

**SIX INDIAN PAINTERS**



**BHAGWAT, GAJANAN D.  
KHANNA, BALRAJ K.  
MALI, YASHWANT  
RAO, S. V. RAMA  
RIBEIRO, LANCELOT  
WAGH, IBRAHIM**

**Grosvenor  
Gallery**



**The Roots of the Indian Artists' Collectives**

11 July - 9 August 2019

Cover: Catalogue for 'Six Indian Painters', 1964

Overleaf: Lancelot Ribeiro, *Untitled*, c.1978

Back cover: Indian Artists UK catalogue. Text by Balraj Khanna

In organising this exhibition we have come across the work of artists we've not encountered before, many of whom did not have the exposure their work deserved at the time. Their experiences chime with those of many foreign artists from that period. Their story is a common one; of aesthetic unappreciation and discrimination, which is documented in Ibrahim Wagh's essays and letters on the treatment of black artists in Britain.

This exhibition is unfortunately missing works by some of the artists due to the difficulties of tracking them down, however the amount of archive material we have had access to for the show is quite remarkable. There is certainly more research to be done on these artists and the period as a whole, which I'm sure will happen in time.

We would like to thank the contributing artists; Yashwant Mali, who has supported the gallery for many years, and whose archive has been such a rich source for photographs and catalogues – some of which are likely the only copies in existence. Our visits to Prafulla Mohanti's studio are always enlightening, and seeing his work displayed throughout his home is to be overwhelmed by colour. Ibrahim Wagh's wife Anna is someone I only met recently, however her willingness to collaborate and lend us Ibrahim's precious archive is very much appreciated. And of course thanks to Marsha Ribeiro, for her fascinating essay on the various collectives and their members, and her continued efforts to document the era.

Charles Moore, June 2019



## **Roots of the Indian Artists' Collectives**

### **In their voices**

In 1963, four painters from Bombay (now Mumbai) met to form the Indian Painters Collective (IPC), an informal body of artists which, they hoped, would:

*“represent a wide field of young Indian painters ... that would give a positive idea of contemporary painting in India today.”*

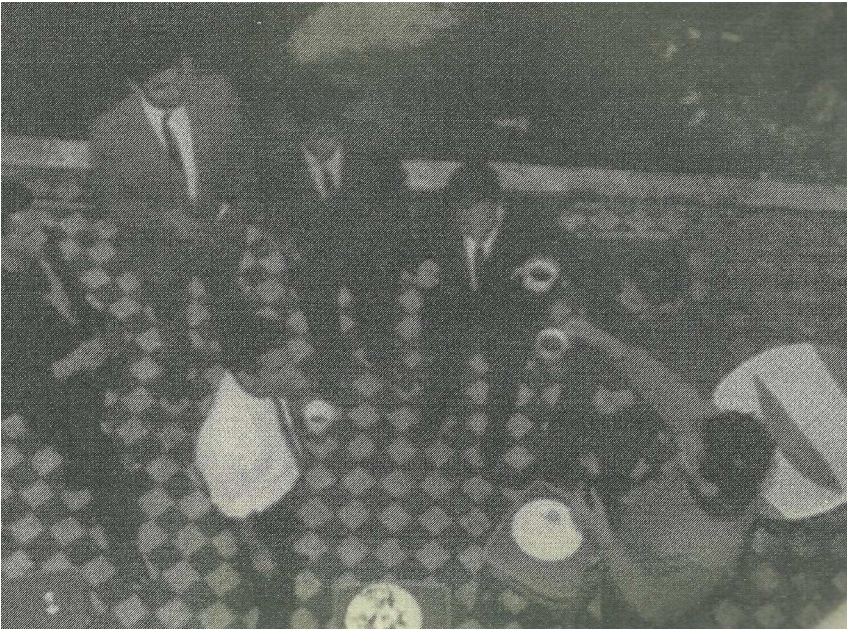
It would be the first such body of its kind outside of India and one to stage the first group showing of Indian artists in the country. Although a host of South Asian events were occurring across Britain at this time, these painters advocated for active involvement rather than simple representation, attracting a number of influential partnerships to their cause. Despite occasional lapses in activity and the fluidity of its painter-members, the IPC would survive - ever-defiant - for well over 25 years, evolving into the Indian Artists UK (IAUK).

### **Old friends create the Indian Painters Collective (UK), 1963**

A 1964 circular announced the formal presence of the IPC. It was the product of a March 1964 meeting between painters Gajanan Bhagwat, Yashwant Mali, Lancelot Ribeiro and Ibrahim Wagh but the rumblings of what would soon develop into a transformative movement lay in their individual struggles to get a foot into the established art scene. Wagh's experiences were telling:

*“... the Brook Street Gallery in Bond Street showed interest ... but when Ibrahim followed up the idea of a show he was told it was not possible. The owner suggested that if he had fellow Indian artists they should form a group.”*

Former members of the Bombay Art Society, the lives of these four had intermingled back in the artistic circles of Bombay. Their journeys to Britain and experience of the London art scene, cemented their bond.



The first meeting of the Indian Painters Collective, 1963 (I. Wagh archive)

Mali explained:

*“[We] realised that we had to fight to promote ourselves and that’s why we founded the group, some kind of force ... People never thought Indian artists could be contemporary. That was a shock.”*

Soon they were joined by Balraj Khanna and S.V Rama Rao. Khanna too recalled:

*“...a first-time-ever invitation to take his work to a West End gallery, an appointment “forgotten all about” by the man in charge on his arrival and the disillusioned trudge back to Golders Green.”*

(From David Buckman’s biography on Ribeiro)

L.B Chavan had joined but soon dropped out while Gulam Mohammed Sheikh, who had attended the March meeting, was unable to join as he was returning to India.

With an average age of 27, this fervent and defiant group of six came from across the subcontinent and represented a broad expanse of Indian painting. All had studied in prestigious art schools and won recognition - and patrons - back in India. Some were also pursuing literary or dramatic arts careers before painting took hold. They had each moved to Britain over the previous two decades, living and working in bedsits-cum-studios, while working odd jobs to overcome their financial straits.

The IPC's circular was optimistic in tone, stating a collective goal to stage frequent exhibitions "under their own auspices" in the UK or the Continent and as a group or on behalf of its members. Its base was at 21 Corrington Road in North London's Golders Green, where Bhagwat and Mali were living. An annual membership fee of £1 was paid into a 'Group fund' plus an 'optional' 10% should any sales result from collective activities. Other young Indian painters joining would be encouraged to "*strengthen the group and make it progressive in its work.*"



The first meeting of the Indian Painters Collective, 1963 (Wagh archive)  
L-R: Lancelot Ribeiro, Balraj Khanna, S.V. Rama Rao, Gajanan Bhagwat,  
Ibrahim Wagh, Yashwant Mali

C I R C U L A R

At a meeting on 8th March, 1964 where M/s. Gajanan Baghwat, Yeshwant Mali, Lancelot Ribeiro and Ibrahim Wagh were present, it was suggested that a few young Indian painters get together and form a group in London. The suggestion was immediately accepted and agreed upon. These were the following points arrived at:-

- (1) The group would represent a wide field of young Indian painters and help present their work in a manner that would give a positive idea of contemporary painting in India today.
- (2) As a group there would be more inter-activity and freer communication with each other than is otherwise possible.
- (3) That the group will have as its founder members M/s. Baghwat, Mali, Ribeiro and Wagh.
- (4) That the group should be called Indian Painters Collective and have its address at 21, Corringham Road, Golders Green, London, N.W.11.
- (5) That the group invite to its successive meetings other young Indian painters as prospective members.
- (6) That each member will subscribe £1. per annum to the Group fund and 10% on the sale of any painting that is sold through the active participation of the Group. The latter mentioned charge could be optional in certain cases.
- (7) That the Group will have its own exhibitions at regular intervals and also submit its members' work for other exhibitions etc.

It would be genuinely appreciated if each and every member makes an effort to strengthen the group and make it progressive in its work to present contemporary Indian painting today.

These are the members at present:

Gajanan Baghwat, Maharashtra  
Yeshwant Mali, Maharashtra  
Lancelot Ribeiro, Goa  
L.B. Chavan, Maharashtra  
B. Khanna, Delhi  
S.V. Rama Rao, Andhra Pradesh  
Ibrahim Wagh, Bombay.

Above: The IPC circular, March 1964 (L. Ribeiro archive)

Opposite: Catalogue details 'Six Indian Painters' (Y. Mali archive)

Ambassador Salman Haidar (former Indian Foreign Secretary), then a junior official in the “desultory” culture section of the Indian High Commission, recalled: “... a group of young men burst in, with Lance in the lead, and told me I had to organize an exhibition of their work at India House... seeking opportunity not concessions. They exemplified the freshly awakened pride of the new nation and India House was rapidly infused by their enthusiasm.”

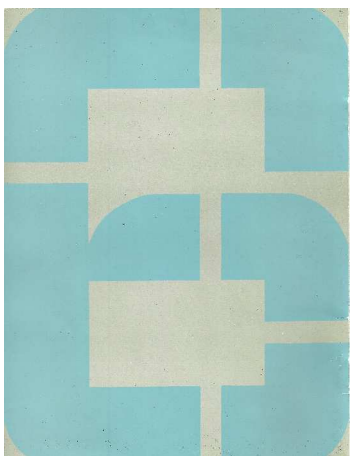
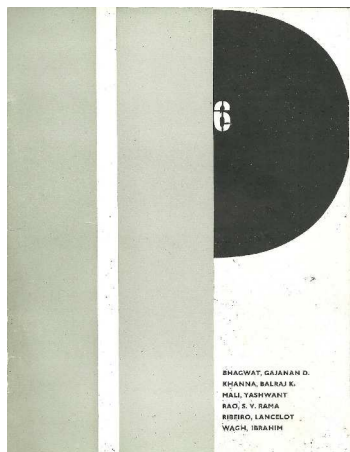


## India House hosts 'Six Indian Painters', 1964

The IPC's first coup was the Six Indian Painters exhibition in the wood-panelled offices of India House in Aldwych (9 – 28 November, 1964).

Haidar explained:

*"... everything for the exhibition had to be done by the artists themselves ... they laboured hard to make panels to hang the paintings, arranged lights scrounged from the inner depths of India House, spruced up the exhibition hall, printed a catalogue, drew in the media, played host to the many guests, and produced a fine exhibition of modern Indian art where nobody had ever thought of having one."*



### SIX INDIAN PAINTERS

The artists exhibiting here are also the founder members of "The Indian Painters Collective".

The group consists of Indian artists living and working in London. It has been formed with the intention of holding frequent exhibitions under their own auspices and also to participate in other exhibitions here and on the Continent. Their work represents a cross section of Indian painting today. The young and talented members of this group have won a good deal of acclaim in India and some are also known abroad.

### THE TAGORE INDIA CENTRE

*Patron:*

The Rt. Hon. Harold Macmillan

*President:*

H.E. the High Commissioner for India  
Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta

The Tagore India Centre—which has been incorporated as a Company limited by guarantee, under the Companies Act—is designed to promote knowledge and appreciation of the cultural life of India today and to contribute, as far as possible from abroad, to its growth. It is hoped that the Centre will be able, among other activities, to found and maintain scholarships and lectureships at British universities, and also to give practical help to Indian artists, writers, teachers and others. It may well be that the Centre, housed in its own premises, will become a focal point of expanding cultural relations between the peoples of Britain and India.

*Opening at India House on Monday 9th November  
by Miss Jennie Lee.*

*The Exhibition will remain open until November  
28th.*

*Open Daily 12 noon to 6.30 p.m.*

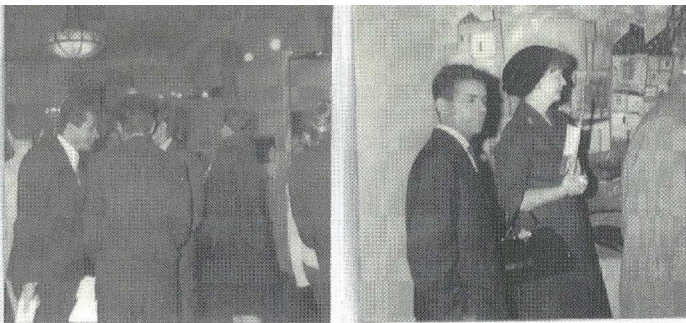
*Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

George Butcher, art critic for The Guardian, had gradually got to know some of the painters personally and – as Khanna explained - advised that their “best bet was the Indian High Commission and ... not to waste your time running around unnecessarily.”

The event was sponsored by the newly-established Tagore India Centre which had been set up to promote Indo-British cultural relations.

Dr Jivraj N Mehta, the Indian High Commissioner and President of the Tagore India Centre and Jennie Lee, then Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Public Buildings and Works (Britain’s first Arts Minister) opened proceedings. Khanna explained it as:

*“... the first time a group of Indian artists were exhibiting in this country... We managed to persuade someone of considerable gravitas to open the event. And I remember, she said “These works could only be painted by Indian artists...” I don’t know if that was true or not but I think she was trying to be polite and pleasant.”*



Above: Images from the preview of 'Six Indian Painters' (Wagh archive)

Opposite: A review of the exhibition (Ribeiro archive)

# THE ARTS

## PAINTING

### Six Indian Artists in Search of a Subject

"I hope before long the cultural attachés at all diplomatic missions would play an increasingly important part and I do not mind if defence attaches lost importance", declared Miss Jennie Lee, Parliamentary Secretary of Public Building and Works, opening an exhibition of the Indian Painters' Collective at India House, London. The exhibition, sponsored by the Tagore India Centre, offers a representative display of the work of six Indian artists all of them young, with ages ranging from 25 to 31, and working in London. Whether Miss Lee's utopian hope comes true or not in our life time, it is certainly a matter for gratification that the Indian High Commission in recent years has begun to interest itself increasingly in cultural activities — and, in particular, in co-operating with voluntary organisations, like the Tagore India Centre, which are concerned with promoting Indo-British cultural understanding.

All this is to the good. But, ultimately, diplomacy is not the end of art: the end of art is communication of experience at its most significant

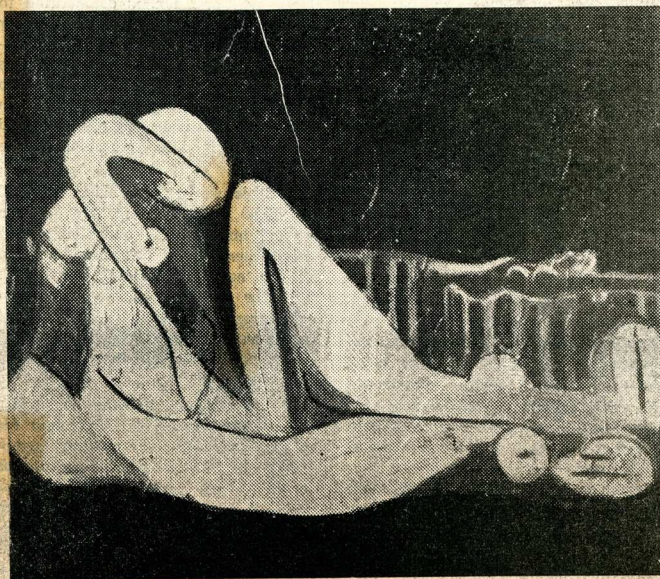


Jennie Lee with the High Commissioner Jivraj Mehta look at "Landscape at Noon" by Lancelot Ribeiro

and in a language, whether of words or images, which is so compelling that it cannot be denied attention. Does the work of the six Indian artists exhibited at India House serve that end? It is important for the old and middle-aged critics to avoid discouraging young artists. But it is also important to be honest. So one is confronted with an agonising dilemma: how to be honest and yet not discouraging?

**Echoes:** For the truth is that most of the paintings or artefacts represented in this exhibition do not quite come up to the level where they might be considered as the proper subject of criticism. These young artists have no doubt looked at a great many experiments that are going on around them; they obviously feel that they have something to say in visual terms; some of them are also convinced that they can say it. But the final effort of communicating this conviction to the beholder seems still beyond them. This is as true of Gajanan Bhagwat's montage works which evoke echoes of Rauschenberg as of the evolving zoomorphic forms and chromatic exercises of Rama Rao; the engaging preoccupation of Balraj Khanna with the sensual potential of the female form which recalls Matisse as of the geometricism of Ibrahim Wagh.

This leaves out two of the six artists represented at the exhibition—Yashwant Mali and Lancelot Ribeiro. Mali is baffling. He may well prove to be the most gifted of the group—or, again, he may not. There is something of the extreme economy of the Chinese art in his work—something, too, of its approach to music and understatement. But one may be wholly wrong. Ribeiro, on the other hand, does not baffle. His work recalls that of Souza. Not surprisingly. For they have a common background—and perhaps more than a background in common. Both are Goans. But that is only very small part of the story. Both see the world somewhat



Painting by Balraj Khanna

## **Getting into the 1965 Commonwealth Arts Festival...almost**

Following the success of India House, an approach was made by the IPC for inclusion in the three-week Commonwealth Arts Festival which would showcase artists from across the former British Empire. A ‘Contemporary Art from India’ exhibition was to be curated by George Butcher who had pushed the group towards India House, but while the organisers replied that they “were naturally interested to know of the work of your group”, the approach was “rather late for us to consider you for inclusion within the Festival frame-work... by now the plans for his section may already be complete.”

A sympathetic suggestion that “one other possibility exists for liaison with the Festival” was offered but this was contingent on there being an exhibition in a London gallery under their own resources, if details were received within the next few days.

## **The Mandeer Gallery at the Mandeer Restaurant opens, 1974**

Over 1974-78, Mali and Suresh Vedak operated the Mandeer Gallery on Hanway Place. Although separate to IPC activities, it had a similar purpose: to promote contemporary artists in the UK, with the support of owner and friend Ramesh Patel. Its inaugural ‘Exhibition of Paintings’ show (9 May – 24 June, 1974) comprised works from collective members: Khanna, Mali, Ribeiro, Vedak, Wagh and Zakir. The artists, Mali revealed, put in the hard graft to organise every aspect of what would be a well-attended event, with Ravi Shankar and The Beatles among the guests.





Opposite: Mandeer Gallery exhibition catalogue, 1974 (Y. Mali archive)

Top: Ibrahim Wagh, Yashwant Mali, Suresh Vedak, R. Patel, Indian High Commissioner Mr Goray

Middle: Dinner at Mandeer Gallery, 1974 (both Wagh archive)

Bottom: Zakir, Vedak, Chandra, Dave, Wagh and Ribeiro (Mali archive)

## IPC becomes ‘Indian Artists United Kingdom’ (IAUK), 1978

By the seventies, the group had dwindled down to just four artists (Khanna, Mali, Ribeiro and Wagh). Newly-named as Indian Artists UK (IAUK), it now started to resemble an influential association of professional artists, revitalising the IPC and still “the only organization of its kind outside India.”

Its 1977 manifesto announced it was “non-profitmaking and apolitical ...[and] democratic”. It sought greater access into public collections and to grant funding and offered tiered membership. Full members (subscribing at £20 per annum) were to be professional artists of Indian origin, living and working in the UK with one successful solo exhibition in tow. They would be vetted by simple majority voting. Associate membership was for art students ‘and others’ who paid £5 annually, while prospective patrons would see their fee waived and a promised endorsement on all IAUK activities.

A touch of militancy had, however, crept into the language, reflecting that the ‘individual struggle’ had been a common one. Each member, had: “... *his own tale to tell having come up against closed shop tactics, and a hard wall of chauvinistic zeal.*”



Ibrahim Wagh, Yashwant Mali, Balraj Khanna, Lancelot Ribeiro, c.1977 (Mali archive)

The group held a series of meetings throughout 1977 following approaches to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Arts Council. Wagh's memoirs revealed: "... *that thirteen years later the whole concept of the immigrant in this country had changed. The political & socio-cultural situation necessitated a constructive and meaningful discussion [whereby] Indian artists in the years to come, given the opportunities, could play a significant role.*"

They met Naseem Khan from the Minorities' Arts Advisory Service (MAAS) who provided them with suggested gallery leads. The CRE and MAAS, Wagh explained, were "a great asset to the group". (MAAS would arrange the 1979 multicultural 'Rainbow Art Group' exhibition in Birmingham involving IAUK members).

The slimmed-down collective would soon secure a second exhibition at India House in 1978, with 'Four Leading Indian Artists'. The Deputy High Commissioner, Mr Nazareth and the Indian High Commissioner, Mr Goray, would prove increasingly supportive in years ahead. Wagh explained that the aim was also broader in vision:

*"... to promote Indian artists and to encourage visiting Indian artists to exhibit in the High Commission."*



Above: 'Four leading Indian Artists', India House, 1978 (Wagh/Ribeiro archive)

Overleaf: IAUK meeting minutes, November 1978 (Wagh archive)



# INDIAN ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

an association of Indian Artists living & working in United Kingdom

Secretary 18 Stuart Avenue West Hendon London NW9 7AT Tel: 01-202 9368

IAC Meeting 30 November 1978

While extending a warm welcome to our new members - AVINASH CHANDRA, PRAFULL DAVE, PROFULLA MOHANTI, SURESH VEDAK and ZAKIR - we take this opportunity to acquaint them briefly of the IAC's history, and its aims and objectives.

The IAC is a non-political organisation of professional artists of Indian origin who have lived and worked in the UK for the last several years. It is a revived version of an earlier body - The Indian Painters Collective, UK, 1964 - and this revival is based more on practical reasons than aesthetic or ideological. They are based on a commonly shared sense of frustration that continuously hindered its members' efforts during their individual struggle against the barriers that exist in this truculently chauvinistic art world here. We have come to believe that if the issues concerning us are tackled collectively, we have a better chance of overcoming them and thus we stand a better chance of making a positive contribution to the arts in this country.

Among the IAC's main aims are the recognition of its members' work on a par with their British contemporaries' by the powers that be, and the fulfillment of their rights to the amenities and facilities available to their indigenous counterparts as we all live in the same democratic society. The IAC would like to assist and promote Indian artists living in the UK and help those visiting from India. And through talks and discussions etc, it would like to involve the general public here in creating a greater awareness of the Indian arts and culture. We are the only body of its kind in Britain or anywhere outside India for that matter.

TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE HAVE A PLACE OF OUR OWN AND AT LONG LAST THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON HAS OFFERED US A BASE IN ITS BUILDINGS IN SOUTH AUDLEY STREET MAYFAIR.

To date the IAC has had cordial and functional relations with various public bodies, viz., the Arts Council, the GLAA, the I.C.A., the C.R. the Gulbenien Foundation, the Whitechapel Gallery etc., etc.

We have also had a productive relationship with the Indian High Commission in London whose encouragement has been invaluable.

Cont.....2





# INDIAN ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

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2

IAC Meeting 30 November 1978

While it is our intention to broaden our aims and enlarge our activities, selection of new members is strictly controlled by a unanimously agreed criterion that they will be professional artists dedicated to their work and to the group. The IAC functions along strict democratic lines in matters of policy and decisions.

### Founder Members

Balraj Khanna  
Yeshwant Mali  
Lancelot Ribeiro  
Ibrahim Wagh

Balraj Khanna

L. Ribeiro

### New Members

Avinash Chandra  
Prafull Dave  
Prafulla Mohanti  
Suresh Vedak  
Zakir

Prafull Dave  
Prafulla Mohanti

### Waiting Members

Avtarjeet Dhanjjal  
Dutta  
Vasant

Avinash Chandra

Wagh

Suresh Vedak

Dutta

Vasant

In 1978, IAUK expanded to nine members, with Avinash Chandra, Prafull Davé, Prafulla Mohanti, Suresh Vedak and Mohammed Zakir joining. It now had a glossy corporate pack with biographies of its painter-members and an introduction explaining its roots lay in the “earlier body” of the IPC. Its goal, as before, was rooted in the conviction that, their chances of success were better, if united.

Wagh’s archive revealed that they had secured funding from the Indian High Commission and the CRE. The IAUK soon established itself in what would become the Nehru Centre at 8 South Audley Street where exhibitions, talks and discussions could take place. Robert Skelton, then Keeper of the V&A’s Indian Department, first met the group at Maria Souza’s (FN Souza’s first wife) Gallery 38 on Homer Street, which was their base but: “...*their ‘so-to-speak’ office ... was in the basement of what is now the Nehru Centre... where the loos are now.*”

Wagh’s memoirs noted a cocktail party in May 1979 at the residence of the High Commissioner, Mr Goray, to promote IAUK in what proved to be a lavish evening. Khanna recalled: “*It was a very grand house. Now in Kensington Palace Gardens. And we all had one painting each. The whole lot of London came ... For us it was a great party. Some galleries were invited and at least three of them turned up.*”

By the end of the decade, Khanna, Chandra and Davé would leave and there were signs of differences emerging within the ranks. In a 1973 interview, Ribeiro explained: “*Partly it broke up because some of the artists went back to teaching or commercial jobs. Partly it was all kinds of petty niggling things which developed as they always seem to develop with Indian groups.*”

Khanna concurred: “*When you get Indian groups together, it’s like Partition all over again.*”



## IAUK's 'Indian Month' at Burgh House & Hampstead Museum

In 1980, the first exhibition to be mounted by the collective - now known as IAUK - was at the Burgh House & Hampstead Museum (1 – 24 February, 1980). India Weekly enthused that the:

*“stunningly beautiful paintings ... the contrast and variety of styles represented ... is as pleasant as it is amazing.”*

The IAUK Group had now acquired a new patron too, Mr Swarj Paul (the Labour peer and steel magnate, Lord Paul). Mali, Mohanti, Vedak, Wagh and Zakir exhibited 5-6 evocatively-titled paintings each, with Ribeiro, the exception, exhibiting only one, perhaps a reflection of his impending departure.



Intended to be more than just an exhibition of paintings, 'Indian Month' comprised a celebration of art, poetry, music and a 'Taste and Learn' Indian food afternoon. Their old V&A contact, Robert Skelton, spoke on Indian culture alongside the Royal College of Art's Philip Rawson (a founder curator of Durham's Gulbenkian Museum of Oriental Art) who, as Ribeiro described, was behind several television programmes:

*“... dealing with the whole of the Eastern Hemisphere ... and the one that's on our boxes currently is the Spirit of Asia.”*



Opposite: Burgh House opening reception (Wagh archive)

Top: Anna Wagh/ IAUK poster for the Burgh House exhibition (Mali archive)

Bottom: Vedak, Zakir, Wagh, Mali outside Burgh House (Ribeiro archive)

The Indian High Commissioner, Dr I. P. Singh and CRE opened proceedings and provided financial support. BBC Asia provided invaluable coverage although, Ribeiro's speech, welcoming guests, would reveal that the obstacles that had spurred the IPC into being were still current in a system "*hell bent on ignoring them.*"

### **IAUK 'Between Two Cultures' at the Barbican, 1982**

The IAUK saw its members come and go and, despite a hiatus in activity, it would survive internal upheavals. IAUK would go on to secure the 1982 'Between Two Cultures' exhibition at the Barbican - as part of the Festival of India. It would now feature 17 artists - old, new and returning collective members. Wagh and Mali, two of the original IPC founders, had stayed the course.



Installation view 'Between Two Cultures' The Barbican Centre, London (Mali archive)

## **Paving the way forward**

The Indian artists' collective movement proved to be ahead of the times and was unrelenting in its call for change. IAUK would evolve into the 1983 Indian Arts Council (created by Sri Lankan poet and editor, Tambimuttu) and lead to the formation of the Horizon Gallery (1987-91).

Behind this collective body of talent, were artists who were also advancing their own work while meeting the gruelling demands of their personal exhibition circuit. Their tireless campaign to push the work of South Asian artists to the foreground, since the fledgling Indian Painters Collective was created in 1963, deserves much credit over half a century on.

Marsha Ribeiro, June 2019

Marsha Ribeiro is an independent researcher and curates the work of her father Lancelot Ribeiro







**Yashwant Mali** b.1934

*Untitled (Seated Woman)*, 1975

Oil on canvas  
Signed and dated lower right  
91 x 53 cm  
35 7/8 x 20 7/8 in

**Yashwant Mali** b.1934

*Self Portrait*, 1977

Oil, resin and mixed media on  
board  
Signed and dated centre left  
38 x 38 cm  
15 x 15 in

Private collection, East Anglia



**Yashwant Mali** b.1934

*Sunset*, 1980

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated lower right, the reverse signed, and with a 1980 exhibition label giving the painting's title as '*Ballet on the Sea*'

38.4 x 38.5 cm

15 1/8 x 15 1/8 in



**Yashwant Mali** b.1934

*Rose*, 1981

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated lower right, the  
reverse signed, dated and titled

46 x 46 cm

18 1/8 x 18 1/8 in



**Yashwant Mali** b.1934  
*Untitled*  
*(Ballet on the Sea series)*, 1976  
Graphite on paper  
Signed and dated lower right  
25.4 x 20.2 cm, 10 x 8 in

*Untitled*  
*(Ballet on the Sea series)*, 1976  
Graphite on paper  
Signed and dated lower right  
25.4 x 20.2 cm, 10 x 8 in

*Untitled*  
*(Ballet on the Sea series)*, 1976  
Graphite on paper  
Signed and dated lower right  
25.4 x 20.2 cm, 10 x 8 in



**Yashwant Mali** b.1934

*Untitled*

*(Ballet on the Sea series)*, 1976

Graphite on paper

Signed and dated lower right

20.2 x 25.4 cm, 8 x 10 in

*Untitled*

*(Ballet on the Sea series)*, 1976

Graphite on paper

Signed and dated lower right

20.2 x 25.4 cm, 8 x 10 in



**Prafulla Mohanti** b. 1936

*Untitled*, c. 1965

Oil on canvas

91.3 x 71 cm

36 x 28 in

**Prafulla Mohanti** b. 1936

*Ratri*, c.1965

Oil on canvas

Signed and titled on the reverse

101 x 76.5 cm

39 3/4 x 30 1/8 in

*Untitled*, c.1965

Oil on canvas

Signed on the stretcher

102 x 77 cm, 40 1/8 x 30 1/4 in





**Prafulla Mohanti** b. 1936

*Devi*, 1970

Watercolour & pigment on paper  
Signed, titled & dated on the  
reverse

65.6 x 50.3 cm

25 7/8 x 19 3/4 in



**Prafulla Mohanti** b. 1936

*Untitled*, 1988

Watercolour & pigment on paper  
Signed & dated on the reverse

75.5 x 56.5 cm

29 3/4 x 22 1/4 in



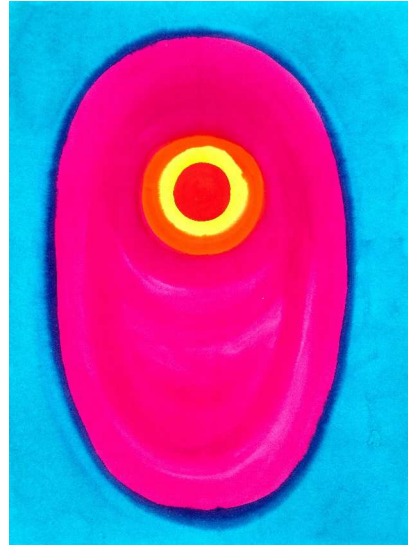


**Prafulla Mohanti** b. 1936

*Rati*, 2006

Watercolour & pigment on paper  
Signed, dated & titled on the  
reverse

76.2 x 56.1 cm  
30 x 22 1/8 in



**Prafulla Mohanti** b. 1936

*Shakti*, 2007

Watercolour & pigment on paper  
Signed, titled & dated on the  
reverse

75 x 55 cm  
29 1/2 x 21 5/8 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro 1933-2011**

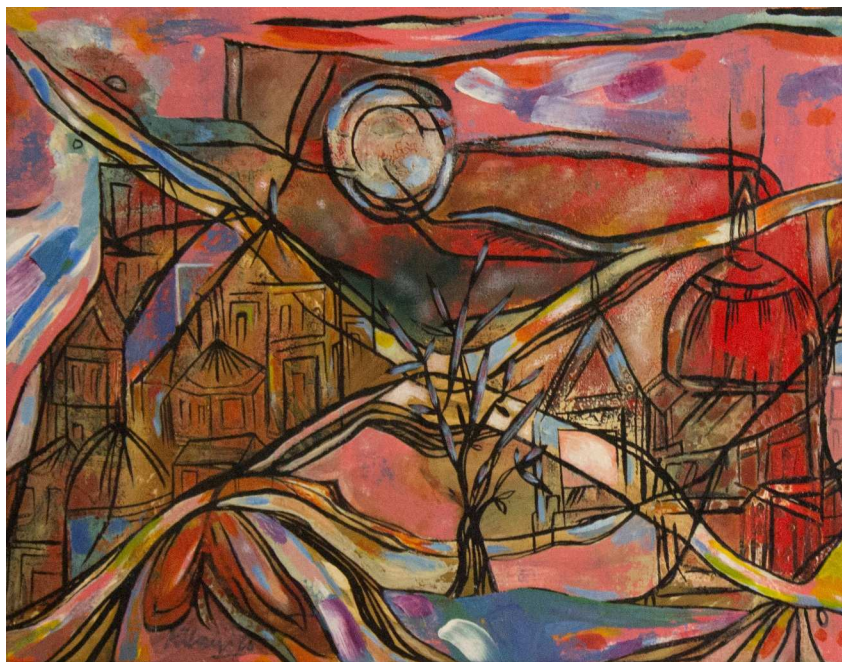
*Evolving*, 1963

Oil and pva on canvas

Signed and dated lower left

64 x 55 cm

25 1/4 x 21 5/8 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro** 1933-2011

*Untitled (Landscape with Moon  
& Tree), 1966*

Oil and pva on canvas  
Signed and dated lower left  
41.5 x 54.3 cm  
16 3/8 x 21 3/8 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro 1933-2011**

*Untitled (White Landscape with Houses), 1964*

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated upper right

64.8 x 104.1 cm

25 1/2 x 41 in

**Lancelot Ribeiro 1933-2011**

*A Patch of Sky, 1965*

Oil on board

Signed and dated, titled verso

23.5 x 31 cm

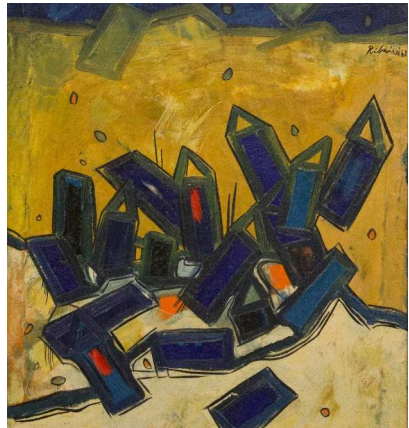
9 1/4 x 12 1/4 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro 1933-2011**

*Untitled (Red Landscape  
with Dome), 1966*

Oil and pva on canvas  
Signed and dated upper right  
38.1 x 44.4 cm  
15 x 17 1/2 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro 1933-2011**

*Untitled (Blue and Yellow  
Landscape), 1968*

Oil on canvas  
Signed and dated upper right  
37 x 33 cm  
14 5/8 x 13 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro** 1933-2011

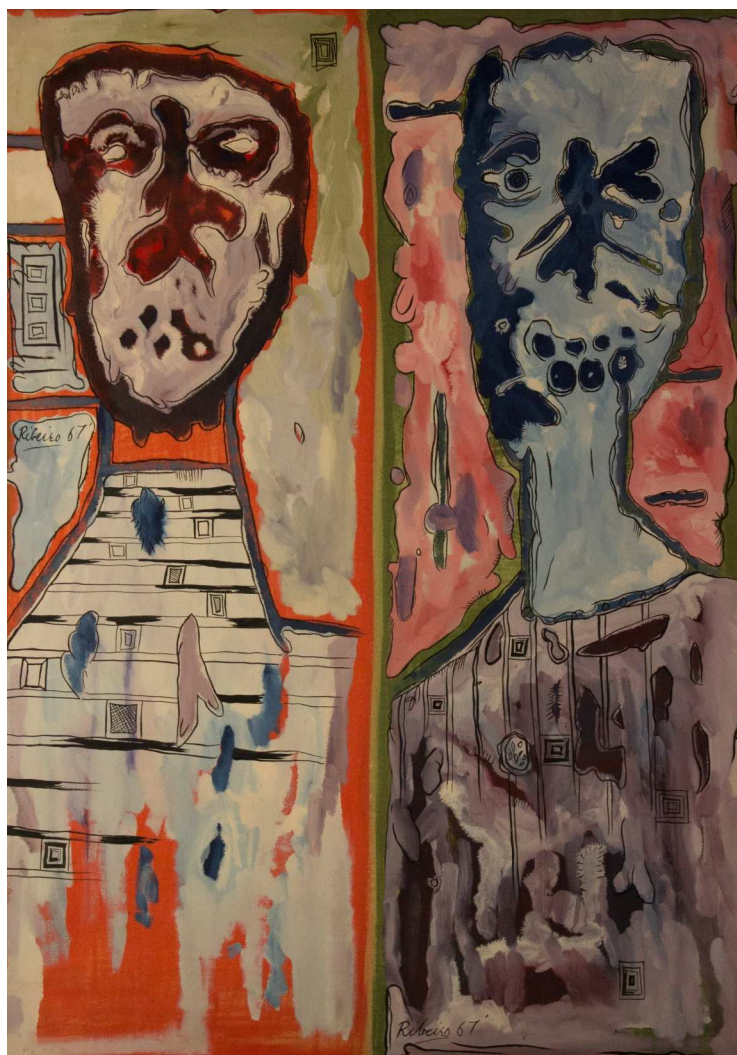
*Untitled (Head with Patterned Shirt)*, 1967

Oil and polyvinyl acetate on canvas

Signed and dated lower left

90.2 x 62.2 cm

35 1/2 x 24 1/2 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro 1933-2011**

*Untitled (Monolithic Heads), 1967*

Oil and polyvinyl acetate on canvas

Signed and dated in two places

142.2 x 100.3 cm

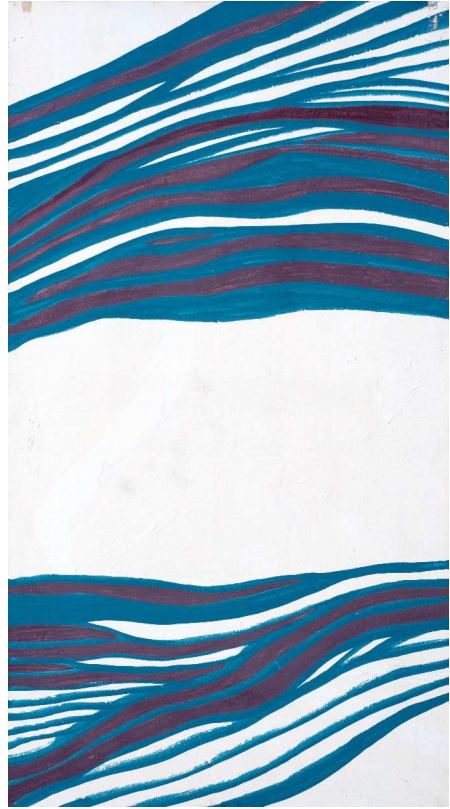
56 x 39 1/2 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro** 1933-2011

*Untitled*, c.1978

Acrylic on canvas  
Stamped with the artist's  
signature on the reverse  
54.6 x 27.9 cm  
21 1/2 x 11 in



**Lancelot Ribeiro** 1933-2011

*Untitled*, 1978

Acrylic on canvas  
Stamped with the artist's  
signature on the reverse  
54.6 x 30.5 cm  
21 1/2 x 12 1/8 in





**Lancelot Ribeiro** 1933-2011

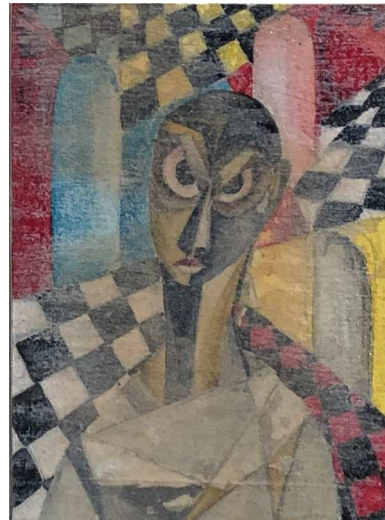
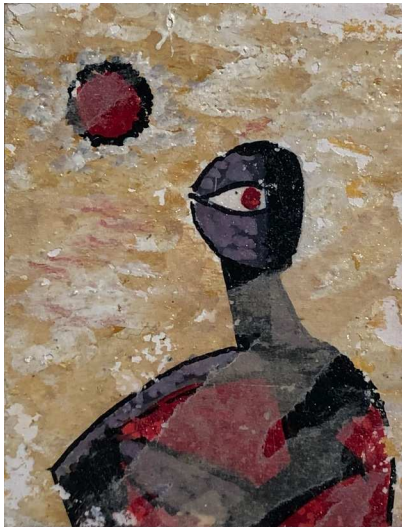
*Untitled*, 1972

Acrylic on canvas

Stamped with the artist's  
signature on the reverse

50.8 x 34.3 cm

20 x 13 1/2 in

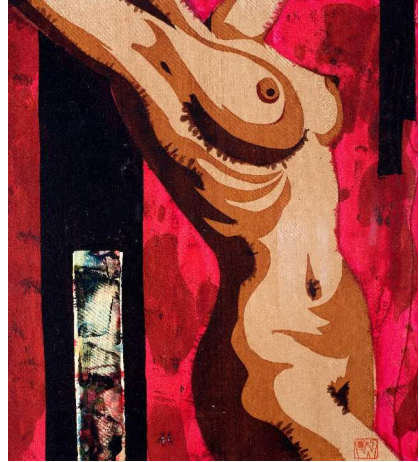
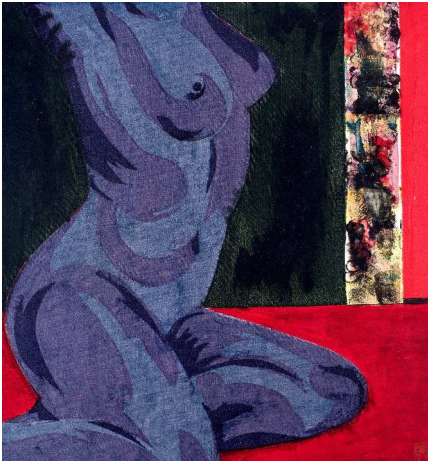


**Ibrahim Wagh** 1932-2013  
*Untitled (Four Seated Figures)*,  
 c.1960  
 Gouache & mixed media on paper  
 17 x 15.5 cm, 6 3/4 x 6 1/8 in

*Untitled (Two Women with Trees)*,  
 c.1960  
 Gouache & mixed media on paper  
 20 x 16.5 cm 7 7/8 x 6 1/2 in

*Untitled  
 (Figure with Red Sun)*, c.1960  
 Mixed media on paper  
 8.5 x 6.5 cm 3 3/8 x 2 1/2 in

*Untitled  
 (Figure in an Interior)*, c.1960  
 Mixed media on paper  
 6.5 x 5 cm, 2 1/2 x 2 in



**Ibrahim Wagh** 1932-2013  
*Untitled (Woman with Moon and Fish)*, c.1965

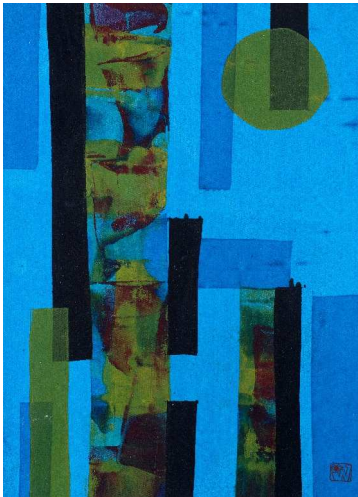
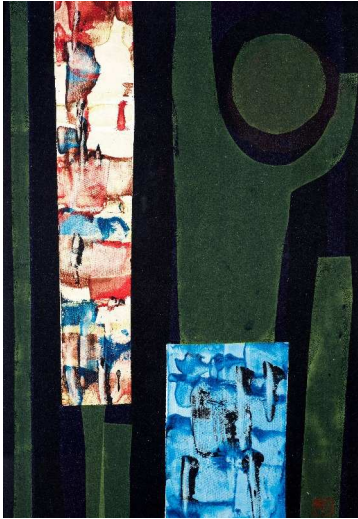
Unique etching on paper  
32 x 38.5 cm, 12 5/8 x 15 1/8 in

*Untitled (Blue Nude)*, c.1970  
Unique screen print on paper  
38 x 37 cm, 15 x 14 5/8 in

*Untitled (Abstract form in white)*,  
c.1965

Unique screen print on paper  
25.5 x 28.5 cm, 10 1/8 x 11 1/4 in

*Untitled (Nude on Red)*, c.1970  
Unique screen print on paper  
39.5 x 37.5 cm, 15 1/2 x 14 3/4 in

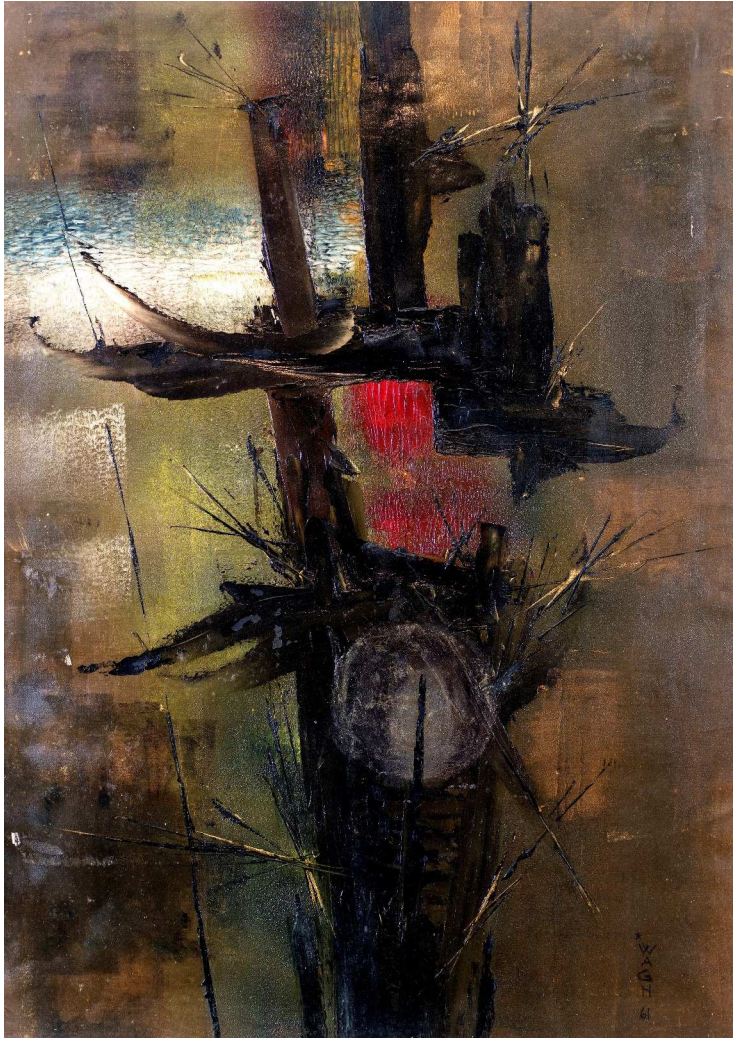


**Ibrahim Wagh** 1932-2013  
*Untitled (Composition with Green Figure)*, c.1970  
Unique screen print on paper  
52 x 36 cm, 20 1/2 x 14 1/8 in

*Untitled (Angular forms)*, c.1970  
Unique screen print on paper  
60 x 43 cm, 23 5/8 x 16 7/8 in

*Untitled (Blue abstract)*, c.1970  
Unique screen print on paper  
49 x 35 cm, 19 1/4 x 13 3/4 in

*Untitled (Abstract forms with Red Sun)*, c.1970  
Unique screen print on paper  
37 x 47 cm, 14 5/8 x 18 1/2 in



**Ibrahim Wagh 1932-2013**

*Untitled (Abstract forms), 1961*

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated lower right

58 x 43 cm

22 7/8 x 16 7/8 in

India Centre, a recently started organization designed to promote Indo-British cultural relations, of which Harold Macmillan is the Patron and Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta, the Indian High Commissioner, is the President. And, the six Indian painters are: Gajanan D. Bhagwat, Yashwant Mali, Lancelot Ribeiro and Ibrahim Wagh, all of Bombay and former members of the Bombay Art Society, S. V. Rama Rao of Madras and Balraj K. Khanna of the Punjab.

These six Indian painters have taken a big step forward in not only having a joint show but in founding the "Indian Painters Collective", an organization of all Indian painters living and working in London. The Collective, an informal co-operative, is planning to hold frequent exhibitions under their own auspices and to participate in other exhibitions being held in the United Kingdom and on the Continent.

These six painters represent a cross-section of the younger generation of Indian painters. Their average age is about 28. They come from different parts of India. And, all of them have won recognition in India and abroad one way or the other. Bhagwat has been a Fellow of the Sir J. J. School of Art, where he has lectured. He secured an Italian Government scholarship. Yashwant Mali, after winning several prizes, migrated to Britain two years ago. Ribeiro (half-brother of F. N. Souza) gave up his job in the Life Insurance Corporation and took to painting. He has exhibited in Bombay, Delhi and London. Ibrahim Wagh has held one-man shows and won prizes. S. V. Rama Rao has won scholarships from the Government of India and the Commonwealth authorities. And, Khanna, a post-graduate in English Literature, took to painting two years ago.

The six painters deserve congratulations and good wishes.

**DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA**

*High Commissioner for India and President of the Tagore India Centre*

*Invites you to the Opening by*

**MISS JENNIE LEE**

*Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Public Buildings and Works*

*of an Exhibition by the Indian Painters' Collective  
at India House, Aldwych, W.C.2*

*on Monday, 9th November, 1964, at 6 p.m.*

*Reception 5-30 p.m. Opening 6 p.m.*

*R.S.V.P. Hon. Secy. India Centre, India House, Aldwych, W.C.2*



**INDIAN ARTISTS  
United Kingdom**  
cordially invite

Mr / Ms .....

The Guest of Honour  
H.E. the High Commissioner of India  
**Dr V. A. Sayid Muhammed**  
and **Mrs Sara Sayid Muhammed**  
The Deputy High Commissioner  
of India, **Dr. I. P. Singh**  
**Mr & Mrs Swraj Paul**  
**Mr Surendra Kamath**

at the Inauguration of the **IAUK Centre** by the  
**Rt. Hon. Paul Channon M.P.**, Minister for  
the Arts, and the opening of an  
Exhibition of members' work by  
**Mrs Asha Singh.**

on **Thursday, the 2nd April, 1981,**  
at **7pm**, at 8 South Audley St.  
London W1 (Entrance from  
Hill Street).

# SIX INDIAN PAINTERS

**BHAGWAT, GAJANAN D.  
KHANNA, BALRAJ K.  
MALI, YASHWANT  
RAO, S. V. RAMA  
RIBEIRO, LANCELOT  
WAGH, IBRAHIM**

**INDIA HOUSE**  
Aldwych London WC2

Exhibition by

## The Indian Painters Collective

the group consists of  
six Indian artists  
living and working in London  
who have won acclaim in India  
and represent a cross section  
of Indian painting today

until November 28  
Daily 12-6.30 Saturday 10-1

Admission free Catalogue 1s

**mandeora**  
galleru

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS



**GAJANAN D. BHAGWAT**  
Born in Bombay, India. Studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. Member of the Bombay Art Society. Exhibited in Bombay, Madras, London, and other cities. Works in oil, watercolor, and gouache.



**BALRAJ K. KHANNA**  
Born in Punjab, India. Studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. Member of the Bombay Art Society. Exhibited in Bombay, Madras, London, and other cities. Works in oil, watercolor, and gouache.



**YASHWANT MALI**  
Born in Bombay, India. Studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. Member of the Bombay Art Society. Exhibited in Bombay, Madras, London, and other cities. Works in oil, watercolor, and gouache.



**S. V. RAMA RAO**  
Born in Madras, India. Studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. Member of the Bombay Art Society. Exhibited in Bombay, Madras, London, and other cities. Works in oil, watercolor, and gouache.



**LANCELOT RIBEIRO**  
Born in Bombay, India. Studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. Member of the Bombay Art Society. Exhibited in Bombay, Madras, London, and other cities. Works in oil, watercolor, and gouache.



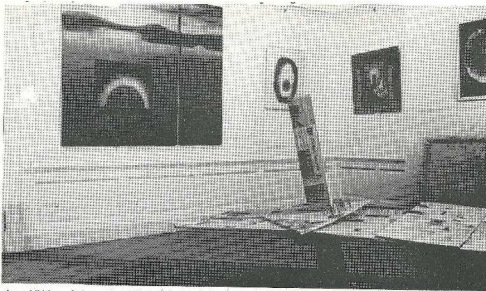
**IBRAHIM WAGH**  
Born in Bombay, India. Studied at Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay. Member of the Bombay Art Society. Exhibited in Bombay, Madras, London, and other cities. Works in oil, watercolor, and gouache.

# India Weekly

LONDON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1980

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An exhibition of the works of Indian Artists living in the United Kingdom was held in Burgh House Museum, Hampstead taken by George Heat shows a few exhibits.

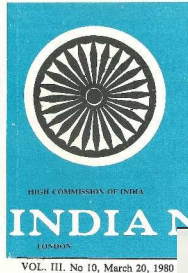
20th March 1980

## Exhibition Of Paintings At Burgh House Museum By Indian Artists Living In U.K.

I visited the exhibition at Burgh House and found the show highly interesting and imaginative, and one which leaves a mark in one's mind. The interesting part is that these artists have lived in this country for fifteen years or more but originated from India. The individual techniques of their work is projected, emerging Western image with Eastern fascination. After you have seen the show, it leaves you with ideas and thoughts that linger with you, taking you into a different world. These three painters Y.Mall, M.Zakir and Suresh Vedak, their techniques particularly portray Western style. Mall tells you about our sea sides and looks at pollution as 'Ballets on the Sea'. While Zakir's sculptures tell the story of 'Our Times and Democracy' in the troubled world Vedak's 'Procenium' engulf the stage with pillars of colour without the human being capturing the scene.

The remaining two artists Prafulla Mohanti and Ibrahim Wagh their work interested me in particular because of the combination of the Indian mystical theme with Western, technique of painting. Prafulla Mohanti's 'Blinda', the point, a philosophic idea, takes the viewer into a mystical world. Ibrahim Wagh - his paintings stunned me, the ideas behind the paintings - man and his world, his source of creation and living; that the world we live in is beautiful except that man has contained his life into his own square and now shouting to be released. With the symbolic use of 'Shilvngam' the source of creation lending enhancement to his work, the canvas takes you into a different mystical world, with lingering thoughts that stay in the viewers' mind asking questions.

The exhibition finished on February 24. The Arts Council of Great Britain are organising

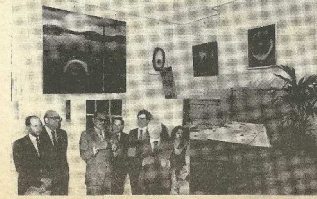


### Paintings by "IAUK" at Burgh House Museum, Hampstead

A visit to the currently held exhibition of paintings at Burgh House Museum, Hampstead by the leading Indian Artists living in U.K. (IAUK) must prove a most rewarding experience to any art-lover. It makes such significant contribution to the contemporary art scene in this country that the stamps of this select - but by no means exclusive -

group of Indian painters to be recognised on par with their British fellow artists must now merit the acclaim which has long been denied them. There were twenty nine stunningly beautiful paintings exhibited here including the two most telling collages: 'Our Times and Democracy' by Muhammad Zakhir who has also contributed three other paintings to the show. Four other highly talented and dedicated artists, Messrs. Yeshwant Mall, Prafulla Mohanti, Suresh Vedak and Ibrahim Wagh, have displayed twenty seven of their recent works while that dozen of modern Indian painters in this country.

The contrast and variety of styles recognised on par with their British fellow artists must now merit the acclaim which has long been denied them. There were twenty nine stunningly beautiful paintings exhibited here including the two most telling collages: 'Our Times and Democracy' by Muhammad Zakhir who has also contributed three other paintings to the show. Four other highly talented and dedicated artists, Messrs. Yeshwant Mall, Prafulla Mohanti, Suresh Vedak and Ibrahim Wagh, have displayed twenty seven of their recent works while that dozen of modern Indian painters in this country.



IAUK - Indian artists living in the United Kingdom - exhibition at Burgh House Museum, London. (From left) Inaugurated the exhibition, Frank Hill, Mr. L. Robinson, Deputy Chairman, Commission for Racial Equality, Mr. Swraj Paul, Patron of the Group, Mr. Singh, Mr. G. Dhillon and behind him Mrs. S. Paul. (From top) Student Anant

recreated in this collection is as pleasant as it is surprising. — Yeshwant Mall's 'Ballet on Sea' series of five miniature-like exquisite presentations are an ingenious experiment in combining the painting and sculpture art forms as integrated works of art. These efforts are pleasing to the eye as well as thought-provoking. The same is true of the five much larger canvases by Ibrahim Wagh. These five paintings really succeed in paying homage to the profound Indian heritage and at the same time linking it to the serious problems of our present-day universe. The juxtaposition of symbols ancient and modern achieved in these five paintings in lovely tones and textures of various colours, make a deep impact on the viewer; they are beautiful.

Suresh Vedak's 'Procenium' reflect his connection with the stage and can be described as a diologue in colour. A beautiful visual experience that lingers in your mind long after you have come away from it. For those like me who know Prafulla Mohanti only as an able writer, his seven 'Blinda' paintings must be a revelation of his process with the masterpiece 'Blinda' can perhaps be most aptly translated as 'Aton' but these beautiful paintings are so expressive that they need no additional commentary at all. Coming back to Muhammad Zakhir, his painting 'Man and Looking' is very effective. But I wish two such detailed presentations were larger in size which would then have brought out their subtlety and those real justice to the immense hard-work he has put into them. All in all a very enriching experience and a nice stop in the official record of the Group - Indian Artists, U.K. MAHENDRABHAI ANKAR

## RAG RAINBOW ART GROUP



RAINBOW ART GROUP  
45 Randall St., Maidstone, Kent.  
Maidstone (0822) 674940

EXHIBITION

PAINTINGS & SCULPTURES BY RAINBOW ART GROUP

22 May - 9 June 1979

at action space  
16 Chenies Street  
London WC1  
tel: 637 7664

# RAINBOW ART GROUP

## PAINTINGS

OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 18  
PRIVATE VIEW  
OCTOBER 26. 6.30 PM

EXHIBITIONS AT THE MIDLANDS ARTS CENTRE Cannon Hill Park Birmingham

In the Spring of 1978 MAAS (Minorities' Arts Advisory Service) held its second London Conference. This conference which took place on the 14th April 1978, summoned together people from ethnic groups living in London who were involved with the arts of London's ethnic groups.

The format of it was such that a number of seminar groups were organised been broken down according to art forms - Music, Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, Community Arts and Literature.

The visual artists recognised the main problem that exists in relation to the work and aspirations of all ethnic minorities in the art world, including their own. This is the difficulty that all had in getting their work considered seriously and supported through established channels.

They therefore decided, at the Conference, to form an organisation with the aim of promoting their work and, by joint efforts, to make a positive contribution to the cultural life of the country.

In this way they hope eventually to create a climate of knowledge and appreciation that will allow the work of the future generation to be admired and sought after on its own merits and not simply because it happens to be the work of an ethnic minority.

The first tasks were to find a name, quality aims and objectives and work out a constitution. At the group's second meeting on the 26th June 1978 at the Herkidge Centre, the members agreed that the group should be named 'Rainbow Art Group' thereafter.



FOYLE HOUSE  
021-440 4221

# The Roots of the Indian Artists' Collectives

## **Text and research**

Marsha Ribeiro

Charles Moore

Kajoli Khanna

Hamza Syed

## **Photography**

Justin Piperger

Previous page: Archive material (Wagh/Ribeiro archives)

Opposite: IAUK manifesto (Wagh archive)

35 Bury Street  
London SW1Y 6AY

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**Grosvenor  
Gallery**

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In 1963 a group of Indian painters living and working in the United Kingdom got together and formed the Indian Painters Collective. They had a successful show in London, called 'Six Indian Painters'. When the group first started in 1963 they had their own goal to achieve in the United Kingdom, some had come to further their education and study - others had come to gain further experience in the Western World. Time passed, and some decided to return home others made this Country their home.

Then in 1976, we re-vitalized the group and functioned under the name of Indian Artists Collective, so that it could embrace all other forms of arts in the fine art community. In order to ascertain their realative position and determine the course of action necessary. Achievements were made and expansion of the group took place, we had several show, lectures and seminars and helped organise shows for visiting Indian artists. But, we still had one main objective to overcome - a place to function.

In 1978 we revised the groups' name once again, now it was to be known as Indian Artist United Kingdom, in the hope of creating a greater awareness, in a way that eventually a climate of knowledge and appreciation will allow the work of the future generation to be admired. As well as sought after on its own merits and not simply because it happens to be the work of the Indian, as we have made this Country our home.







# INDIAN ARTISTS UNITED KINGDOM

8 South Audley Street, Mayfair, London W1Y 5DQ

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of art, at least throughout the history of modern art, there have been groups of artists. The reason for the existence of these groups have been perhaps as diverse as the ideas behind them. But invariably there have been sound human reasons for these groups to come about.

The *IAUK* too has similar reasons for its existence. It is an Association of Professional Artists of Indian origin who have lived and worked in the UK for the last fifteen years or more. It is a revived version of an earlier body — *The Indian Painters Collective, UK, 1963* — a revival which is influenced by practical reasons derived from the results of its members' efforts during their individual struggle for recognition.

We, the members of the *IAUK*, have come to believe that if the issues concerning us are approached collectively, we stand a better chance of succeeding and thus of making a positive contribution to the arts and culture of this country we have now made our home.

Among the *IAUK's* aims are the recognition of its members' work on an equal basis with their British contemporaries and the fulfilment of their rights to the amenities and facilities available in this democratic society. The *IAUK* would like to assist and promote Indian artists living in this country by showing their work. And, through exhibitions, talks and discussions etc, at its centre at 8 South Audley Street, London W1, and at other selected places, it will attempt to create a greater awareness of the Indian arts and culture among the general public.

The *IAUK* is the only organisation of its kind outside India. It functions on strict democratic lines.

### Founder Members:

Avinash Chandra  
Prafull Davé  
Balraj Khanna  
Yashwant Mali  
Prafulla Mohanti  
Lancelot Ribeiro  
Suresh Vedak  
Ibrahim Wagh  
Mohammad Zakir