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MINIATURE. 'A LADY WITH FLOWER AND FLY WHISK'

INDIA, MUGHAL; C. 1630

MINIATURE: 25 × 14 CM

A specific genre that the Mughal artists developed to perfection in the 17th century was portraiture. There is an entire gallery of true-to-life depictions of men, from the Great Mughals themselves to their ministers and courtiers. Women were a different matter. Artists naturally did not have access to Muslim harems, and the many depictions of women in Mughal miniatures are consequently idealized.

This sensual rendition must thus be considered a personification of the period's ideal of beauty. The clinging or partly transparent garments give us more than an intimation of the sweetness that could be found in the closed world of the harem.

Published in:

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 50;  
Kjeld von Folsach, Torben Lundbæk and Peder Mortensen (eds.): *Sultan, Shah and Great Mughal: the history and culture of the Islamic world*, The National Museum, Copenhagen 1996, cat.no. 344;  
Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 72;  
Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 105;  
Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art – Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2017, fig. 51, p. 221;