

**Syllabus:**

**ARTH 104/SAST 200/SAST 500**  
**Introduction to the Art of South Asia**  
**Instructor: Professor Michael W. Meister**  
**Teaching Assistant: Manail Ahmed**

**Spring 2007**  
**TR 3-4:30**  
**Jaffe 113**



Atul Dodiya, "Between Two Thresholds," 2005  
Interview with artist Atul Dodiya: <http://www.artinfo.com/News/Article.aspx?a=22615>

**Advance notice:**

**January 13—March 11, 2007**

[Modern Indian Works on Paper Post-Independence Art from a Private Collection](#) [a catalogue of this exhibition is available from the Ross Gallery]

**Course Description:** "Art of South Asia" is a survey of painting, sculpture and architecture in the Indian sub-continent from 2300 B.C., touching on the present. It attempts to explore the role of tradition in the broader history of art in India, but not to see India as 'traditional' or unchanging. The Indian sub-continent is the source for multi-cultural civilizations that have lasted and evolved for several thousand years. Its art is as rich and complex as that of Europe, and as diverse. This course attempts to introduce the full range of artistic production in India in relation to the multiple strands that have made the cultural fabric of the sub-continent so rich and long lasting.

**Methodology:** Textbooks and image-study pages on-line provide a substantial outline of the material covered. My role as teacher is to think through the material with you. One of several issues I have tried to focus on

before, for example, is the continuing 'hybridity' of South Asia in all periods (try looking the word up).

**Image study pages for ARTH 104:** are available on the Web. These provide a wide range of images to review and study:  
<http://dept.arth.upenn.edu/104/review.html> . [to access larger images, click on the thumbnail and use "arthistory" as ID and "!jaffee!" as password]

**Sections:** Sections will meet in alternate weeks during class hours. One of the first sections will be a visit to the Ross Gallery exhibition announced above. Participation in sections and visits to museums are essential.

**Written Assignments:** There will be short written assignments for sections throughout the course and one short research paper.

**Required Texts:** Available from Penn Book Center, 34<sup>th</sup> street.  
Craven, Roy. *A Concise History of Indian Art*. 1976. [available late this month]  
Thapar, Romila. *Early India*. 2002.  
Zimmer, Heinrich. *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*. 1946.

**General Reference:** Other significant texts that can provide other perspectives:  
Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*. 1927.  
Dehejia, Vidya. *Indian Art*. Phaidon Press. 1997.  
Ghosh, Pika and M. W. Meister. *Cooking for the Gods*. 1995.  
Harle, James C. *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent*. 1986.  
Huntington, Susan. *The Art of Ancient India*. 1985.  
Rowland, Benjamin. *The Art and Architecture of India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*. 1953.  
Zimmer, Heinrich. *The Art of Indian Asia*. 1955.

**Additional readings:** will be assigned during the semester. These will be placed on reserve in the Fischer Fine Arts Library or be available on Blackboard.

**Course requirements:** Participation in sections; short written exercises for sections; one hour exam; one short research paper (8-10 pp.) and a final exam.

**Outline of Possible Lecture Topics:** (subject to change)  
Jan.: Categories of India's Art History/Changing Views of Indian Art as Art or Craft/Folk Art and Indian Traditions  
Geography and Historic Outline/India's Ancient Horizon, the Indus Valley  
Buddhist Imperial Art Under the Mauryas  
Buddhist Populism: Shunga Art  
Architecture as Cosmogram from Sanchi to Borobudur

Feb.: Cave architecture and Humanism under the Andhras  
Buddhist Narrative Sculpture  
Invaders: the Shakas and Kushanas  
Icons and Symbols: Origins of the Image  
Gandhara's 'Alien' Art and India's Syncretism  
'Classic' Gupta Art: the Evolution of Buddhist Sculpture  
Hindu Renaissance and the Beginnings of Temple Architecture  
Painting and the Sweet-Smelling Halls of the Vakatakas: Ajanta

March: The Spread of Buddhism and Painting to Central Asia  
Hindu Efflorescence: Elephanta and Ellora  
Architecture as Symbol: the Indian Temple  
India's 'Medieval' Sculpture: Eroticism and Tantra  
India in Greater India: Lineage to Empire  
Coming of Islam as a Cultural Interface  
Painting and Architecture in the Sultanate Period

April: Indian Painting and the Patronage of the Early Mughals  
Mughal Buildings  
Miniature Paintings in the Hindu Courts: 17th-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries  
Hill Painting and John Company/Contemporary

