Dr. Stephanie Schrader will address the 23 drawings Rembrandt made late in his career after Indian paintings that were imported into Amsterdam from Dutch trading post in Surat. Rembrandt’s portraits of Mughal rulers, princes, and courtiers demonstrate how his contact with Indian art inspired him to draw in a different style on Asian paper. Schrader argues that the Mughal compositions Rembrandt copied were not merely foreign curiosities, but carried with them specific associations of empire, trade, luxury, and exceptional artifice.

Stephanie Schrader is curator at the Department of Drawings at the J. Paul Getty Museum, specialising in 16th to 18th century Dutch and Flemish art. Her interest in cross cultural exchanges include exhibitions, publications, lectures and classes on artists including Jan Gossaert, Maria Sibylla Merian and Peter Paul Rubens. Dr. Schrader is the editor of Rembrandt and the Inspiration of India, a sumptuously illustrated volume that examines the impact of Indian art and culture on Rembrandt (1606–1669) in the late 1650s. By pairing Rembrandt’s twenty-two extant drawings of Shah Jahan, Jahangir, Dara Shikoh, and other Mughal courtiers with Mughal paintings of similar compositions, the book critiques the prevailing notion that Rembrandt “brought life” to the static Mughal art. Written by scholars of both Dutch and Indian art, the essays in this volume instead demonstrate how Rembrandt's contact with Mughal painting inspired him to draw in an entirely new, refined style on Asian paper—an approach that was shaped by the Dutch trade in Asia and prompted by the curiosity of a foreign culture. Seen in this light, Rembrandt’s engagement with India enriches our understanding of collecting in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, the Dutch global economy, and Rembrandt’s artistic self-fashioning. A close examination of the Mughal imperial workshop provides new insights into how Indian paintings came to Europe as well as how Dutch prints were incorporated into Mughal compositions. This volume is published to accompany an upcoming exhibition on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center March 13 to June 24, 2018.