



An enraged elephant charging its tormentors in a palace courtyard

Kotah School

Not on display

Title/Description: An enraged elephant charging its tormentors in a palace courtyard

Artist/Maker: Kotah School

Born: 1725 c. - 1750 c.

Measurements: Unframed: (h. 498 x w. 575 x d. 1 mm) Framed: (h. 788 x w. 785 x d. 30 mm)

Accession Number: 766

Historic Period: 18th century

Kotah split off from Bundi in 1625. Kotah painters captured movements in animals, particularly elephants, better than any other artists. Although they made their elephants lively, they also managed to indicate massive bulk and strength. They concentrated on the huge energy of the animal, rather than the impressive decoration seen in Deccani paintings of elephants. In the 18th century the favourite royal sport was tiger hunting from mounted elephants through lush jungle scenery, and pictures of these hunts are the most exciting Kotah paintings, especially between 1720 - 1870.

The initial sketch is done with charcoal. The only completed part is the elephant's head finished in black and brown ink with white highlights. It is probably a preliminary sketch for a painting of two elephants fighting - the other one is not shown. Attendants, trying to deter the beast with firecrackers, run for cover as the mahout appears to have lost control. An outline of the Maharaja watching can be seen on the top right balcony.

Description taken from the 'Art From The Indian Sub-Continent In The Sainsbury Centre' catalogue by Margaret A. Willey (Sainsbury Centre, UEA, 1995).
