



Unknown (Deccan, Aurangabad)
Two Girls Dancing, ca. 1700
opaque watercolor on paper, heightened with gold
5 13/16 x 4 7/16 in.
Bequest of Mrs. Horace W. Frost
91.15.7

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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The Deccan Plateau of central and southern India consisted of small kingdoms ruled by Muslim leaders, independent of the Mughal Empire to the north. In 1565 some of these kingdoms formed an alliance and won a victory against the Hindu empire that had traditionally controlled the southern half of the subcontinent. The dissolution of this great court brought highly skilled Hindu craftsmen and artisans into the Muslim kingdoms, resulting in a fertile period of artistic development and a blending of artistic heritages. Evident in this watercolor are vibrant Hindu color schemes melded with a subject matter and style indicative of the Persian tradition.



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DISCUSS

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This painting combines Hindu color schemes with a Persian subject matter and style. Persian artistic tradition is known for a strong use of line and intricately detailed patterns.

Roll your cursor over the image to view these figures closely.

- What are these two girls doing?
- Are they moving or standing still? How can you tell?
- What type of lines do you see?
- How many different decorative patterns can you find on their clothing?
- What feeling does this painting convey? What details help to suggest this feeling?
- If you wrote a story about these two girls, what do you imagine might happen next?

Now develop your story ideas into a full tale. Explain the events that led to the moment shown in the painting. Why are the two girls dancing? How do they feel when they are dancing? What happens next?



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CREATE

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This painting of two girls dancing emphasizes the use of line and pattern. Roll your cursor over the image to magnify. Notice how the flowing lines give a sense of movement.

Look through some magazines to find a photo of two or three people in action. Try your hand at translating this image into a drawing emphasizing line and pattern in the Persian style.

1. Place a sheet of carbon paper (available at office supply stores) on top of a blank sheet of paper. Then place the magazine photo on top of the carbon paper.
2. Use a pencil to trace the lines in the photo that you wish to transfer to your drawing paper. Press harder for bold lines and more gently for fine lines.
3. When you have completed your line drawing, remove the photo and the carbon paper. Now use colored pencils to add patterns to your design.