



Dr. Sonal Khullar PhD will speak on the changing practices of Durga Puja in India, discussing images from recent celebrations of the festival in Calcutta and Delhi. She will illuminate the community of artists, artisans, patrons, priests, devotees and deities who participate in what could be considered the largest public art festival in the world. From cracking terracotta idols and ornate structures to ‘eye opening’ ceremonies and sumptuous decorations, Khullar will conjure the sights, smells, and sounds of this annual homage to the goddess.

Born in Delhi, Sonal Khullar received her doctorate in art history from the University of California, Berkeley. Now at the University of Washington, Seattle, she teaches courses on modern and contemporary Indian art, south Asian art from Mohenjo-daro to the Mughals, and 19th century visual culture under the British Raj. Her research, based on extensive field work in India and beyond, focuses on modernism and national identity, cosmopolitanism, and contemporary feminist politics. Her interests include Bollywood cinema, crafts revival, kite festivals, block printing, and textile traditions.