



Unknown (Rajasthan, Sirohi)
Gauri Ragini: A Girl with Peacocks, ca. 1660
opaque watercolor on paper
9 1/4 x 7 in.
Bequest of Mrs. Horace W. Frost
91.15.59

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Unknown (Rajasthan, Sirohi)
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The term *ragini* refers to an Indian musical composition, and a *Gauri Ragini* is a song for the end of the day in autumn. In this watercolor, a woman anticipates the return of her husband as she gathers flowers in the forest. Peacocks, whose haunting cries often taunt abandoned lovers, here approvingly observe the scene of marital devotion. The mysterious red square that floats above the figure suggests that this painting is set in an enclosed garden, rather than in the wilds of nature. The woman's clothing and the painting's overall style reflect the survival of artistic devices in India apart from the influence of foreign (such as Persian) styles. The text in the upper border is in *Devanagari*, the predominant script for Hindi writing.



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DISCUSS

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The term *ragini* refers to an Indian musical composition. This painting was associated with the *Gauri Ragini*, a song for the end of the day in autumn. Roll your cursor over the image to examine the carefully painted details:

- Where is the girl? How can you tell?
- What is she wearing?
- What is she doing?
- The song lyrics mention a wishing tree and sweet-toned bells around the girl's waist. Can you find these in the picture?
- How does this painting make you feel?
- What type of song does this painting make you think of?



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CREATE

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This painting was inspired by the *Gauri Ragini*, a song for the end of the day in autumn. Roll your cursor over the image to examine the carefully painted details.

Listen to some *raga* recordings by visiting the Royal Ontario Museum website: www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/special/ragamala/ragas.php.

Now create an artwork of your own inspired by your favorite song. Think about how to include the things you like best about the song in your artwork. How can you show the ideas or feelings expressed in the song? How can lines, textures, shapes, and colors capture mood, rhythm, harmony, and melody?