DAG THE SILVER SERIES - 5

EDITION 5

18 – 22 SEPTEMBER 2020

10% OF THE SALE PROCEEDS SHALL BE DONATED TO Development Alternatives
THE SILVER SERIES

EDITION 5

100 ARTISTS • 100 WORKS

Modern and Contemporary Indian Art

18 – 22 SEPTEMBER 2020

FIXED-PRICE SALE

The Silver Series is DAG’s initiative towards raising funds for charity through its fixed-price sales

For further information please contact us at info@dagworld.com
PUTTING TOGETHER A Silver Series sale is like re-visiting the annals of modern art practice in India, beginning with the arrival of European artists in the subcontinent and their impact on Indian art. With every edition, we introduce more artists from DAG’s comprehensive collection to offer insights into the development of modern Indian art. We begin this sale with a historical engraving by Henry Singleton from his siege of Seringapatnam series. Some favourites remain steadfast in the catalogue, some are occasional visitors, but in Edition 5 we are delighted to mark the debut of S. R. Bhusan, Ajoy Kumar Ghose, Shamshad Husain, Tushar Joag, Bhagwan Kapoor, Walter Langhammer, Badri Narayan, Homi Patel, Sushil Chandra Sen, Laxman Shreshtha, Arpita Singh, Muni Singh, K. Sreenivasulu and Waswo X. Waswo with R. Vijay—I do hope you will enjoy their work. As always, 10 per cent of the proceeds from the sale will go to charity which, for this edition, is Development Alternatives that has worked consistently to create a more sustainable world.

Ashish Anand is CEO and Managing Director, DAG

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SALE

- Fixed-price sale of works valued between Rs 50,000 and Rs 5 lakh
- First-come, first-served basis
- Sale starts on 18 September and ends on 22 September 2020
- Prices mentioned in this catalogue are excluding Goods & Services Tax (GST) and shipping charges outside NCR (India). Currently, applicable rate of GST on sale of artworks in India is 12%
- 10% of sale proceeds from the artworks sold, excluding GST and shipping charges, will be donated to Society for Development Alternatives
- Delivery of artworks will be made on free movement of goods being allowed in both locations of dispatch and delivery
- For invoicing, payment, delivery and other terms, please refer to the Conditions to Buy on pages 108-109 of this catalogue
ABOUT DAG

Established in 1993, DAG is an art company that spans a gamut of verticals including museums, art galleries, exhibitions, publishing, archives, as well as knowledge-based programming. With India’s largest inventory of art and archival material, it offers curators and writers a vast choice for important retrospectives and historic expositions at its galleries in New Delhi, Mumbai and New York, as well as through collaborations with institutions such as The Wallace Collection, London, the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai, The Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi, Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi, Chandigarh, and Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur.

With museums located in heritage buildings in partnership with the Archaeological Survey of India, it has curated the finest art experiences for visitors. DAG’s exhibitions and books have helped establish Indian art around the world, its repertoire spanning pre-modern art as well as modern masters. Its collection includes works by India’s most celebrated artists—an extensive list including over a thousand painters and sculptors.

As an agile, flexible organisation, DAG has responded to the coronavirus pandemic by shifting its activities online, of which the Silver Series sales e-catalogue is an important step. As India’s most significant art organisation, its continued belief in the relevance and importance of Indian art as part of global art remains its guiding force.

ABOUT DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

Nearly four decades ago, Development Alternatives was set up as the world’s first social enterprise—a not-for-profit to mount a business-like attack on the problems of poverty, social injustice, environmental destruction and the other mounting threats to the wellbeing of people and the planet. It is now a global leader in innovating and delivering ‘frugal’ but highly efficient and affordable technologies for shelter, energy, water, farming et cetera. Development Alternatives has worked with villagers in thousands of villages (including helping nearly a quarter of a million women become literate), creating better and more sustainable local economies—and lakhs of jobs—generating a more productive and resilient resource base for their future, and bringing traditional arts and crafts together with the best amenities of a modern world.
THE SILVER SERIES
EDITION 5
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THE SALE
HENRY SINGLETON 1766-1839

Untitled (The Surrender of Two Sons of Tipoo Sultan)

Hand tinted engraving and aquatint on paper, 1801

22.0 x 25.5 in. / 55.9 x 64.8 cm.

In print: Inscription in English (lower left) ‘Painted by H. Singleton’, inscription in English (lower centre) ‘London Published Oct’15, 1801, by Anth’ Cardon N° 31, Clipstone, Street Fitzroy Square; and by Mef’ Schiavonetti N° 12 Michael Place, Brompton’ and inscription in English (lower right) ‘Aqua-Fortis by Anth’ Cardon’

Provenance Private collector, New Delhi, 2019

A close examination of this engraving distinctly reveals two royal personages in the centre, with their heads hung low, apparently in defeat to the British personnel who receive them with their heads held high. This is an engraving of The Surrender of Two Sons of Tipoo Sultan, one of the four famous oils by Henry Singleton, depicting the war between the British and Tipu Sultan. This particular engraving shows two sons of the Mysore Tiger—Abd al-Khaliq and Muizz al-Din—being taken into custody by Lieutenant General Lord Cornwallis, the Governor General of India. These paintings remain the best known work of Singleton, who attended the Royal Academy School from the age of seventeen, winning many medals and gaining recognition for his portraits and compositions of historical events. He was also commissioned by the Royal Academy to paint a group portrait of forty of the academicians.
THOMAS DANIELL 1749-1840
WILLIAM DANIELL 1769-1837

View at Najibabad,
Near the Coaduwar Gaut, Rohilcund
Hand tinted engraving on paper, 1804
18.0 x 23.7 in. / 45.7 x 60.2 cm.

In print: Inscription in English (lower left)
‘DRAWN AND ENGRAVED BY THO & W’
DANIELL’, title and inscription in English (lower centre) ‘VIEW AT NIJEIBAD, NEAR THE
COADUWAR GAUT, ROHILCUND.’ Published as
the Act directs by THO Daniell, R. A. Howland
Street, Fitzroy Square, London, March 1, 1804.’
and inscription in English (lower right) ‘N° XIII’

Non-exportable work

Provenance Private auction house, UK

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‘Thomas Daniell and his
nephew William were among
the earliest professional
British landscape painters to
visit India, being here from
1786 to 1793’ – Giles Tillotson

Seen here is the thirteenth print in the fourth volume of the Oriental Scenery
collection of aquatints published by the Daniells. The landscape is of Najibabad,
located at the south of Haridwar, a town described by them as ‘opulent’ and teeming
with life. The landscape of the print was documented during their journey from Delhi
into the Garhwal hills, between mid-March and mid-May of 1789, which made them
the first Europeans to visit the region. During the expedition, they did not come
across any grand architecture and therefore chose to focus on the picturesque
landscape. We see the use of human characters to scale the artwork—the closest
figure being a resting boatman and the farthest being the group of seven villagers
located on the opposite end of the bank towards the left.
ANONYMOUS
(KALIGHAT PAT)

Hanumaner Sahit Ramer Juddha / War Between Hanuman and Ram
Water colour on paper pasted on paper,
late 19th century
11.5 x 10.0 in. / 29.2 x 25.4 cm.
Title in Bengali (lower right) ‘Hanumaner Sahit Ramer Juddha’; title and inscription in English (lower left) ‘War between Hanuman & Ram / Susena sahit yuddha… [indecipherable] / fight with Susena, monkey physician’ and inscription in English (lower centre) ‘Isalay sohit vânar judha’
Registered work (non-exportable)
Provenance Bonhams, London, 2005

‘These drawings from Kalighat patuas would possess a peculiar interest … and they would outshine others not only for their different characterisation but for their wonderful colour-effects and contours as well’ – W. G. Archer

This KALIGHAT PAT is a classic example from the later period, identifiable by the broad sweeps of pigment used on the two battling characters. Only five colours—black, green, yellow, red and blue—were used for the artwork, in addition to the colloidal-tin ornamentation over Rama. A second layer with a deeper concentration of the skin pigment is used to create a sense of volume. The figures’ identity becomes a notion of curiosity, as an inscription in graphite identifies the artwork as ‘War between Hanuman & Ram’, while in actual mythology, no such fierce battle exists. Below it, another reads, ‘Isalay sohit vanar judha’, while two inscriptions in the bottom-left corner identify the simian as Sushena—the physician of Rama’s vanar army.
UNIVERSAL
(BENGAL ‘SCHOOL’)  

Untitled  
Water colour on paper  
19.5 x 15.0 in. / 49.5 x 38.1 cm.  
Signed in Bengali (lower right) ‘Priyo’  
Provenance Private collector, Kolkata, 1999  

‘Although the Bengal School was a direct refusal of British artistic traditions, one of its major founders was E. B. Havell’  
– Eva Sarah Molcard  

Painted by an unknown artist who signed as ‘Priyo’—written in Bengali but styled like Urdu—this artwork exemplifies the perfect amalgamation of varied traditions that came together in the Bengal ‘School’. In a quest to celebrate the subcontinent’s rich artistic heritage, Emperor Ashoka of the Mauryan kingdom was chosen as the subject of the painting. Described as a young man and dressed in Buddhist yellow robes, he narrates edicts that are engraved on the pillar in the centre—also inscribed below the artwork, plausibly in the official Brahmi script. The Lion Capital, the Ashoka Pillar and the panelled barrier framing the backdrop allude to the world-renowned Ashokan sites of Sarnath and Sanchi. Meticulously painted, the stylised figuration and the postures are clearly inspired by the Ajanta murals, a staple muse for the movement.
For most of the 1950s and part of the ’60s, M. F. Husain’s subject of choice was representations of village life—the farmer tilling the soil, women at work, or—as here—asses loaded with a potter’s wares being taken to a bazaar for selling under the supervision of their mistress. In this period, Husain drew inspiration from primitive folk art forms, painting with an elegance and simplicity that was appealing in the aftermath of India’s Independence. That his prints—he was a prolific painter but a reluctant printmaker—echoed the same subject was hardly surprising, and the economical use of colour too was a reflection of his palette at the time. It was only later that Husain came to use more exuberant colours, relying, earlier, on more earthy tones.
You CAN TAKE a man away from his roots but you can never take his roots away from the man. Rarely has this adage been truer than of Bhagwan Kapoor who studied art in Bombay and Paris before making his home in New York where he kept a relatively low profile while painting scenes of the country of his birth. Kapoor brought together familiar tropes from miniature painting and folk art to create a language that he made uniquely his own. This rural idyll of a man tending his bullocks has an attractive quality of figuration, a simplicity of lines and the ability to communicate without unnecessary clutter. A cluster of houses in the distance allows the artist to depict the expanse of the countryside while extolling the figures in the foreground.
SUSHIL CHANDRA SEN
1909-72

Sindhu / At The Hermitage
Water colour wash on paper, 1944
14.0 x 12.5 in. / 35.6 x 31.8 cm.
Signed and dated in Bengali (upper left) ‘Sushil Sen / 1944’
Verso: Titled, inscribed and signed in English
‘Sindhu / Rs 400/- / Sushil Sen [sic.];’ label with artist’s name, title and inscription in English

Provenance
Private collector, Kolkata, 2000
Private collection, New Delhi, 2007

‘As a guru Abanindranath inspired a whole battalion of accomplished students, many of whom played noteworthy roles in spreading the ideals of Oriental art and establishing what later came to be known as Bengal School painting’
– Soumik Nandy Majumdar

Inspired by Mukul Dey, the country’s socio-political situation and the new realism of contemporary literature, Sushil Chandra Sen’s work witnessed a dramatic change from mere romantic idealisation to showcasing the life of the masses. His art—describing pastoral and urban landscapes, intimate household scenes, and documenting social and religious functions—was well received both in India and internationally. At the Hermitage shows a young man, a brahmachari given the sacred thread on his torso, caring for the ashram’s occupants. A stylistic blend between the academic and neo-Bengal styles is observed in the artwork: while the seated figures appear lifelike, the woman’s curved palms, the standing figure’s face and even the emphasis on flora is undoubtably inspired by the Ajanta murals.
**Untitled**

Dry pastel on mulberry tissue pasted on canvas board, 2000
31.5 x 21.7 in. / 80.0 x 55.1 cm.

Signed and dated in Bengali with artist seal (lower right) ‘Ajoy / 00’ and signed and dated in Bengali (lower left) ‘Shri Ajoy Kumar Ghose / 00’

**Provenance** Acquired directly from the artist
Distinguished collection, Kolkata, 2018

Belonging to the Bengal ‘School’ gharana, Ajoy Ghose’s mastery over the watercolour medium was common knowledge to his students at Kolkata’s Government College of Art and Craft. In this work, the artist described a scene from the penultimate battle at Kurukshetra from the Mahabharata. Arjuna, painted green after classical tradition, bows down in reverence to his charioteer, the blue-skinned Krishna—whose celestial dark blue is softened to a lighter cobalt to complement his companion. Behind the characters is the chariot they share; heavily armed with spears and arrows, the vehicle’s depiction has clear Japanese design influences. The ruddiness of the ground may be representative of the bloodshed at the battlefield, or the end of the day when the battle stopped.

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**AJOY KUMAR GHOSE**

1938-2020

‘... the artists of Bengal School experimented in Japanese techniques, Persian miniatures, [the] methodology of Bagh and Ajanta cave paintings, they added to the art movement...’

– P. N. Mago
How commonplace the scene of a woman at her toilette, and the subject of numerous miniature paintings, before it was adapted by modernists worthy of their consideration. For Santiniketan-based Nandalal Bose at this point, however, it merited mere documentation as one among several daily rituals and activities he recorded on his ‘postcards’—often just slips of paper he carried on his person for this purpose. Having forsaken his Bengal ‘School’ training, he opted to paint or draw scenes from everyday pastoral life that he saw around him. Using mere lines, he recreates a woman marking the parting in her hair with vermilion as she looks in a mirror while seated in the courtyard of her home, ready for the day’s tasks to begin.
‘Release from limitations... can become a reality only when the Indian artist is really and truly tired of the present situation’
– K. C. S. Paniker

K. C. S. PANIKER 1911-77

Untitled
Charcoal on paper, c. 1950s
13.5 x 9.0 in. / 34.3 x 22.9 cm.
Verso: Sketch in charcoal
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, Chennai, 2019

This charcoal drawing by one of the most influential masters of modern Indian art, K. C. S. Paniker, comes from that transitory phase when his style shifted from exuberant impressionist landscapes to stylised figuration, to eventually make way for processing of Indian spirituality through abstraction. The view of a posed man from behind is not just balanced in its execution but reveals a high level of skill. The figure, likely a life model, with his well-built muscles, appears to be a workman, a tiller, a labourer—a class that did not escape Paniker’s eye, even as he set about creating institutions and organising artists in long-lasting relationships, such as the Cholamandal Artists’ Village in Chennai.
M. V. DHURANDHAR
1867-1944

*Ragini Deshakhi*

Water colour on paper pasted on mount board, 1944
11.7 x 8.5 in. / 29.7 x 21.6 cm.

Signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘M Dhurandhar / 21.5.1944’; titled in Hindi on mount (lower right) ‘Ragini Deshakhi’

Verso: Title and inscription in English ‘Ragini Deshakhi by M. V. D. / Price Rs 5000/-’

**Provenance** Private collector, New Delhi, 2005

M. V. DHURANDHAR excelled in his many roles—as a student of art, teacher, and administrator at his alma-mater, Sir J.J. School of Art—but above all as a prolific artist. His work forms part of museums in what was the Bombay Presidency, the Rashtrapati Bhawan complex in New Delhi, and his paintings were exhibited and appreciated by collectors in London. This charming vignette of two lovers meeting against an enchanted landscape is a trope straight out of miniature paintings, but from the couple and their clothes to the method of painting, it is ‘modern’ in the way art was prescribed before the arrival of the Progressives on the scene. The title alludes to the melodic moment attributed to the Hindola raga in the season of spring.

‘Rendered romantically, he was seen as a painter of idyllic images...’
– Suhas Bahulkar

**₹ 5,00,000 | $ 6757**

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AESTHETICALLY PLEASANT AND deceptively simple, the florae Ajit Gupta painted later in his life were an amalgamation of different painterly traditions. While seemingly realist at first, they carried a lyrical quality associated with the neo-Bengal 'School'—visualised in the movement of individual leaves and petals seemingly kissed by an invisible delicate breeze. The subject itself is presented within a romanticised purview, where the bright white dahlia, a winter flower, takes centrefold. Following a fauvist’s approach, Gupta painted the plant against an undefined mossy backdrop, its hue differing only subtly from the greens seen on the stems and leaves. The white flower and the green leaves share a velvety, almost satin-like texture where colour variances help define shape. The artist’s signature is curiously detailed, with a black overlay over a red inscription.
Given the renewed interest in works by A. A. Almelkar, underscored by a seminal exhibition dedicated to his oeuvre at N.G.M.A., Mumbai, in 2016, it is a relief that not all about him is lost to history. He stood firm in espousing traditional styles of painting at a time when the chief current of Indian art abandoned it for experimentation and a new idiom. This is one of his many luminescent creations—full-bodied and vigorous—that derives from the big fish theory of philosophy. When living, he may have found himself akin to a small fish tucked in a corner of the canvas of Indian art. But his work has stood the test of time—it is now a bigger fish that has survived the waters to swim the waves of popularity.
By 1982, the year Shyamal Dutta Ray created this artwork and won the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award, he had already become an established artist for his neo-realist style of painting infused with political commentary. Forced to paint using water colours due to medical restrictions, Dutta Ray’s mastery over the difficult medium, especially of chiaroscuro, always resulted in stylised but stunning visuals. The dense white smoke billowing from the wood fire contrasts strikingly against the overcast sky, which appears layered and lighter. The imagery of the open fire and broken utensils signifies life’s undying tenacity and innate survival instinct even in the face of strenuous adversity. Contrarily, it may also be read as ignorance towards the suffering masses. Flags, some religious, others probably political, litter the landscape as ironic markers of a society where infighting has become increasingly common.
J. D. DALVI 1922-2014

Untitled
Water colour on paper, 1956
16.5 x 11.2 in. / 41.9 x 28.4 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower left)
‘J. D. DALVI / 7/12/56’
Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2005

‘A great portrait is always more a portrait of the painter than of the painted’
- Samuel Butler

Born to an artist family in Kolhapur, a princely state where the royal family were patrons of the fine arts, J. D. Dalvi was educated by his father before being trained in Bombay’s Sir J.J. School of Art and excelling in portraiture, a genre he mastered both as a painter and a sculptor. His adherence to academic realism found him patrons throughout his career, many of them from the political order. This watercolour of a local grandee captures the dignity of the person with his sun-bronzed skin, his turban and jacket adding a touch of formality and respect to his dignified posture.
S. K. BAKRE 1920-2007

Two Prophets in One
Oil on plywood, 1998
18.5 x 13.2 in. / 47.0 x 33.5 cm.
Verso: Titled and signed in English, signed in Gujarati and dated in Marathi ‘TWO PROPHETS IN ONE / Sadanandji Bakre / Bakre / 1998;’ inscribed in English ‘MURUD, TAL-DAPOLI, DIST- RATNAGIRI, PIN- 445721’

Provenance Acquired directly from the artist
Private collector, Nagpur, 2014

‘...my interest in forms has gone far beyond the dull imitations of subject matter, which to me is almost unimportant’
– S. K. Bakre

Primarily a sculptor, S. K. Bakre returned to India from England in 1988, choosing to retire to the countryside in coastal Maharashtra where he continued to work in near oblivion. He did not give up painting in this period, something that had sustained his interest through his career. Bakre’s paintings had a sculptural quality about them—something that becomes evident in this work that uses a mid-twentieth century trope of merging profiles wherein one face is revealed as two. Bakre separates them through the colour of their pupils and lips. With almost no other distinguishing feature, the absence of hair indicates the possibility that they are monks—which would square with the title of the painting, though Bakre had no known allegiance to theological subjects in his practice.
How F. N. Souza found the time to draw in his busy life—he painted, wrote, was bohemian-about-town, had affairs, raised a family, and frequented the red-light districts of London—will remain a mystery, for he was also prolific as an artist. His interest in heads, or portraits, was as obsessive as his nude paintings and drawings of women. The early primitivism of his work was making way for distortion, and this drawing is a fine example of this stage of transition. The exaggerated features, the eyes moving upwards towards the forehead, the emphasis on the nose, all these serve to point to the direction he would take as a painter in the years ahead.
KRISHEN KHANNA
b. 1925

Untitled
Charcoal on paper, 1988
20.0 x 14.7 in. / 50.8 x 37.3 cm.
Signed and dated in English (centre right)
‘K Khanna / 24/3/88’

Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist,
c.1990s
Private collector, New Delhi, 2015

KRISHEN KHANNA HAD completed his masterpiece for ITC Maurya in New Delhi in the early 1980s and was well ensconced in his career, finding a source for his paintings while observing life in his Nizamuddin neighbourhood. Equally, his mammoth drawing for the group’s hotel in Chennai gained respect for the use of graphite—the humble pencil—used by millions of his countrymen for their daily affairs. This drawing represents that skill, his masterful use of graphite and charcoal to render a glimpsed face as part of his continuing interest in the subaltern. The open-ended lines are also a nod to his paintings from the 1960s during which period his experiments with abstraction peaked and were slowly eliminated from his work.

‘All great art has to be local’
– Krishen Khanna

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Akbar Padamsee was a people watcher, a voyeur even, for all of his career, fascinated by faces and heads. He was less curious about their thoughts or their motivations. What interested him was their physicality, and this he painted almost obsessively, in sunset colours and—as here—in soft monotones. Briskly rendered, Padamsee uses the slide of water colour to dilute across paper, using it to accentuate features. The result has the tones of a photographic negative—not surprisingly, Padamsee was fond of photography, and the female form was his muse. The translucence is rendered as a woman’s face with sharp features, a slight hint of pupils suggesting a sideways glance as she looks probably towards the artist.
JOGEN CHOWDHURY

b. 1939

Untitled
Charcoal on handmade paper, 2005
12.2 x 9.7 in. / 31.0 x 24.6 cm.
Signed in Bengali (lower right) ‘Jo’ and dated in Bengali (upper right) ‘2005’
Provenance Distinguished collector, Mumbai, 2015

‘A drawing is about being able to cultivate the body and the spirit, it is not only about a pretty picture’
– Jogen Chowdhury

Jogen Chowdhury’s confidence when using black stems from a childhood spent studying while using oil lanterns that barely managed to hold the darkness of the night at bay. He borrowed his characteristic outlines from Kalighat pat paintings. But his use of those lines to suggest a corporeality, something sinister and venomous, was entirely his doing. The head here is distinctively rendered, a handsome profile of a young person, but the penetrating gaze and reptilian brow add a sinister element to the drawing. Chowdhury does not believe in pandering to people’s egos, and his portraits are rarely flattering. This one, though, comes close to it—an arresting portrait of someone still to be corrupted by society.
INDRA DUGAR 1918-1989

Bathing at Dudh Talai
Oil on cardboard, 1952
8.5 x 14.2 in. / 21.6 x 36.1 cm.
Signed, inscribed and dated in Bengali with artist’s seal (lower right) ‘Indra / Udaipur / 28.3.52’
Verso: Artist’s label with inscription, date and title in English ‘NUMBER 90 / DATE 28.3.52 / Title Bathing at Dudh Talai / Medium Oil on Board / Size 8”.6 x 14”.4”
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, Kolkata, 2004

DUDH TALAI or Doodh Talai is a pond in Udaipur, Rajasthan, located adjacent to the Pichola lake and close to Maharaja Fateh Singh’s Shiv Niwas Palace. In this painting, Indra Dugar, born to eminent painter Hirachand Dugar, presented a group of local women arriving at the pond for a communal bath. They change out of their clothing below the shade of a tree and descend into the pool, in a scene that could easily be lifted out of a Krishna leela tale. Dugar’s romanticised vision is clearly established by the warm palette used to replicate a bright Rajasthani afternoon. The sun casts a stark shadow beneath the tree and creates bright splashes of reflection in the rippling water. Though the pond is not well-hidden from the surroundings—notice the visible architecture on the opposite bank—the women appear comfortable in their surroundings.

‘When I paint I never think of my style as... anything else but the flavour of India, the flavour of that sweet breeze and nature of my country in my painting’ - Indra Dugar
An oftentimes overlooked but striking characteristic of Haren Das’s prints is the seamless marriage between the worldly and the familiar. The imagery in *Her Pet*—a young woman from rural Bengal cradling a lamb—has a universal appeal, immortalised in the Western world through Mother Mary and the proverbial little animal, or even celebrated in *Heidi*, the globally-loved story by Swiss author Johanna Spyri from 1881, about a girl living in the Alps who taught innumerable children empathy towards animals. Even though the woodcut is trichromatic (ignoring the neutral space on the lamb), the viewer can imagine the idyllic redness of her saree and the flower placed in her bun, while the metal jewellery glistens in the scorching sun.
From early on in her career, Gogi Saroj Pal has explored the condition of women in society as also the emotions they experience within. She has married the subject matter with mythology and fables, and created strong women characters through her art. Hathyogini-Kali, this gouache on paper, is a perfect example of such a creation. The woman at the centre of this work is a powerful yoga practitioner (Hathyogini) and a supremely powerful female force (Kali). This juxtaposition of the two concentrates immense power in the female figure, almost standing up for all the women in society who are generally denied their due. The women in Pal's canvases are also evidence of her exploration of the nayika or heroine of miniature painting traditions. However, Pal's subjects do not embellish themselves like the traditional nayika, but stride boldly, unclothed, not just in defiance of the accepted role but also mocking the same.
ARUP DAS 1924-2004

Untitled
Water colour and ink on paper, 2003
30.0 x 22.0 in. / 76.2 x 55.9 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower left)
‘Arup Das / 03’
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, New Delhi, 2018

ARUP DAS HAD painted this *Untitled* artwork, capturing the classical beauty of the clay festival idol of goddess Durga, a year before his death. In choosing the subject, Das had inadvertently documented the different artistical occupations that thrive in Bengal as a result of the region’s many festivities. In accordance with tradition, specialists are individually employed to sculpt the idols from clay, paint over the dried sculpture, as well as produce the faux hair and tinfoil embellishments—both jewellery and weaponry. The different groups work in tandem to produce the final image, which is then taken to the *pandal* for worship. Durga’s small round face harks back to an archaic and colonial sense of beauty, while the yellow skin highlights her *rajasik* quality. The jewellery surrounding her head was painted sporadically to emulate light reflecting off the shiny tin.

‘My works are about human beings, but I like to put them in their historical and social context’ – Arup Das
WALTER LANGHAMMER
1905-77

Untitled
Oil on canvas
16.5 x 25.7 in. / 41.9 x 65.3 cm.
Signed in English (lower right) ‘W Langhammer’
Provenance Private auction house, UK

₹ 3,00,000 | $ 4054
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A former art teacher in Vienna, he held regular discussions with the [Progressive artists] and exposed them to many new trends current in Europe’
– Yashodhara Dalmia

IN THE YEARS that Walter Langhammer spent in Bombay, he achieved a lot: a career in India’s premier media house where he was art director, a mentor and an inspiration for the members of the Progressive Artists’ Group, and an artistic career outside his work. Having fled Europe to seek a haven in India, Langhammer’s work was published frequently in The Illustrated Weekly of India. The impressionistic style appealed greatly to the city’s elite, and among those he influenced was S. H. Raza before he left for Paris. A painter before arriving in India, Langhammer continued to paint plein-air, his palette turning more vivid to reflect his surroundings. This evocative landscape of flowering laburnums at the height of an Indian summer is quintessential Langhammer—a treat for the eyes.
A master of dry-point etching who pioneered this art form in India, Mukul Dey was inspired to take up this genre by W. W. Pearson, a close associate of Rabindranath Tagore, who came to Santiniketan to teach English and nature study. Dey made a success of it, gaining an opportunity to study in and exhibit his works in London. This sweeping landscape is a busy panorama of life quotidian in the countryside, dominated by a monument from another era as indicated by the unchecked growth of flora around it, and a close cluster of low-lying huts nearby. The past of the monument is differentiated from the present by a road, depicted by a fine track cutting across the image in the middle. In the foreground are village folk busy with their chores in the pond, lending harmony to the work and completing the picture.
CREATED IN THE last year of his life, this untitled gouache is almost like a summation of the wide-spanning art of Gopal Ghose—one of the country’s foremost modernists and a teacher who inspired—an expressionist landscape illumined deftly by a master known for playing with colour. A figure stands amidst fenced woods, where two alpine trees rise way above the others, not just in height but in colour as well. The red denotes the supremacy of the two trees over the rest of the woods—in fertility and vigour for life. The sky, a muted blue, and the foreground, a hint of grassy green, accentuate the vitality of the two trees. The fact that the figure is placed between the trees implies his relation with them, perhaps as an owner of the verdure, or an observer who wishes to derive something from their exuberance.

‘Ghose’s paintings exhibited preference for the power of light and its incandescent fleeting moments’
– Uma Nair

Gopal Ghose 1913-80

Untitled

Gouache on paper, 1980

14.2 x 21.5 in. / 36.1 x 54.6 cm.

Signed and dated in Bengali (lower left)
‘Gopal / 80’

Provenance Private collector, Kolkata, 2000

₹ 2,50,000 | $ 3378

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MUNI SINGH 1936-96

Dharasala
Gouache on mount board, 1959
18.7 x 11.0 in. / 47.5 x 27.9 cm.
Signed in Hindi (lower left) ‘Muni’
Verso: Artist’s stamp with artist’s name and inscription ‘Shree Muni Singh / ARTIST MODELER / State Museum, LUCKNOW’; title and inscription in English ‘DHARASALA / Rs 250/-’.1
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, Lucknow, 2018

MUNI SINGH is a lost name from the annals of modern Indian art. In this beautiful painting in pastel colours, the artist presented a relaxing image, complete with the snow-capped Himalayas peeking out from behind the verdant hills in the backdrop. Miniature influences are clearly identifiable in the scaling and perspective used by the artist: though the houses face different directions and are placed at varying elevations, they sit parallelly flush to the base of the canvas board. The houses were methodically placed in slanted rows and then dotted with cedar trees for a greater aesthetical impact. The natural shape of the conifers and the upward slope draws the viewer’s gaze from the bottom of the hill—an area that is closest to us—to the distant icy streaks of the towering mountains located far away.
INSPIRED BY UNFETTERED nature, Paramjit Singh paints landscapes that lie beyond the clutches of man and urbanity. His paintings are identifiable for their tactile presentation as oil paint is applied uncompromisingly in multiple layers on the canvas, resulting in a textured relief. This texturing is methodical, and a keen exploration of the picture-plane reveals subtle variations between tree, earth and water. In this *Untitled* work, we see a patchy piece of land between two bodies of water—painted with a light cyan at the bottom and a deep prussian near the top. The viewer’s interpretation defines the scale of the artwork, since the green patch may be seen both as a grassy marsh as well as imagined as an entire forest. The uniformity of the green is broken by patches of grey soil.

‘What matters is the concept of landscape. I’m a painter of nature, not an illustrator of nature’ - Paramjit Singh
In a Certain Mood
Acrylic on canvas, 2005
34.0 x 34.0 in. / 86.4 x 86.4 cm.
Verso: Title, date, artist’s name and inscription in English “In a certain mood” / 2005 / JAGADISH DEY / NEW DELHI’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, Ghaziabad, 2017

Since his childhood, Jagadish Dey had a keen interest in art and drew anything that caught his fancy, including goddesses and film actors, as he shared in an interview. However, with personal maturity and professional training, he soon found the direction he needed. In an interview he stated that his early paintings were transformed landscapes based on his flights of fancy, in surrealistic manner. In late 1980s, he shifted from dream images to figurative works, like this work, In a Certain Mood. The two women in the work seem to be observers at a window, or of a performance in a hall or merely waiting listlessly in a room. The painting does not have a peacock, otherwise a constant feature of Dey’s works, which he says acts as a means of communication between the depicted figures.
SUDHI RANJAN BHUSAN, who trained under both Ramkinkar Baij and Benode Behari Mukherjee at Santiniketan, traversed mediums with ease. But whatever the medium, he refrained from creating figurative or representational works. He presented his own worldview in an abstract form, letting the work speak through its harmony in its composition and colour scheme. Critics have often spoken about Bhusan’s works being ‘radiant, lively and stable’, owing to their ability ‘to catch light in space’. This Untitled watercolour, from a period just before he started creating public art works in metal and stone, appeals most for the balance of colour that it projects. The black and the red are balanced by the ash-coloured spaces created throughout the work. The strokes of the ash-coloured circular shapes also lend a certain movement to the canvas, giving it an animation rather than pure, passive abstraction.

‘...the poetry of painters like Bhusan is entirely contained in colour and discreet shape’
– Keshav Malik

S. R. BHUSAN 1938-99

Untitled
Water colour and ink on paper, 1967
19.5 x 25.5 in. / 49.5 x 64.8 cm.
Inscribed, signed and dated twice in English (lower right) ‘PARIS / Bhusan / 67 / Bhusan / 67’
Verso: Signed and dated in English ‘S. Bhusan / 22/3/67’
Provenance Acquired from the artist's family, Mumbai, 2007

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₹ 2,00,000 | $ 2703
RAJENDRA DHAWAN
1936-2012

Untitled
Oil on canvas, 2004
23.5 x 31.7 in. / 59.7 x 80.5 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
'DHAWAN / 04'
Verso: Signed and dated in English
'DHAWAN / 04'
Provenance Bodhi Art, New Delhi, 2017

‘The aura of silence is something that comes effortlessly to Dhawan’
– Uma Nair

From the very start of his career, the enigmatic Rajendra Dhawan turned to abstraction as his genre of choice, even though it had few takers in India at the time. Having made his home in Paris, he found greater acceptance for his work, even though his career posed a struggle. Dhawan’s linear quality stood out in his paintings, and he became known for always blending his colours to create unique and soft palettes, even when the primary notes were strong. The result was compositions that were like sonnets, or haikus, pieces of poetry that demanded no interpretation. Often likened to landscapes, Dhawan leaves the suggestion of colours to us to imbibe—whether as inward looking emotions, which informed his work, or as reeds by a still lake’s deep waters where one might choose to meditate.
‘The common perception about tantra has been one of magic. Art relating to tantra has been informed by the same perception’
- G. R. Santosh

In G. R. Santosh’s works, symbols combine in infinite ways to form compositions of exquisite beauty reflecting the innate order of creation. He accepted that his works were doctrinal, intentional and purposeful, with the Shiva-Shakti explosion beginning to take root in Santosh’s life as early as the 1970s. The markers were unmistakably religious, emerging from the rich philosophies of the monastic Shaiva tradition. Santosh belonged to the tradition of a shilpayogi who painted only to identify with the object of his creativity, resulting in the intermingling of the spiritual and the artistic processes. The experience of self-transformation is made visible through the active imagination of the artist, with an identification with the symbolic archetypes of tantric symbols. In modern Jungian terminology, this form of opening out to self-evolution is identified with the process of individuation.
AVINASH CHANDRA
1931-91

Untitled
Waterproof ink and ink on paper, 1977
21.2 x 29.0 in. / 53.8 x 73.7 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
‘Avinash / 77’
Provenance Estate of the artist
Osborne Samuel, London, 2014

‘In Chandra’s work, sexual images play a vital role, but it is important to realise that they are almost always introduced as part of a much larger experience...’
- Ronald Alley

The city Avinash Chandra was so fond of, with its psychedelic neon signs and pop-styled shopfronts, the streets peopled with the flower children who epitomised the 1960s and ’70s, found its way into his studio. The streetscapes made way for hallucinogenic scenes of acid-toned limbs and body parts that seemed to merge somewhat randomly—though harmoniously—together. A sense of patterns and designs persisted even in this phase, but they now appeared to respond to a kind of rhythm. The sexual liberation of the post-war decades found its expression in art, and Chandra’s response was instinctive. His ability to give visual form to ecstasy set him apart from his peers even as a whole generation of artists grappled with experiments that combined line with colour.
Although Bishamber Khanna had established his identity in the Indian art world with enamel designs on metal, he continued to parallelly work in more traditional mediums, as witnessed here. In this painting of boats in Podolskein, Khanna utilised a classical combination—landscape painting using transparent watercolours being one of the oldest fine art traditions—and fragmentised the space in accordance with a nuevo-cubist principle. The land surrounding the small inland port is segmented using straight lines, as if viewed through a kaleidoscope, which causes warped elevation. We see angular roofs of small tenements amidst the differently-sized boats, their evenness broken by the tall sail-less masts that rise vertically upwards. White highlighting is seen throughout the landscape and perhaps alludes to light snowfall.
Untitled
Water colour on handmade paper, 1982-89
26.0 x 17.0 in. / 66.0 x 43.2 cm.
Signed and dated in Bengali (lower left) ‘Chakladar / 82/89’
Verso: Signed and inscribed in Bengali and artist’s name in English ‘Chakladar / 80 / A. N. Chakladar’
Provenance Distinguished collector, Kolkata, 2005

The NEO-BENGAL MOVEMENT had frittered away by the middle of the twentieth century, though individual practitioners such as Amal Nath Chakladar utilised its tenets as a basis of experimentation. Painted over the course of many years, this Untitled work is of epical proportions both in its subject—the great migratory journey of a solitary bird of prey—as well as the lengthy painting process undertaken by the artist. Like any ancient epic, Chakladar has infused mythology within the imagery—the sun, framed by the billowing clouds and the gushing waves, resembles a gigantic eye, replete with a black iris within the larger pupil. In this fantastical setting, the viewer shares the bird’s supernatural sense of sight, where we can visualise not only the radiating streaks of light coming out of the sun, but also the lateral winds flowing across the canvas.

'Boundaries are abolished, and even the familiar subjected to interrogation [in Chakladar’s work]' - Calcutta Painters website
AKKITHAM NARAYANAN
b. 1939

Untitled
Oil on paper, 1984
24.5 x 19.0 in. / 62.2 x 48.3 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
‘Akkitham N / 84’

Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist, Kerala, 2005

‘I compose abstract forms that evoke the images of my life with my family in Kerala...’

– Akkitham Narayanan

KERALA-BORN and Paris-based Narayanan’s paintings have been most commonly described as geometric configurations of abstract forms. But this juxtaposition—of geometry and abstraction—is not simply just that. It is an amalgamation of the influences of his growing up years in Kumaranalloor in Kerala and living since 1967 in Paris—a fusion of Indian tantric art expressed through evolved, European geometrical art. Geometrical shapes form the background of this Untitled work, whose lyrical quality is underscored by a wave that emanates from one end of the paper and reaches the other after meandering through two horse-shoe loops in the centre. The loops contain the soul of the painting as depicted through the colours filled in them—bright yellow and saffron. The echo of this soul is evident elsewhere in the work, especially in the throbbing presence of yellow and saffron strokes at the edges of the work.
SOHAN QADRI
1932-2011

Untitled
Ink and dye on handmade paper, 1999
27.5 x 19.0 in. / 69.8 x 48.3 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower centre)
‘Qadri / 99’
Verso: Inscribed, signed and dated in English
‘9912 / Qadri / 99 / May / cph’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist,
Denmark, 2006
Private collection, Mumbai, 2015

Works speak for an artist like no words can, and Sohan Qadri’s oeuvre has always underscored his deep engagement with spirituality, whose essence he distilled in his art by giving expression to tantric symbolism through his own abstract, modernist language. This ink and dye work is from the second phase of his career when he had long given up painting in oil on canvas in preference of paper. His treatment of the paper is well known, where he gouged it in stages and applied ink and dye, leaving the furrows to soak it organically. In this work, a succession of ridges, enclosing a being in a red space in the centre, rises towards a point higher up, almost as if reaching towards a state of bliss or union with the Supreme, indicated by a halo-like punctuation of dots.
An artist-teacher of great distinction, Maniklal Banerjee studied and taught at the Government School of Art in Kolkata while painting exquisitely, almost exclusively, on silk, thereby adding a further element of delicacy to his training in the ideology of the Bengal ‘School’ that he rendered in a more modern language. His fine draughtsmanship remained with him, and his colours were rendered more vivid given his choice of medium. His preferred subjects remained mostly landscapes and studies of women. Here he breaks with the norm when painting a woman with sacred markings on her forehead. The background is rendered as a series of flat patches of colour, leaving the figure in the foreground as the main subject of Banerjee’s painting.
With Love N. 1
Serigraph on paper, 1977
12.0 x 12.0 in. / 30.5 x 30.5 cm.
On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘A/P’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘With Love N.1’ and signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘Manjit Bawa / 77’
Artist proof
Provenance From the collection of Preben Gondolf (Preben Gondolf is a former Danish diplomat who was posted in the Danish Embassy in New Delhi, India and Dhaka, Bangladesh)

‘Manjit turned to figuration when the whole art scene was leaning towards abstraction’ – S. Kalidas

MANJIT BAWA 1941-2008

NOT MANY KNOW of Manjit Bawa’s love of printmaking, even though it is most likely that his love of colours arose from his experiments with serigraphy for which he trained in England from 1964 to 1971. He continued to practice printmaking on his return to India, and the first bulbous shapes occurred during this period. The flat tones he used in serigraphy would also become a distinguishing feature of his paintings. Here, using just two colours, he gives us a form that, shorn of gravity, can be imagined as a leg—though it might equally be an arm. In suspending the two forms mid-air, Bawa was working his way to the manner in which it would develop as figures in his paintings.
PRABHAKAR BARWE
1936-95

Untitled
Water soluble pencil colour, graphite and ink on paper, 1989
8.2 x 11.5 in. / 20.8 x 29.2 cm.
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family
Bodhana, Mumbai, 2015

‘He was so profound, always brilliant in his ideas; a unique artist, with unique works’ – Lalita Lajmi

PRABHAKAR BARWE’S novel way of showing us ways to look at things was nothing short of surrealistic, and he achieved this in even his simplest drawings. This sketched work leaves us with more questions than answers. Is this a tin or a jar with some sticky substance overflowing from it? Is the winged creature a fly or a bee? Might it, in fact, be an over-brimming well? As an exceptional artist, what mattered most to him was the relationship of an object to the space it occupied—often changing our perspective in the bargain. The monumentality of the object and the ability of its contents to overwhelm everything around it seem the raison d’être for the existence of the work.
K. LAXMA GOUD  

Untitled  
Graphite on paper, 1990  
12.0 x 16.7 in. / 30.5 x 42.4 cm.  
Signed and dated in Telugu (lower left)  
‘K. Laxma Goud / 1990’  

Provenance  
Acquired directly from the artist  
Distinguished collection, Kolkata, 2017  

‘Having put the world into a relaxed gear, Laxma leaves his dreamy characters in a state of inebriation and wonder’ – Roobina Karode  

Young men out seeking their pleasure at night—viewers of K. Laxma Goud’s work will be familiar with this theme of his work. Goud made a practice out of extolling the sexuality of Telangana men and women, their robust figures not shy of intimacy, unlike their urban peers for whom copulation was an act conducted in the strictest privacy. Finely rendered in graphite, Goud here brings together five people against a landscape of raw earth and village walls under a slumbering sky. The protagonists express their desire openly, yet there is nothing salacious about it. The artist’s honest approach to the taboo subject serves to inform us of the liberal attitudes of rural society. All that’s missing is goats, the presence of which, in a Goud painting, were a stand-in for randiness.
INDIANS ACROSS THE COUNTRY Watched in dismay the migration of millions of migrant workers from the cities to their villages earlier this year, driven by the health and economic crisis. But the issue had been spiralling globally for some years as people are driven from their homes, undertaking perilous journeys with their families, to reach safe havens where they might earn their livelihood and have a chance of a new life with respect and dignity. New Delhi-based sculptor K. S. Radhakrishnan, a student of Ramkinkar Baij, has been making works with a multitude of figures, but in this sculpture they seem to be aspiring for a part of a globe to call their own. Escaping hunger, exploitation and violence, they flee, unmindful of others—a rare political statement from an artist of utmost equanimity.
Untitled
Water colour and conte on paper, 1983
9.5 x 13.5 in. / 24.1 x 34.3 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower centre)
‘S / 13/2/83’
Provenance
Acquired from the artist’s family, Santiniketan, 2014
Private collection, Kolkata, 2018

‘Socialism may well encourage an artist to create works of art, but it can never make him an artist’
– Somnath Hore

Somnath Hore’s subjects often bear the weight of humanity on their frail shoulders. Having lived through the ravages of the Bengal famine as well as Partition, he was no stranger to death by violence, something that would leave a permanent impression on his practice. Yet, he witnessed also the stoic resilience of people, whom he renders with a solidity, as though hewn from rock. What one takes away is the melancholy in the figure’s eyes in this painting as he carries his meagre belongings while migrating from one place to another—something all of us experienced during the current public health emergency which saw similar uncomplaining tolerance by the people most impacted by it.
Students of Sir J. J. School of Art were routinely required to report at the Elephanta Caves, a boat ride away from Bombay, Jogeshwari Caves, as well as scenic spots amidst the Western Ghats and, occasionally, Ajanta and Ellora, as part of their training process. This became so engrained in their habit that a number of them would continue to arrive at these spots to paint even as mature artists. Here, N. R. Sardesai reports on one such outing at a cave shrine with its stunning architecture carved straight from rock. He appears to have positioned himself inside to gaze outwards beyond gigantic rock-cut sculptures and pillars, towards a group of people in the sunlight providing a perspective to the enormous size of the complex.

‘...landscape was one of the most avidly explored genres of painting in the late nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century’
– Shukla Sawant

N. R. SARDESAI
1885-1954

Untitled (Jogeshwar Caves)
Water colour on paper, 1931
9.5 x 13.5 in. / 24.1 x 34.3 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
‘N. R. SARDESAI / 11/11/31’
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, Mumbai, 2001

₹ 2,00,000 | $ 2703
ENQUIRE HERE
L. N. TASKAR 1870-1937

Untitled
Oil on paper
11.7 x 8.5 in. / 29.7 x 21.6 cm.
Signed in English (lower left) ‘L. N. TASKAR’
Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2004

L. N. Taskar's paintings mirror ideals of academic realism introduced by the British within their art education system. In 1898, he served as a teacher at Sir J. J. School of Art. Adopting the style of objective accuracy, formal order and an interest in visual narration, his paintings concentrated on 'slices of everyday life'. They became a tool for reflecting upon contemporary social reality. In Taskar's art, mythological figures were replaced by common people in their local environments. In this work, we see eight characters, seated or working, around the largest among a row of temples while another group gathers at the far end. Light falls across from the viewer's right, casting shadows across the opposite end as well as in the interiors of the temple. Taskar had trained in watercolours, and he often replicated the transparency in his oil paintings, which is witnessed in the rendition of the sky.
The most distinctive feature of this painting is the pleasant harmony of its diverse elements depicted effortlessly by the artist who had trained under J. P. Gangooly. Kisory Roy was known for his depictions of the countryside that he did not restrict to just idealised scenic scapes but included slice-of-life glimpses of the working classes as well as the advance of modernisation and development represented by industrial growth. Here, the artist skillfully foregrounds the two elements in this work: while the seemingly pristine countryside is actually in the forefront, the industrial background pushes its way to the front with the heavy smoke belloowing from the refinery. The gradations of light from the top to the bottom of the painting lend it a *plein-air* charm, adding, at the same time, an aura of a romantic idyll lost.
SUDHIR KHASTGIR
1907-74

Untitled
Gouache on cardboard, 1949
18.0 x 13.5 in. / 45.7 x 34.3 cm.
Signed and dated in Bengali with artist’s seal (lower right) ‘Sudhir Khastgir / 1949’
Verso: Sketch in gouache
Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2001

‘Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky’
– Khalil Gibran

SUDHIR KHASTGIR had the good fortune to study under both Abanindranath Tagore in Calcutta and Nandalal Bose in Santiniketan, rounding it off with a stint at an art school in Munich before making his home in Dehra Dun where he taught art, tried to recreate Rabindranath Tagore’s dance dramas, and painted to his heart’s content. His expressions varied, combining mythology and figurative painting with an expressionistic style. The Himalayan foothills encouraged his interest in landscape painting, and this work with its yellow blossom covered trees is typical of his style with its broad daubs of colour which came to exemplify his signature style.
LAXMAN PAI

b. 1926

Goa

Water colour and ink on paper, 1962
16.7 x 12.2 in. / 42.4 x 31.0 cm.

Signed in English and Hindi and titled and dated in English (lower centre) ‘Pai / Laxman Pai / Goa / 9/2/62’

Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, New Delhi, 2003

LAXMAN PAI’s arrival back in Goa after its liberation from Portuguese occupation would be reason to celebrate its local culture, none more representative than the church. Goa’s churches rise amidst lush paddy fields, and it is one such that Pai paints here, fronted by coconut palms, while two nuns in the foreground discuss the concerns of their parishioners. Pai’s use of black lines around which he painted using only a few colours, was his trademark style during this period, rendering a sense of busyness to the paintings at odds with the sosegade associated with this coastal state. Pai went on to become a frontrunner in documenting the life and landscapes of his beloved Goa.

’enquire here’ - Laxman Pai

'Vee the life of a creative artist is like the continuous flow of a river’ - Laxman Pai

€ 2,50,000 | $ 3378
ARPITA SINGH
b. 1937

A Man with Flowers
Etching on paper, 2006
9.7 x 7.2 in. / 24.6 x 18.3 cm.

On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ’10/20’, titled in English (lower centre) ’A man with flowers’ and signed and dated in English (lower right) ’ARPITA SINGH / 2006’
Edition 10 of 20

Provenance The artist Anupam Sud, New Delhi, 2019

ARPAITA SINGH’S A Man with Flowers does indeed show a towering man carrying a bouquet of flowers who walks on Delhi’s Mehrauli-Badarpur road, but the work is so much more. The title, placed underneath the gargantuan man and alongside the artist’s name and date of printing, snakes into a spiralling mess that loses legibility after the initial fragments. As our eyes sprint around the carousel of oddities, we clutch at visual cues—familiar words and numbers mostly—that leave us more confused, but somehow wiser. A car enshrined in a labelled balloon. A flock of airplanes (noted somewhere as ‘cheel gadi’) buzzes about in the sky like flies, while a note that counted them to be 39 is edited to say 29. Singh’s work is not to be viewed quickly and judged, but rather waited on and studied carefully, as each new clue is a pleasant surprise.

‘But sometimes the roads are disrupted, damaged, broken, one can’t proceed, the journey is abandoned, this is a tragedy’ – Arpita Singh
ONE OF THE stalwarts of modern Indian art, K. G. Subramanyan was a versatile artist and teacher. He created art across a variety of mediums while helping to free it from the yoke of colonialism. A pioneer who was among the first to use terracotta for his relief works, he also used terracotta plates for painting—as is evident in the work under discussion. It does not depart from the essential Subramanyan signature—stark faces, animated expressions, overly emphasised lips quivering to say something. The four figures simultaneously engage the onlooker, each with a distinctive, lively visage. It is only after one has absorbed their presence that the eye trails to the left where two supplementary figures can be seen.

‘...the language of art should emerge naturally, with ease and spontaneity, out of our responses to our environment and out of our inner vision’

– K. G. Subramanyan

K. G. SUBRAMANYAN
1924-2016

Untitled
Acrylic on terracotta, 2003
11.0 x 11.0 in. / 27.9 x 27.9 cm.
Signed in Malayalam and dated in English (lower centre) ‘Mani / 03’

Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2013

₹ 3,00,000 | $ 4054

ENQUIRE HERE
K. SREENIVASULU
1923-95

Untitled
Pastel and charcoal on paper
22.5 x 29.5 in. / 57.2 x 74.9 cm.
Signed in English (lower right) ‘K. Sreenivasulu’
Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2012

‘As a child my mind was focused on art and the hereditary artistic instincts in me were awakened’
– K. Sreenivasulu

K. SREENIVASULU’S EXPRESSIONS contradicted almost all aspects except the persistent descriptive line. Sreenivasulu extended his study to the Jain miniature tradition with Jamini Roy’s iconography, amalgamating both these with Lepakshi-style mural folk patterning and use of bright colours. His experiences were rooted in rural Nagalapuram (Andhra Pradesh) where he had spent twelve years of his childhood and adolescence before running away to Madras. His strong artistic predilection came from his father, a clay modeller who fashioned toys, while his great-grandparents had owned a theatre for local performances. His paintings reveal strong patterning, decorative designs and minute details originating from folk art. In this work, we see three male musicians who are dressed identically in matching dhoti, pagri and earrings, each playing a different instrument. The colours of their skin—green, ashen and cobalt—are familiar shades used to define the Hindu deities Rama, Shiva and Krishna respectively.
PARITOSH SEN 1918-2008

Untitled
Acrylic and charcoal on paper, 2007
23.0 x 28.7 in. / 58.4 x 72.9 cm.
Signed and dated in English (upper right)
‘Paritosh Sen / 07’

Provenance Acquired directly from the artist
Artworld, Chennai, 2017

What must Paritosh Sen have been thinking, a year before his death, that warranted a painting such as this pair of clasped hands? Was it gratitude he was expressing? Or a united front? At any rate, it seems a strong metaphor for a coming together in unison of diverse forces, boldly rendered, as if in anticipation of stormy times ahead. Sen had travelled across Europe early in his career and had been influenced by his meeting with Pablo Picasso, and had gone on to create works in a modernist language at variance with the kinds of modernism that emerged in Calcutta. This painting seems more an ode to the forces of labour and is reminiscent of socialist or communist bonding and camaraderie.

‘...most of us remember Sen for his bold lines that are economical even as they lionise the subject...’
– Benita Sen
Badri Narayan (1929-2013)

**Untitled**
Woodcut on paper
6.2 x 14.0 in. / 15.7 x 35.6 cm.

On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘WOODCUT’ and inscribed and signed in English (lower right) ‘8/50 / Badri Narayan’
Edition 8 of 50

**Provenance** Private collection, Mumbai, 2018

‘While Badri’s paintings take the form of fables and parables, their simplicity is deceptive’ – Ranjit Hoskote

Painter, writer and teacher, the multi-talented Badri Narayan began his career in the early years of India’s Independence. Like so many of his contemporaries yearning for an indigenous identity, he gravitated towards local folklore and mythology. In this horizontal woodcut, we see a woman lounging, with a man seated beside her, their proportions modelled after puppets. Both have exaggerated heads that feature a narrow nose and a pair of oversized blank eyes. Seated closer to the woman’s feet, the male figure appears servile. The imagery is quite like the popular prints sold in colonial Calcutta that ridiculed the *babu* and his bossy courtesan. Throughout the print, we see faint grain lines of the wooden stamp, resulting in charming long striations in the pressed image.
HEMANTA MISRA 1917-2009

Khali Girls
Oil on cardboard, c. 1950s
15.2 x 13.2 in. / 38.6 x 33.5 cm.
Signed in English (lower left) ‘MISRA’
Verso: Titled, inscribed and signed in English ‘Khali Girls / Oil on Board / 2nd Period / No 44 / An idle moment / MISRA’; sketch in ink and graphite
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, Guwahati, 2012

HEMANTA MISRA, a young man from Assam, came to Calcutta at a time when the city was in great political, social and cultural ferment in the early decades of the twentieth century. This timing was to have a bearing on the career of this self-taught artist, who remained perpetually restless to seek newer avenues for his art. This quest saw him move from naturalism to cubism and eventually to surrealism in the course of his career, exhibiting superb command over subject and strokes in all the phases. Khali Girls is an oil from the intervening phase of cubism that Misra explored before finally settling on surrealism as the calling card of his art. Through all the three phases, the soul of his work remained Indian, as is beautifully evidenced by this study of Khali girls working in the north-eastern hills. The cubist technique and essentially Western palette apply uniquely to this familiar Asian image.
The late artist’s wife, Navjot—an artist herself—had shared in an interview before his retrospective in Mumbai in 2017 that his favourite artist was the Irish-English painter Francis Bacon. The textures of this painting bear it out with an unconscious likeness on the surface with Bacon’s work. However, the similarity ends there. Altaf’s art was distinctly his own. Throughout, he remained openly sympathetic to socio-political causes, aligning himself with the voiceless and the deprived. The themes invariably found expression in his art. This painting shows figures bracketed to stand in some queue, to be catechised for a certain ideology, or interred for an ideal. The fate of the figures preceding them is laid out on a table in the form of busts while the ghostly remnants of books and bottles indicating an intellectual life point towards a freedom from the fetters of this world.
CHITTAPROSAD 1915-78

Untitled
Oil on paper, c. 1950s
10.0 x 14.0 in. / 25.4 x 35.6 cm.

Provenance
Acquired from the artist’s family, Kolkata, 1999

CHITTAPROSAD MAY HAVE brought the horrors of the Bengal famine to our homes via his excoriating drawings published in People’s War, but he could also exult in the sheer sensuality of life and living. His particular fondness of children, and his later involvement with the craft and storytelling of puppetry, were significant aspects of his artistic practice. This colour-saturated painting with its thick dabs of paint creates a joy-filled interlude in which an orange sun sets over the sea, while the moon rises above it. Painted in rich tropical colours, the mother and child on the beach, the swaying palms and restless waves recreate an idyllic getaway from Bombay, which served as home to the artist for most of his career.
Women at Gossip
Water colour on handmade paper, 1940
12.7 x 12.7 in. / 32.3 x 32.3 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
‘P T Reddy / 1940’
Verso: Inscription, title, date and artist’s name in English ‘NY No 3 / SL NO 420 / WOMEN AT GOSSIP / 1940 / 32 ½ x 32 ½ cm. / W.C.P / P.T. Reddy / 3-4.574, NARAYANGUDA, HYDERABAD-29 A.P. INDIA’
Provenance
Acquired from the artist’s family, Hyderabad, 2012

P. T. REDDY 1915-96

‘Virtue is not solitary; it is bound to have neighbours’ – Confucius

P. T. REDDY’s Narayanaguda neighbourhood in Hyderabad was the frequent subject of his paintings. At the time it had not been overtaken by the city’s urban sprawl, women and children still gathered together post the completion of their chores and families kept cows and buffaloes to supply them with milk. This charming painting belongs to this period and can be compared with Amrita Sher-Gil’s compositions for the number of figures, its use of palette, and the way the artist has distinguished his protagonists through their skin tones. Unlike Sher-Gil’s work, however, it is far from melancholic, depicting, instead, the engagements of community life before the walls rose higher and cut off neighbours from their friends and families.
**Friendship / Play Near House**

Oil on canvas, 1989

20.0 x 16.0 in. / 50.8 x 40.6 cm.

Signed in Hindi and dated in English (lower centre) ‘Madhvi / 89’

Verso: Artist’s name and title on stretcher ‘MADHVI PAREKH / FRIENDSHIP’ and inscription, date and title in English ‘16” x 20” / 1989 / Play near house’

**Provenance** Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2015

As a CHRONICLER of village life, Madhvi Parekh turns not to toil as much as to leisure, to play rather than to work—manifestations of a happy childhood in which one was free to run around at will, intermingling with creatures feathered as well as four-legged. Parekh’s gender would not have allowed her to play as freely as the protagonists of her paintings, but she reminisces with affection about a life in which all living beings were as well regarded as inanimate objects. Here, friends gather together, play with animals, or relax and look on to the countryside around the village house that gives the work its evocative title.

**MADHVI PAREKH** b. 1942

‘Madhvi’s works are about a specific memory field but they also enforce a sense of the encounter with modernity and the changes that it must bring’

- Gayatri Sinha

**₹ 3,50,000 | $ 4730**

**ENQUIRE HERE**
Quite van Goghian in its likeness, with swirling light emanating outwards from the sun, this hurried watercolour presents a relaxed aspect of Nikhil Biswas’s intense personality. The imagined land is far removed from 1950s Calcutta—the boiling cauldron of post-Independence uncertainty where Biswas’s activism was located—and is a picturesque hilly horse ranch with pine-trees growing in neat lines near the horizon. The subject of the painting, a jockey on his poised stallion, was drawn in the boldest outlines with the most vivid colours, whereas the additional characters were placed in no noticeable order. Barring black, the only colours used in the artwork are yellow and orange, the colours of the sunlight that reflect off different surfaces.
M. SURiyAMOORTHY

b. 1942

Untitled
Gouache on paper, 1967
21.5 x 27.2 in. / 54.6 x 69.1 cm.
Signed in Tamil and dated in English (lower right) ‘M. Suriyamoorthy / 1967’
Verso: Artist’s Stamp in English
‘M. Suriyamoorthy / Internationally Acclaimed Artist / KADAIKADU - NEIDAVASAI P.O.
POOMPUHAR (VIA)-SIRKALI-TK. NAGAI QUAIDEMILLETH - DT. TAMIL NADU STATE, S.
INDIA 809106 / PHONE No…’

Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2018

‘I have evolved my own style which is unique. You could describe it as a one-man movement’
– M. Suriyamoorthy

The seemingly chaotic nature of M. Suriyamoorthy’s early paintings was an artistic ploy used to capture the viewers’ attention. One was compelled to find order within the disorder, successfully achieved in his decorative patterning of space. Line and colour modulated his spatial patterning through which the narrative transcended time, recording the multiple chores performed by its woman protagonists. The woman was his constant muse, and his paintings were a paean to her versatility at multitasking. In this 1967 Untitled work, Suriyamoorthy’s perspective became the painter’s equivalence to a fish-eyed view, as space was distorted around the central woman dressed in a red saree. Around her, we see two additional figures, plausibly vegetable sellers, a goat trying to steal from a basket of wares, and the tiled buildings of the locality behind them.
PARTHA PRATIM DEB
b. 1943

Untitled
Oil on canvas, early 1970s
18.0 x 23.2 in. / 45.7 x 58.9 cm.
Verso: Signed in English ‘Partha Pratim Dev’ [sic.]
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, Kolkata, 2003

‘Partha Pratim Deb used to tell us that we need to produce work for at least 10 years. Then we can see if we can survive in the art world’ – Sanjoy Chakraborty

PARTHA PRATIM DEB’s work is characterised by contrast—in colours bright as well as muted, in lines sharp as well as gently curving. This contrast is well in play in this *Untitled* oil on canvas where soft pinks and blues are offset by grey-black and solid yellow. The lines too curve pleasantly to lend a softness to figures that would otherwise have appeared wooden. The group of people seem to be in a public reading room, or a conference hall, as if waiting for some meeting to begin. A figure on the left is engrossed in reading a newspaper while two others lounge abstractedly on the right. Three more in the centre participate in idle conversation. Deb lends a bright, poetic quality to this undistinguished setting with a pink overtone, almost like an observer watching the proceedings through a window.
Calcutta in the 1940s was flooded with people from rural Bengal, a trend that grew exponentially following the Great Bengal Famine. Families such as those in the painted image would leave with their belongings and arrive in the city—perceived from afar as a land of plenitude, which in reality had very little to offer the hopeful. While some men found work in manual labour, many were forced to beg and scavenge in the streets, and the rest made their way into refugee camps dotting the city. These refuges were squalid spaces with little or no resources, a reality that is plainly described in Sinha’s painting. Women and men of all ages are seen asleep on the ground or resting against supply sacks, barring a young nursing mother. Surrounding the figures are their worldly possessions—wicker baskets, aluminium buckets, torn clothing, and clay pots to cook food on makeshift wooden stoves.

‘The decade 1940-1950 was a climactic one for Bengal politically, economically and culturally... Calcutta was shaken and devastated by the war, famine and communal riots’

- Ella Datta
VISHWANATH NAGESHKAR’S WORK is readily distinguishable for the artist’s unusual palette comprising muted greens, reds and pinkish cream highlights. His art echoed with a humanist concern, perhaps as a manner of coping with the trauma of surviving through Hitler’s Germany during the Second World War. The images of suffering—Crucifixion, famine and death—reverberate in his canvases as solemn reminders of the meaningless of conflict. In this Untitled work, the allegory of grief is Mary, the ever-suffering mother to the son of God. Although she has just given birth to baby Jesus whom she holds in her lap, Nageshkar’s Mary is an elderly woman burdened with the fate that will befall her son—the searing image of Christ at the Cross already embedded in her heart.
ANUPAM SUD  b. 1944

Ups and Downs
Etching on paper, 2014
19.7 x 25.7 in. / 50.0 x 65.3 cm.

On print : Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘Variation Print-2’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘ups and downs’ and signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘Anupam Sud / 2014’

Variation print 2

Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2019

‘My works are reflections of the environment and people around me’ – Anupam Sud

Considered one of the finest printmakers of the country, Anupam Sud’s practice has emphasised the role of the human figure to explore her feminist concerns—from the social and personal to the sexual. In this etching, the male and the female figure, separated in their thoughts through an imaginary compartment, are contemplating a life away from each other, as is evidenced by a roving helicopter over each one’s head. While the man appears to be distraught, with his eyes shut and fingers clenching his hair, the woman seems to be composed. Her eyes and her pose exude a calmness and sense of liberation that indicate the departure as her choice—alluded by the butterfly depicted in colour as it flutters beside the helicopter.
SCALE AND FORM have defined Dhruva Mistry’s practice. Known primarily as a sculptor, he has worked across most mediums and genres, exploring concepts without being bound by their limitations. In the late 1980s and early ’90s, in particular, he found himself exploring the relationship of the body with its external environment in a manner that dissolved the difference between the animate and the inanimate. The sculpture under discussion creates an interesting simultaneity: it negotiates the territory of geometric space even as it renders what appears to be a female figure while retaining its credence of form for form’s sake.
The 1980s was an exciting decade for Rekha Rodwittiya. She was enrolled in London’s Royal College of Art, completing her masters in painting, and in a period of two years (1982-84), had painted over two hundred artworks using the watercolour medium. In 1985, the year she painted this work, Rodwittiya was the sole woman artist included in an American exhibition from the Chester Herwitz collection. It was also the year when she was hosting workshops in southern India, as well as developing a long-standing relationship with fellow artist Surendran Nair. Her art of this time is crammed full of an almost cartoon-like language. In this Untitled painting, a visual parallel may be drawn with folk images of Radha and Krishna’s courtship underneath the kadamba tree, where at times Radha would coddle a calf, here amusingly replaced with an adult ram.
JAYA GANGULY  b. 1958

Untitled
Acrylic, water colour, ink and pastel on handmade paper, 2006
30.0 x 22.7 in. / 76.2 x 57.7 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
‘Jaya / 06’
Verso: Dated and signed in English ‘03/2006 / Jaya’, signed twice, dated and inscribed in English ‘Jaya / 06 / Jaya Ganguly / 18/8/06’ Kolkata

Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist, Kolkata, 2008

‘Ugliness is unpredictable and offers an infinite range of possibilities. Beauty is finite. Ugliness is infinite, like God’ – Umberto Eco

The concept of ‘ugliness’ has been at the centre of all art, whether as an ideal to strictly avoid while making ‘beautiful’ art or as a notion of contention. While earlier this point of contention was mostly formalistic, in the modern era—where art exponentially became more experimental—and after the advent of psychoanalysis, the rubric shifted to reflect the artist’s mind. For Ganguly, the physical distortion of the figure, primarily women characters, is but a manifestation of limitations placed upon them. The woman’s disproportioned figure, with patchy dark skin and sagging, asymmetrical breasts, is a hyperbolic mental projection that is forced upon the protagonist, who cries in anguish. Through the woman’s presumed ugliness, Ganguly critiques both societal convention and the industry of beauty augmentation.
PROKASH KARMAKAR
1933-2014

Untitled
Acrylic on handmade paper, 1990
30.0 x 22.0 in. / 76.2 x 55.9 cm.
Signed in Bengali and dated in English (lower left) ‘Prokash / 90’
Provenance Private collector, Kolkata, 2002

‘Karmakar has always believed figure-painting needs something more than skill’ – Sandip Sarkar

M. F. Husain became known as a painter of horses, but as a subject it also held great appeal for Prokash Karmakar. If for Husain horses represented virility and masculinity—as they did for Sunil Das, his peer in Kolkata—Karmakar saw them as terrifying beasts often racing towards people or charging towards women and wreaking devastation. This distorted, disjointed horse is such a creature, but becomes a repository of power instead of dread for being painted by itself. In this painting, therefore, the artist's suggestion of the equine's potency and independence communicates itself to the viewer—the diagonal limbs representing motion, the flowing mane and tail implying speed—as an untamed creature of the wilderness.
Many Lives
Water colour and charcoal on paper, 2003
20.0 x 29.0 in. / 50.8 x 73.7 cm.
Signed in English (lower right) ‘Amit’
Verso: Signed, dated and titled in English ‘Amit / 9-4-2003 / ‘Many Lives’’
Provenance Private collection, Mumbai, 2018

‘Art becomes a burden if you become rigid or possessive about it. All I want to do is celebrate what I have now and accept everything as Krishna’s leela’
– Amit Ambalal

AMIT AMBALAL
b. 1943

SATIRE OFTEN OCCUPIES a central space in Amit Ambalal’s work, helping him re-imagine mythological themes and characters. However, in this watercolour, he re-imagines a fellow traveller on a trip to Sri Lanka some years ago. The person painted here is Ranjit Hoskote, author-curator-critic, who along with Ambalal and other artists, went to Sigiriya-Dambulla caves and other places of historical importance in the island nation. “We were looking at a mural depicting a bearded Sultan and I remarked to Ranjit, ‘This is so much like you. You must have been here in a previous incarnation!’” The artist adds that Hoskote of present is asleep and dreaming of a past life in which he is a Sultan—depicted by a wasp rising from his head leading to the dream sequence. Behind them is a vanishing opaska from a Sigiriya mural, alluding to the vaporizing of the dream, evidenced by a hazy foreground.
ANANDA MOY BANERJI
b. 1959

Performer-VIII (Diptych)
Acrylic and oil bar on canvas, 2006
60.0 x 72.0 in. / 152.4 x 182.9 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower left)
‘AMB-06’
Verso: Artist’s name, title, inscription and date in English ‘ANANDA MOY BANERJI /
“PERFORMER-VIII” / ACRYLIC / OIL (OIL-BAR) / 2006; signed and dated thrice in English
‘Anandamoy Banerji / 2006 / Anandamoy Banerji / 2006 / AMB-06’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, Ghaziabad, 2017

A COMPARATIVE STUDY of Ananda Moy Banerji’s career shows the recurrence of specific motifs that aid in establishing a continued lore. The idea of duality—presented by the pairs of arms extended perpendicularly, as well as two gold masks—may be traced back to his Purusha / Prakriti – I woodcut print that had won the artist the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award. Banerji offsets the pictorial space with a floating line, which at times encircles the painted forms to emerge as a solid line traversing across the lower third of the image. This line, akin to a vein or the proverbial thread of destiny, establishes a direct connection between his different canvases. Finally, like the other works in the series, the performer before us exists to please the audience—their eyes visible in the red backdrop—while others extend their hands, waiting to be invited to the spectacle.

‘[My] works are concentrated on exploring themes which are in a way a reflection of my personal life and what goes around me’
- Ananda Moy Banerji

₹ 4,00,000 | $ 5405
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For most second-generation artists, a comparison to their parents is inevitable, but when the father’s name is spoken in the same breath as ‘modern Indian art’, it is easy to feel overburdened. Shamshad Husain, born to the indefeasible Maqbool Fida, struggled for his individuality until he realised that, like his father, he too gravitated automatically towards figuration, especially the female form. In Shamshad’s work, tangibility was established within the figure with broad expressionist brushwork, allowing the viewer to comprehend the general shape and movement of the body. In this *Untitled* painting, figures generate outwards from within an abstract void: a pair of lower legs and an entire nude female form without her head. They may be the *dramatis personae* of a tale in the process of being written, evolving outwards from the mind of the poet or the painter.
‘I grew up surrounded by these hardworking women of Telangana with their rustic simplicity that has always appealed to me’
- Thota Vaikuntam

Weddings can inspire a painting but the reverse is quite rare, especially when the nuptials are meant to showcase an unprecedented luxe quotient. The theme of the most recent celebrity wedding, of Telugu film industry’s superstar Rana Daggubati, was inspired by a Thota Vaikuntam painting, of Radha and Krishna, rich with colours and suffused with vigour that renders each of his paintings indelible. So is the case with this signature Vaikuntam work, of a distinctive robust Telangana woman, embellished in vermilion and turmeric, and sporting a blood red bosom, indicating fertility. The covert sexuality of the work is further camouflaged by its innate richness, another characteristic of Vaikuntam’s art. Women from the rural milieu where he grew up before moving to Hyderabad as a student—and where he continues to live—have long remained his muse on account of their sensuality.
Biman Bihari Das, a public art sculptor and an educator who was associated with teaching in both Kolkata and New Delhi, excels in realism in his public sculptures that are placed both in India and abroad. His studio works, on the other hand, such as thisUntitledstone piece, are more experimental in nature. This sculpture belongs to a series called Philosophy of Life where each comparable rendition showcases the union between an embracing couple. The figures arise from a shared base, a symbol of their spiritual and carnal unison—imagery that invokes sambhoga shringara as per classical rasa theory. The sculpture visibly leans towards an abstract expressionistic language, barring the slight modulation of the woman’s bodily contours—such as the swell of her breasts and fold of her stomach—which become iconic markers in this series.

Biman Bihari Das
b. 1943

Untitled
Stone, 2009
8.7 x 5.5 x 3.0 in. / 22.1 x 14.0 x 7.6 cm.
Signed and dated in English (base)
‘BIMAN DAS / 09’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2017

‘[Sculpture making] was perhaps the best decision that I have taken in my life’
– Biman Bihari Das

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SHANTI DAVE  b. 1931

Untitled
Oil and encaustic on canvas, 1973
23.7 x 23.7 in. / 60.2 x 60.2 cm.
Signed and dated in English (centre right) ‘Shanti Dave / 73’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2017

‘My artistic pursuit is my only religion’
– Shanti Dave

AN ABSTRACT ARTIST who mastered the art of encaustic relief with which he combined sacred objects and scripts, Shanti Dave often worked in unusual colours, thereby making his paintings that much more difficult to ‘interpret’. His purpose was to let the viewer experience his paintings instead, making of them as they chose. For most, his work represented the tenuous link to civilisations from the past, their learnings passed down to us as vestigial memory. This lavender-coloured painting seems to penetrate the depths of earth—whether water or land—to provide us a glimpse of that which may have passed before: a settlement we can decipher over an even earlier one, marking the passage of time.
S. G. VASUDEV b. 1941

Untitled
Acrylic on canvas, 1993
27.0 x 24.0 in. / 68.6 x 61.0 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right)
‘Vasudev / 93’

Provenance
Acquired from the artist’s family, Bangalore, 2004

S. G. VASUDEV abandoned agricultural studies to pursue a career in fine art. At the Madras art school, he was sucked into the vortex of its nativist argument. Vasudev sensed the need to establish an identity for the Madras Group, and along with R. B. Bhaskaran, he took on the responsibility of taking exhibitions by Madras artists to Bombay and New Delhi at the initiative of K. C. S. Paniker. Within an ambience that was stimulating and catalytic, he negotiated a space for mythologies, legends and folklore. His technique and cryptic synoptic forms, often fragmented and floating within a layered space, result in a mysterious aura. The Untitled artwork under discussion may seem to be completely abstract at first glance, but a paused study gradually reveals the impression of a face. He gives the mauve a semblance of structural depth by changing the tonality of the colour, evoking recesses and elevations.

‘My imagery is my ideograph, with each detail worked out intuitively’
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‘My imagery is my ideograph, with each detail worked out intuitively’
– S. G. Vasudev
Absterix
Viscosity on paper, 1953
15.0 x 11.5 in. / 38.1 x 29.2 cm.
Edition VI of X
Provenance Galerie 88, Kolkata
Distinguished collector, Kolkata, 2012

Even though he did not live in India, Krishna Reddy proved to be an undeniable influence on the development of printmaking in the country. Most printmakers from this generation encountered Reddy and the technique of viscosity printmaking either at Atelier 17 in Paris and later in New York, or in the several workshops that he conducted across India in the 1980s. It was not just Reddy’s technical brilliance that attracted Indian printmakers but also his abstract imagery and philosophy. Many were influenced by his spiritual approach to printmaking as a ‘living process’. Absterix was printed from the same plate that produced the different Tuataras (also 1953), but has a comparatively vibrant palette. The title is the medieval word for obstetrics, the science of childbirth and midwifery, and subsequently falls into the category of Reddy’s prints that delved on life and germination.
Horses represented the highest form of masculinity and grace for Sunil Das till they met their match with bulls on the artist’s trip to Spain and his experience of watching bullfights. He was mesmerised into making drawings that showed these powerful creatures combat their nemesis by way of caped matadors. The thrill and excitement, the shouting crowds, the thrust and parrying, the risk of violence and death—all of these were captured in quick drawings swiftly executed in black and white. Das returned intermittently to painting bulls and horses throughout his career, but this lovely work from that first encounter has a power and rawness that is hypnotic.
A pioneer of the Madras Art Movement, L. Munuswamy negotiated the elements of line, space and colour with easy facility. His family lineage as idol makers meant an environment thick with talks about temples and deities as well as hymns sung to them. The idea of Animal Parade, painted the same year he graduated from the art college, had already incepted in Munuswamy's mind through an earlier work titled Elephants (1959) and exhibited the artist's control over line, colour and space. The painted outline is the protagonist of the artwork, which is imbued with inherent rhythm and enigmatic energy, describing three capering elephants and a lone oxpecker. The orange and grey backdrop invokes a muddy riverbank at dawn, the perfect time of the day to see a herd arrive for a day's drink and bath.
K. S. KULKARNI 1916-1994

Untitled
Acrylic and enamel on paper, c. late 1970s
29.0 x 20.7 in. / 73.7 x 52.6 cm.
Signed in English (lower right) ‘KSK’
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family
Private collection, New Delhi, 2005

K. S. Kulkarni owned the thick outline like no other Indian modernist, rendering it for his landscapes, figurative and abstract forms. In this work, a white line frames the entire space and demarcates geometric shapes—borrowed by Kulkarni from the neo-tantra movement of painting that swept across the Indian subcontinent during the 1960s and after. The subject of the painting is a woman, whose eyes and red bindi are clearly described near the top, while the plethora of inverted triangles throughout her ‘body’ highlight her femininity. The painting, while having tantric qualities, is not a work carrying esotericism within it, and is more structural or design-oriented. The triangles and squares appear fragmented, and similar to Kulkarni’s cubism-inspired work. However, the colours—vermillion red, grassy green and gold yellow—are connotatively associated both with women and fertility.
SHOBHA BROOTA
b. 1943

Untitled
Acrylic on canvas, 2008
60.0 x 60.0 in. / 152.4 x 152.4 cm.
Verso: Signed and dated in English ‘Shobha Broota / 2008’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2010

‘I want to hold the subtle vibrations that carry the essence of life’
- Shobha Broota

Grids, the recurrence of lines and forms, the sparse but contradictory use of colour, Shobha Broota’s ability lies in never repeating herself over the vast body of work she has undertaken in her career. Yet, her paintings are immediately recognisable—often as repositories of the meditative power of consciousness. Taking a round circle consisting of dots fading as they move towards the outer edge, she creates a form that appears to pulsate with energy. Scattering similar but gradually smaller circular forms evenly through the grids as a mirror reflection, she creates a painting that throbs with vitality. Each dot-filled circle is its own microcosm that, taken together, builds up a universe that mimics the skies with the planetary bodies about which we know, as yet, so little.
AMBADAS 1922-2012

Untitled
Water colour, water soluble pencil colour and ink on paper, 1976
11.2 x 16.0 in. / 28.4 x 40.6 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower left) 'Ambadas / 1976'
Provenance Private collector, New Delhi, 2002

'A painting by Ambadas is a world in itself, a true microcosm, conceived in his own scale' – Jaya Appasamy

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AN ERODED DELTA, a great frigid island surrounded by water, a beautifully pastel but toxic alien landscape, or perhaps an entire ecosystem of thriving microorganisms within the smallest sample—Ambadas's complex play of textures is as much an exercise of introspection for the viewer as it was an exercise of control for the artist. Because the artist religiously averted from interpreting his own art, it is up to the viewer to derive meaning from this complex space of dots, dashes and whirls of pigment. For example, the flowing pink ‘water’ may remind us of the highly alkaline lakes in Australia or Tanzania, while the speckled blacks become the shores of Iceland consisting of volcanic sand, or perhaps a wasteland following a forest fire, the likes of which have ravaged the earth in recent memory.
Ved Nayar uses the iterative image of slim bodies posing for advertisements to talk about a consumerist culture
– Sagnik Dutta

An elongated human form set amidst symbols from nature is an archetypal Ved Nayar work. The human figure became an inspiration for the artist early on in his career, soon evolving into an elongated form. In this work, the figure is surrounded by leaves that take after the insectivorous plant, Venus Flytrap. The leaves seem to be in a state of opening or closing, however you choose to view them. Between their flytraps, each of the leaves encases a busy road packed with vehicles, making a strong comment on the way human growth has impacted the environment—the effect of globalisation and consumerism on the environment has for long remained an important concern with Nayar. The image here seems to be throwing light at a time when nature strikes back, folding up on the material world.

**Ved Nayar**
b. 1933

Untitled
Gouache on handmade paper, 2002
51.2 x 27.2 in. / 130.0 x 69.1 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower left) 'Ved Nayar / 2002'

Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2005

₹ 3,00,000 | $ 4054

Enquire Here
LAXMAN SHRESHTHA
b. 1939

Untitled
Water colour and pastel on handmade paper pasted on mount board, 1994
28.0 x 40.0 in. / 71.1 x 101.6 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘LAXMAN / 94’
Provenance Galerie 88, Kolkata
Distinguished collector, Kolkata, 2018

‘Abstract is the end result of painting. The tendency of an abstract artist is to be reticent. Reading, listening to music, silence are the main ingredients’
- Laxman Shreshtha

AHEAD OF HIS retrospective in Mumbai in 2016, Laxman Shreshtha had said, ‘I went to abstract art through landscapes. Maybe I missed the mountains of Nepal or the expanse of the Himalayas. I thought that could be captured only on a bigger space, and that’s why I started painting large canvases.’ This watercolour is almost a bird’s-eye view of the world’s highest peaks that cluster together in the eastern fringe of Shreshtha’s native Nepal, though it is not as large as some of his other abstracts. On a lucky day when the sun is more powerful than the clouds, a flight over Nepal offers almost such a view—the dark smudges of Mt. Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, Sagarmatha and the others in an unparalleled expanse of white. Mumbai-based Shreshtha started out as a figurative artist before moving to abstraction, probably spurred on by his early struggles and a quest to seek existential answers.
AKHILESH  b. 1956

Untitled
Acrylic on canvas, 1989
36.0 x 36.0 in. / 91.4 x 91.4 cm.
Verso: Signed and dated in English
'akhilesh / 89'
Provenance Private collector, Mumbai, 2017

‘My paintings are not theme-based as I do not make illustrations, but try to convey my experience through paintings’ – Akhilesh

AKHILESH has emerged from that firmament of Indian art that has given rise to one of its most well-known exponents of abstraction, S. H. Raza. That environment is the unique artistic sensibility of Madhya Pradesh that does not subscribe to any established school but has nurtured several artists destined for glory. Akhilesh is also, incidentally, a Raza awardee, one of the most prestigious honours for young artists, given by the Raza Foundation. This azure canvas is quite in the manner of Mark Rothko’s abstract expressionism, especially in the different shades of the colour and gradient in texture. However, one can discern a kite expanding across the canvas, with a small tail at the top right end. The kite seems to be in motion, diving headlong to ground perhaps, as is evident from the upturned tail and a line in the centre of the kite, appearing like a fold.
HOMI PATEL 1928-2004

Untitled
Acrylic on canvas
25.0 x 25.0 in. / 63.5 x 63.5 cm.
Verso: Signed and inscribed in English ‘Homi Patel / 20024’

Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist by friend and artist Deepak Shinde, early 2000s
Deepak Shinde, 2016
Private collection, Mumbai, 2017

HOMI PATEL’S RESOLUTE stance against figuration and representation was a lifelong quest, one which he maintained without compromise. After graduating from Sir J. J. School of Art, he represented India at the international stage through the 1950s until the ’70s, including the 1954 Venice Biennale and at centres like Hamburg, Tokyo and Zurich. A regular at the experimental Bhulabhai Institute, he became entrenched with scions of culture modernists such as Ebrahim Alkazi and Ravi Shankar. Patel’s art represented his worldliness, whether it was his white on white paintings, or the example presented here belonging to a series made after the texture of stone. The filled-in black shapes appear to mirror each other, as if two halves of a freshly cut stone, complete with individual sedimentary layers that were deposited and subsequently hardened one on top of another.

‘Form itself, even if completely abstract ... has its own inner sound’
– Wassily Kandinsky
BIMAL DASGUPTA 1917-95

Untitled
Acrylic on canvas, 1994
22.5 x 22.5 in. / 57.2 x 57.2 cm.
Signed and dated in English (lower left) ‘B. Dasgupta / 94’
Provenance Acquired from the artist’s family, New Delhi, 2000

‘The colours are always there in my heart, an unseen power in the background drives me to put them down on canvas’ – Bimal Dasgupta

BIMAL DASGUPTA was drawn to tantric philosophy after he had already established a reputation as a landscape painter. In his transition towards this esotericism, he refrained from using geometric metaphors for genitalia, but rather showcased growth and reproduction—the product of a successful purusha-prakriti union—through abstract organic structures. This Untitled work, painted a year before the artist’s death, perfectly summarises his personal interpretation of tantra. Its palette—comprising brown, green and vermillion—evokes fertility. The subject, a phallic growth, exists within an undefined and empty field, and much like the spreading roots of a flourishing plant, is covered with tendrils and growing nodes. The artist’s knack for texture is clearly witnessed in the artwork, attained by first painting a thin layer of pigment that is then scraped away with a palette knife or the back of a brush.
Born in Lothal, Gujarat, into a Jain mercantile family, Himmat Shah’s versatility helped him experiment with several mediums, making burnt paper collages, architectural murals, minimalist drawings and sculptures. The ancient history of the village, where the remains of a Harappan port town were excavated, seeped automatically into his art—a connection that is readily made with his terracotta sculptures. He moulded the artworks—dare we say artefacts—from discarded objects utilising a special blend of medium that he would mix over months and even years. Extremely delicate to handle, they invoke the fragility of historical objects and of historicity itself, which is an abstract concept tangled with memory and agenda. The seamline that runs through the middle of this bottle is seen elsewhere as well, and perhaps serves as a reminder of their original utilitarian purpose, now rendered redundant.

**HIMMAT SHAH**

*b. 1933*

*Untitled*

Terracotta, 1990

6.7 x 2.7 x 2.7 in. / 17.0 x 6.9 x 6.9 cm.

Signed and dated in English (base) ‘HIMMAT / 90’

Provenance Private collection, New Delhi, 2009

‘Once you understand the plastic value of the medium or its nature, the medium becomes your language and shows you the way’

– Himmat Shah

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JAGMOHAN CHOPRA
1935-2013

Composition 6A
Viscosity on paper, 1970
15.7 x 19.7 in. / 39.9 x 50.0 cm.

On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘Artist’s Proof’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘Composition 6A’ and signed, inscribed and dated in English (lower right) ‘Jagmohan Chopra / Imp / 70’
Verso: Signed, dated and inscribed in English ‘Jagmohan Chopra / 1970 / 40 x 50 cms / Mixed media / Rs 800=’

Provenance: Private collection, Kolkata, 2012

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‘Jagmohan Chopra proved to be a very significant influence on printmaking in north India, particularly in Chandigarh and Delhi’ – Paula Sengupta

MASTER PRINTMAKER JAGMOHAN Chopra influenced a generation of Indian students as a teacher at the College of Art, Delhi. He used paper block or mount board plates, which he engraved, and created relief with such additives as resin polymers and Araldite to achieve substantially varied surface textures than possible by the usual process of metal and acid bite. The physical act of preparing the plate and making the print impacted most of his prints, with many accidental occurrences leading to a range of interesting pictorial and textural effects. In addition, his vast range of visuals, comprising jagged rock formations, cave interiors, architecture, limestone fossils and so on are informed by memory, his internal, poetic world, and the extensive travels he undertook with his students. In Composition 6A, the viscous flow of the yellow-red regions creates a striking contrast against the flat black backdrop.
MOTI ZHAROTIA
b. 1953

Floating Leaf
Serigraph on paper, 1986
15.0 x 20.0 in. / 38.1 x 50.8 cm.

On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘2/5 A/P’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘Floating leaf’ and signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘Moti Zharotia / 86’

Edition 2 of 5

Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2017

For MOTI ZHAROTIA, the medium of serigraphy has been a source of fascination. In an interview, the artist stated, ‘I see every serigraph as a challenge and keep on working on it until I feel I have exploited its possibilities to the fullest. Every day is a new day and I continue to explore and capture images on my serigraphs. I yearn to delve deeper and deeper to find a greater expression for my imaginative world. My works are representative of all that is happening around me, they are enriched by my personal experiences and reflect my thinking.’ The subject of Floating Leaf shares this calming familiarity: a dried leaf floating away with the breeze on the water of a lake or a river, or being pulled with the water accumulated on the streets after a bout of monsoon rain.
ONE OF THE most important contributions of Vadodara-based Jyoti Bhatt to Indian art is the mainstreaming of its indigenous roots through his intaglio prints or serigraphs, as evidenced in *Beginning of the Journey*. Executed in dual tone—reminiscent of wall decorations on houses in Saurashtra in his native Gujarat—the work is rich with depictions of rituals and motifs from local folklore. This serigraph is populated with images of a deity, a priest; locally-revered birds and animals; a man and a woman embarking on their individual, inner journeys; and a horde of symbols—religious as well as irreverent. Another important characteristic is his use of text as a visual element—words, proverbs and numbers not only add breaks in the busy imagery but also meaning to the stories being conveyed.
RABIN MONDAL 1929-2019

Untitled
Oil on box board
17.0 x 12.5 in. / 43.2 x 31.8 cm.
Signed in English (centre right) ‘Rabin’
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, Kolkata, 2008

‘I will go on painting and exhibiting, and that is not for awards’ – Rabin Mondal

If there is a work by Rabin Mondal—one of India’s leading modern practitioners to whom recognition came belatedly—which defies what he stood for, then this could be it. Akin to an impressionist still-life, this painting is an antithesis of what Mondal experienced and expressed through art—suffering, isolation, anguish, despair. But then, the signature Mondal speaks boldly through the cacti-like flora that the vase cradles, in place of peonies, cerises and roses that impressionist still-lifes would likely depict. What makes the work important is its possible relation to an event that likely left an indelible influence on Mondal’s art—an exhibition of works by a group of French artists that a young Mondal saw in Calcutta, in the late 1940s, that gave him his first exposure to international art, decidedly affecting his artistic sensibilities.
DATTATRAYA APTE  b. 1953

Still Life X  
Acrylic on canvas, 2008  
24.0 x 30.0 in. / 61.0 x 76.2 cm.  
Signed and dated in English (lower left) 'Dattatraya Apte / 2008'  
Verso: Artist's name, title, inscription and date in English 'DATTATRAYA APTE / STILL LIFE X / ACRYLIC ON CANVAS / 24" x 30" / 2008'; signed in English 'Dattatraya Apte'  
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2017

DATTATRAYA APTE’S INTEREST in the manmade environment as a bearer of meanings, stories and associations led to his creation of enigmatic still-lifes. As removed from the conventional genre as can be imagined, he brings together objects that appear to have no similarity or reason for proximity into an assemblage for the specific purpose of painting. The objects in Still Life X are arranged on a table covered with a red cloth and placed against a steely-blue backdrop. The familiar and utilitarian kitchenware appears almost non-Newtonian, as jars and glasses fold in on themselves like paper scrolls. While they are deformed both in shape and scale, these artefacts are painted in the realist convention, with light reflecting off objects illuminating their neighbours. Like an academically drawn counterpart, this imagined congregation is lit from a single direction that casts shadows towards the right.

‘While doing still-lifes, I deal with forms. These forms come from long-forgotten objects’ – Dattatraya Apte
SURENDRAN NAIR  b. 1956

Still Life - Frugal Meal
Mono print on paper, 1986
10.0 x 12.2 in. / 25.4 x 31.0 cm.

On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘Mono print’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘Still life- Frugal meal’ and signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘Surendran / 86’

Provenance  Synergy Art Foundation Ltd, Mumbai, 2010

This still-life by Surendran Nair, known for his later surrealist paintings drawing from Indian and Greek mythology and re-interpreted for modern times, is seemingly in the manner of an artistic study. The quintessential Indian tiffin-carrier, easily the most eye-catching of the three items on a table, places it within a localised context. This stack of two, three or more boxes fastened together with an easy-to-carry metallic frame has long been an essential accompanist for the Indian office-goer, carrying his victuals for the day, prepared in the morning and eaten at lunch time. The dark horse in the picture is the fish swimming in the glass of water—hinting at the direction that Nair’s art would take as it evolved from his early artistic training towards something entirely new.
Dream
Acrylic on canvas, 2001
48.0 x 36.0 in. / 121.9 x 91.4 cm.

Verso: Artist's name, title and inscription in English 'JAI ZHAROTIA / DREAM / ACRYLIC ON CANVAS'

Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist, Faridabad, 2005

Seeing Jai Zharotia’s art is like diving headfirst into an abstract subconscious lucid dream, which is both without cause but rooted in deeper meaning. The artist reveals as much through the title of the work, Dream, where a person—quite possibly the artist himself—has morphed into the quintessential Indian aluminium bucket and floats forward through an unending corridor. Like Sigmund Freud, who was the first to suggest that dreams are but a mere representation of hidden fears and desires, we too try to analyse the hidden meaning behind this bucket. Surely the etched figures, all painted in shades of virile green, hint at some form of fertility? All interpretations aside, it is the artist’s skill in aptly recreating the graffitied corridor walls that give the artwork a sense of constant movement and portentous depth.

‘As I paint everything comes out of nothing and returns to nothing. I am just evoking my eternal space where images rise, evolve, arouse and then liquefy into another space’
– Jai Zharotia
***WASWO X. WASWO*** b. 1953  
***R. VIJAY*** b. 1970

Transcendence  
Water colour and gold pigment on wasli paper, 2008  
7.7 x 17.7 in. / 19.6 x 45.0 cm.  
Signed in English (lower left) ‘R. VIJAY’ and embossed (lower right) ‘W X W’  
Verso: Signed, dated and titled in English ‘Waswo X Waswo / 2008 / "TRANSCENDANCE“’ [sic.]  
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, Udaipur, 2009

Among Waswo X. Waswo and R. Vijay’s very early paintings, and the first time they attempted a panoramic format, Transcendence pictures the well-known ‘fedora man’ of their oeuvre meditating upon a larger-than-life pink lotus. His eyes are closed beneath his spectacles, apparently deep in spiritual practice. Above him swoop green parrots, while the sky is populated with floating lotus blossoms, as if the meditator’s thoughts have achieved a transcendent consciousness. The peace of this image is disturbed by plastic water bottles in the lake and industrial pipes pouring effluent into it. Transcendence was done at a time that Waswo foregrounded his collaborator R. Vijay by having him sign the front of the works he had painted; Waswo himself signing only upon the reverse. It was not until 2010 that both artists began to sign the front of each work.
**Pleasure of Nature**

Serigraph on canvas, 1985

21.0 x 17.7 in. / 53.3 x 45.0 cm.

On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘Print on Canvas’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘Pleasure of Nature’ and signed and dated in English (lower right) ‘Paramjeet Singh / 85’

Verso: Artist’s name (twice) and title in English ‘PARAMJEET SINGH / PLEASURE OF NATURE / PARAMJEET SINGH’

**Provenance**

Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2018

**Paramjeet Singh**

b. 1941

Paramjeet Singh attained a name within the art circles and beyond through his work in serigraphs or silk screen prints, something that he took up on the advice of Jagmohan Chopra, fellow artist and teacher at College of Art, Delhi. He continued to work with serigraphs for three decades, even though he painted alongside. However, in 2000, he shifted to painting. This serigraph on canvas is a pleasant image—as the title also underlines—of beauties of nature that are commonplace but give uncommon peace and joy. The central idea of the work is brought forth by the yellow sky with floating clouds and distant hills that enhance its brightness. The dark earth does not denote any negative emotion and is merely under the shadow of the dazzling sky. The flowers in the foreground highlight the delightful feel of the work.
NEMAI GHOSH 1934-2020

Ray Behind the Camera
Inkjet print on archival paper, 2012
24.0 x 16.0 in. / 61.0 x 40.6 cm.
On print: Inscribed in English (lower left) ‘4/6’, titled in English (lower centre) ‘Ray’ and signed in English (lower right) ‘Nemai Ghosh’
Edition 4 of 6
Provenance Acquired directly from the artist, Kolkata, 2006

‘I must admit, the camera is no longer something outside my existence, distinct from me; it is a part of my person’
- Nemai Ghosh

Nemai Ghosh’s initiation into photography was akin to a movie plot: a misplaced camera in a taxi found by a friend resulted in the quick recovery of an unpaid debt to Ghosh and the beginning of a long association with photography. From possessing a camera to then beginning to shoot did not take long. Happenstance having taken him to Satyajit Ray’s sets, Ghosh found there an entire world to capture with his newly acquired camera. A word that Ghosh often used to articulate his camera’s devotion to Ray is perhaps also the most succinct and effective—trance. Ray was the emblematic auteur, who commandeered every single aspect of the filmmaking process, be it costume design or composing his own music, and Ghosh automatically gravitated towards him. The portrait shows the director behind the camera and checking a shot, as a crowd gathers behind.
For performance and fine arts artist, activist and educator Tushar Joag, humanitarian concern was at the centre of his life and career. Not only was he one of the cofounders of Open Circle, an artist collective that engaged with socio-political issues, in strenuous performances like Right to Dissent, he would champion the cause of freedom of expression. In 2008, Joag opened Reconciliations & Truth, an exhibition which mockingly celebrated the razing of monuments and icons because ‘they make for spectacular footage’. In this work modelled after an action-packed page from any off-the-shelf comic book, replete with segmented panels, motion lines and an onomatopoeic blast-sound within the explosion bubble, a public landmark—ironically a meditating Buddha—is destroyed. As the statue’s head acknowledges that the protestors found their ‘peace’ that night, a piercing scream breaks the quietude almost instantly.
Jhoola Park
Serigraph on paper, 2000
34.0 x 22.2 in. / 86.4 x 56.4 cm.
On print: Inscribed and titled in English (lower left) ‘3/12 / “Jhoola Park” and signed in English (lower right) ‘Kavita Nayar’
Edition 3 of 12
Provenance
Acquired directly from the artist, New Delhi, 2017

TRAINED IN PRINTMAKING at Santiniketan, Kavita Nayar joined New Delhi’s Garhi Studios in 1979 and, by the end of the millennium, had become an active participant in popularising the medium across India. Jhoola Park shows different views of Delhi’s innumerable beautified public spaces, complete with play and seating areas that, of course, include the jhula, or the swing-set. Figures are scattered throughout the artwork: friends and lovers seated on benches, people playing cards or boardgames in groups, and children as well as adults enjoying themselves on playsets at the park. The pastel colours of the artwork—mauve, light green and different shades of ochre—evoke a romanticised memory, which hits especially hard during this continued and unkind period of complete, or at least partial isolation, from everyday access to the outside world.

‘A deeper urge to express her inner self or her emotions and feelings on paper or canvas have kept her so active and involved’
– Aruna Narlikar
CONDITIONS TO BUY

The Silver Series sale (Sale) is an initiative of DAG Private Limited (DAG) to raise funds for charity through its fixed price sales. 10% of proceeds from the artworks sold, net of taxes and shipping charges, will be donated to Society for Development Alternatives.

Glossary of Terms
Words in bold used herein have a special meaning attributed to them, details of which can be referred by you in this Part. Please refer to the terms below while reading the ‘Conditions to Buy’.

‘Buyer’ shall mean such person who has confirmed purchasing the Lot(s) and paid the Purchase Price as per terms contained herein.

‘Catalogue’ shall mean the e-catalogue published specifically for this Sale, whether in print or any electronic form, containing details of Sale including, without limitation, description, price and other details pertaining to Lot(s).

‘Lockdown’ shall mean the restrictions, if any, by the Government of India/States restricting movement as a preventive measure against the coronavirus pandemic in India.

‘Lot(s)’ shall mean such item which has been offered for Sale and more particularly described in the Catalogue.

‘Post-Sale Documents’ include, with respect to each purchased Lot, a Certificate of Authenticity, a Statement of Provenance and a Condition Report in DAG’s customary form. A post-sale Condition Report issued with respect to a purchased Lot shall supersede any pre-sale Condition Report with respect to the said Lot.

‘Purchase Price’ shall mean the aggregate of the price of the Lot and applicable charges, duties and taxes, if any, thereon. Currently, applicable rate of Goods & Services Tax (GST) on sale of artworks within India is 12%.

‘Sale’ shall mean this fixed-price sale.

Catalogue Description
The Catalogue sets out an entry in relation to each Lot. Such entry, inter-alia, includes identification of the relevant Lot vide a unique number, description of such Lot, a pictorial/photographic illustration of the same and its price. DAG shall not be liable for any error or omission made in the Catalogue or otherwise with respect to any description of the Lot(s) set out therein.

Where applicable, the Lot description will also include the provenance. However, the identity of the previous owners may not be disclosed for a variety of reasons, such as request for confidentiality by the previous owner or if the identity of the previous owner is unknown.

Due to Lockdown and restrictions imposed by the Government, you may not have the opportunity of pre-viewing and inspecting the Lot(s) or having the Lot(s) inspected by your professional advisors. However, we strongly advise you to consult DAG’s team and/or your professional advisors prior to purchase.

Condition of the Lot(s)
Any reference to the condition of the Lot(s), either in the Catalogue or otherwise, shall not amount to be a full or contractual description of such Lot(s). They merely state DAG’s opinion and may not cover all details, faults, latent defects, alterations, etc., pertaining to the relevant Lot. DAG may, if so requested by the Buyers, provide condition reports in respect of the Lot(s) to the said Buyer. Such report shall set out DAG’s bona fide description of the condition of the Lot(s) prepared by its specialists prior to Sale and DAG shall not be responsible to the Buyers in respect of the content of such condition report. We, therefore, strongly encourage all Buyers to seek advice from their own professional advisors regarding the condition of each of the Lot(s) that they may be interested in.

We also advise all Buyers to rely on their own judgement or on that of their professional advisors as to whether any Lot matches the description set out beside it and not merely rely on any photographic or pictorial presentation of the same as may be provided in the Catalogue.

In light of the foregoing, except as otherwise expressly provided in the Post-Sale Documents, all Lot(s) offered for Sale hereunder are on an ‘as is’ basis, without any express or implied warranties of any nature whatsoever; we do not make any representations or warranties, or assume any liability of any kind, with regard to the merchantability, fitness for a specific purpose, description, condition, rarity, exhibition history, literary or historical relevance of any of the Lot(s); and no statement issued by us anywhere, whether oral or written, will be deemed to constitute such a representation, warranty, or assumption of liability. If, despite the terms in this paragraph, we are found to be liable to you for any reason, we shall not have to pay more than the purchase price paid by you to us.

Payment and Invoice
DAG shall give a proforma invoice for the Purchase Price to the successful Buyer using the details furnished by such Buyer. All proforma invoices shall be made either in INR (Indian National Rupee) or in US$ (United States Dollar). The currency exchange rate for the Sale is US$ 1 = INR 74. DAG, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to revise the above stated currency exchange rate owing to exchange fluctuation. Any such revision to the currency exchange rate shall be informed at the beginning of the Sale.
Full payment shall be due and payable by the Buyer within 7 (seven) banking days from the date of receipt of the Proforma Invoice. Payment must be made in the currency stated in the Proforma Invoice via RTGS/NEFT or direct wire transfer. The details in order to facilitate making of payments by the Buyer are as follows:

**ACCOUNT DETAILS FOR RESIDENT BUYERS PAYING IN INR**

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**ACCOUNT DETAILS FOR FOREIGN BUYERS PAYING IN FOREIGN CURRENCY**

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Upon receipt of the full Purchase Price in cleared funds, DAG shall issue tax invoice or export invoice, as applicable, to the Buyer in respect of the relevant Lot.

In the event the Buyer fails to make full and final payment or collect the Lot within the timelines stipulated herein, DAG may, at its sole discretion, (i) cancel the sale and sell the Lot again to any other person/entity, publicly or privately, on such terms as we consider appropriate in which case you must pay us any shortfall between the amount you owe us and the resale price plus all costs, expenses, losses, damages and legal fee we incur because of the cancellation; (ii) extend the date of making payment by the Buyer on such terms as we may decide; (iii) retain any deposit you may have made or apply it as part payment against the balance due; or (iv) take any other action we deem necessary or appropriate. The Buyer agrees to indemnify and hold DAG harmless against all legal and other costs of enforcement in connection with account of delay or refusal on the part of the Buyer to make full and final payment in accordance with the terms hereof.

You warrant to us that the funds you use for payment are not connected with any criminal activity, including tax evasion, and neither are you under investigation nor have you been charged with or convicted of money laundering, terrorist activities or other crimes.

**Shipping and Delivery**

The Buyer shall have the option of having the purchased Lot(s) collected from DAG; or require DAG to ship/deliver the same to the Buyer at the Buyer's given address within 15 (fifteen) days of making full, final and cleared payment of the Purchase Price and issuance of a formal government notification terminating the Lockdown, if any, and allowing free movement of goods in both locations of dispatch and delivery. In case of the Buyer choosing the collection option, the Buyer shall solely be responsible for collection of the Lot within 15 (fifteen) days of making full, final and cleared payment of the Purchase Price in respect of such Lot(s) at end of the Lockdown, if any. Further, DAG shall be responsible for insurance of the purchased Lot(s) (excluding the frame) till the time of collection of the purchased Lot(s). All costs related to packaging and shipping of the Lot(s) outside the National Capital Region (India) shall be borne by the Buyer.

It shall be the sole responsibility of the Buyer to (a) obtain all export/import related licenses, permits, registrations and/or any other consent required under applicable laws; (b) bear all charges relating to customs levy, octroi, and any other governmental levies in respect of delivery/shipment of the purchased Lot(s).

Please note that any Lot falling under the purview of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 cannot be exported outside the territory of India. In the event of any Lot qualifying as Antiquity or Art Treasure, the Buyer shall be responsible for meeting the requirement under the said Act and any other applicable legislation.

**Risk and Title**

The risk and the title in the relevant Lot(s) shall pass on to the relevant Buyer upon payment of the full Purchase Price by the Buyer to DAG in accordance with the terms hereof, the same being received in cleared funds by DAG and issuance of final invoice to the Buyer.

**Intellectual Property Rights**

DAG owns the copyright in or is duly authorised to use all images, illustrations and writings as set out in the Catalogue or other media produced in relation to each Lot.

**Confidentiality**

Any personal information relating to the Buyers shall, at all times, be kept confidential by us and we undertake not to disclose the same to any third party unless otherwise required under applicable laws or pursuant to order of any court, tribunal or governmental authority.

**Assignability**

You may not assign or transfer your rights, obligations and responsibilities pursuant to these terms and conditions to any third party unless we have given our written permission. These Conditions to Buy will be binding on your legal heirs, successors, legal representatives, trustees, permitted assigns and delegates.

**Waiver**

Our failure to or delay in enforcing any right or exercising any power set out herein shall not constitute a waiver of such rights and/or power except when a specific waiver is granted to you hereunder in writing.

**Notice**

We may validly send a notice to any Buyer either by way of an email to the email address provided to us or by courier sent at the physical address provided to us. Such notice shall be said to be properly served (i) in case of an email, on the date of transmission; (ii) in case of courier, within 5 (five) business days from the date of dispatch.

**Severability**

If any part of these conditions is found by any court of law to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable, that part may be discounted and the rest of the conditions shall be enforceable to the fullest extent permissible by law.

**Governing Law and Jurisdiction**

These terms and conditions of Sale are subject to the laws of India and all parties hereby submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts at Delhi, India.
ARTIST
PROFILES
Akhilesh (b. 1956)

Born in Indore, Akhilesh initially resisted following his father’s footsteps and taking to art, though he eventually got a diploma in fine arts. Local traditions of his native state, Madhya Pradesh, deeply affect his work, lending a sense of familiarity to their deep abstraction. The artist has exhibited his works across the world and been feted with prestigious awards like the Madhya Pradesh government’s state award in 1984, and the Raza Foundation award in 2002. His work was also recognised at the 1990 Bharat Bhavan Biennale.

A. A. Almelkar (1920-82)

An alumnus of Sir J. J. School of Art, A. A. Almelkar’s close association with the Art Society of India and Bombay Art Society allowed him early recognition in an illustrious career, with over forty solo shows in his lifetime. He started out by painting landscapes, influenced by Walter Langhammer, N. S. Bendre and European art. By 1950s, Almelkar’s art showed a modernist tendency, incorporating the decorative elements and two-dimensionality of traditional Indian folk art. Almelkar had won over twenty gold and silver medals in his career, including the National Award in 1956 and 1960.

Altaf (1942-2005)

At a young age, Altaf Mohamedi’s nascent talent was encouraged by his teacher Niyogi and elder sister Nasreen, also an artist of high repute. Deeply influenced by Marxist ideologies, Altaf was committed to investigating different aspects of human condition—loneliness, despair, fear and hope. Using colour, he explored the dark psychic recesses of the mind and ambiguities of life represented by haunting shadows and floating heads in his paintings. In 1994, he was awarded the Shiromani Kala Puraskar by the Government of India. In 1998, he participated in the exhibition Artists from India and Pakistan held in Hong Kong. DAG has held retrospectives of Altaf in Mumbai and New Delhi.

Ambadas (1922-2012)

Growing up in proximity of Mahatma Gandhi’s family, Ambadas was imbued with similar values since childhood. He trained in art at a private school in Ahmedabad before acquiring a diploma from Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. He then shifted to Madras, where he worked at the Weavers’ Service Centre. In 1962, he co-founded Group 1890, a collective that contemplated the need of shifting ideologies for the progress of Indian art. Ambadas pioneered non-representational tendencies in post-Independence Indian art, where colour played a significant role with its ‘character’ and mode of application. He travelled and exhibited extensively, eventually settling in Norway in 1972.

Amit Ambalal (b. 1943)

Amit Ambalal became a full-time painter only at the age of thirty six and has since created art that is perceptibly playful and derived from personal experiences and folk stories. Humour and irony find equal footing in his canvases, teasing in part both the painted subject and the viewer. A founder member and secretary of the Contemporary Painters Group in Ahmedabad, Ambalal has been a member of various educational and cultural institutions like before Bharat Bhavan in Bhopal and the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. He lives in Ahmedabad.
Anonymous (Kalighat Pat)
The Kalighat temple in Calcutta, built in 1809, became home to a community when folk artists making scrolls and terracotta idols settled around the temple area. Descendants of artisan castes—*patuas, kamars or kumors*—they practiced their traditional art on newly introduced cheap mechanical paper. The Kalighat style was an amalgamation of different mediums and idioms, and by adopting popular urban elements, they acquired currency as religious tokens, consisting of painted images of deities and local legends. Later, they also showcased non-religious images of the scandalous *babu* culture. Though this school of painting dissipated early in the twentieth century, it continues to influence modern artists to the present day.

Dattatraya Apte (b. 1953)
Born in Sangli, Maharashtra, Dattatraya Apte studied printmaking at M. S. University, Baroda. Maps and cartography are a strong presence in his works, which stand out for his emphasis on texture, often resulting in relief-like effects. Besides printmaking, he also works with paper pulp casting. Apte has taught printmaking at various workshops in India, Nepal and France, and curated several graphic print exhibitions and published related catalogues. He was given the 1992 Chitrakala Parishad Award in Bangalore, and the 1999 Charles Wallace India Trust award to work under Prof. Jaky Pery at Glasgow School of Art, Scotland.

S. K. Bakre (1920-2007)
Born in Vadodara, Gujarat, Sadanandji Bakre was one of the founder members of the Progressive Artists’ Group in Bombay. Arriving in the metropolis in 1929, he obtained a diploma in modelling and stone carving from Sir J. J. School of Art. As a student, he was much feted: he received a scholarship while studying at Sir J. J. School of Art, won the first prize for sculpture from Bombay Art Society in 1942 and the Lord Harding Scholarship in 1944. Dissatisfied with the contemporary art scene thereafter, he left for London in 1951, where his career developed from academic realism to abstractionism. He eventually returned to settle down in India in 1980s.

Maniklal Banerjee (1916-2002)
A celebrated painter, Maniklal Banerjee was equally well-known as a teacher, fondly remembered by his students at Government College of Art and Craft in Calcutta. Banerjee mastered the difficult art of painting watercolours on silk—he imparted this technique to many of his students as well, his efforts going a long way to popularise it. Mostly narrative and figurative, his works speak of the pleasure and pain of life, within a spiritual worldview. A harmony of colours and control over lines made him a perfectionist in his own style.

Ananda Moy Banerji (b. 1959)
Born in Calcutta, Anand Moy Banerji studied under acclaimed printmaker Anupam Sud at College of Art, New Delhi, and later at Santiniketan. In 1985, he joined the Polytechnic for Women, New Delhi, as a lecturer, while practicing at Lalit Kala Akademi’s Garhi Studios. Initially, Banerji’s work comprised landscapes but awareness of the Naxalite movement shifted his focus to wider social concerns. Banerji has collaborated with renowned printmakers like Carol Summers, Krishna Reddy and Paul Lingren, and has been the recipient of the 20th Sahitya Kala Parishad Award.
Prabhakar Barwe (1936-95)
Grandnephew of well-known sculptor V. P. Karmakar, Prabhakar Barwe studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. His fascination with abstraction reflected in early watercolours that drew on the work of Bauhaus painter Paul Klee, but later gave way to tantra-oriented objects and symbols during the time he spent at Varanasi’s Weavers’ Service Centre. Barwe evolved a universal, abstract visual language that explored inward spaces and transient realities. In 1990, he published Kora Canvas, a collection of writings on the creative process.

Manjit Bawa (1941-2008)
Born in Dhuri, Punjab, Manjit Bawa studied at Delhi Polytechnic from 1958-63 under eminent artist-teachers Somnath Hore, Dhanraj Bhagat and B. C. Sanyal. He lived in England from 1964 to ’71, studying painting and working as a silkscreen printer. Upon his return, he taught at Delhi’s College of Art during 1975-77. The 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi saw him organise peace marches and participate in several anti-communal projects with fellow artists and writers. Bawa was awarded at the first Bharat Bhavan Biennale at Bhopal in 1986 and received the 1980 Lalit Kala Akademi National Award. He passed away after a long illness in 2008.

Jyoti Bhatt (b. 1934)
Born in 1934 in Bhavnagar, Gujarat, Jyoti Bhatt studied painting and printmaking at M. S. University, Baroda. Inspired by his mentor, K. G. Subramanyan, Bhatt explored the academic divide between art and craft. A keen experimenter, his works reflected a variety of styles before he arrived at folk-inspired designs. Though a multidisciplinary artist, his work with photography and printmaking has garnered him most acclaim. A founder member of the Baroda Group of Artists, he was also a part of the artistic initiative, Group 1890. Bhatt lives and works in Baroda.

S. R. Bhusan (1938-99)
Born in Karimganj in present-day Bangladesh, Sudhi Ranjan Bhusan studied at Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, under the tutelage of Ramkinkar Baij and Benode Behari Mukherjee. He was awarded a French government scholarship in the Sixties, which allowed him to study painting in Paris. A painter, sculptor and printmaker, Bhusan was appointed as Director of Design and Development Centre, Goa, in 1974, and later of the Lait Kala Akademi, New Delhi, in 1990. A founder member of the Calcutta-based Society of Contemporary Artists, Bhusan was awarded by AIFACS, New Delhi, in 1975 and won the Lalit Kala National Award in 1978.

Nikhil Biswas (1930-66)
Born in Calcutta, Nikhil Biswas was an indefatigable art activist and a firm believer in collective action. A founder member of the Calcutta Painters Group, Chitrangshu Group and The Society of Contemporary Artists, Biswas was committed to transforming contemporary artistic thought. He trained at Calcutta’s Government College of Art at a time when India was in the midst of the abstract wave, but he deliberately chose a figurative language. Despite a devastatingly premature death, Biswas produced around ten thousand works, mostly black and white drawings on paper.
Nandalal Bose (1882-1966)
Groomed initially by Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose drew early philosophical inspiration from Ananda Coomaraswamy, Sister Nivedita and E. B. Havell. Bose experimented with flat spaces seen in Mughal and Rajasthani miniatures, and incorporated Sino-Japanese styles in his washes. While working with Japanese painters at Calcutta and Santiniketan, he developed a calligraphic lyricism that became iconic to his painted line. In 1919, he joined Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, as its first principal, mentoring a generation of artists such as the stalwarts Ramkinkar Baij and Benode Behari Mukherjee. Awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1954, his works were declared a National Art Treasure in 1972.

Shobha Broota (b. 1943)
Classical Indian ragas form one of the basics of Shobha Broota’s celebrated style, captured as outward vibrations on the canvas surface. She studied at the College of Art in Delhi, receiving a diploma in 1964. Fusing aesthetics with transcendence, Broota’s art is an amalgam of abstraction, mysticism and the quest for a higher ideal, infused with lyrical inspiration, harmony and serenity. The artist lives in New Delhi.

Amal Nath Chakladar (b. 1936)
Amal Nath Chakladar graduated from the Government College of Art, Calcutta, in 1960. Nature dominates his works: flowing water, swaying breeze, the softness of grass and petals, all are captured beautifully by the artist in his brilliant mastery over form and technique. He has participated in several important exhibitions such as the Centenary Celebration of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1957 and the 1992 Hyderabad exhibition, Bengal Art Today. Chakladar was awarded the Rajya Charukala Pradarshani award by the Government of West Bengal in 1987.

Avinash Chandra (1931-91)
A student of Delhi Polytechnic, Avinash Chandra taught at his alma mater for a few years after completing his studies. In 1956, he moved to England and studied the art of Vincent van Gogh and Chaim Soutine, where he found the European urban landscape inspiring. Chandra’s elegant line drawings that began in the Sixties continued to evolve through the Seventies to become implicit, erotic coloured drawings. He was the first Indian artist to exhibit at one of the most important art events worldwide, the Documenta, in Kassel, West Germany, in 1964. Chandra’s work is widely collected, especially by museums across the U.K.

Chittaprosad (1915-78)
A self-taught artist, poet, storyteller, and an active member of the Communist Party of India, Chittaprosad was inspired by village sculptors, artisans as well as puppeteers. In 1943-44, he experienced the Great Bengal Famine first-hand, resulting in his brutally honest depiction of human suffering in stark drawings and sketches made in pen and ink. Powerful and emotive, his art of caricature emerged as a statement in favour of the oppressed masses and as a denunciation of the ruling class. Apart from representing human suffering, the proletariat and the marginalised classes in his works, Chittaprosad also created landscapes and cityscapes, portraits, female figures, nudes and illustrations for books.
Jagmohan Chopra (1935-2013)
A foremost printmaker and art teacher, Jagmohan Chopra influenced a generation of Indian artists. Eminent artist Somnath Hore, also his colleague at the College of Art, Delhi, encouraged him and also influenced his art. A unique characteristic of Chopra's intaglio prints was the fact that he dispensed with the use of acid on zinc plate, improving the efficiency of the process. Chopra headed several art institutions such as New Delhi's All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society (AIFACS), Delhi Silpi Chakra, and the Lalit Kala Akademi at Chandigarh. He also co-founded Group 8 in 1968, a New Delhi-based collective of printmakers. In 1976, he became the principal of Government College of Art, Chandigarh.

Jogen Chowdhury (b. 1939)
Jogen Chowdhury moved from Faridpur (in present-day Bangladesh) to Calcutta after Partition, studying at the Government College of Art and Craft. A student of Prodosh Das Gupta, he worked in a confident expressionistic style during his early years. He spent three years in Paris working within the academic mode, but after returning to India developed a distinct modernist approach, characterised by intense texturing and spindly appearance to painted forms. He interprets the human form as simplified, the body oftentimes placed against a dark, vacant background. A celebrated and awarded artist, Chowdhury continues to work and live in Kolkata and Santiniketan.

J. D. Dalvi (1922-2014)
J. D. Dalvi was born in 1922 in Kolhapur. His father Dattoba was a durbar artist in the court of the Maharaja of Kolhapur. Dalvi received his initial training in art from the Dalvi's Art Institute, Kolhapur, established by his family, and subsequently at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, and Abhinava Kala Mahavidyalay, Pune. Dalvi was honoured by the All India Arts and Crafts Society (AIFACS), New Delhi, in 1993. He was the founder president of the Kolhapur Artist Guild and a trustee of one of India’s oldest art schools, Dalvi's Art Institute, Kolhapur.

Thomas Daniell (1749-1840) and William Daniell (1769-1837)
The uncle and nephew pair, Thomas and William Daniell, arrived in India in 1785 under the aegis of the East India Company. Over ten years, the Daniells travelled extensively across India, documenting diverse landscapes, architecture and ways of living: from Mughal monuments and snow-capped mountains in the north to the cave temples and hitherto unexplored jungles of the south. Upon their return to England, the Daniells made aquatints from drawings they had amassed, brought together in a collection of about 140 prints issued in six volumes collectively called Oriental Scenery, a publication that achieved great success.

Arup Das (1924-2004)
An alumnus of the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta, Arup Das was a figurative painter and an acclaimed muralist. A member of the council of the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society (AIFACS), New Delhi, he went to study in the U.K. on a British Council fellowship in 1972. Das's works were part of several national and international shows. He was awarded the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award and the President’s Silver Plaque, both in 1957.
Biman Bihari Das (b. 1943)

Biman Bihari Das was born in Tamluk, West Bengal. He graduated in modelling and sculpture from the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta, where he would later be principal. Das was the recipient of a Fulbright fellowship under the Indo-Hungarian cultural exchange programme, which took him to Budapest for further studies. He was also the principal of the College of Art in New Delhi. His public sculptures are on display in Brazil, Venezuela, Spain, Italy and Mauritius. Das was awarded the Padma Shri in 2014 and he lives in New Delhi and Kolkata.

Haren Das (1921-93)

A master printmaker, Haren Das specialised in graphic arts from the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta. At a time when oil painting ruled consciousness and prints were considered inferior, Das chose to work solely with printmaking. Taken from densely engraved or sparsely cut wood blocks, Das’s prints are both technically and artistically superior. A dexterously crafted equilibrium of black and white, at times washed with thin layers of colour, detailed renditions of objects and elements, simplicity of composition and a petite format are all characteristic features of his prints.

Sunil Das (1939-2015)

A student of Calcutta’s Government College of Art & Craft, Sunil Das travelled to Paris on a scholarship and studied at Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts. There, he also worked with William Hayter and Krishna Reddy at Atelier 17. Celebrated for his iconic drawings of animals, Das was inspired by Spanish bullfights for his series of paintings on bulls. He experimented across techniques, mediums and styles, charging his images with changing ideas, and painting in both the figurative and abstract modes while also including elements inspired by *tantra*. Das was awarded by the state government and the Lalit Kala Akademi, and invited as a juror to art bodies in India, France and Brazil.

Bimal Dasgupta (1917-95)

Bimal Dasgupta joined the Government College of Art and Craft in Calcutta in 1937 but his studies were interrupted by World War II. Acquiring the reputation as a landscape painter, Dasgupta briefly experimented with cubism after his tour across Europe, and later dabbled in neo-tantrism. Besides exhibiting his works widely in India and abroad, he also handled commissions for murals for India pavilions at the International Trade Fairs in Moscow and Tokyo. He was honoured by the Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi, in 1972. Dasgupta was made a fellow of the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, in 1989.

Shanti Dave (b. 1931)

Following a childhood in rural Gujarat, Shanti Dave arrived in Baroda to study at M. S. University under N. S. Bendre. Here, he co-founded the Baroda Group in 1957 with fellow artists. Dave’s painting style is non-objective and disingenuously abstract, experimenting with the encaustic medium to create works in high relief. He received the Padma Shri in 1985 and Sahitya Kala Parishad’s award in 1986. The artist lives in New Delhi.
Partha Pratim Deb (b. 1943)
Initiated into art by Ramkinkar Baij and Benode Behari Mukherjee at Santiniketan, Partha Pratim Deb later studied at M. S. University, Baroda. He subsequently taught at Rabindra Bharati University. His research on Nandalal Bose and the issues of education resulted in a series of published articles. Deb’s work crisscrosses trajectories of the indigenous folk tradition rooted in the rich art and craft of Santiniketan with experimental pop art of the West. Early guidance from Baij and Benode Behari and the analytical insight of K. G. Subramanyan and Jyoti Bhatt gave Deb the impetus to explore set techniques and approaches to art. He lives and works in Kolkata.

Jagadish Dey (b. 1942)
Born in Sylhet in present-day Bangladesh, painter and graphic artist Jagadish Dey graduated from Delhi Polytechnic in 1963. He has been the co-founder of several artist collectives such as Group 8 and The Six as well as Gallery 26. Like other Group 8 artists, Dey often used the inexpensive, cardboard-based collography technique instead of the more expensive etching process in his early years. In the Sixties, Dey joined College of Art, New Delhi, as a lecturer. He won the AIFACS Award in 1969, ’77 and ’82, and the Lalit Kala National Award in 2000.

Mukul Dey (1895-1989)
Introduced to printmaking by W. W. Pearson, Mukul Dey was one of the first artists to explore printmaking beyond its role as a tool of the colonial enterprise. Time spent at art schools in England deepened his interest in printmaking, and upon his return to India as the principal of Government School of Art, Calcutta, he actively promoted the medium. In 1916, he became the first Indian artist to be elected a member of the Chicago Society of Etchers and published several volumes of his etchings and illustrations in subsequent decades. From 1956 to ’58, he served as curator of the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, and in 1987, he became a fellow of the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

Rajendra Dhawan (1936-2012)
Rajendra Dhawan studied at Delhi’s College of Art (1953-58), and thereafter in Belgrade (1960-62). He was a founding-member of The Unknown group that was active between 1960 and ’64. In 1970, he left India to study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and subsequently settled in France. The abstraction in Dhawan’s work stayed constant throughout his career, with no discernible shifts or turns.

M. V. Dhurandhar (1867-1944)
Rai Bahadur M. V. Dhurandhar studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, and found early success after winning the gold medal from the Bombay Art Society for his oil painting, Do You Come Laxmi? He joined his alma mater as a teacher, and at the end of a long and illustrious career, became the school’s first Indian director in 1930. Dhurandhar was the foremost and most significant among the Bombay school of artists, maintaining a fine balance between academic realism and popular commercial art. Several of his works were scenes from Hindu mythology; he also illustrated Otto Rothfield’s book, Women of India, which attained renown in colonial circles.
Indra Dugar (1918-89)

Indra Dugar, unlike his illustrious father Hirachand Dugar, did not have any formal education in art. While growing up in Santiniketan, he somewhat unconsciously absorbed the artistic ambience of Kala Bhavana and the Neo-Bengal ‘School’. Perhaps, the absence of academic programming gave Dugar’s art a rare individuality. Outgrowing the Bengal ‘School’ mannerisms, he invariably became a *plein air* painter. While progressively reducing the naturalistic details in his paintings, Dugar instinctively retained colour harmony for expressing serenity in nature. As an art critic, Dugar wrote for Bengali journals *Desh* and *Ananda Bazar Patrika*.

Shyamal Dutta Ray (1934-2005)

Shyamal Dutta Ray completed a diploma in painting from Government College of Art, Calcutta, and in 1968, became a founder member of the Painters 80 group. One of the most accomplished watercolourists, Dutta Ray started his career with oil painting but later switched to watercolour on medical advice. Laden with satire and wit, and often subtly political, his work communicates the artist’s preoccupation with the human condition. In 1982, Dutta Ray was given the National Award by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, and the prestigious Shiromoni Puraskar in 1988.

Jaya Ganguly (b. 1958)

The focus of Jaya Ganguly’s work is to expose society’s hypocritical treatment of women. Her work is filled with large, voluminous figures, rendered with broad brush strokes in a spectrum of colours. Men and women from thriving but orthodox families leading a placid existence occupy her canvases, painted against monotonous backgrounds. Born in Calcutta, Ganguly graduated from the Indian College of Arts in 1982 and has since then participated in numerous exhibitions and biennales. She won the Birla Academy of Art and Culture award, Kolkata in 1997. She was also awarded at the Bhopal Biennale in 1996, and by the Indian College of Arts and Draftsmanship, Kolkata, 1980.

Gopal Ghose (1913-80)

An ‘India wanderer’, as he liked to call himself, Gopal Ghose was trained at the Maharaja School of Arts, Jaipur, and the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Madras. In 1943, he became one of the founder members of the Calcutta Group. During 1950-72, Ghose taught art at the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta. Dexterous in handling different mediums, including watercolour, tempera, pen and ink, and pastels, Ghose became a legend in his lifetime for reinterpreting the genre of landscape painting.

Ajoy Kumar Ghose (1938-2020)

Born in Bengal, Ajoy Kumar Ghose studied at the Government College of Art and Craft in Calcutta, under Benode Behari Mukerjee. Painting in the Abanindranath Tagore propagated neo-Bengal style, Ghose showcased a mastery over the watercolour medium, in both gouache and tempera painting. A founder member of the Bengal Artists Group, Ghose held an important position as member of the faculty council at Calcutta University, and the Head of Department of Drawing and Painting (Indian Style) at his alma mater during 1984-98.
Nemai Ghosh (1934-2020)

Nemai Ghosh was the distinctive Satyajit Ray photographer, recording the auteur and his films over a thirty-year span with unusual fidelity and affection. Although Ghosh was identified mainly by his association with Ray, his work was not restricted to the filmmaker’s oeuvre alone. He worked extensively, photographing the work of several other directors of cinema and television. His passion for theatre led to a large collection of photographs that forms a pictorial history of theatre in Kolkata over the last five decades, in both Bengali and English. Ghosh was awarded the Padma Shri in 2010 for his outstanding contribution to the field of photography.

K. Laxma Goud (b. 1940)

Hailing from a rural background in Andhra Pradesh, Goud completed a diploma in painting and drawing from the Government College of Fine Arts and Architecture in Hyderabad, and a post-diploma from M. S. University, Baroda. By the late Sixties, he had evolved a distinct style that reflected a pan-natural sexuality seen in terms of spontaneous, uninhibited passions, unfettered by the puritanical ethics of the urban middle class. A master draughtsman, Goud pioneered the art of printmaking and painting, excelling in the handling of a variety of mediums. His works feature in international collections like The Philips Collection, Washington D. C., amongst others. He lives and works in Hyderabad.

Ajit Gupta (1910-73)

Born in Dhaka, Ajit Gupta completed his diploma in 1938 from Calcutta’s Government School of Art. He taught painting at the Hooghly Training School, David Hare Training College, Dacca Training College and later at Calcutta’s Government School of Art. Among his noted works was a mural for the corridors of Parliament House, New Delhi, based on scenes from the Konark temple in Odisha. A teacher to several eminent artists of today such as Lalu Prasad Shaw, several of Gupta’s works are part of the collection of Indian Museum in Kolkata.

Somnath Hore (1921-2006)

Studying briefly at the Government School of Art, Calcutta, in mid-1940s, Somnath Hore trained under painter Zainul Abedin, and printmaker Saifuddin Ahmed. A participatory, collective practice with fellow artists like Chittaprosad led to his intellectual growth. In a thirty-year teaching career, he set up the printmaking department of the Delhi Polytechnic of Art, and nurtured students at Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan. He was the quintessential Bengal artist deeply affected by the cataclysms that changed its social history, foregrounding in his works the working class and toiling peasant, grappling with issues of survival.

M. F. Husain (1913-2011)

Born in Pandharpur, Maharashtra, M. F. Husain came to Bombay in 1937, where he began his career by painting cinema posters and hoardings. A member of the Progressive Artists’ Group, Husain was a peripatetic painter, constantly on the move, covering both geographical and conceptual territories, and transited at will between painting and poetry, assemblage and performance, installation and cinema. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1966, the Padma Bhushan in 1973 and the Padma Vibhushan in 1991 by the Indian government. Having fled from India following death threats and obscenity cases filed against him, the artist died in exile in London in 2011.
Shamshad Husain (1946-2015)
The son of M. F. Husain, Shamshad was born in Bombay. He completed a diploma course in painting from Baroda’s College of Art and post-graduation from the Royal College of Art, London (1979-80). Shamshad was awarded the National Award in 1983 and received an Indian government fellowship in 1983-85. The artist had 28 exhibitions throughout the country at centres like Hyderabad, Bombay, Delhi, Baroda and Bangalore. He exhibited internationally at London, Copenhagen, Hofheim and Geneva. His public works include murals in Jaipur and Delhi, a sculpture in Hyderabad and a work in metal relief in Mussoorie.

Tushar Joag (1966-2018)
Tushar Joag was born in Mumbai and studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, before enrolling for his masters at Baroda’s M. S. University. Joag was awarded many scholarships in his career, including the merit scholarship at JJ (1984-88), a two-year fellowship at Ahmedabad’s Kanoria Centre for Art (1990-92), the Inlaks scholarship (1995), a residency at Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam (1998-2000) and at PULSE in Durban (2007). The artist was known for strenuous performance pieces such as the 2011 Riding Rocinante from Bombay to Shanghai via Sardar Sarovar and Three Gorges, where he travelled on a motorbike lovingly named after Don Quixote’s steed.

Bhagwan Kapoor (b. 1935)
Bhagwan Kapoor studied at Bombay’s Sir J. J. School of Art, before travelling to Paris on a French government scholarship where he enrolled at Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-arts. Painting in a style that may be identified as folk-modernist representation, Kapoor’s characters typically exist against nostalgia-enabling sepia-toned backdrops. The artist has exhibited both in India and internationally. He presently lives in New York.

Prokash Karmakar (1933-2014)
Prokash Karmakar learnt painting from his father, the renowned portraitist, Prahlad Karmakar. After his matriculation, Karmakar joined the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta, but quit soon due to financial constraints. He held his first exhibition in 1959 on the railings of Indian Museum, Calcutta. In 1969-70, he visited France on a fellowship to study art museums, an inspiring exposure for the expressionist artist. He won the 1968 Lalit Kala Akademi National Award, and his work exists in several collections throughout the world.

Bishamber Khanna (1930-2000)
Bishamber Khanna was born in Peshawar and studied at Forman Christian College in Lahore before acquiring a diploma in fine arts from Delhi Polytechnic in 1954. An active member of the Delhi Silpi Chakra, Khanna started out as an art teacher in the city’s Modern School. He was the only artist in India to practice and master the technique of enamelling, used mainly to embellish jewellery. A recipient of the National Award by Lalit Kala Akademi, Delhi, he represented India at the International Enamel Exhibition, Los Angeles, in 1976 and International Exhibition of Ceramic Art, Washington D.C. He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1990.
Krishen Khanna (b. 1925)
Born in Lyallpur in pre-Partition Punjab, Krishen Khanna grew up in Lahore and moved to Simla post-Partition. While studying English literature at Government College in Lahore, he took evening classes in painting at Mayo School of Art. Resigning from his bank employment in 1961, he devoted himself completely to art, and in Bombay, he became part of the extended Progressive Artists’ Group. He was awarded the Rockefeller fellowship in 1962 and was artist-in-residence at the American University in Washington in 1963-64. He received the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award in 1965, the Lalit Kala Ratna in 2004, the Padma Shri in 1990 and the Padma Bhushan in 2011. Most of Khanna’s work is figurative.

Sudhir Khastgir (1907-74)
Originally hailing from Chittagong in undivided Bengal, Sudhir Ranjan Khastgir studied fine art from Nandalal Bose at Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan. He learnt sculpting in 1933 from Ganpath Kashinath Mahatre in Bombay. Khastgir received a scholarship in 1937 to pursue postgraduation at Deutsch Academy, Munich. In 1956, following Lalit Mohan Sen’s death, he was appointed principal of the Government College of Art and Craft, Lucknow, from where he retired in 1962. He made portraits of several eminent Indian and British personalities, while his sculptures included themes from the real and the mythical world. In 1957, he was awarded the Padma Shri.

K. S. Kulkarni (1916-94)
Born in Belgaum, K. S. Kulkarni completed a diploma in fine art from Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, in 1940, following which he came to Delhi in 1943 to work in textile design. He became a member of AIFACS and, later, the founder-president of the Delhi Silpi Chakra. From 1972 to ’78, he served as chairman of Lucknow’s Lalit Kala Akademi, and as vice-chairman of Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi from 1973 to ’78. In his art, Kulkarni treated human figures with the decorative grace seen in the classical art of Ajanta, combined with the vitality of a modern vocabulary.

Walter Langhammer (1905-77)
Born in Austria, Walter Langhammer came to India when Hitler’s army marched into his country in the late 1930s. Langhammer was a key figure in the history of post-colonial Indian art, and an influential connoisseur and patron who was also an artist. Like other refugees from Nazi Germany, Langhammer travelled east. Settling in Bombay, he soon became the first art director of The Times of India. In the western Indian metropolis, Langhammer met a vibrant art scene, caught up in a conflict between officially patronised academicians and a young rebellious generation experimenting with modern art; he nurtured the latter who founded the Progressive Artists’ Group under his tutelage. In 1938, he became chairman of the Bombay Art Society and, in 1952-53, he was a committee member of the society’s diamond jubilee exhibition.

Hemanta Misra (1917-2009)
As a self-taught painter, Hemanta Misra’s art traversed a wide range of pictorial styles, from pointillist renderings to the expressionistic, before arriving at a consistent and personal pictorial vocabulary. For Misra, surrealism served a dramatic or declamatory idiom. In 1947, he was the art advisor to the First Assam Hills and Plains People’s Exhibition, and worked as a staff artist in the military. A member of the Academy of Fine Arts and All India Annual Exhibition in Calcutta, he joined the Calcutta Group in 1953.
Dhruva Mistry (b. 1957)

Dhruva Mistry studied at M. S. University, Baroda, and at London’s Royal College of Art (1981-83) on a scholarship from the British Council. He designed award-winning sculptures on commission for the Birmingham City Council in 1992. A celebrated sculptor, Mistry was elected to the Royal Academy in 1991 and became a fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1993. In 1997, he returned to India as dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at his alma mater in Baroda, heading the sculpture department. In 1998, he was chosen for the Millennium Medal Competition, London, and was knighted by the Queen of England in 2001.

Rabin Mondal (1929-2019)

The 1943 Bengal Famine and the 1946 Calcutta communal riots deeply impacted Rabin Mondal’s psyche, prompting him to join the Communist Party and become an activist. However, his final refuge and ultimate weapon of protest became art. His work was typically known for its inspiration from folk art and for its potent simplifications and raw energy. Beginning his career as an art teacher, with a stint as an art director in films, Mondal was a founder member of Calcutta Painters in 1964, and a general council member of the Lalit Kala Akademi during 1979-83.

L. Munuswamy (b. 1927)

Hailing from a community of artisans, L. Munuswamy trained in painting at the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Madras, at a time when a strong Dravidian movement was sweeping Tamil Nadu. His early works reflect an inclination towards cubism and expressionism, blending with the monumental compositions drawn from the pictorial vocabulary of Deccani period mural paintings. After a year of training in graphic design in the U.K., Munuswamy’s work showed experimentations with new mediums, colours and lines that revolved around the female form, and motifs of birds and animals. He was awarded the Lalit Kala Akademi National Award in 1968 and 2002.

V. Nageshkar (1910-2001)

Vishwanath Nageshkar was Goan in origin but was born in Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He completed his diploma from Sir. J. J. School of Art, Bombay, in 1930, following which he specialised in fresco-making. He travelled to France in 1933, studying at Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts. Nageshkar studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich from 1938, and subsequently under A. Strube in Berlin. He witnessed the horrors of World War II while in Germany, which destroyed his studios in Würzburg and Berlin. He was awarded the Governor’s Prize, the Waddington Prize and the Viscount de Pernim’s Prize among others.

Unknown (Bengal ‘School’)

The discovery of the Ajanta Caves and the copying of its frescos in the late nineteenth century, together with the popularisation of Far-Eastern art spurred a worldwide interest in Southeast Asian art. Led by Abanindranath Tagore, this school produced stylised, romantic imagery inspired by mythological and religious epics, and traditional Indian themes, utilising the Oriental art-inspired technique of watercolour wash, and tempera or gouache on paper. Known for its delicately attenuated lines, dreamy mood and an atmosphere of gentle reflection, this art had for its practitioners the leading artists of Bengal of the time. While nearly all artists working in this style signed their works prominently, a small group of anonymous works too has emerged.
Surendran Nair (b. 1956)
Born at Onakkoor in Kerala, Surendran Nair studied at College of Fine Arts, Trivandrum, and M. S. University, Baroda. Nair began his art practice with strongly realist pen and ink drawings, etchings and lithographs, commemorating people from his immediate surroundings or literary heroes in his portraiture. In 1990s, Nair produced a large body of oil paintings he termed ‘corollary mythologies’. Mistakenly considered surrealist, these works are elaborate pictorial fictions composed of elements drawn from Greek mythology and Indian iconography. An internationally acclaimed artist, Nair’s works are in several public and private collections in India and abroad. He lives in Baroda.

Badri Narayan (1929-2013)
Born in Secunderabad, Telengana, Badri Narayan began his career in the late 1940s with ceramic tiles and mosaics, before moving to ink, pastel and watercolour. His distinctive pictorial vocabulary drew from medieval woodcuts, Byzantine portraiture, Ajanta murals and Pahari miniatures. He exhibited in over fifty national and international shows and his works are in several permanent collections, including the National Gallery of Modern Art and National Museum in New Delhi. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1987 and the Maharashtra Gaurav Puruskar in 1990.

Akkitham Narayanan (b. 1939)
The Kerala-born Akkitham Narayanan studied at the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Madras, under noted painter K. C. S. Paniker, following which a government scholarship enabled him to study in Paris. Collapsing figures into minimal forms, geometric patterns consisting of triangles, squares, rectangles and circles are seen in his work, as allusions to natural elements—fire, water, earth and ether. Though Narayanan’s constructions are reminiscent of Vedic or tantric ritual elements, especially rhythmic chanting, his art is worldly. The Paris-based artist’s works have been exhibited widely in India and internationally.

Kavita Nayar (b. 1957)
Born in Amritsar and raised in Calcutta, Kavita Nayar specialised in printmaking at Santiniketan in 1976. In 1989, she completed her masters from the College of Art, New Delhi. Nayar’s work delves into the themes of human isolation, complexities of modern relationships and existential suffering. In 1979, she joined the graphic art studio at Garhi in New Delhi; she has also been a member of the Indian Printmakers Guild. Nayar has participated in national and international exhibitions, including the Festival of India held in the U.S. in 1985, and at the Ruskin School of Drawing & Painting at Oxford, U.K., in 1996.

Ved Nayar (b. 1933)
The Partition uprooted Ved Nayar’s family, forcing a relocation to New Delhi, where he completed his graduation from St. Stephen’s College in 1952. In 1957, Nayar finished a diploma from College of Art, New Delhi, and exhibited his works at Lalit Kala Akademi’s national exhibition. Initially a painter, Nayar’s work later expanded to sculpture, installation and digital art, photography and printmaking. Rooted in the present, the artist gazes into the future with an ironic assessment of cultural globalisation. Nayar won the 1981 Lalit Kala Akademi National Award for his sculpture, Mankind-2110.
Akbar Padamsee (1928-2020)
A member of the first generation of post-colonial Indian artists who sought a free artistic license in Paris and London during the 1950s-60s, Akbar Padamsee developed images within the genres of portraiture and landscape as refracted through the prism of high modernism. He graduated from Sir J. J. School of Art in 1951 with a diploma in painting; he had also studied sculpture. Whatever his chosen medium, he had a distinctive command over the use of space, form and colour. He was a recipient of several accolades, including the Lalit Kala Akademi Fellowship, Kalidas Samman by the Madhya Pradesh government, and Padma Bhushan, India’s third highest civilian honour.

Laxman Pai (b. 1926)
Born in Margao, Goa, Laxman Pai studied and later taught at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, and for a decade was the principal of Goa College of Art. He participated in the Goa liberation movement and was imprisoned for his involvement in Gandhi’s Satyagraha. Years spent in Paris helped him in forming an individual artistic language that incorporated angular simplification, and the use of expressive lines. With influences spanning from Paul Klee, Mark Chagall to Joan Miro, Pai illustrates an eclectic modernity. He has twice won the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award, received the Padma Shri, and several honours by the government of Goa.

Gogi Saroj Pal (b. 1945)
After studying at Banasthali, Rajasthan, Gogi Saroj Pal completed a diploma from Lucknow’s Government College of Arts and Crafts, following it up with a post diploma in painting from the College of Art, New Delhi. Among her visual devices, Pal often uses the Kamadhenu or wish-fulfilling cow as a metaphor for woman kind—both for her giving nature as well as to express her anguish against exploitation. Her Nayika series expands on the facets of feminine attraction, addressing the female as the epitome of sensuality and male desire. Her works are found in major museum collections in Japan, the Netherlands and Poland. She lives in New Delhi.

K. C. S. Paniker (1911-77)
Born in Coimbatore, Paniker joined the Government School of Arts and Crafts, Madras, in 1936, studying under D. P. Roy Chowdhury. He won the 1938 Calcutta Academy Prize for the year’s best watercolour. In 1954, Paniker was nominated as an eminent artist-member of the Lalit Kala Akademi. In 1957, the artist succeeded Roy Chowdhury as principal of his alma mater. A pioneer, Paniker founded the Progressive Painters’ Association in 1944 and the Cholamandal Artists’ Village on the outskirts of Madras in 1966. European abstractionism and investigation into local calligraphy and metaphysical abstraction formed the basis of Paniker’s mature art, resulting in his well-known series, Words and Symbols.

Madhvi Parekh (b. 1942)
Madhvi Parekh was born and raised in a village in Gujarat. With no formal education in art, her style evolved from childhood memories, popular folk stories and legends from her village. Art formed a part of her consciousness through the forms of painting that were part of her family’s everyday rituals, such as the traditional floor designs of rangoli. Later, inspired by her partner Manu Parekh and artists such as Paul Klee and Joan Miro, she began painting in 1964 in her early twenties. Apart from folk motifs, legends and figures, Parekh also uses imaginary characters in figurative and abstracted orientations in her compositions. She lives in New Delhi.
Homi Patel (1928-2004)
Homi Patel was born in Bombay and graduated from Sir J. J. School of Art. An experimental artist, Patel worked with his contemporaries—the likes of Ambadas, Apolinario D’Souza and S. G. Nikam—to define a strictly non-representational artistic language for Indian painting. Internationally, he represented the country at the 1954 Venice Biennale, and at art shows at Zurich and Basel (1956), Tokyo (1957), Hamburg and Tehran (1970), Düsseldorf and Kronberg (1972), and Essen (1973), among other places. Patel’s art is housed in eminent public collections such as the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai.

Sohan Qadri (1932-2011)
Born to a wealthy farming family in Chachoki village in Punjab, Sohan Qadri came across two spiritualists at the age of seven—Bikham Giri, a Bengali Tantric-Vajrayan yogi, and Ahmed Ali Shah Qadri, a Sufi saint. His association with them heralded a lifelong commitment to spirituality and art. Initially, Qadri painted like his contemporary modernists, veering towards abstraction, but eventually abandoned representation altogether in search of new transcendental expression. The work he produced from then onwards was a meditative, unique exploration of tantra, where he built up compositions with rows of ink-dyed dots puncturing the paper.

K. S. Radhakrishnan (b. 1956)
K. S. Radhakrishnan took to painting inspired by the works of his uncle, P. N. Narayanan Kutty. He studied at Kottayam and later joined Kala Bhavana at the Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. He was awarded a research grant from the New Delhi Lalit Kala Akademi that allowed him to work at the city’s famous Garhi Studios. He has exhibited extensively and several of his sculptures are installed around the world—including two open air sculptures in Bikaner in Rajasthan, a sculpture at India House, London, among others. He has worked at Studio Obsonvile, France and participated in the Triennale organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

Krishna Reddy (1925-2018)
Krishna Reddy was born in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh, studied at Santiniketan (1942-47), headed Kalakshetra in Madras (1947-48), and travelled to Europe in 1949. There he studied sculpture with Henry Moore, Ossip Zadkine and Mario Marini. In Paris, Zadkine took Reddy to S. W. Hayter’s influential printmaking studio, Atelier 17, where he pioneered the ‘colour viscosity process’. Through his method, Reddy managed to attain a range of extraordinary colours on the plate, with each print being an individual coloured image. When Atelier 17 opened in New York, Reddy too travelled across the ocean, making U.S.A. his home.

P. T. Reddy (1915-96)
Pakala Thirumal Reddy was born in a farming family in Andhra Pradesh’s Karimnagar district. Defying his family’s opposition to art as a professional practice, Reddy joined Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, on a scholarship. In 1941, he formed an artists’ collective, the Contemporary Painters of Bombay, much before the Progressive Artists’ Group. He evoked a unique vision of his own, creating complex compositions, realistic and expressionistic portraits, still-lifes and impressionistic landscapes. His later works are abstract, often revealing a tantric influence with folk motifs and symbols, and a synthesis of almost contrary forms.
Rekha Rodwittiya (b. 1958)
Born in Bangalore, Rekha Rodwittiya graduated in painting from M. S. University, Baroda, in 1981. In 1982, she received the Inlaks scholarship for post-graduation in painting at the Royal College of Art, London. In her work and filtered through the prism of self-questioning, she engages with gender politics, socio-political subjugation, human degradation, violence and discrimination. In 1990, Rodwittiya was awarded a staff fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation-Asian Cultural Council to work in the U.S. She has represented India at several prestigious art shows internationally, apart from delivering a series of workshops and lectures on Indian art.

Kisory Roy (1911-65)
Kisory Roy’s initial inspiration was his father Nandalal, a railway employee and an occasional painter. He won a competition in school, which helped him secure an admission in the Government School of Art in Calcutta. Roy learnt the usage of different mediums under Mukul Dey and was trained in landscape painting by J. P. Gangooly. An artist as well as a teacher, Roy taught art at Uttarpura Government High School before joining the art college in the city, where he was employed for over fifteen years. Roy is also known for the murals he created in the Ramgarh Palace, Jharkhand.

G. R. Santosh (1929-97)
The artist was born Gulam Rasool Dar in a Shia Muslim family in Srinagar but took his wife’s surname as his own. He learnt painting from Dina Nath Raina in Kashmir, before studying under N. S. Bendre at Baroda’s M. S. University. In Baroda and for a while after returning home, Santosh painted in a style similar to cubism. In 1964, he travelled to the Amarnath caves in Kashmir and became enamoured with tantric cults that had coexisted in the mountains with Sufi mystics. An originator of the neo-tantra movement, Santosh fused the sexual with the transcendental in his art and poetry, at whose heart was the purusha-prakriti duality.

N. R. Sardesai (1885-1954)
N. R. Sardesai studied drawing at Ratnagiri School of Industry, before enrolling at Bombay’s Sir J. J. School of Art for formal training. His watercolours show the influence of principal Cecil Burns, who excelled in transparent watercolours and helped popularise the medium. Sardesai’s paintings reveal fine draughtsmanship and skill in diverse mediums such as oil painting, watercolour, pencil, and charcoal. Widely acclaimed and awarded for his talent, Sardesai won Bombay Art Society’s annual exhibition twice, in 1927 and 1929. Like many contemporaries of the Bombay School, earnest documentation was the centre of his artistic belief, and this unpretentious realism is seen in his portraits, and landscapes of Indian architecture.

Paritosh Sen (1918-2008)
Paritosh Sen ran away from his house in Dhaka to learn art in Madras. He was a participating member of the Calcutta Group’s inaugural exhibition in 1942. He travelled to Paris in 1949, where he had a chance to meet Pablo Picasso. Sen’s spontaneous response to the traumatic changes in West Bengal in the 1970s resulted in a series, where, along with large-size canvases, he installed a papier-mâché sculpture after pop art, inspired by his travels in Mexico and Egypt. Among awards, the French government conferred on him the L’officier de l’ordre des Arts et des Lettres, while the Lalit Kala Akademi honoured him with the Kala Ratna in 2004.
Sushil Chandra Sen (1909-72)
Sushil Chandra Sen studied at the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta. In 1936, he joined the college as a lecturer and later, worked at the Delhi Polytechnic, eventually becoming vice principal of his alma mater in Calcutta. Associated with the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, Calcutta University and various government art galleries, Sen made numerous woodcuts and etchings, and painted Bengal village life in his works; two of his large murals adorn the Parliament House in New Delhi. Sen received wide viewership at exhibitions in the country and abroad, including Afghanistan and the U.S.

Himmat Shah (b. 1933)
Going against his Jain mercantile family, Himmat Shah chose art, which he studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, and M. S. University, Baroda, and then spent two years at Atelier 17 with S. W. Hayter in Paris. A versatile artist, Shah has experimented across forms and mediums, making burnt paper collages, architectural murals, drawings and sculptures, though he sees himself as primarily a sculptor. His self-designed tools and innovative techniques give his preferred medium of terracotta a contemporary edge. A founder-member of Group 1890, Shah has been widely awarded. He resides in Jaipur.

Laxman Shreshtha (b. 1939)
Laxman Shreshtha was born in Siraha, Nepal, but grew up in Darbhanga, northern Bihar. In 1957, he enrolled at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, and five years later, received a scholarship from the French government to study at École des Beaux-Arts, Paris. During his stay in France, he was also enrolled at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière (1964-1967), and spent some time at Atelier 17 with S. W. Hayter. Shreshtha’s works inhabit the rare space between sensuality and meditativeness, mainly due to the fine handling of colour.

Arpita Singh (b. 1937)
Born in Baranagar in present-day Bangladesh, Arpita Singh joined the Delhi Polytechnic to study art in 1954. After graduation, she worked at the Weavers’ Service Centre in Kolkata and New Delhi for the nationwide cottage industry restoration initiative. Singh has exhibited internationally at London’s Royal College of Art, Paris’s Centre Georges Pompidou, and in Australia as well as in Switzerland. Among her accolades are the Sahitya Kala Parishad Award and the Kalidas Award from the Madhya Pradesh government. In 2011, she was awarded the Padma Bhushan.

Muni Singh (1936-96)
Born in Shivpur Diyar in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh, Muni Singh studied at the College of Art, Lucknow. In 1963, he received formal training in fresco making from Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan. A contemporary of Badri Nath Arya, Satish Chandra, R. S. Bisht and Sanat Chatterjee, Singh was inclined towards water colour as a medium. He mastered the miniature—Mughal, Rajput and Pahari—style of painting and translated it into his own idiom and technique. Singh served as the head of the modelling department, State Museum, Lucknow, from 1958-79, and was head of the observation division, National Research Laboratory, Lucknow, from 1979-94.
Paramjeet Singh (b. 1941)
Born in Jamshedpur, Paramjeet Singh moved to Delhi to study at the College of Art. Apart from working in watercolours, acrylics, oils and drawings, he has worked in different mediums of printmaking including woodcut, linocut and etchings. He prefers working with silkscreens, the smoothness of the medium allowing him to blend colours in an unobtrusive fashion. A recipient of the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award in the Seventies, he won the Kala Vibhushan award for his contribution to promote art by AIFACS, New Delhi, in 1988. He lives in New Delhi.

Paramjit Singh (b. 1935)
Paramjit Singh trained at the School of Art, New Delhi, in 1950s. A close association with nature at his home in Amritsar and reading art books at Khalsa College library underscored his affinity for both nature and art. Singh’s mature works are a combination of figuration and abstraction, where orchestration of colours and light finds forms in rugged hills, boulders, shrubs, fields, groups of trees and sky. Singh received the Lalit Kala Akademi’s National Award in 1970. His works have been widely exhibited in India and abroad. He lives in New Delhi.

Henry Singleton (1766-1839)
Henry Singleton was an English artist who studied at the Royal Academy where, during his lifetime, he exhibited over 300 works. Singleton was born in a family of artists: his uncle, Joseph Singleton exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy, so did his sisters Sarah and Maria, who were trained miniaturists. Following his father’s untimely death, Henry was brought up by another uncle, William, who had studied under the renowned English painter Ozias Humphry. Singleton travelled to India and worked both as a commissioned portraitist as well as a propaganda painter recreating images of English victory in the subcontinent.

Satish Sinha (1894-1965)
Born in Calcutta, Satish Chandra Sinha was associated with Abanindranath Tagore, J. P. Gangooly and Percy Brown. He worked as an insurance agent before interning with Hemendranath Majumdar at the Jubilee Studio. He was appointed a teacher and subsequently principal, first of Government College of Art and then Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship in Calcutta. Sinha was a member of Rasachakra, a cultural collective in Calcutta; he also served as a Joint Secretary at New Delhi’s Lalit Kala Akademi. For his contribution to Indian art, Sinha was felicitated in 1962 with the ivory Ashoka Stambha.

F. N. Souza (1924-2002)
A pariah who mutinied against all forms of social conformity, F. N. Souza was expelled from school and later from Sir J. J. School of Art. He was a founder-member of the Progressive Artists’ Group, the most iconic among the modern Indian artist-collectives, but later abandoned it to pursue painting in Europe. Souza found his own blunt, extreme style by combining the expressionism of Rouault and Soutine with the spirit of cubism and the sculptures of classical Indian tradition. Whether nudes, landscapes or portraits, he painted in every style and in every medium, even inventing ‘chemical alterations’, a method of drawing with the use of chemical solvent on a printed page without destroying its glossy surface.
K. Sreenivasulu (1923-95)

K. Sreenivasulu was born to a family of toy makers in Madras. He studied at the city’s Government School of Arts and Crafts and after graduating was employed to copy the murals of Lepakshi. Due to his upbringing, Sreenivasulu showed an innate interest in the local folk tradition that reflected on his art, at times drawing comparisons with the work of Jamini Roy. Active around the same period as K. C. S. Paniker, Sreenivasulu’s experimentation with folk elements marked an important modernist transition away from the mechanical processes of western academism.

K. G. Subramanyan (1924-2016)

K. G. Subramanyan participated in India’s freedom struggle as a youngster but eventually veered towards art. He studied economics in Madras but found his calling when he joined the Kala Bhavana at Santiniketan in 1944, where he trained under Nandalal Bose. He taught at the Faculty of Fine Arts at M. S. University, Baroda, and briefly taught at Santiniketan too but eventually settled in Baroda. Subramanyan attempted to create an alternate sensibility to modern Indian art where he drew on myths, fables and traditional narratives in a variety of mediums that at times reflected a post-cubist sensibility. A revered teacher and theoretician, Subramanyan was a well-known fiction writer and poet as well, and had written extensively on art.

Anupam Sud (b. 1944)

Born in Punjab, Anupam Sud graduated from College of Art, New Delhi, in 1967 and was the youngest member of Group 8, an association of artists at the college founded by her teacher, Jagmohan Chopra. Sud joined the Slade School of Art in England in 1971 where her sensibility and approach to printmaking underwent a radical change. Her work focuses on the exposed human body and follows a consistent trajectory where historic, religious and mythical references are connected to personal memory. Widely exhibited in India and internationally, DAG and KNMA hosted her retrospective in New York in late 2019. She lives in New Delhi.

M. Suriyamoorthy (1944-2012)

A key artist of the Madras Art Movement spearheaded by K. C. S. Paniker, M. Suriyamoorthy was taught by him at the Government College of Arts and Crafts. He experimented with natural ingredients through interest spurred by his father who was a practitioner of Siddha medicine. Suriyamoorthy’s visual language was born from his encounters with regional cultures like kolam, handloom textile motifs, wooden toys and the Lepakshi murals. The female muse was ever present in his works, either as an iconic-deity or as a middle-class woman managing her home.

L. N. Taskar (1870-1937)

A talented portraitist, L. N. Taskar taught at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, from 1898. His art became a tool for reflecting upon contemporary social reality where he soon replaced mythological figures with common people in their local environments. Unlike his oil canvases, where stricture to academism was maintained, Taskar’s transparent watercolour paintings showcased comparative freedom, often keeping the pencil underdrawings as an exposed, viewable element. Taskar’s works form part of several collections, the most prominent of which is that of Sir Ganga Singhji Bahadur, the Maharaja of Bikaner.
Thota Vaikuntam (b. 1942)
Born in Telengana, Thota Vaikuntam graduated from the College of Fine Arts, Hyderabad, in 1970, before studying under K. G. Subramanyan at Baroda’s M. S. University. His village’s egalitarian social structure, with no marked distinctions of caste or other divisions, has been his lasting inspiration; its rustic beauty and resilient farmers, labourers and women are part of his frequent subjects. In addition to art, Vaikuntam has also worked in cinema, even winning a national award for the Telegu film Dasi.

S. G. Vasudev (b. 1941)
Born in Mysore, S. G. Vasudev studied under K. C. S. Paniker at the Government College of Arts and Crafts in Madras, from where he completed his diploma. One of the founding member-artists of the Cholamandal Artists’ Village, he has constantly experimented with mediums and painting surfaces, such as small beaten-metal objects and the batik style of painting on cloth. Geometric patternisation is often seen in Vasudev’s canvases, plausibly a result of his early interaction with Paniker, one of the founders of the neo-tantra movement. An elected executive board member of the Lalit Kala Akademi, Vasudev lives in Bengaluru.

Waswo X. Waswo (b. 1953) with R. Vijay (b. 1970)
Waswo X. Waswo is an Udaipur-based American photographer, fine artist and writer. Waswo attended University of Wisconsin and Studio Marangoni, the Centre for Contemporary Photography in Florence. He came to India nearly two decades back after travelling the world, and settled in Udaipur where he opened a photography studio. Waswo collaborates with many local artists including R. Vijay with whom he has created a series of loosely autobiographical miniature paintings. R. Vijay, short for Rakesh Vijayvargiya, was born in Udaipur in a family of traders and is an informally-trained miniaturist. He is the grandnephew of renowned modern artist from Rajasthan, Ramgopal Vijayvargiya (1905-2002), who played an important role in inspiring young Rakesh to be an artist.

Jai Zharotia (b. 1945)
Jai Zharotia completed two diplomas in art and joined New Delhi’s College of Art as a teacher in 1974. Accessible and non-dogmatic as a teacher, he encouraged students to tap into their creativity. Essentially a painter, Zharotia is also known for his printmaking skills and has been a noteworthy participant of several national and international exhibitions. Traditional iconography finds precedence in Zharotia’s art, to which circus performers, clowns, jugglers and puppeteers are added by the artist who sympathises with tragicomic tropes. He lives in New Delhi.

Moti Zharotia (b. 1953)
Although Moti Zharotia loved painting since childhood, he studied Political Science in order to become a lawyer. However, a strong inclination towards the arts made him enrol at New Delhi’s College of Art. By the time he graduated in 1979, he had learnt photographic processes as well as linocut and silk-screen printmaking techniques. Fantasy is centric to Zharotia’s practice, and each subsequent series has inculcated motifs such as the moon, trees, rainbow, flying men and animals, each of which transcends its Newtonian qualities. A writer in addition to being an artist, Zharotia is based in New Delhi.
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FRONT COVER
Sohan Qadri, Untitled, Ink and dye on handmade paper, 1999

BACK COVER
Rabin Mondal, Untitled, Oil on box board, c. 1970s