

**SOUTH ASIAN
MODERN ART
2022**

**Grosvenor
Gallery**



SOUTH ASIAN MODERN ART 2022

9 JUNE – 1 JULY 2022

35 Bury Street • London SW1Y 6AU • art@grosvenorgallery.com
grosvenorgallery.com

1. JAMINI ROY

1887 - 1972

Untitled (Mother and Child)

Tempera on paper laid on card

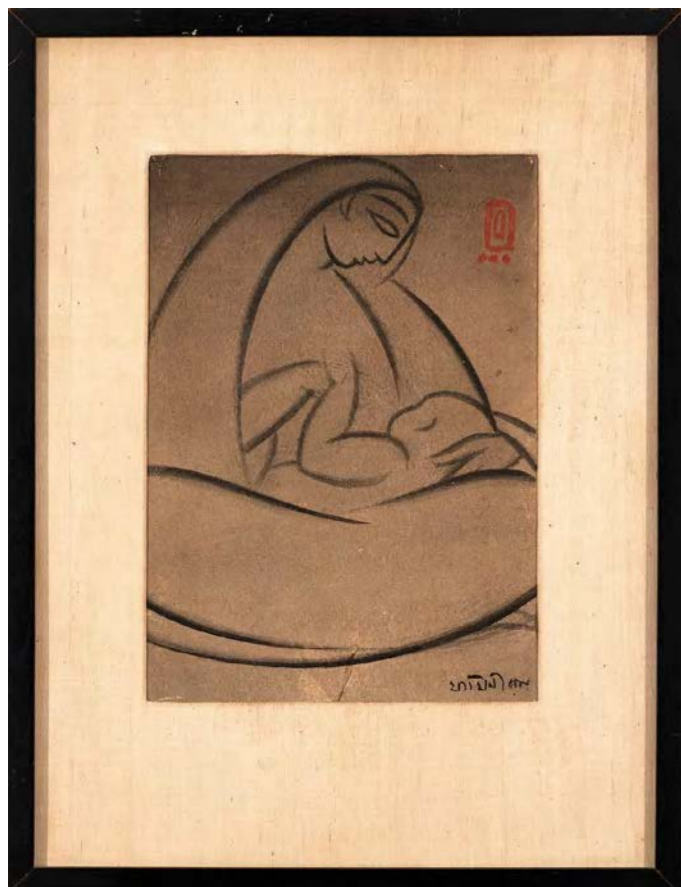
Signed in Bengali lower right

27.5 x 19 cm

10 7/8 x 7 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist in India in the 1940s;
Thence by descent



2. ABDUR RAHMAN CHUGHTAI

1897-1975

Village Maiden, circa 1950s

Signed 'Rahman Chughtai' and titled in pencil along lower margin

Dry-point etching and aquatint on paper

36.2 x 25.4 cm

14 1/4 x 10 in

PROVENANCE

Private US collection

LITERATURE

Sirhandi, Marcella, *Abdur Rahman Chughtai: A Modern South Asian Artist*, PhD thesis, Ohio State University, 1984, p. 483, fig. 262 (another edition)

The Private Collection of US Ambassador Benjamin H. Oehlert, Grosvenor Gallery, London, 2016, No. 7 (another edition)



3. ABDUR RAHMAN CHUGHTAI

1897-1975

Green Valley, circa 1950s

Signed 'Rahman Chughtai' and titled in pencil along lower margin

Dry-point etching and aquatint on paper

27.9 x 29.2 cm

11 x 11 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private US collection



4. AVINASH CHANDRA

1931-1991

Untitled (Landscape with Planets and Sunflowers), 1960

Signed and dated 'Avinash 60' lower right, further signed and dated 'Avinash 1960' on the reverse, also bearing label of Page Art Inc, California

Oil on board

76.2 x 100.6 cm

30 x 39 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Saffronart, 6 December 2005, lot 82;

Private collection, acquired from the above;

South Asian Modern + Contemporary Art, Christie's, London, June 9, 2011, lot 102;

Private collection, UK, acquired from the above

Landscape with Planets and Sunflowers was painted three years after Chandra's first solo-show at the Imperial Institute. The following years would see success and international acclaim for Chandra's paintings. In 1962 he won the Prix Européen (European Prize) and was the first Indian artist to be exhibited both in Documenta, Kassel (1964) and Tate Britain (1965), the later acquiring his painting *Hills of Gold*, the first painting by an Indian artist to be held in the Tate collection.

Chandra's paintings from the late 1950s were formally structured, block like townscapes, rendered in mostly intense colours. In the early 1960s his style evolved and the rigidity of his depiction loosened to encompass more sensual forms, often accompanied by swirling suns and moons.

"In Avinash 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 and in a wider context. They are symbols of exuberance, resilience, toughness and delight and part of their appeal lies in their constant blending with other poetic images: spires, trees, flowers, orchards, hills, moons and stars. It is the complexity of his meanings, the ambiguity of his forms that is perhaps this painter's special quality.."

"His pictures, with their ardent colours, taut rhythms and poetic images are perhaps the strongest proof we have that Indian painting can be vitally modern yet, through these very qualities, remain deeply and traditionally Indian."

W. G. Archer

From his introduction to *Indian Painting Now*, 1965



5. ALI IMAM

1924-2002

Untitled (Still Life on a Red Table), 1960

Signed and dated 'IMAM '60' lower right

Oil on card laid down on board

60 x 49.5 cm

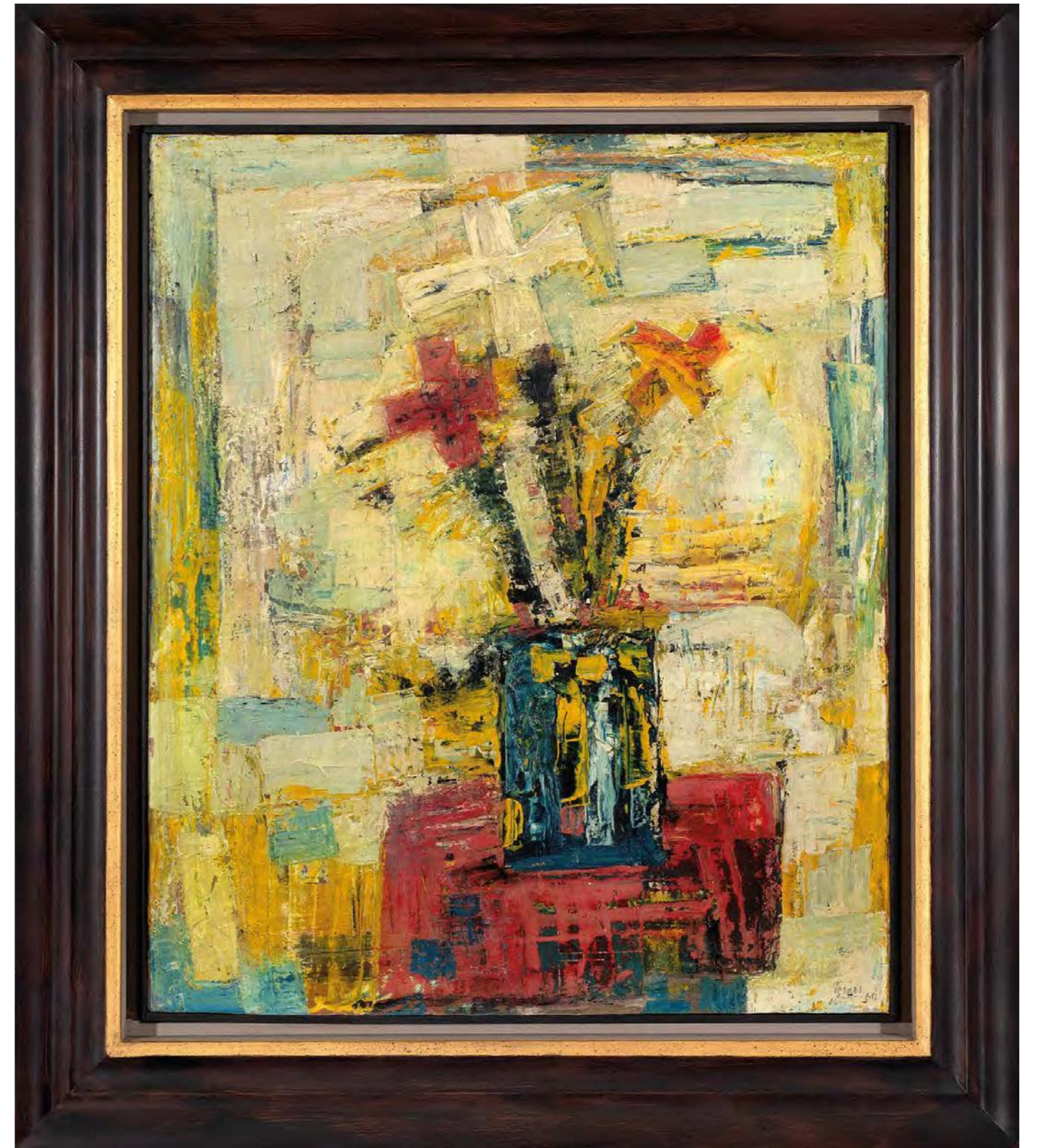
23 5/8 x 19 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, UK; acquired directly from the artist

Still Life on a Red Table was painted during the artist's time in London (1956 – 1967). Whilst there he studied at St Martin's School of Art as an evening student, and later at the Hammersmith School of Arts. His first exhibition in London was held in 1958 at the Imperial Institute. The critic Eric Newton wrote to Imam on that occasion to say; *"I am very disappointed that I shall not see your exhibition as I am sailing for America... I have not seen your latest work, but if it is of the same quality as that you showed me a year ago the exhibition will be a good one. You have my permission to quote me on that."*

In 1959 Imam, along with Ahmed Parvez, Anwar Shemza, Murtaza Bashir and Saffudin Ahmed formed the London Group. Their work was presented at Woodstock Gallery in 1959.





Shakir Ali, *Still Life*, 1955



Seal with Two-Horned Bull and Inscription, circa 2000 BC
Indus Valley civilization, Pakistan
The Cleveland Museum of Art, USA

6. ZAHOOR UL-AKHLAG

1941-1999

Untitled (Bull and Line of Figures), circa 1960

Indistinctly signed lower right

Gouache on paper

37.3 x 100.4 cm

14 3/4 x 39 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Pakistan, acquired directly from the Artist

Born in Delhi in 1941, Zahoor's family moved to Lahore after the Independence of Pakistan in 1947, later settling in Karachi. He attended the Mayo School of Arts and was taught by Shakir Ali. In this early painting by Zahoor, almost certainly from his time at the Mayo School, he uses the script and imagery of the Indus Valley

Civilisation as his main visual tools. The painting is in essence a deconstructed Indus seal, with the central area of the painting representing a line of script, abstracted to the point of appearing almost as a still life, floating on a blue background. The panels at either end with figurative representations of a bull and of a standing female figure.

The composition of this work echoes the visual methods employed by Shakir Ali during the late 1950s/early 1960; of flat areas of colour and ornament overlapping and floating above one another, to produce what Akbar Naqvi describes as; *'the joyous improvisations of a Cubist who had found the true meaning of space.'* Zahoor was soon to move away from the 'modernist' style he explored at the Mayo School, later shifting his focus towards the deconstruction and re-appropriation of imagery from classical miniature painting, in turn, becoming one of the most revered and influential Pakistani artists of the late 20th century.



7. ZAHOOR UL-AKHLAQ

1941-1999

Untitled (Cubist Still Life), 1962

Signed and dated 'Zahoor ul Akhlaq/ 62' lower right

Gouache on paper

29.4 x 76 cm

11 5/8 x 29 7/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Pakistan, acquired directly from the Artist

“Arguably the most significant Pakistani artist of our times, Zahoor unravelled complex questions of meaning embedded in tradition. He was concerned with the marginalized networks, practices and forms which still lurked beneath the surface offering up memories beyond the colonial. Zahoor ul Akhlaq was never content with facile readings of the ‘Islamic’ in his heritage.”

Salima Hashmi

8. FRANCIS NEWTON SOUZA

1924-2002

Untitled (Still life with a guitar - After Picasso), 1961

Signed and dated 'Souza 61' lower right

Oil on canvas

57 x 65 cm

22 1/2 x 25 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Kumar Art Gallery, New Delhi;

Private UK collection

EXHIBITIONS

Celebration, Kumar Art Gallery, New Delhi, 2007

LITERATURE

S.K Jain, *Celebration*, Kumar Art Gallery, New Delhi, 2007, illustrated on the cover and p. 32 (in colour)

All artists painting in the 1950s and 60s had to define themselves in relation to the great modernist movements of the earlier half of the 20th Century and its most famous exponent, Pablo Picasso. As it was for Souza, or Newton as he was then called; *"The tour de force came in the 40s when I saw works by Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cezanne, Matisse, and Picasso reproduced in art books over which I poured in the N. Petit Library, of which you had to be a member which cost money.... I was a member.... Completing my extracurricular education.....I had to find my own way through this (Western Art), because the Indian Tradition was not up to date having been disrupted by alien conquests; and the Western Tradition was alien to me. I had to express my own individuality, so I had to make a spectacular entrance."*

FN Souza, Writings and Statements by Souza, in correspondence with Dr A. S. Rahman, August 1986

By the time he reached London in 1949 and finally saw Western Art in the flesh, he excitedly wrote to his fellow progressives:

"The one man who has upset my ambition of being famous is Picasso! We had seen nothing of Picasso in Bombay. The quantity of work he has done he has done in capitals AMAZING! The quality is ASTONISHING! There is no style he has not done, he has imitated you, me, Husain, Ara, Gade and in his sculpture Bakre without we knowing it, or he knowing us!... I envy him. I love him. I admire him. I am jealous of him, which sincere painter wouldn't be... be proud as well as envious of him?"

Ed. A. Vaypeyi, Geysers, Letters Between Sayed Haider Raza & his artist friends, Raza Foundation, p 21

After finding his feet Souza did indeed make a spectacular entrance after his first solo in 1955 and became one of the key artists of Post War Britain. Souza took inspiration from the same Old Masters that Picasso did, but once those motifs were mixed with Souza's own particular knowledge of Classicism what emerged was a very individual language. Indeed, Souza clearly believed he had more to say than Picasso, as he pointed out *"John Craxton committed suicide because Picasso and Matisse had done everything there is to be done in Art, that is before he had heard of me..."*

F. N Souza, 1960, quoted in E. Mullins, Souza, Anthony Blond Publishing, London, 1963



9. SADANAND K. BAKRE

1920-2007

Untitled (Still Life with Bar Tray), 1961

Signed and inscribed on the reverse 'S.K. BAKRE/ S.K.BAKRE/
19. ST. HELENS GDNS./ LONDON. W.10/ TEL. LAD. 8434' in
English, dated 1961 in Devanagari
61 x 91.4 cm
24 x 36 in

PROVENANCE

Alfie's Antique Market, London;
Mr Ronald & Nanita Brend, Instow, UK

This work was acquired by Ronald Brend from Alfie's Antique market in Paddington, London. One morning he spotted it in the window of Alfie's Antique Market and it caught his eye. At the time he was working as a sports therapist or a masseur and lived in Paddington. He bought it and took it home. After leaving London, Ronald and Nanita moved to Bude and later to Instow on the north coast of Devon, where Ronald had grown up and had his first job working on the trains. The painting travelled with them over the years and was always at the centre of their house.





10. FRANCIS NEWTON SOUZA

1924-2002

***Businessman*, 1961**

Signed and dated 'Souza 61' centre right, Gallery One label on the reverse, inscribed with the artist's name and the title

Acrylic on canvas

76.2 x 55.9 cm

30 x 22 in

PROVENANCE

Gallery One, London;

Private Indian collection;

Grosvenor Gallery, London

EXHIBITIONS

F.N. Souza, Stone Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne, 22 June - 21 July 1962, No. 20

Little has been written of Souza's solo-exhibition at Newcastle-upon-Tyne's Stone Gallery, held between 22 June - 21 July 1962. The show featured a number of what are now considered to be Souza's most important works of the 1950s and 60s; *Negro in Mourning* (1957), *Tycoon and Tramp* (1955), *The Crucifixion* (1959) and *Old Man with Skull* (1961), to name a few of the twenty-five paintings exhibited. The show was well reviewed at the time in the press, with one journalist commenting;

"I rate this as one of the liveliest shows Newcastle has seen for a long time - and another reminder of the quality that we must now associate with the name of the Stone Gallery."

Alan Tompkins, *Evening Chronicle*, July 4, 1962

The Stone Gallery was opened in 1958 by Michael Marshall and established itself as a venue for interesting contemporary artists from the north of England. It moved to 10 St. Mary's Place in the early 1960s and held several successful shows of paintings by LS Lowry, indeed Lowry owned several sketches by Souza.

The forward to the exhibition was written by Edwin Mullins:

"It is not a critic's job to ask why an artist paints as he does. At the same time, one cannot walk into a room full of Souza's without at once being forced to participate in certain passions and fears which makes these violent distortions of the visual world explicable and sympathetic."

"Frequently these passions are not only violent but destructive, as though each painting liberated the artist from a private nightmare. His art is full of strange perversities and contradictions too."

"All his most successful work seems to contain something of an emotional clash - vulgarity and tenderness, or agony and wit, pathos and satire, aggression and composure."

Edwin Mullins, 1962



11. SYED SADEQUAIN

1930-1987

Untitled (Reclining Figure), circa 1962

Signed 'Sadequain' lower left

Oil on canvas

60 x 120 cm

23 5/8 x 47 1/4 in

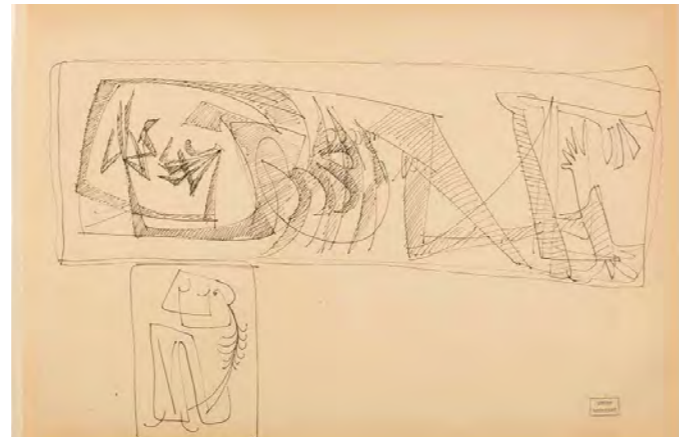
PROVENANCE

Private French collection

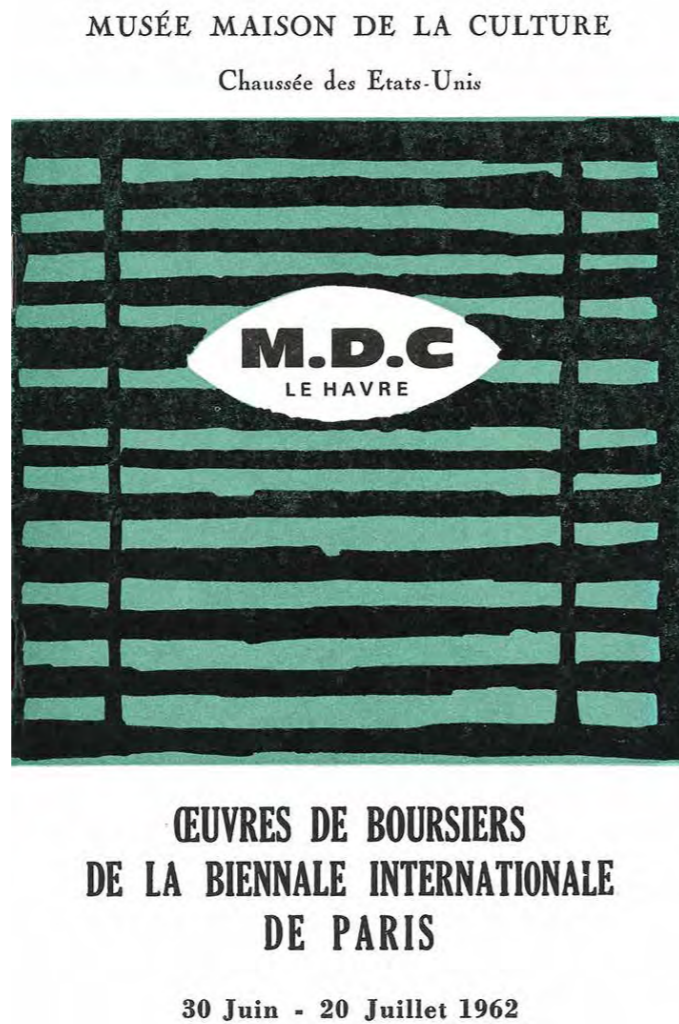
This painting was acquired by a French collector in the 1960s in Paris. He built a very large collection of artists working in Paris, including many of the leading artists of the day; Jean Degottex (1918 - 1988), Edgard Pillet (1912 - 1996), Anna-Eva Bergman (1909-1987), Bengt Lindstrom (1925 - 2008), Jean Messagier (1920 - 1999), Jean Degottex (1918 - 1988), Luis Tomasello (1915-2014), Robert Malaval (1937-1980) and many others.

Sadequain was announced a laureate of the 1961 Paris Biennale. An accolade that came with a grant to live in Paris for 5 months. In June and July 1962 Sadequain's work, along with his fellow laureates; José Hernandez Delgadillo (Mexico), Piero Dorazio (Italy), Flavio Shiro (Brazil), Marko, Sustarsic (Yugoslavia) and Brett Whiteley (Australia), was exhibited at Musée Maison de la Culture in Le Havre as part of an exhibition celebrating those awarded. This was followed later that year with a solo exhibition in Paris at Galerie Lambert from the 3rd - 25th October 1962.

Stylistic comparisons suggest that *Reclining Figure* is likely to have been painted in late 1962/early 1963, shortly after the Le Havre and Galerie Lambert exhibitions. It belongs to a suite of work starkly different from that produced in Pakistan at the end of the 1950s. Gone are the literal depictions of men and women (*Snake Charmer*, *Self-Portrait with Eiffel Tower*) and in come figures and landscapes constructed of dark silhouettes and spikey, staccato calligraphic abstractions, rapidly incised into the painted surface. Sadequain worked and reworked the subject numerous times, usually depicting himself, the tormented artist, as the protagonist.



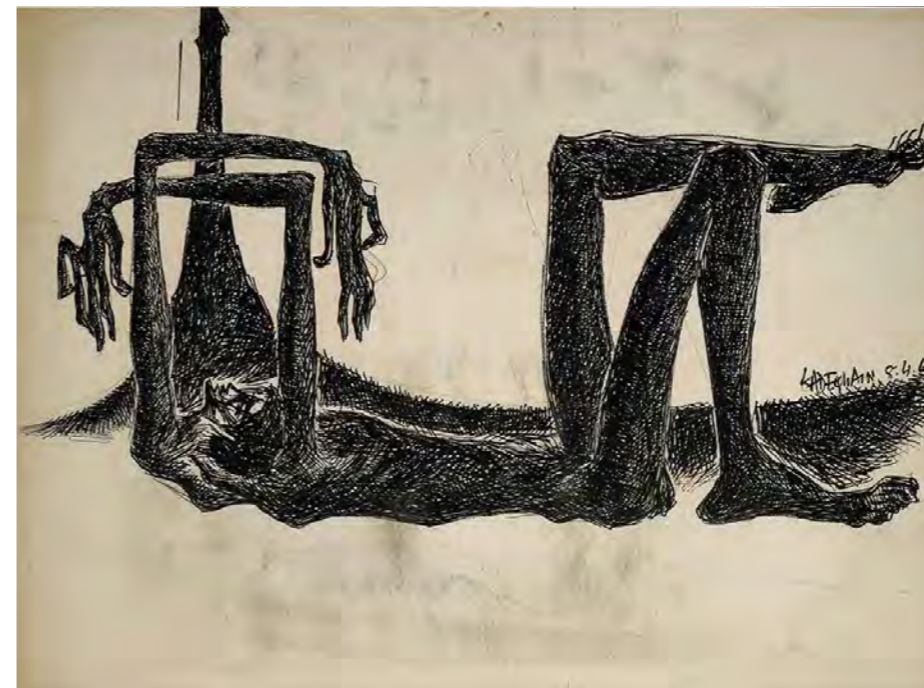
Study for *Reclining Figure*, circa 1962



Le Havre exhibition catalogue, June - July 1962



Reclining Figure, 1962
Private collection



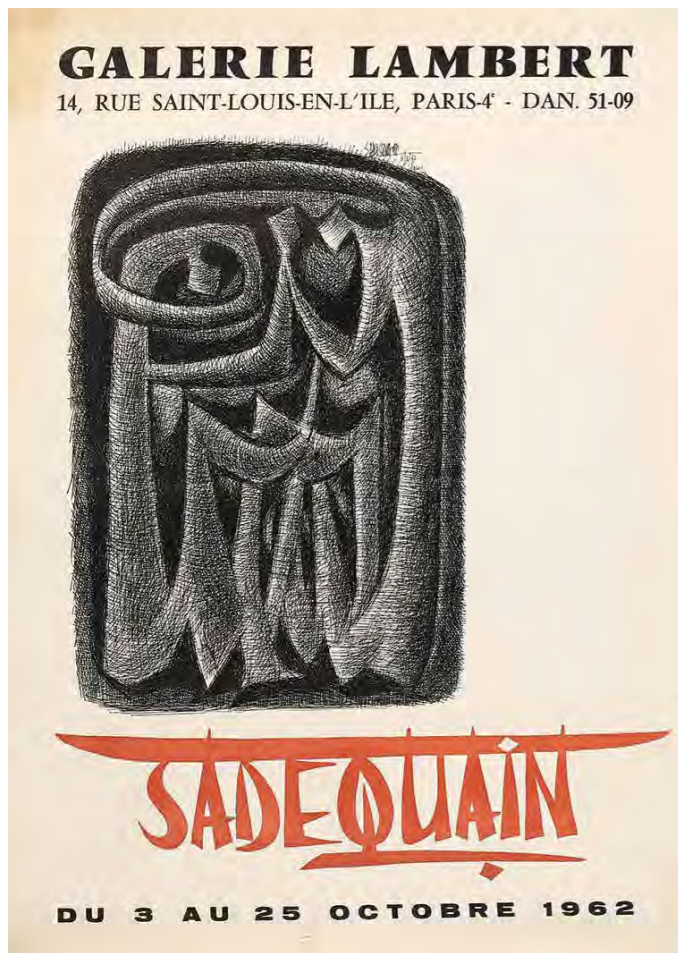
Self portrait with Eiffel tower, 1961
Private collection



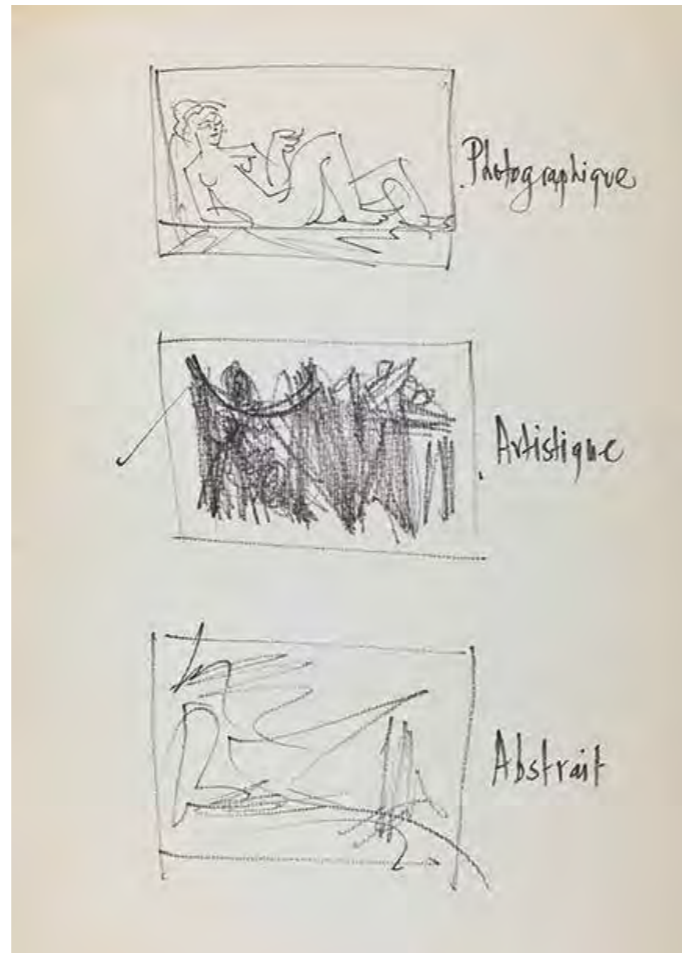
Reclining Figure, 1961
Private collection



Snake Charmer, 1960
Private collection



Exhibition poster, *Sadequain*, Galerie Lambert, October 1962



Studies for reclining figures, circa 1964





“With the commencement of his phantasmagorical exploration of form and substance, there emerges a series of abstract visual statements, strong and subtle, stripping, anatomising and recreating the skeletal forms beneath the visual flesh – skeletons of streets and cities, weeds and plants, men and women.”

“Ram Kumar’s Benares appears like a mirage of a city, a bleak apparition seen in the early hours of dawn or at dusk, just before nightfall, a sort of subliminal city; a grey and brown ensemble of dilapidated forms rather than a site of human habitation. Sometimes the view is clearer: shrines and squalid tenements huddled along the riverfront; their foundations submerged in the muddy water.”

G. Kapur, Contemporary Indian Artists, New Delhi, 1978, p. 75



12. RAM KUMAR

1924-2018

Benares, circa 1964

Signed in Devanagari lower right, further signed 'RAM KUMAR/
'BENARES' on the reverse

Oil on canvas

68.6 x 77.5 cm

27 1/8 x 30 1/2 in

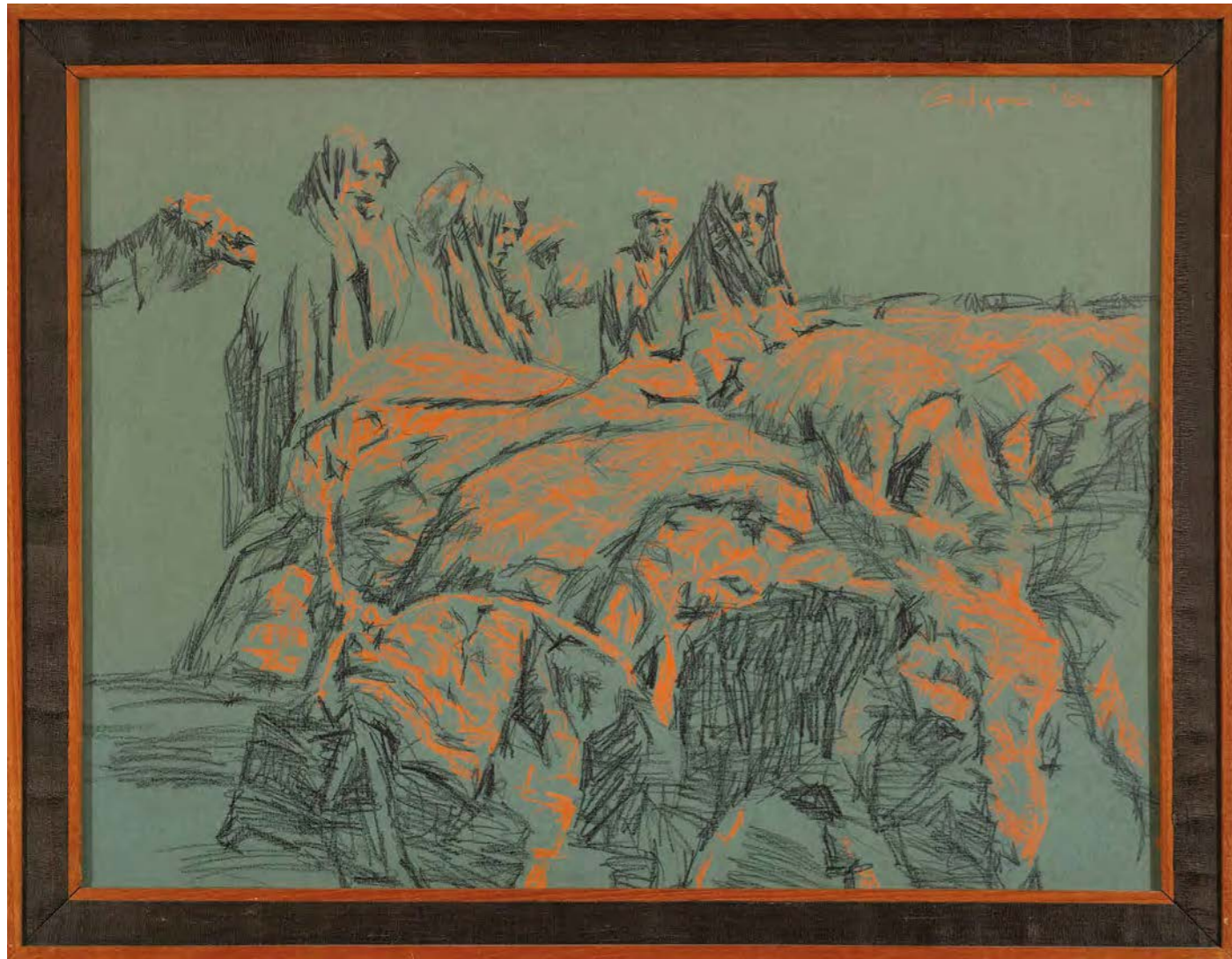
PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Virginia, USA; acquired from Kumar Gallery,
New Delhi, in the early 1970s

"It was the middle of winter. And I had reached the city late at night. The dimly lit lanes were deserted and gave an impression of a ghostly deserted city. Except for the occasional howl of stray dogs, all was quiet. I thought the city was inhabited only by the dead and their dead souls. It looked like a haunted place and still remains the same... Every sight was like a new composition, a still life artistically organised to be interpreted in colours. It was not merely outward appearances which were fascinating, but they were vibrant with an inner life of their own, very deep and profound, which left an everlasting impression on my artistic sensibility". (R. Kumar quoted in G. Gill ed., Ram Kumar: A Journey Within, Vadehra Publishing, New Delhi, 1996, p. 89)

Richard Bartholomew commented: *'He had gone to the city to interpret its visual experience in terms of colour and forms. The confrontation was intense - the doorways, arches and steps were his themes. The meander of forms constituted a dramatic structure. He noted the structure of the city as a relic, its wharfage and haven for the philosophy of death and passage of time.'* (Thought, 11th March 1961, quoted in G. Gill (ed.), Ram Kumar: a Journey Within, New Delhi 1996, p. 102).





13. ISMAIL GULGEE

1926-2007

Untitled (Herdsmen), 1964

Signed and dated 'Gulgee 1964' upper right

Charcoal and conte crayon on paper

57.1 x 72.4 cm

22 1/2 x 28 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, USA



14. LANCELOT RIBEIRO

1933-2010

Untitled (Townscape), 1964

Oil on board

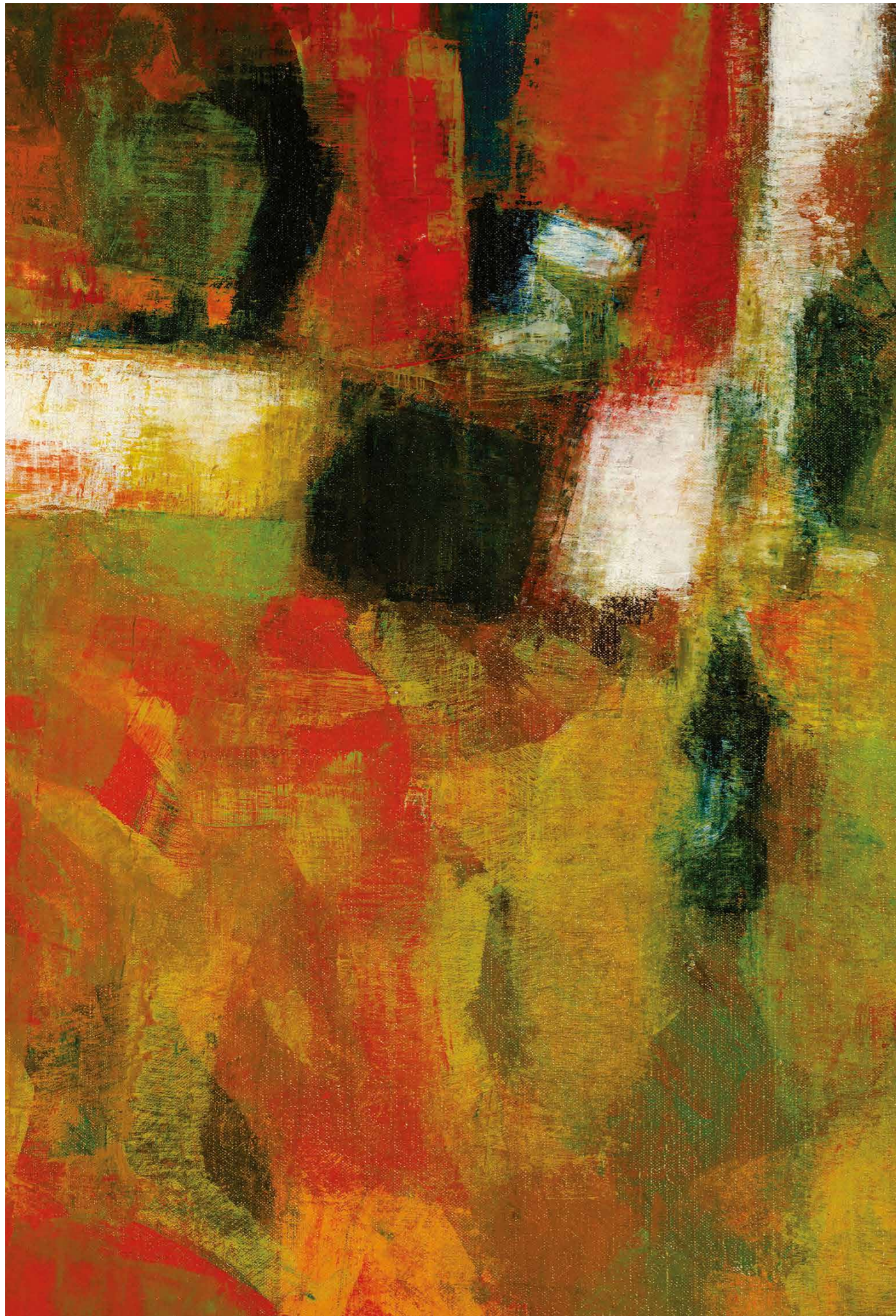
Signed 'Ribeiro' centre right, further signed and dated 'Ribeiro 64' on the reverse

19.5 x 26 cm

7 5/8 x 10 1/4 in

PROVENANCE

The Estate of the Artist



15. SAYED HAIDER RAZA

1922-2016

The Fall, 1964

Signed and dated 'RAZA '64' lower right, further signed, titled and inscribed 'Raza/ The Fall/ P562'64' on the reverse

Oil on canvas

100 x 81 cm

39 3/8 x 31 7/8 in

PROVENANCE

Galerie Lara Vincy, Paris;

Collection L. Paris, acquired from the above

LITERATURE

Jacques Lassaigne, *Raza*, Cimaise Art et Architecture Actuals, Paris, No. 79, 1967, unpaginated (illustrated in black and white)

Anne Macklin (ed.), *S H Raza, Catalogue Raisonne, Volume I (1958 - 1971)*, Vadehra Art Gallery & The Raza Foundation, New Delhi, 2016, p. 119 (illustrated in black and white)

Alain Bonfand, *RAZA*, Paris, 2008, p. 79 (illustrated in colour), incorrectly titled and dated



Sayed Haider Raza, *L'Automne*, 1961

“Raza always painted an imaginary world, traversed by tragic intensities, with his energies concentrated at the points where his coloured planes overlapped. In the thickness of his matter, a whole network of coloured veins circulated; flashing reds and yellows pierced deep blacks. Effects of tension and nervous agitation upset shadowy zones...”

“His painting has become fluid, light, calm. His fragmented stroke is extending itself gradually across the surface and is now being organised along unexpected planes...”

“The work is finding, occasionally at the heart of strange concretions, a centre of subtle gravity. There is no doubt that there is a solidity, a certainty in these forms, a quasi-mineral aspect, a presence which faces up victoriously to the wealth of imagination.”

Jacques Lassaigne





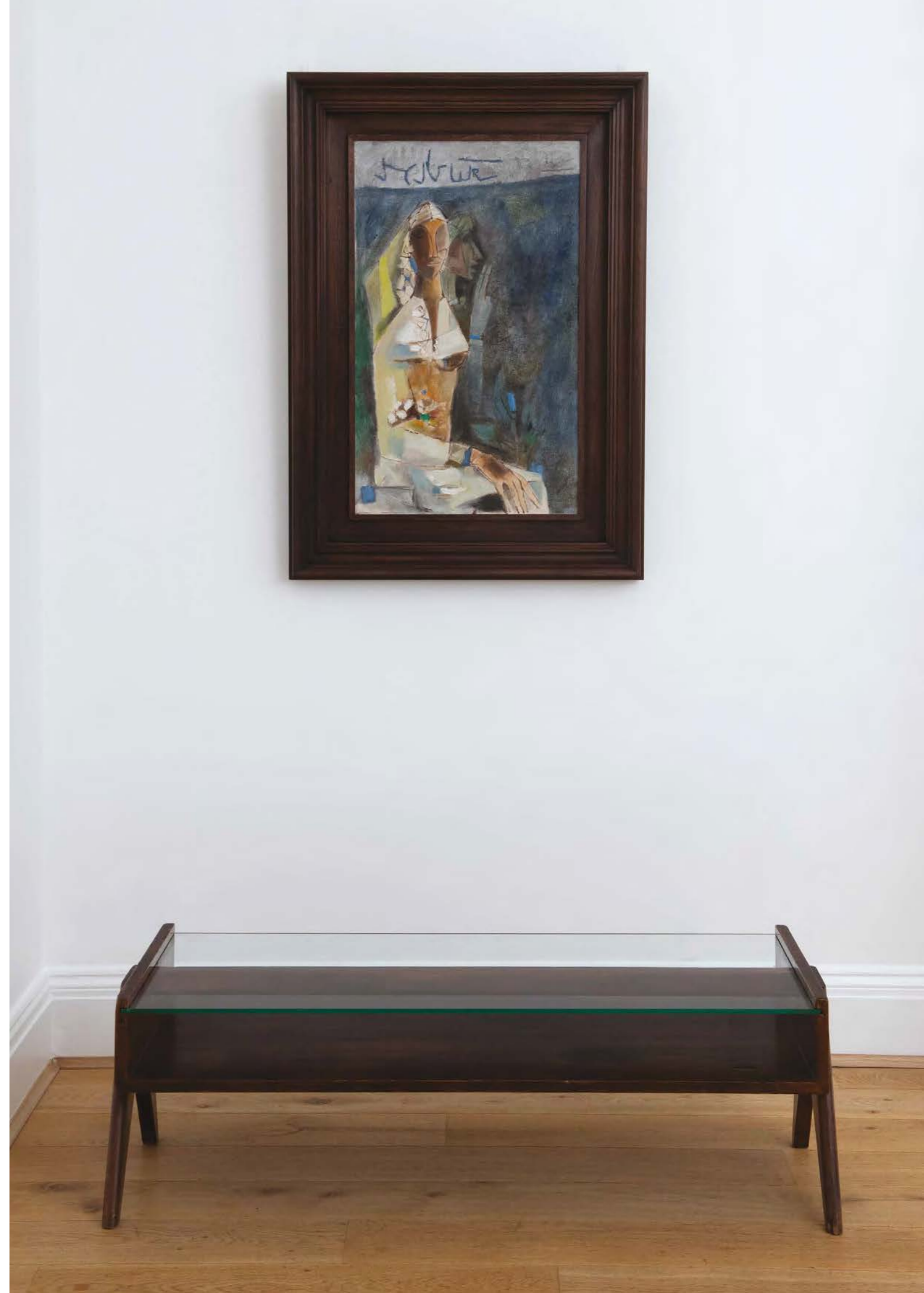
Black Moon, 1960



Nartaki, 1964



Hajera, 1964



16. MAQBOOL FIDA HUSAIN

1915-2011

Sakeena, 1965

Signed, titled, dated and inscribed, 'M.F. HUSAIN/ SAKEENA/ 1965" on the reverse, with a partial exhibition label for the travelling exhibition on the back of the canvas

Oil on canvas
76.8 x 45.7 cm
30 1/4 x 18 in

PROVENANCE

Collection of Phyllis and Kenneth Kurson, Colorado, USA, acquired in India in 1967/68;
Thence by decent

EXHIBITIONS

Contemporary Indian Art, Nairobi, Kenya; Kampala, Uganda and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 1965 – 1966, presented by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi

Sakeena translates as 'God inspired tranquillity', and forms part of a legacy of Husain's most significant paintings of women executed in the 1950s and 1960s: *Blue Night* (1959), *Black Moon* (1960), *Fatima* (1960), *Jhoola* (1961), *Nathani* (1962), *Dhoban* (1963), *Hajera* (1964) *Nartaki* (1964), and *Devdasi* (1965).

"The central concern of Husain's art, and its dominant motif, is woman... Man, in Husain's view, is dynamic only in heroism. He is diminished by confusion and broken by disbelief... Spiritually, woman is more enduring. Pain comes naturally to her, as do compassion and a sense of birth and death of things. In Husain's work, woman has the gift of eagerness... and an inward attentiveness, as if she were listening to the life coursing within her."

(R. Bartholomew and S. Kapur, *Husain*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1972, p. 46).

The painting toured East Africa as part of the exhibition; *Contemporary Indian Art*, in late 1965, early 1966. Following the show the painting returned to India and was subsequently bought by American collectors Phyllis and Kenneth Kurson in New Delhi in 1967/68. It returned with them to their home in Colorado, USA and has remained in the family collection ever since.

Organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, the exhibition toured to three African countries from late 1965 to early 1966 and was staged at the request of Chemchemi Cultural Centre, Nairobi, which also had sites in Uganda and Tanzania.

The Director of Chemchemi in Nairobi was Ezekiel Mphahlele (1919-2008), the South African writer, artist, activist celebrated as the father of African Humanism and one of the founding figures of modern African literature. The celebrated Tanzanian artist Elimo Njau (b. 1932) was head of the visual arts programme. Chemchemi

translates as 'fountain' in Kiswahili, and the centre functioned as a cultural centre with art galleries, theatres, libraries and studios for poetry, drama and creative writing. Further centres opened in Tanzania and Uganda, to which the exhibition travelled in 1966.

Whilst there appears to be little in the way of archive material relating to the East African exhibition, this description of the show appears in the 1965 edition of the Lalit Kala's journal.

"The exhibition, the first of its kind in East Africa, was inaugurated by the Assistant Minister for Education, Mr. Konchella on August 18th, 1965. A Nairobi paper reports that 'the current exhibition of contemporary Indian paintings offers a unique opportunity to Kenya's art lovers and budding artists. It allows them contact with an exciting mode of expression from a country with long established traditional art yet eager to adopt and absorb the modern media and forms. There are some 30 paintings and 4 sculptures representatively selected from the works of the top ranking artists... One is struck by the number of bold experiments both in the techniques and materials'.

"Contemporary Indian art, judging from these exhibits, is virile and the artists appear to have absorbed influences but made their own modern art without losing their individuality or traditional basis. This in itself should be a useful lesson to East Africans in their struggle for a cultural awakening"

Lalit Kala Contemporary 4, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 1965, p. 32

Similar labels to that found on the back of *Sakeena* appear on works by Ram Kumar and Badri Narayan, and as the show contained a great many paintings there is clearly more research to be done to shed light on this important exhibition that toured East Africa in the early years of Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian Independence.

References:

Chemchemi Creative Centre, Nairobi, The Journal of Modern African Studies, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Vol. 3, No. 1, May, 1965, pp. 115-117

The Development of Visual Arts in Tanzania from 1961 to 2015: A Focus on the National Cultural Policy and Institutions' Influences, Dr. Dominicus Zimanimoto Makukula, Berlin, 2019



17. B PRABHA

1933 - 2001

Untitled (Two Fisherwomen), 1966

Signed and dated 'b. prabha/ 1966' upper right

Oil on canvas

91.5 x 63.5 cm

36 1/8 x 25 in

PROVENANCE

Private Swiss collection;

A gift from the family of a Swiss diplomat who worked in
India, 2001



18. LANCELOT RIBEIRO

1933-2010

Untitled (Dripping Figure), circa 1966

Stamped by the Artist's Estate on the reverse

Oil and polyvinyl acetate on canvas

126.5 x 96.5 cm

49 3/4 x 38 in

PROVENANCE

The Estate of the Artist

EXHIBITIONS

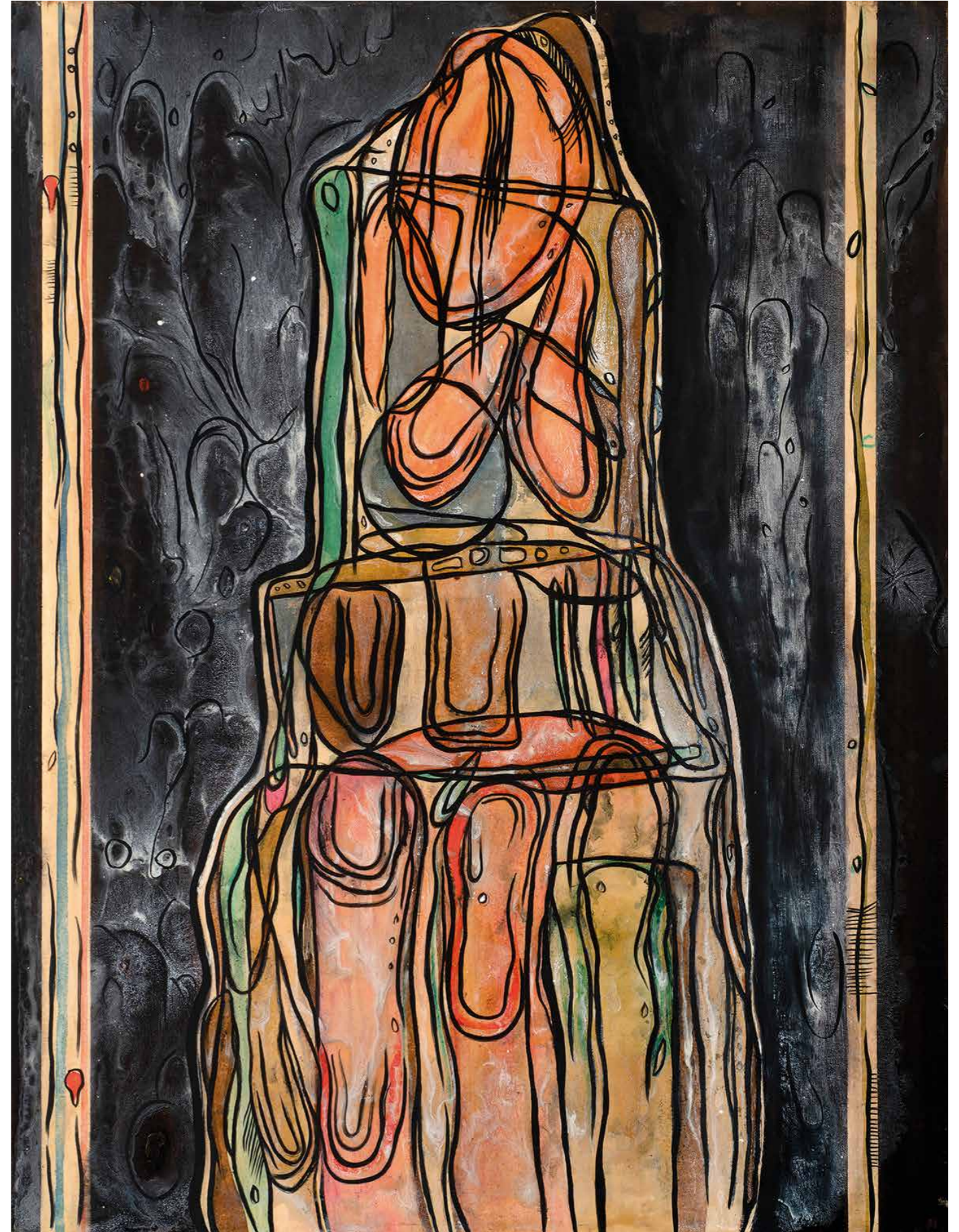
Lancelot Ribeiro, An Artist in India and Europe, Grosvenor Gallery, London, 15 April – 8 May 2015, No.2

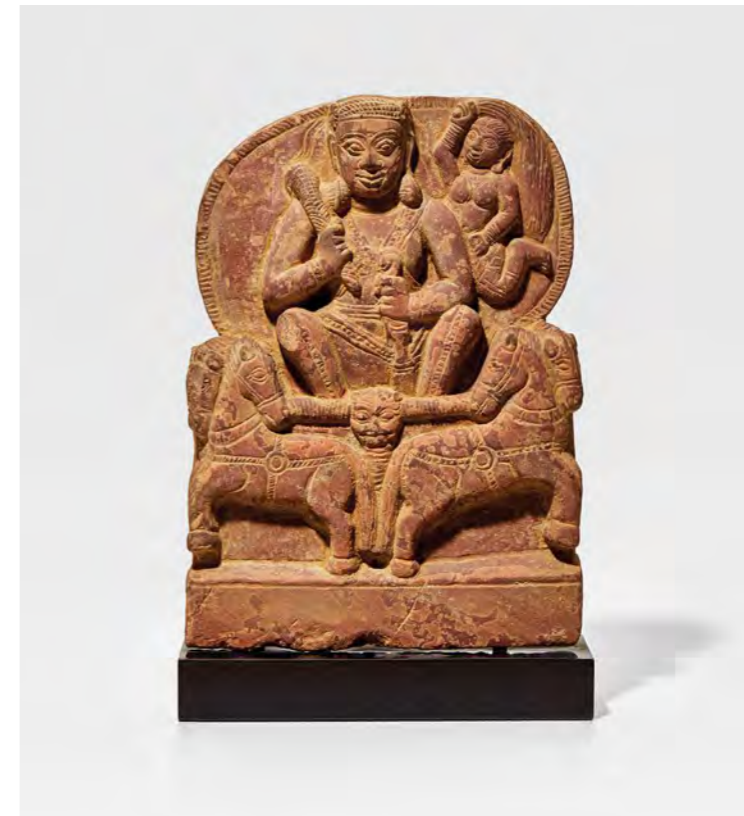
Dripping Figure is an example of the experimental style of work that would come to define Ribeiro's career. His use of acrylic paint, in particular the mixing of pigments with polyvinyl acetate, which he pioneered in the mid-1960s, allowed him to paint works with dynamism and energy, that appear to be flowing off the canvas.

Here, the globular figure is rendered in oranges, greens and pinks, set against a dark, swirling background of deep blue and white, reminiscent of a starry sky. Ribeiro's figures are usually painted head on, and in the 1960s he started to twist and contort his subjects into fantastical forms. His paintings are commonly inspired by scenes from his upbringing in Goa; 'my first influences ... were the churches and statuary of the Catholic church in Goa along with the symbolic ritual that went with it.' Katriana Hazell (ed.), *Restless Ribeiro: An Indian Artist in Britain*, exhibition catalogue, Asia House, London, 2013.



Ribeiro at his home, 1971





A Kushan red sandstone votive image of Surya, Mathura
Circa 2nd century AD
Courtesy of Bonhams, London

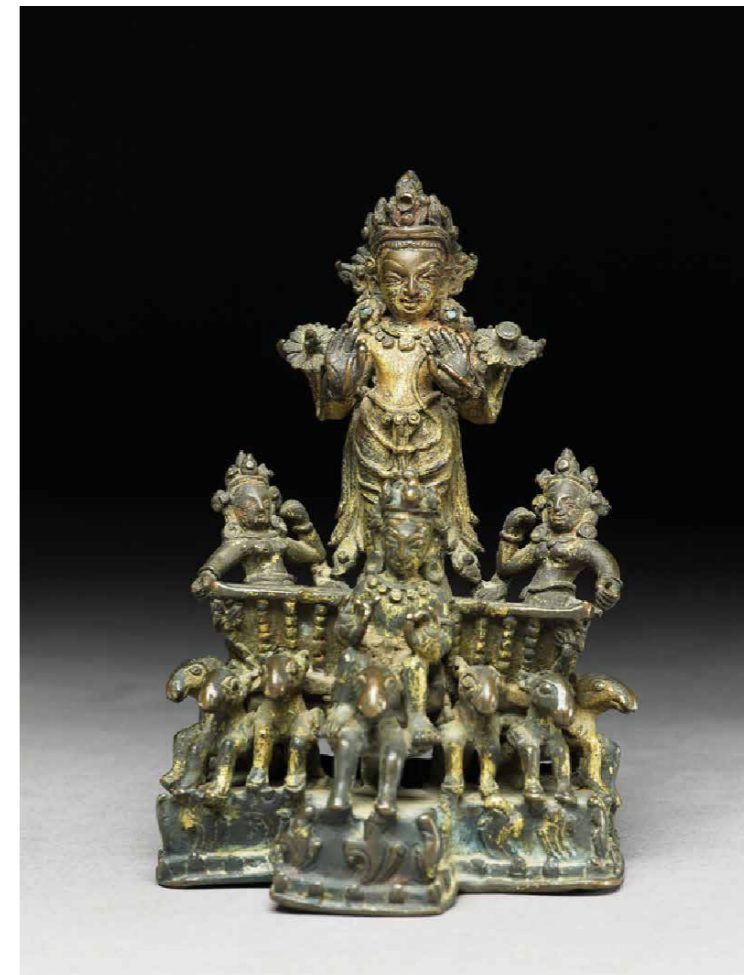


Figure of Surya, the Sun God, in his chariot, Nepal,
17th century AD
© Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

19. MAQBOOL FIDA HUSAIN

1915-2011

Untitled (Surya), circa 1967

Signed lower left

Oil on canvas

86 x 62.9 cm

33 7/8 x 24 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private French collection

Husain recounted to Yashodhara Dalmia in 1992 the effect of the landmark exhibition *Indian Classical Art at Dominions of India & Pakistan*, held at London's Royal Academy in 1948:

"In 1948 after visiting Delhi with Souza where I saw all the Indian works and then I felt I should paint something else. Till then I was influenced by the Expressionists... I combined the form of the Gupta period, strong colours of the Basholi period and the innocence of folk art and worked on it and then came out with five paintings that were shown at the Bombay Art Society in 1949. Nobody had seen it – not even Souza. At the opening night he caught hold of me and took me to the Irani restaurant opposite and said, "Just tell me, what is this? Have you discovered something new?""¹

Husain was drawn to the image of the horse and rider from Indian mythology. From the figure of Surya. In this work Husain paints a trio of galloping, rearing horses being ridden by the goddess. Painted in the mid-1960s it has the typical fast brush technique used by Husain.

The image is also used in classical art. The goddess Selene is depicted riding her celestial horse-drawn chariot to pull the moon across the sky. Both do so for similar reasons; to show human dominance and strength and the raw animal power of the horse, a universal theme of appeal to any nationality.

The work was inherited by a Parisian family from the XVII^e arrondissement. Their parents were collectors and acquired several Indian art works in the 1960s on their travels. They also had paintings in their collection by Gulam Rasool Santosh (Nos. 22 and 23) as well as a work by Laxman Pai.

¹ Yashodhara Dalmia, *The Rise of Modern Art and the Progressives*, Oxford, 2001



20. SAYED HAIDER RAZA

1922-2016

Untitled (Paysage), 1969

Signed and dated 'Raza '69' lower right, further signed and dated 'RAZA/ 1969' on the reverse

Oil on masonite

25 x 23 cm

9 7/8 x 9 1/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private French Collection

LITERATURE

This work will be included in a revised edition of "*SH RAZA, Catalogue Raisonné Volume I (1958 - 1971)*" by Anne Macklin on behalf of The Raza Foundation, New Delhi, (Image ref SR4277)



21. FRANCIS NEWTON SOUZA

1924-2002

Untitled (Nude in Cubist Composition), 1966

Signed and dated 'Souza 66' upper right

Oil on canvas

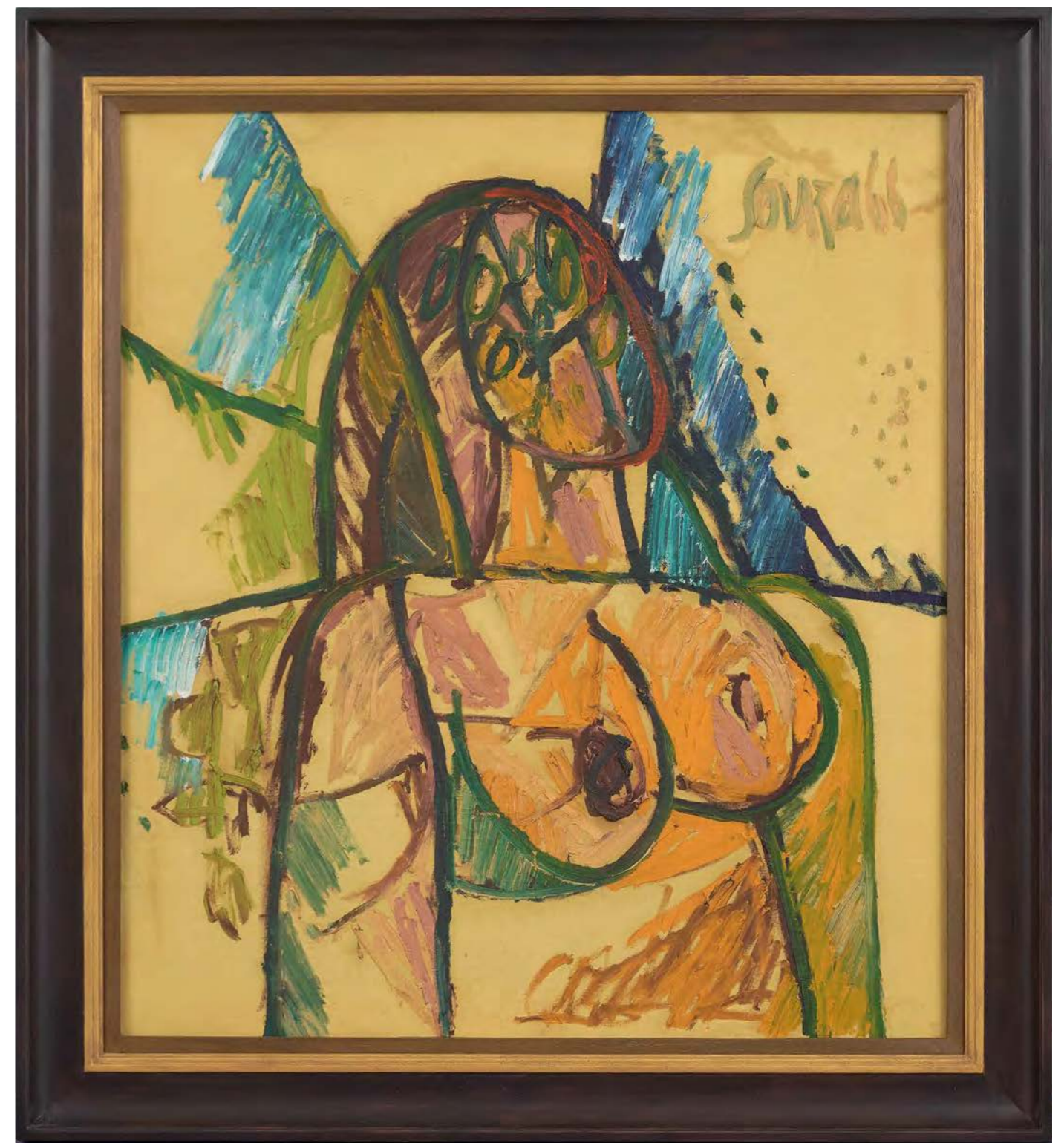
86 x 76 cm

33 7/8 x 29 7/8 in

PROVENANCE

Acquired in India, circa 1990s;

Private German Collection





22. GULAM RASOOL SANTOSH

1929-1997

Untitled (Nude with Tantric Symbol), 1968

Signed and dated lower center, inscribed 'No. 24' on the stretcher

Oil on canvas

84.5 x 60 cm

33 1/4 x 23 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private French collection

23. GULAM RASOOL SANTOSH

1929-1997

Untitled (Abstract Figure with Red Sun), 1968

Signed and dated lower right, signed, dated and inscribed 'March 68/ SANTOSH/ No 10' on the reverse

Oil on canvas

129.9 x 46.1 cm

51 1/8 x 18 1/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private French collection



24. FRANCIS NEWTON SOUZA

1924-2002

Californian Girl, 1968

Signed and dated 'Souza 68' upper right, further inscribed on the reverse 'CALIFORNIAN GIRL/ F N SOUZA/ 1968/ 48 x 35'

Acrylic on masonite

121.9 x 91.4 cm

48 x 36 in

PROVENANCE

The Estate of the Artist

Californian Girl is an homage to Titian, perhaps Souza's favourite Old Master, to whom he often went to for inspiration. Titian's *Venus of a standing Nude with mirror* is also derived from antiquity, the Classical sculpture of *Venus de' Medici* in Florence. As in classical times and later with Titian, the nude is a celebration of female beauty but also a critique of a vanity. Titian painted multiple versions of the subject as did many other contemporary artists as it was a popular subject. Souza's version of 1968 is contemporary take of the subject, with an up-to-date critique of the new Californian version, white, bronzed, tanned and on the beach. The Beach Boys album *California Girls Let Him Run Wild* was released in 1965 and this had spawned a plethora of commercialised images of the Californian Girl.



Titian, *Venus with a Mirror*, (circa 1555)

Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA



25. JAMIL NAQSH

1939-2019

Untitled (Woman and Pigeon), 1971

Signed and dated 'Jamil Naqsh 1971' lower left, further signed and inscribed 'Jamil Naqsh / Pakistan Art Gallery / 39 C Block 6 / PECHS / KARACHI / Price - Rs 1500/= ' on the reverse

Oil on canvas

74.9 x 106.7 cm

29 1/2 x 42 1/8 in

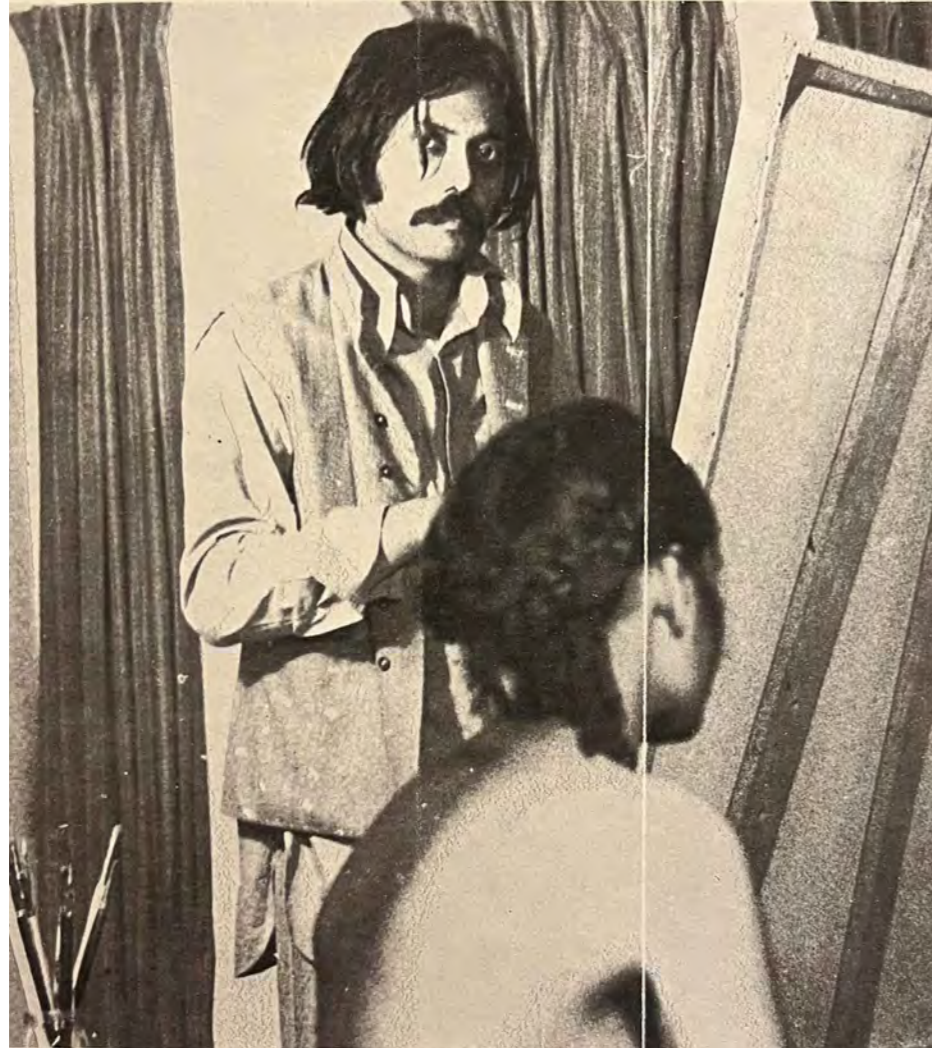
PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist, circa late 1980s

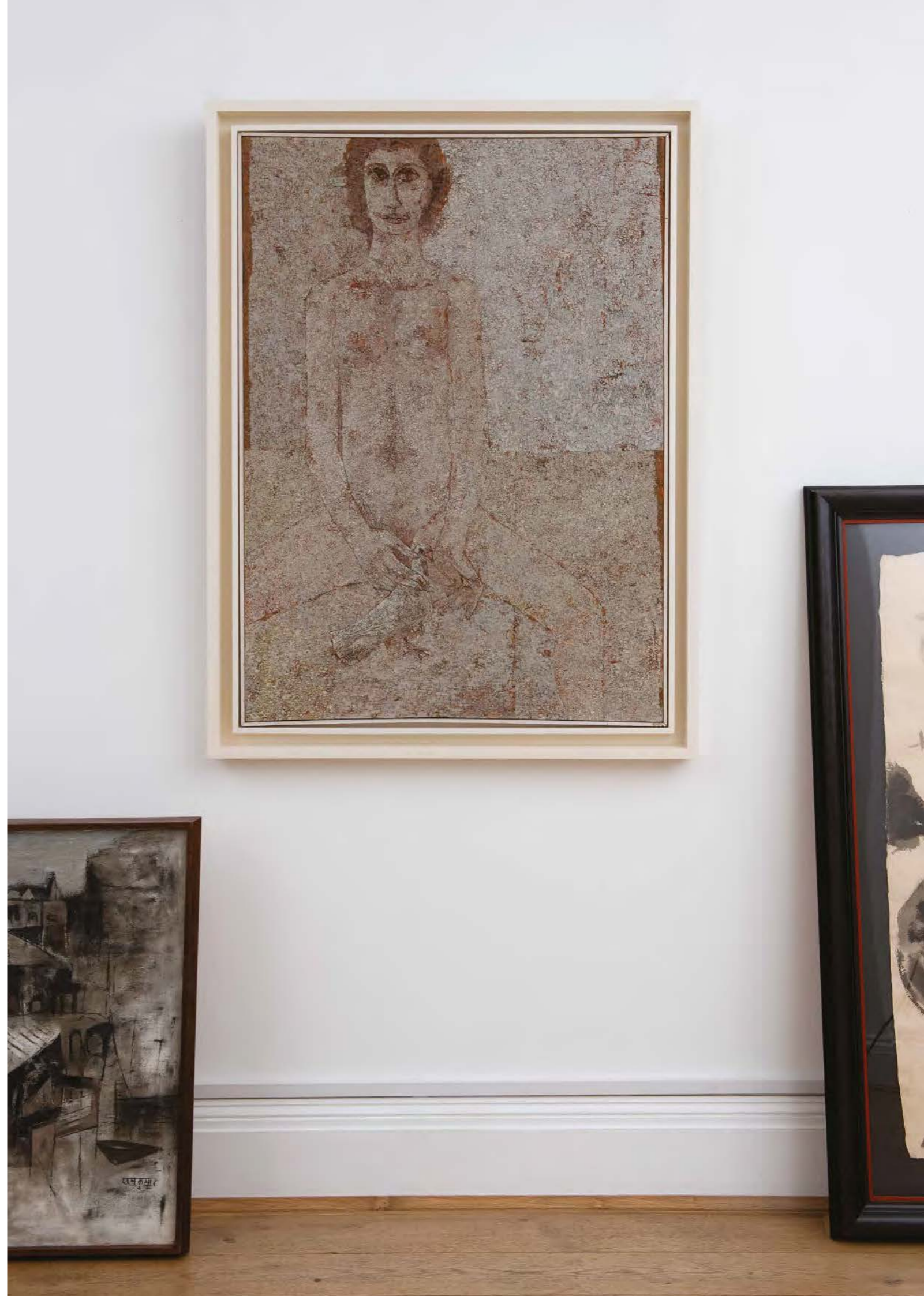
"By chance Jamil found one day what he called 'the missing form' – Najmi (his wife) had crushed lentils in a mortar, and some had fallen to the ground. A neighbour's tame pigeon flew over and started to eat the grains. 'From that day forward, the dove came into our house and into my paintings.'"

Text taken from 'Unser hervorragender Künstler' (Our outstanding artist), *Pakistan Im Blickfeld*, 1976, p. 28





Jamil Naqsh, 1975



26. JAMIL NAQSH

1939-2019

Untitled (Woman with Pigeon), 1974

Signed and dated 'jamil Naqsh/ 1974 Pakistan' lower right

Oil on canvas

106.5 x 76 cm

41 7/8 x 29 7/8 in

PROVENANCE

Indus Gallery, Karachi;

Thomas and Barbara Dimmock, UK, acquired in Pakistan in the late 1970s;

Thence by descent

LITERATURE

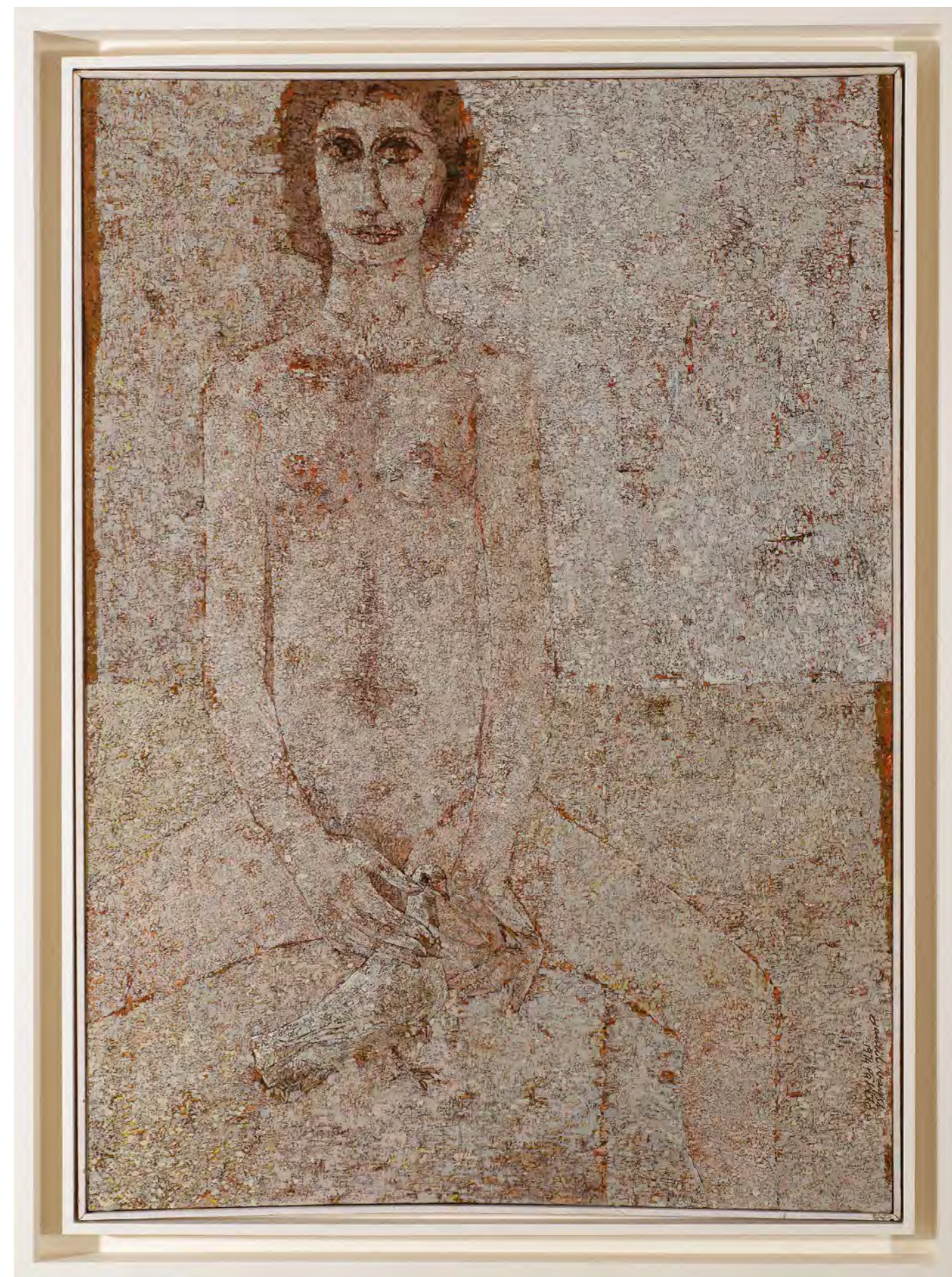
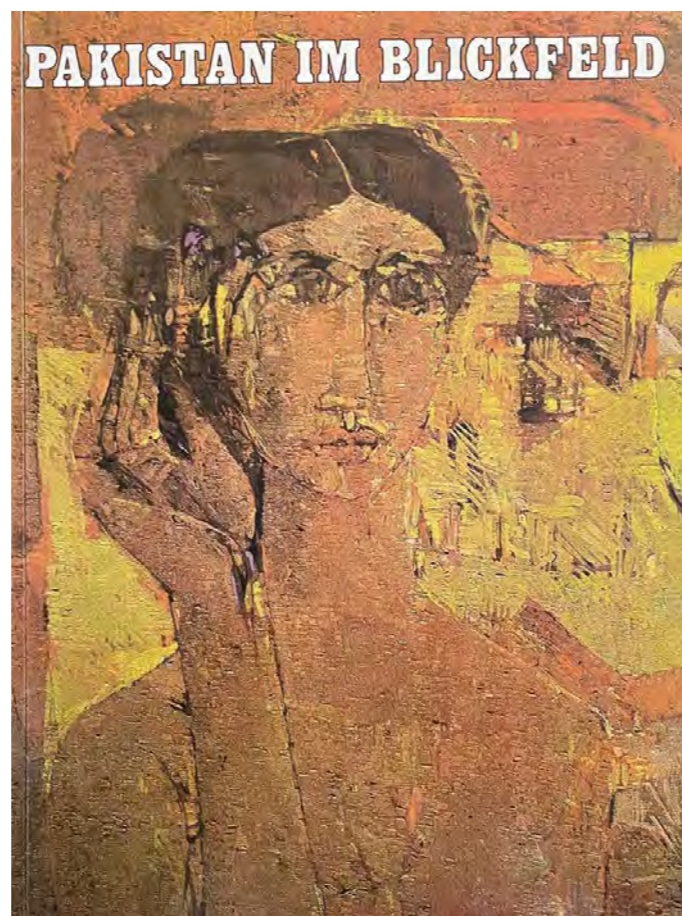
Pakistan Im Blickfeld, No. 3, 1976, p. 28 (illustrated in colour)

Thomas Dimmock worked as an engineer in Pakistan from the 1970s to the early 1980s. Whilst there, he and his wife acquired *Woman with Pigeon*, *The Ghee Maker* and *Still Life on Red* from Ali Imam's Indus Gallery, along with a handful of other works by Pakistani contemporary painters. They left Pakistan in the early 1980s, relocating to Holland, before settling in the UK.

In this painting, Naqsh has built the image using subtle artistic devices; the horizontal line bisecting the work gives depth and grounds the composition. The balance of the composition is extremely considered and harmonious. Here and there across the canvas the dark red/brown paint surface is allowed to come to the fore, lending the painting a sculptural quality, enhanced by the totemic nature of the seated figure, whose gaze stares just past the viewer's shoulder.

A critic once commented that Naqsh's works; *"are reminiscent of the care that a painter of miniatures on all details must use. Every blade of grass, every strand of hair in its place, and justified. Jamil Naqsh placed every grain of pigment as if it were precious metal or a precious stone."*

It has been noted that Ali Imam's work from the early 1970s was influential on Naqsh's paintings from the mid-1970s. The building of the image using small brushwork is something that the two artists have in common from this period.



27. AHMED PARVEZ

1926-1979

Untitled (Abstract Still Life), 1974

Acrylic on canvas
76 x 61 cm
29 7/8 x 24 1/8 in

PROVENANCE

Indus Gallery, Karachi;
Thomas and Barbara Dimmock, UK, acquired from the above in
the mid 1970s;
Thence by descent

EXHIBITIONS

Ahmed Parvez, Indus Gallery, Karachi, December 1974

LITERATURE

Morning News, Karachi, 15 December, 1974

Morning News, Karachi, 12 October, 1979



Ahmed Parvez with *Abstract Still Life*, photographed at the 1974 Indus Gallery exhibition in which this work was exhibited.

Abstract Still Life was part of a suite of paintings exhibited at Indus Gallery in 1974. The exhibition were described by the press at the time as 'a dazzling display of colours.'

"In the latest phase, new elements have crept in. The structures are floating, escaping the hold of the centre, rushing towards the outer rims of the frame are his Ys like the crutches of Dali? Are his escaping ribbons symptomatic of growth? Why is everything twisting, writhing and wriggling? Or, it is the fascination of flowing rhythm, unmanageable flow, grace of the movement or the sparks of fireworks?"

Hameed Zaman, 1974



28. ALI IMAM

1924-2002

The Ghee Maker, 1975

Signed and dated 'S A Imam 75' lower right

Oil on canvas

76 x 106 cm

29 7/8 x 41 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Indus Gallery, Karachi;

Thomas and Barbara Dimmock, UK, acquired in Pakistan in the mid 1970s;

Thence by descent

The Ghee Maker is typical of Imam's work from the early to mid 1970s, when his subjects were often the village women of the Punjab. In the late 1960s Imam started painting his famed 'white on white' paintings. The works produced in the immediate aftermath of this maintain the light hues and plastic nature of these earlier works, and Akbar Naqvi comments; *'the thick, loamy texture of these paintings influenced Jamil Naqsh in his early works.'*¹

This work was painted shortly after the establishment of Indus Gallery in Karachi in 1971. Imam started the gallery to support Pakistani artists; *"I decided to come back to Pakistan and be helpful to those who are more gifted and more talented than me, and to create a climate of work where I could be a sort of guidance and help..."*²

In this painting the figure has a strongly sculptural feel, a sense of dynamism and tension realised in the taut string.

¹ Akbar Naqvi, *Image and Identity Fifty Years of Painting and Sculpture in Pakistan*, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 288-289

² S. Ali Imam quoted in M. Husain, *Ali Imam: Man of the Arts*, Foundation for Museum of Modern Art, Karachi, 2003, p. 59





29. MAQBOOL FIDA HUSAIN

1915-2011

Bathers, 1979

Signed in Arabic and signed and dated 'Husain '79' (upper right); further titled, inscribed, signed and dated "'BATHERS" / 30"x40"' / oil on canvas / Maqbool Husain / 79 / Dubai' on the reverse

Oil on canvas

79.1 x 107.3 cm

31 1/8 x 42 1/4 in

PROVENANCE

Collection of Aziz Kurtha, acquired directly from the artist

LITERATURE

K. Bikram Singh, *Maqbool Fida Husain*, New Delhi, 2008, fig. 93, pg. 115 (illustrated in colour)

"On the ghats of Banaras bathers bathe in ancient lava, so thick are the encrustations of his impasto, so acute his sense of the timelessness of the ritual he saw performed on those hoary steps on the river's edge. Banaras Ghat, in its fusion of theme, forms, and composition is an example of the correspondence achieved by the artist between form and feeling."

R. Bartholomew and S. Kapur, *Husain*, New York, 1971, p. 4

In this work Husain engages with the classic subject of bathers. A common subject amongst European artists of the 19th and 20th centuries, such as Renoir, Matisse and Picasso, as well as Indian artists Ravi Varma and Hemen Mazumdar. Here, Husain reinterprets the subject in an Indian context, showing his demure nudes bathing in the Ganges, alongside an ascetic and an encircled elephant. *"In ancient Indian art and legend, the image of an elephant within a circle symbolizes the Buddha's birth. This image recurs, with formal variations and with altered connotation, in Khajuraho sculpture, and is now used by Husain as a metaphor of sexual attraction and fertility."* *ibid*, p. 46

The flat sections dividing the narrative space are reminiscent of classical Indian miniature paintings, creating a shallow perspective, across which the scene plays out. It is a scene which Husain is revisiting, having painted *Banaras Bathers* in 1963.



Page from the Late Shah Jahan Album: *Harem Night-Bathing Scene*, circa 1653

India, Mughal court, reign of Shah Jahan (1628-1658)
Courtesy Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, USA



Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Les Baigneuses*, 1918-19
Collection Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France



Maqbool Fida Husain, *Banaras Bathers*, 1963



30. ANWAR JALAL SHEMZA

1928-1985

Untitled (Triptych in B and D), 1979

Signed and dated 1979 in Urdu lower right and further signed and dated 1979 in English on reverse, which is further inscribed 'Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Walk beside me & just be my friend - Albert Camus'

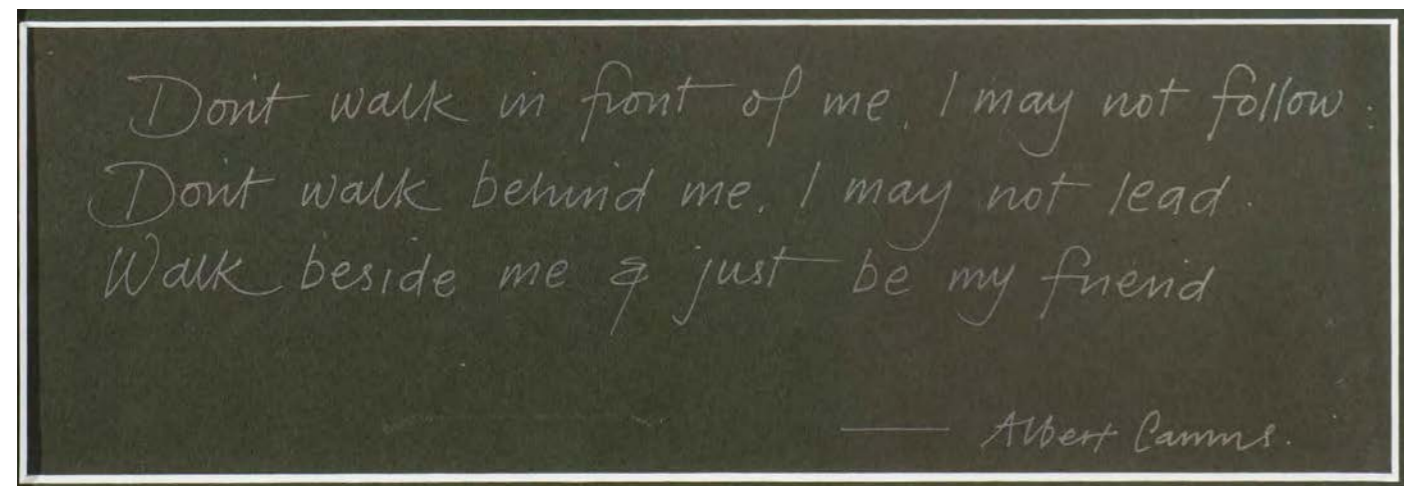
Each panel 14 x 33.4cm (5 1/2 x 13 3/20in)

Entire work 45.5 x 33.4cm (17 9/10 x 13 3/20in).

PROVENANCE

Gifted to the previous owner by the artist, by repute a wedding gift;

Private UK collection



Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow.
Don't walk behind me, I may not lead.
Walk beside me & just be my friend

— Albert Camus.



31. SUDHIR PATWARDHAN

b. 1949

Woman in Black Blouse, 1988

Signed, dated, titled and inscribed 'Sudhir Patwardhan/ woman in Black Blouse/ 1988/ oil', and with gallery label on the reverse

Oil on canvas

61 x 50.7cm

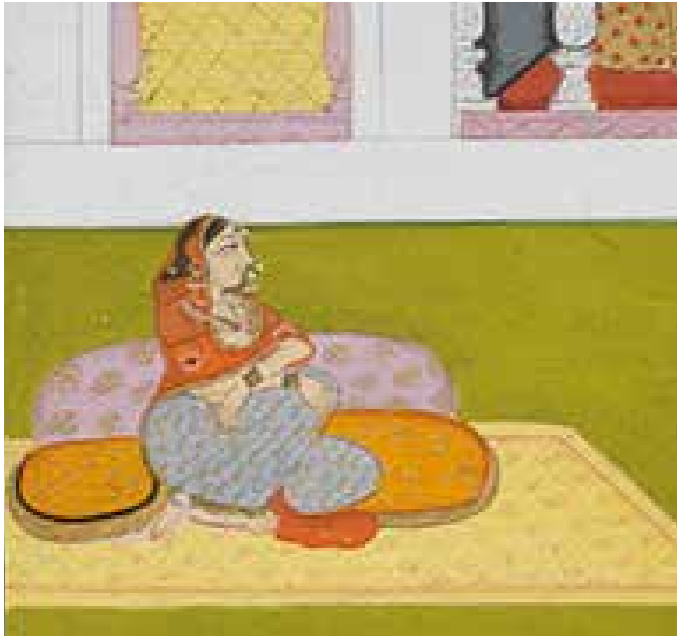
24 x 19 15/16 in

PROVENANCE

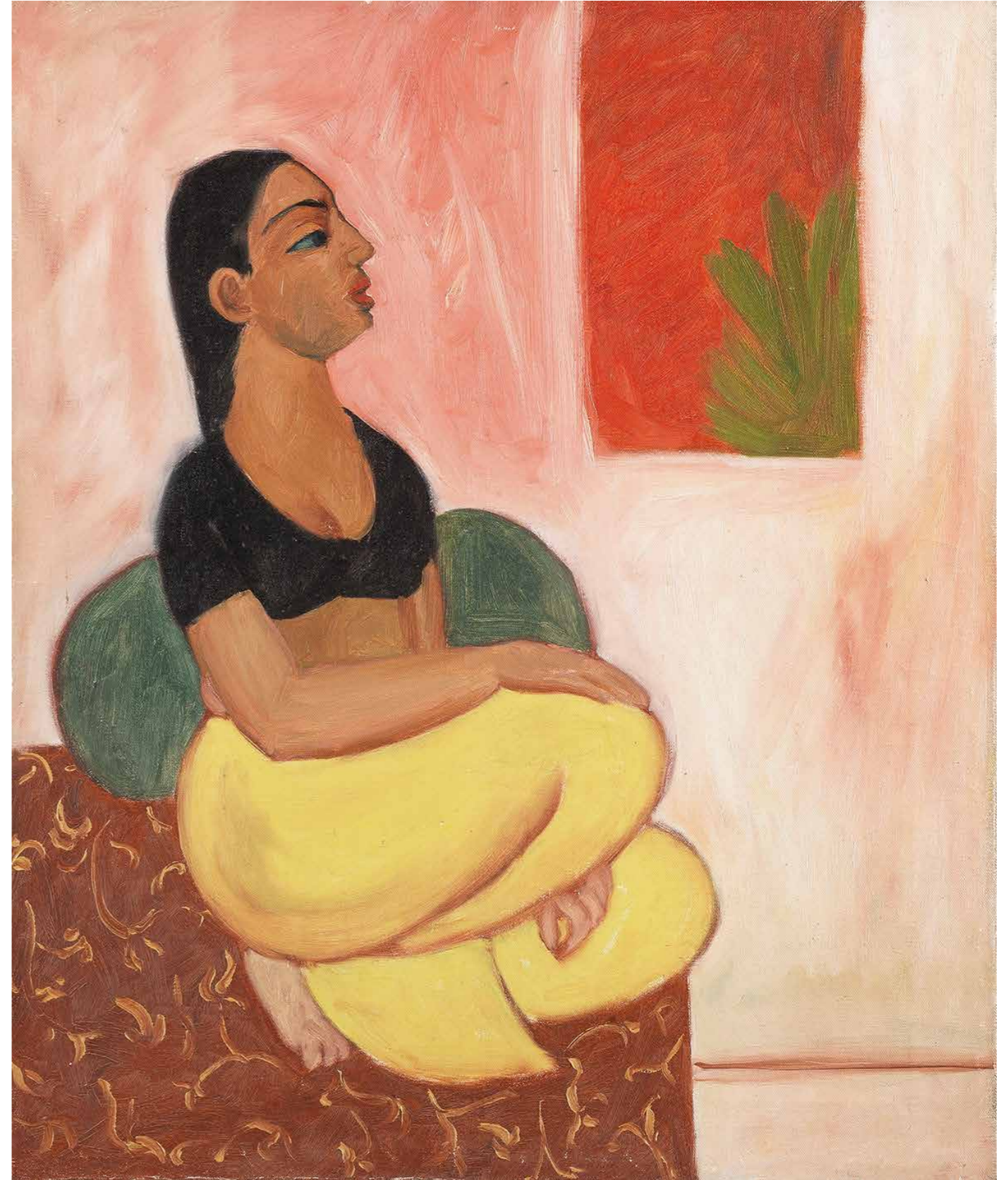
Private Indian Collection; acquired from Saakshi Art Gallery, Mumbai in 2018

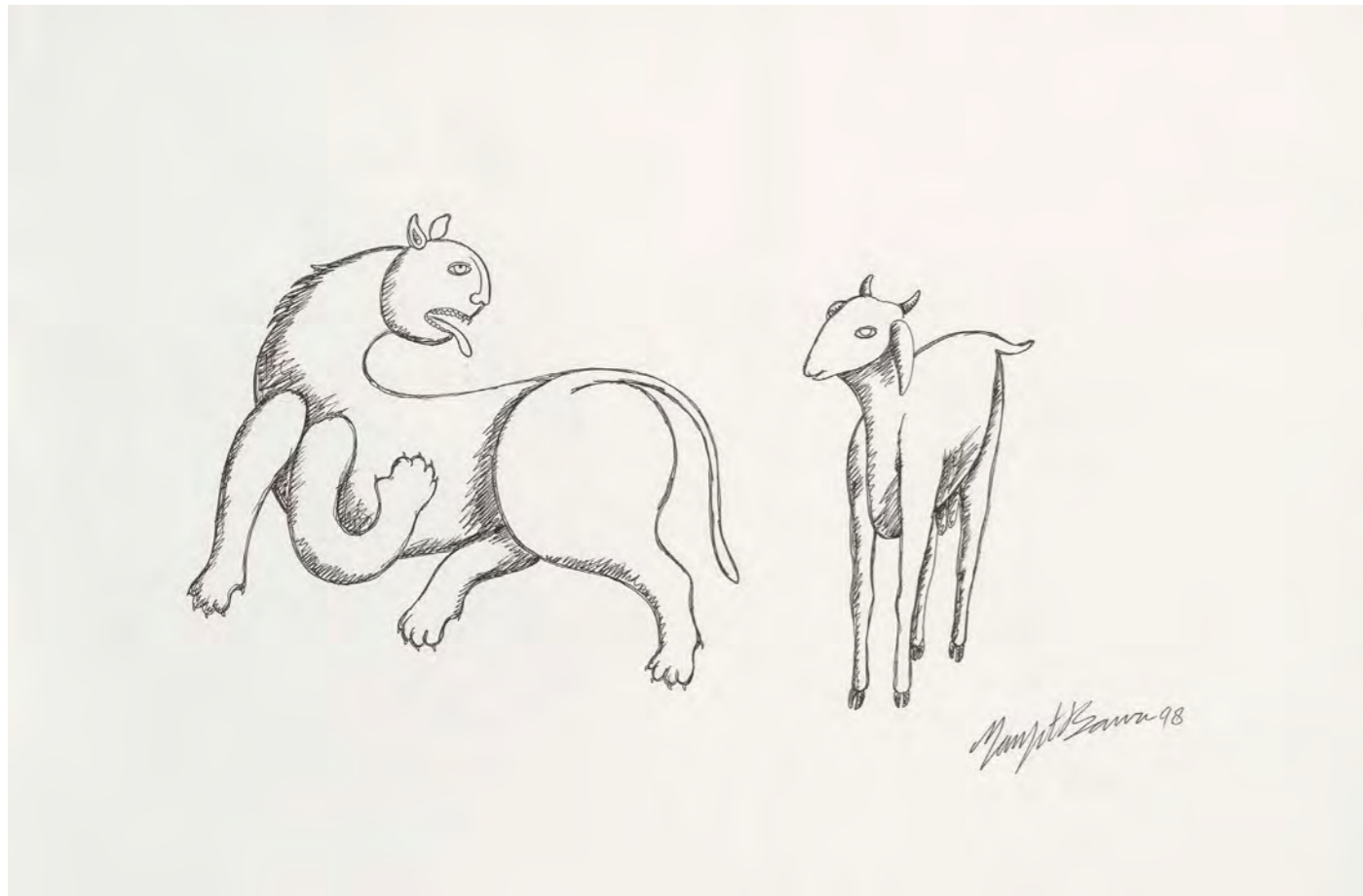
In this painting, Patwardhan is using the visual language of classical miniature painting: the seated maiden, wistfully gazing out of an open window at a red sunset. The set-up and narrative may be classical in style, but the image is contemporary. Of his work, the Artist comments:

"The feeling of being an intruder now catches up with me and pulls me away from the image. I am probably fated to oscillate thus between proximity and distance. There are periods when I am neither here nor there. It is in this in-between space that figures closest to my heart take shape. Figures neither near nor far... like the distance between me and the stranger in the street or in the cafe. In such figures, close enough to be sensuously full-bodied and disquieting, but distanced through the act of observation and depiction, are compounded the pleasures and problems of both extremes. The character and social background of these figures are established, and they take on a sociological role but it could as well be an autobiographical one."



Detail from a Bihari Sat Sai series miniature, Datia, circa 1750





32. MANJIT BAWA

1941 - 2008

Untitled (Lion and Goat), 1998

Signed and dated 'Manjit Bawa 98' lower right

Pen and ink on paper

38.1 x 55.9 cm

15 x 22 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, India

33. MANJIT BAWA

1941 - 2008

Untitled (Figure battling Eagle), 1999

Signed and dated 'Manjit Bawa 98' lower right

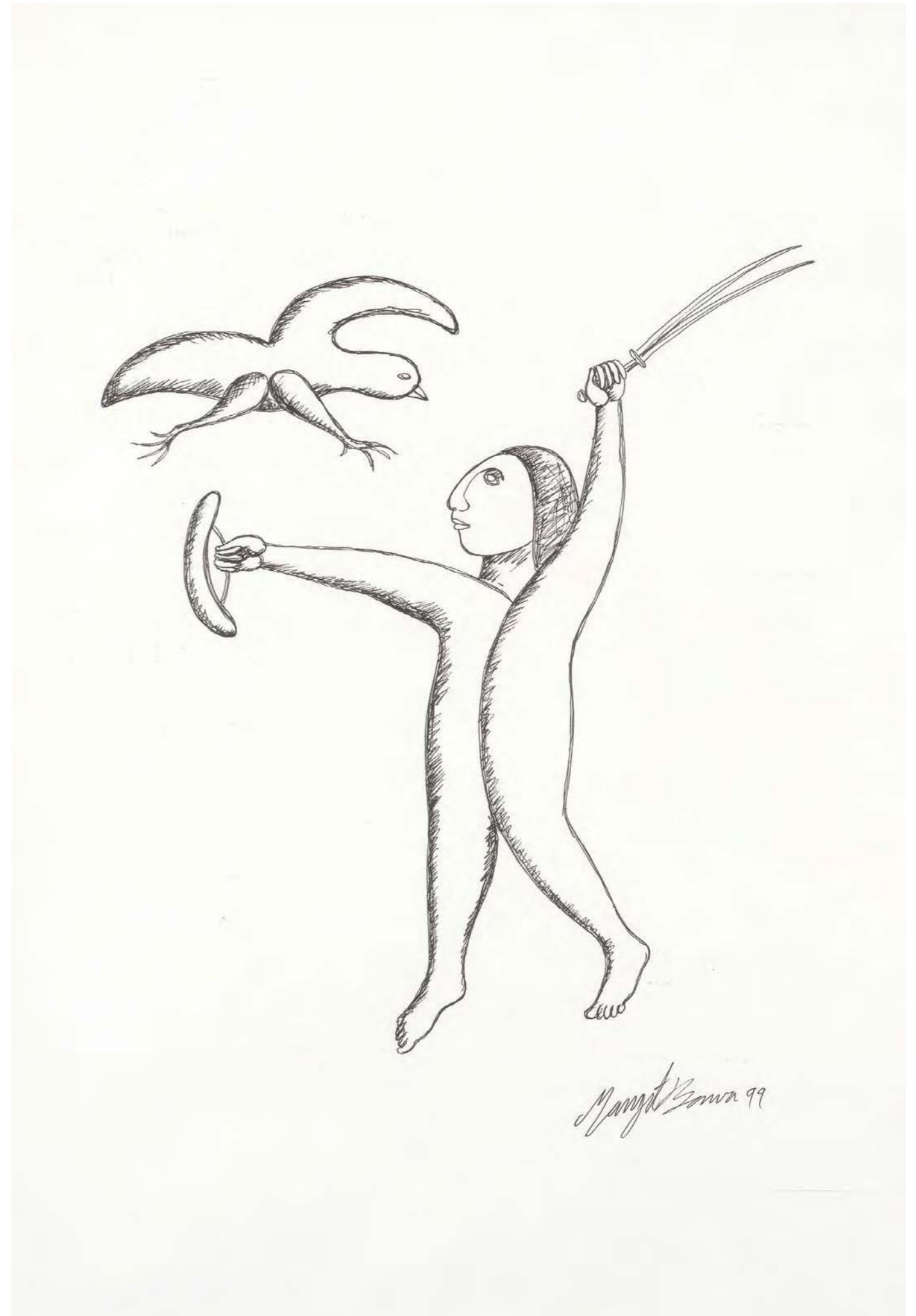
Pen and ink on paper

55.9 x 38.1 cm

22 x 15 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, India



34. MAQBOOL FIDA HUSAIN

1915-2011

Untitled (Horse), 1990

Signed 'Husain' upper left

Ink wash on paper

107 x 71.5cm

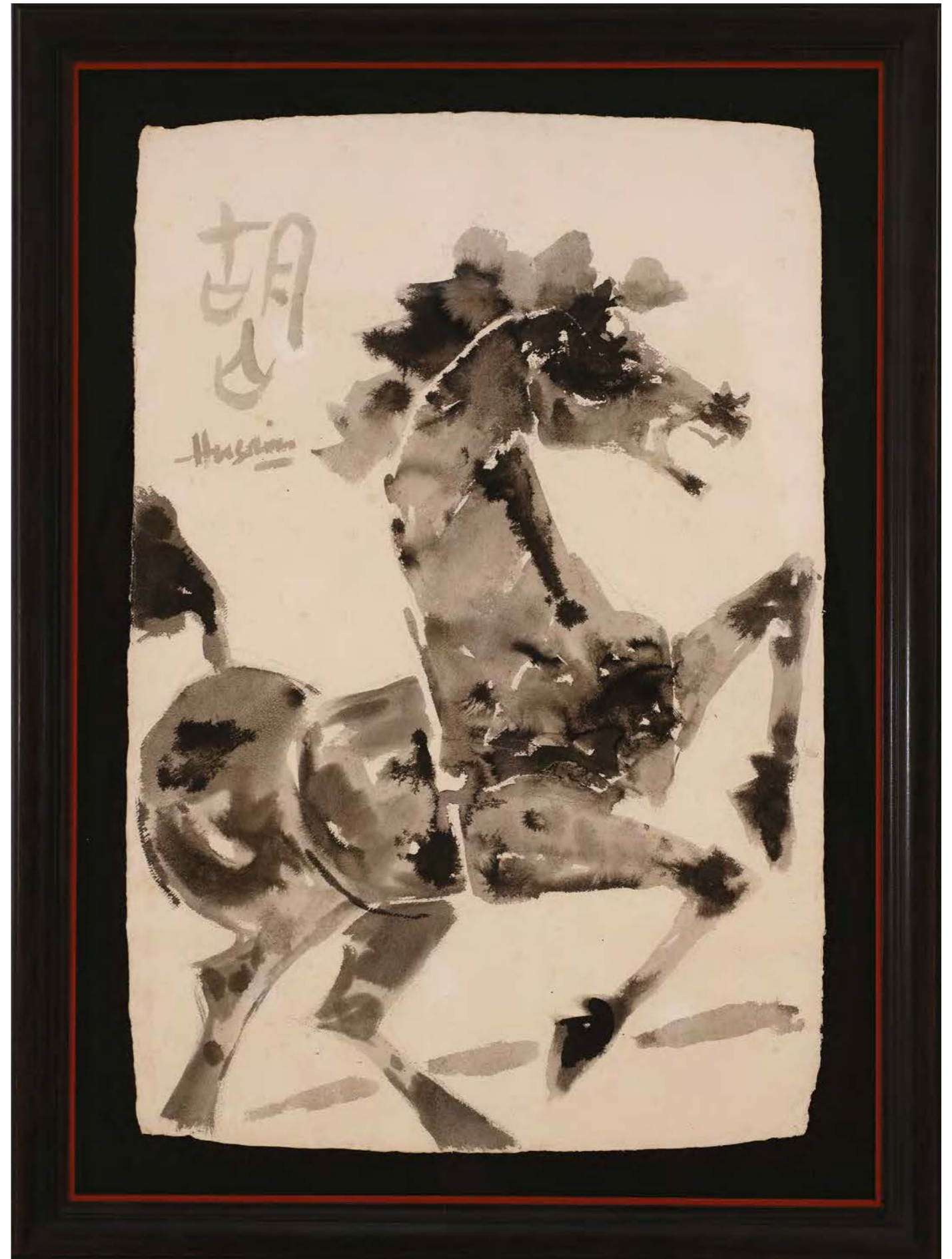
42 1/8 x 28 1/8 in

PROVENANCE

Southeast Asian & 20th Century Indian Pictures, Christie's, Hong Kong,

6 July 2003, lot 82;

Private collection, Singapore, acquired from the above



35. MAQBOOL FIDA HUSAIN

1915-2011

Karbala Horse, 1991

Signed and dated 'Husain 91' lower right

Oil on canvas

116.8 x 61 cm

46 x 24 in

PROVENANCE

Vadehra Gallery, New Delhi;

Private Indian collection;

Grosvenor Gallery, London;

Private collection



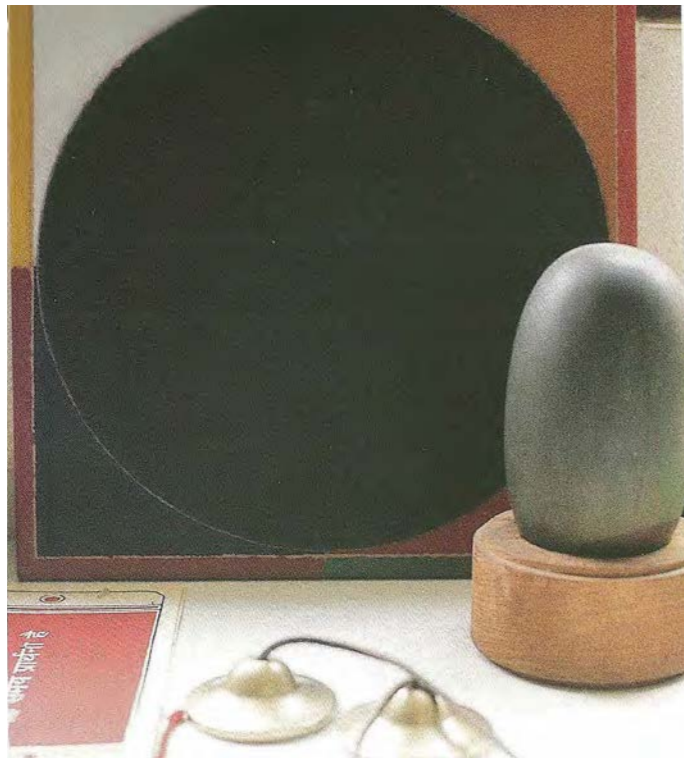


Image from Raza's studio, Gorbio, France



36. SAYED HAIDER RAZA

1922-2016

Form, 2001

Signed twice, dated and inscribed 'RAZA/ 2001/ FORM' and titled in Devnagari on the reverse

Acrylic on canvas

59.1 x 30 cm

23.25 x 11.75 in

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist, Paris;

Private Collection, Mumbai, India

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming *SH RAZA, Catalogue Raisonné, (1990 - 2016)* by Anne Macklin on behalf of The Raza Foundation, New Delhi.



37. SAYED HAIDER RAZA

1922-2016

***Linga*, 2003**

Acrylic on board

Signed and dated 'RAZA '03' lower centre, signed twice, dated and inscribed 'RAZA/ 2003/ "LINGA"' on the reverse

30 x 24 cm

11 3/4 x 9 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Mumbai, India

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming *SH RAZA, Catalogue Raisonné, (1990 - 2016)* by Anne Macklin on behalf of The Raza Foundation, New Delhi.





Grosvenor Gallery

EXHIBITION

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9 June – 1 July 2022

Grosvenor Gallery, London

Credits

Text

Conor Macklin & Charles Moore

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