

MALINI SAIGAL

Editorial & Design Consultant ♦ Botanical Artist

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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PROFILE



I have extensive experience in publication design, editing and production, particularly books in the field of Indian art and history. Over the past fifteen years, I have worked with many national and international publishers, scholars and institutions on a diverse range of books.

Since 2017, I have been focusing on botanical painting of indigenous species around Delhi, and in the Thar and Aravalli regions of northwest India. I hold workshops in botanical art and have taught a course titled 'Art Plantae' at Ashoka University, which combines elements of art history, ethno-botany and botanical painting.

EDUCATION

2017

Diploma in Botanical Art
*The Society of Botanical
Artists, UK*

2006

Indian Art Module
Asian Art Diploma:
British Museum, London

1985–87

M.A History
University of Delhi

1984–5

Diploma in Mass
Communication
*Indian Institute of
Mass Communication,
New Delhi*

1981–84

B.A. History
*Lady Sri Ram College
University of Delhi*

WORK EXPERIENCE

EDITORIAL AND DESIGN

I have an editorial consultancy and take on book projects where I have the full responsibility for co-ordinating and planning content, design and images, and liaising with the author, photographers, publisher and the press.

Publishers that I have worked with include Oxford University Press, Mapin Publishing, Niyogi Books, Worth Press (U.K), Brijwasi Press, Chowmoholla Palace Trust, and Amar Chitra Katha Pvt Ltd, as well as several government institutions such as the Ministry of Culture, the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Supreme Court of India, and the high courts of Guwahati and Madhya Pradesh.

The range of subjects include museum collections, institutional and timeline histories, and exhibition catalogues.

Some titles:

1. *Embroideries at the Court of Hyderabad* by Rahul Jain, published by the Chowmohalla Palace Trust, Hyderabad, 2023.
2. *The Painted Stork: A Story of Conservation, Manufacturing and Sustainability*, published by the TVS Motor Company, Chennai, 2023.
3. *Courts of Madhya Pradesh*, published by the High Court of Madhya Pradesh, 2019
4. *Courts of India: Past to Present*, commissioned by the Supreme Court of India, November 2016
5. I. *The Presidential Retreats of India*, II. *A Work of Beauty: Landscape and Architecture of Rashtrapati Bhavan*, and III. *Around India's First Table: Dining and Entertaining at the Rashtrapati Bhavan*. Three volumes for the Rashtrapati Bhavan Multi-volume Documentation Project, 2016.
6. *Reverse Glass Painting* by Anna L Dallapiccola, Niyogi Books, 2016
7. *Costumes & Textiles at the Jaipur Court* by Rahul Jain, Niyogi Books, 2015
8. *Arms & Armour at the Jaipur Court* by Robert Elgood, Niyogi Books, 2015
9. *Unfolding: Contemporary Indian Textiles*, Maggie Baxter, Niyogi Books, 2015
10. *Rapture: The Art of Indian Textiles* by Rahul Jain, Niyogi Books, 2011
11. *The Timeline History of Architecture*, Worth Press, 2009

RESEARCH, TEACHING AND WRITING

UNESCO-Sahapedia Project Fellowship, 2017–18

The Vegetation of the Thar Desert: A look at its geography, history, cultural traditions and conservation.

This is an ethnobotanical survey of the Thar Desert, which examines the relationship between plants, human communities and art forms. The research module consists of a study of the specific geography and vegetation of the western desert; an allied study on plants in ritual, folk art and social memory; and also provides a plant listing of the indigenous species of the Thar bioregion.

<https://www.sahapedia.org/saha-user/malini-saigal>

Art Plantae: A look at plants in Indian art

Co-curricular course
Ashoka University, India

The course structure looks at various aspects of plant depiction, symbolism, decoration, and cultural patterning in India. The modules include : Sacred Trees–Magic and Mythology; Plants in Cosmology; Gardens and Groves; The Mughal *buta*; Chintz patterns and Trade Textiles; and Botanical Art from the 19th century.

The practical sessions of the course focus on the detailing and style of Botanical portraiture, and then venture into stylisation for developing textile and sculptural patterns.

Botanical Art Workshop

Rao Jodha Desert Park, Jodhpur
August 2019, 2022, 2023

A one-week residential workshop focusing on the plants of the region.

Painting the Desert: An exhibition of Botanical paintings and sketches of the Thar region

Mehrangarh Museum
August 13–19th 2022

The Body in Indian Art: Europalia-India Exhibition

October 2013–March 2014

This was the largest exhibition of art from India since 1982, with over 300 objects from 52 national and international collections. As a member of the curatorial team and head of research, I worked on the selection, installation, and documentation of the objects, as well as coordination with the relevant agencies and museums.

WRITING

1. Essays for the Indian Art Module, Asian Art Diploma, 2006
 - (i) Varying Forms and Relevance of Goddess Worship
 - (ii) A Study of Design Influences in Chintz Patterns in India, 2006
2. *Flora of the Thar Desert* for Arna Jharna Museum, Sahapedia, 2017
3. *Ferdinand Bauer: A Master of his Time*, Final essay for SBA Diploma, 2017
4. *Botanical Art: At the Cusp of Art & Science*. Taj Magazine, July 2022.
5. Amar Chitra Katha Ltd. (Publishers of graphic novels for young readers)
 - *A Day at the Museum*, 2023
 - *Yaskhas, Gandharvas and other Celestial Beings*, 2023
 - *Pioneers of Progress Vol. I & II* (Ardeshir and Pirojsha Godrej; Naval Godrej), 2022
 - *Tales from the Shiva Purana* (2020)
6. *Castles of the World*, Worth Press, London, 2010