

The Lahore Museum (Punjabi: لہور میوزیم; Urdu: عجائب گھر لاہور; "Lahore Wonder House"), is a museum located in Lahore, Pakistan. Founded in 1865 at a smaller location and opened in 1894 at its current location on 'The Mall' in Lahore during the British colonial period, Lahore Museum is one of Pakistan's most visited museums and one of the major museums in South Asia.[1]

The museum houses an extensive collection of Buddhist art from the ancient Indo-Greek and Gandhara kingdoms. It also has collections from the Mughal Empire, Sikh Empire and the British Empire in India.[2]

The Lahore Wonder House, along with the Zamzama Gun located directly in front of the building, is the setting of the opening scene in the novel *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling, whose father was one of the museum's earliest curators.

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History[edit]

Lahore Museum was originally established in 1865–66 on the site of the current Tollinton Market – a hall built for the 1864 Punjab Exhibition.[3] The present building was constructed as a memorial of Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria held in 1887, and financed through a special public fund raised on the occasion. The foundation stone of the new museum was laid on 3 February 1890 by Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence and Queen Victoria's grandson. On its completion in 1894, the entire museum collection was transferred to present building with its new name as Jubilee Museum.

The museum's collection was later shifted in 1894 to its present location on The Mall, in Lahore's British-era core.[1] The present building was designed by the well-known Lahori architect, Sir Ganga Ram.

Rudyard Kipling's father, John Lockwood Kipling, was one of the museum's first curators, and was succeeded by K. N. Sitaram. Over 250,000 visitors were registered in 2005.

Collections[edit]

The museum has a number of Greco-Buddhist sculptures, Mughal and Pahari paintings on display.[1] The collection contains important relics from the Indus Valley civilisation, Gandhara, and Graeco-Bactrian periods as well. The Fasting Buddha, dating from the Gandhara period, is one of the museums most prized and celebrated objects. The ceiling of the entrance hall features a large mural by Pakistani artist Sadequain who originally made the mural in 1972 and 1973.[2][4]

The museum also contains fine specimens of Mughal and Sikh carved woodwork and has a large collection of paintings dating back to the British period. The collection also includes musical instruments, ancient jewellery, textiles, pottery, and armory, as well as some Tibetan and Nepalese work on display.[1][2]

A Gandharan-era "Fasting Buddha"

A Gandharan-era miniature stupa

Relics from the Indo-Greek era

Gandhara Athena

Scope[edit]

The museum displays archaeological materials from Bronze Age (Indus Valley Civilization) to the medieval era Hindu Shahi period.[2] It has one of the largest collections of archaeology, history, arts, fine arts, applied arts, ethnology, and craft objects in Pakistan. It also has an extensive collection of Hellenistic and Mughal coins.[1] There is also a photo gallery dedicated to the emergence of Pakistan as an independent state, the Pakistan Movement Gallery.[2]

Directors[edit]

Museum Directors From First Day Forward: Name of Directors Position Duration (years)

Percy Brown Curator 1899–1912 13

Hugh Lionel Heath Curator 1912–1929 7

Rai Bahadur (S.N. Gupta) Curator 1929–1942 13

Mr. K. B. Molvi Zarar Hasan Curator 1942–1947 5

Malik Shams Curator 1947–1965 18

Syed Muhammad Taqi Curator / Director 1965–1974 9

Fred. Henry Andrews Curator 1893–1899 6

J.L. Kipling (C.I.E) Curator 1875–1893 18

Saifur Rehman Dar Director 1974–1993 19

F.M. Anjum Rehmani Officiating Director 1993–1995 2

Saifur Rehman Dar Director 1995–1998 3

F.M. Anjum Rehmani Officiating Director 1998–2001 3

Mansoor Sohail Director Additional Charge 2000–2001 1

Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi Director 2001–2004 3

Syed Gulzar Mashhadi Director 2004–2005 1

Naheed Rizvi Director 2005–2008 3

Asghar Nadeem Syed Director 2008–2009 1

Kamran Afzal Cheema Director 2009–2009 -

M.Siddique Sheikh Director 2009–2010 1

Humera Alam Director 2010–2012 2

Sumaira Samad Director 2012–2016 4

Himayun Mazhar Director Current NA

Book[edit]

The book Masterpieces of Lahore Museum, written by Anjum Rehmani, was published by

the museum in 1999 with financial assistance from UNESCO.[5] A new edition was published in 2006.[6]

See also[edit]

Lahore: History and Architecture of Mughal Monuments

Popular culture[edit]

Rudyard Kipling's novel, *Kim* (pub. 1901), was set in the vicinity of the old/original Lahore Museum and the Mall areas.

Further reading[edit]

Shaila Bhatti (2012), *Translating museums: a counterhistory of South Asian museology*, Walnut Creek, Calif: Left Coast Press, ISBN 9781611321449

Whitehead, Richard Bertram (1914). *Catalogue of Coins in the Panjab Museum, Lahore; Indo-Greek Coins : Volume 1*. The Panjab Government at The Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Whitehead, Richard Bertram (1914). *Catalogue of Coins in the Panjab Museum, Lahore; Coins of Mughal Emperors: Volume 2*. The Panjab Government at The Clarendon Press, Oxford.

See also[edit]

List of museums in Pakistan