Venice, Italy. (Photograph courtesy of Rita Crane Photography.)

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Muraqqa'

MURAQQA'
Returning to the City, digital collage by Dhiru A. Thadani, 2009

The Persian word *muraqqa'* translates as "patched," as in a collection of recycled fabric that was sown together to make a cloak, worn by a Sufi sage to signify poverty. The word came to be applied to an "album" produced to record the life of Mogul emperors. These royal albums were in fact a patchwork of paper construction, which included paintings, calligraphy, pieces of script, and nonfigural decoration.

Most of the ideas within the book have been spawned by empirical observation, lectures I have attended, and conversations I have had over the past thirty-five years. I have and continue to imbue myself in matters concerning cities, urban form, and historical precedents.

The sketchbooks I customarily carried have served as a journal, and have been a guide and reference for what is contained in the following pages. Experiences and observations usually led to taking notes and recording images though sketches, which on reflection spawned ideas, which in turn produced diagrams and drawings.

The reader should consider this publication a muraqqa', as it is an appropriate term for this patchwork collection of words and terms that document my love affair with urbanism.

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Veronique Breton
Sherry Bruneau
Eileen Burke
Maria Casarella
Milind Chaudhari
Dana Coelho
Alick Dearie
David Delcher
Prabodh Desai
Sean Dougerty
Kimberly Dowdell
Tim Dowdy
Morgan Ennis
William J. Fernandes
Juliana Gamble
Maria Grijalva
Timo Hoefs
Leah Hollstein
Jay Kabriel
Walter Kawa
Luke Kessler
Michael Lawrence
Sarah Lewis
Ashley Livington
Dany Loekman
Ann Maki
Hugo Veliz Maldonado
Allan Marko
Peter Menon
Margarita Meoz
Katie (Poindexter) Mesia
Sanjay J. Mhatre
Susie Molina
Ana (Lee) Montilla
Clemence Montagne
Chad Morig
Marion Muhammad
Sharmistha Mukerjee-Shinde
Smriti Nayak
Kevin Petersen
Aparna G. Phalake
Sambprasad R. Pinge
Angelo Pirali
Catherine Isabel Prince
Angel Rama
Mike Reina
David Roach
Santosh B. Shinde
Sukumar Srinivasan
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