organized by the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, and the volume will then be rebound. This exhibition is therefore the only foreseeable opportunity to view at once all the illustrations to one of the world's greatest manuscripts. The catalogue of the exhibition, illustrates all the paintings and illuminations in full colour, accompanied by eye-witness accounts of the events, personalities and settings depicted. These are identified and discussed with the help of actual-sized details, comparative photographs and drawings.

From Library Journal "Padshahnama," or "Chronicle of the King of the World," was created to commemorate the first ten years of rule by the Mughal Emperor Shah-Jahan, the same man who commissioned the Taj Mahal. It depicts Mughal court culture in a blend of Persian and Indic artistic styles with a focus on official histories and portrait studies. Usually housed in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, this 17th-century piece has been loaned for exhibition in the United States. (The exhibit travels to New York, Los Angeles, Indianapolis, and Fort Worth.) Authors Beach (Mughal Rajput Painting, Cambridge Univ., 1992) and Koch (Mughal Architecture, te Neues, 1995) let the compelling artwork presented in luxurious, almost full-sized reproductions propel the exhibition catalog and underpin it with appropriate information as necessary. One fine example is the appendix, which includes biographical information, with names of those pictured in "Padshahnama," historical placement, and listings for comparative portraits. This first scholarly analysis of "Padshahnama" will be welcomed in specialized libraries focusing on art history or India. Nadine Dalton Speidel, Cuyahoga Cty. P.L., Parma, Ohio Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.