

Rare Works by Modern Masters Headline Saffronart's Evening Sale on 21 September

Saffronart's *Evening Sale* in New Delhi on 21 September 2017 features exceptional works by modern masters and leading contemporary artists. This year, the sale is headlined by modernists **V S Gaitonde**, **Tyeb Mehta**, **Nicholas Roerich**, **F N Souza**, **S H Raza** and **Bhupen Khakhar**. Saffronart is offering a painting by **Roerich** for the first time, diversifying the range and quality of artists featured in its leading annual auction. The sale also includes paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists **G Ravinder Reddy**, **Nataraj Sharma**, **Subodh Gupta** and **Bharti Kher**.



Above images L-R: Bhupen Khakhar, *Untitled*, lot 29; Bharti Kher, *Train'D To Kill 1*, 2008, lot 81. Saffronart, Evening Sale, New Delhi, 21 September 2017. Images courtesy of Saffronart

Commenting on the auction, **CEO Hugo Weihe** said, *"The sale includes works of exceptional quality and rarity, which offer new possibilities for reflection and dialogue. Consider the juxtaposition of the magical blue Gaitonde with a hazy blue mountain landscape by Roerich, the sea by Padamsee, or of a peninsula by Khakhar. Many works are of unique historical significance, and are milestone achievements for the artists."*

Saffronart's *Evening Sale* in New Delhi is one of the most anticipated auctions held in the art capital. First launched in September 2014, the auction attracts the most prominent collectors in India and abroad by sourcing significant works supported by well-researched catalogues. In September 2015, the auction achieved a total sales value of INR 82.6 crores (USD 12.7 million), with its cover lots, Souza's *Man and Woman Laughing*, and Tyeb Mehta's *Standing Figure* crossing USD 1 million. In September 2016, the auction made headlines when Akbar Padamsee's seminal *Greek Landscape* sold for INR 19.19 crore (USD 2.9 million), doubling its pre-sale estimate. With the fourth edition of the *Evening Sale*, Saffronart continues to encourage buyers to build strong art collections.

The *Evening Sale* will be held at The Leela Palace, New Delhi, on 21 September 2017. It is preceded by previews and viewings at Saffronart in Mumbai and New Delhi, where select lots are on display. All lots from the sale can be viewed on saffronart.com.

For further information, high-res images and interview requests please contact Josh Dobbins:

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AUCTION

Thursday, 21 September 2017

Registration: 6.30 pm

Auction: 7.30 pm

VENUE

The Grand Ball Room

The Leela Palace

Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri

New Delhi 110023

VIEWINGS

Mumbai

2 – 9 September 2017

11 am – 7 pm, Monday to Saturday

Sunday by appointment

Venue

Saffronart

Industry Manor, Ground Floor

Appasaheb Marathe Marg,

Prabhadevi, Mumbai 400025

New Delhi

14 – 20 September 2017

11 am – 7 pm, Monday to Saturday

Sunday by appointment

Venue

Saffronart

The Claridges

12 Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Road

New Delhi 110011

Highlights

V S Gaitonde's *Untitled* (1963) leads the sale with an estimate of INR 10 – 15 crores (USD 1.58 – 2.38 million). The expansive blue canvas evokes an image of a horizon separating a dark night sky from a tempestuous sea—but his work was never that literal.

Gaitonde's paintings, variously described as lyrical, meditative, abstract, expressionist and non-objective, possess an intangible, ephemeral quality that defines them. His work through the 1960s reveals an introspective artist whose creations have enduring and universal appeal. This is borne out by the consistent increase in price and record-breaking sales that have been witnessed at auctions in recent years. The painting on auction was once part of the collection of Carole Nimmo Bourne, a philanthropist from New York.

Image Credit: V S Gaitonde, *Untitled*, 1963. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 13. Image courtesy of Saffronart



Tyeb Mehta's *Crucifixion* (1959), estimated at INR 4 – 6 crores (USD 634,925 – 952,385), is an unusual choice of subject, given its Christian theme. It is the only canvas, and one of two works on this subject, that he ever created. The element of human suffering that was the defining essence of Mehta's oeuvre, and the choice of depicting Christ—a figure of human suffering—evokes notions of reigned-in violence. The impasto-laden brushwork and subject matter allowed Mehta to explore his own ideas of disquiet, and that moment of tension just before violence occurs.

Image Credit: Tyeb Mehta, *Crucifixion*, 1959. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 52. Image courtesy of Saffronart



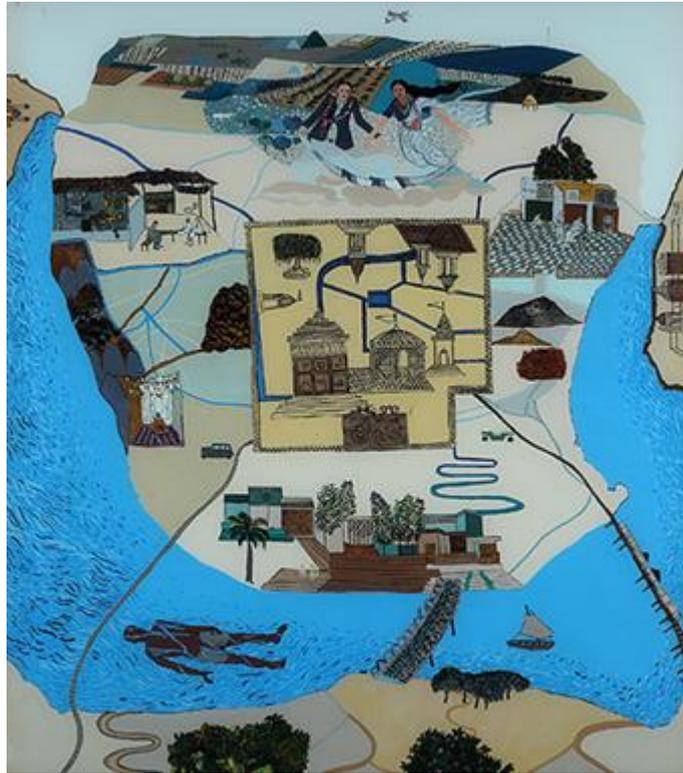
In *Himalayas* (1940), estimated at INR 1.2 – 1.8 crores (USD 190,480 – 285,715), Nicholas Roerich masterfully captures the variations of blue, light pink and purple, created by the sun's reflection. The neighbouring terrain, enshrouded in nuanced degrees of darkness, suggest that this moody scene is one of the many visions that the Himalayas had to offer. Touted as the "Wizard of Eastern Landscapes," Nicholas Roerich was the only artist of foreign origin whose works have been declared national art treasures. The artist was recently the subject of the exhibition, *Nicholas Roerich: In Search of the Mystic World*, organised by the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai. This is the first time Saffronart will auction a painting by the "Master of Mountains."

Image credit: Nicholas Roerich, *Himalayas*, 1940. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 49. Image courtesy of Saffronart



S H Raza explored the emotional content of colours and landscape through his striking *La Terre* series, created during the 1970s and '80s. *La Terre* (1972), a large format canvas estimated at INR 2 – 3 crores (USD 317,465 – 476,195), reveals his exploration of the role of darkness amid colour and life.

Image Credit: S H Raza, *La Terre*, 1972. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 8. Image courtesy of Saffronart



Bhupen Khakhar's *Untitled*, estimated at INR 2.5 – 3.5 crores (USD 396,830 – 555,560), brings the life of the city to the fore in an architectural context. This painting was once in the private collection of the renowned architect B V Doshi, who was “struck by the comprehensive way in which it depicted the entire life of a peninsula.”

Image credit: Bhupen Khakhar, *Untitled*. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 29. Image courtesy of Saffronart



F N Souza's *Portrait of Husain* (1948), estimated at INR 70 – 90 lakhs (USD 111,115 – 142,860), was made shortly after the formation of the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group and is of great historic significance. It shows a rare side of Souza, the artist, devoid of scathing commentaries on the human condition. He presents Husain in a respectful, beautifully composed manner, and highlights the camaraderie between the two artists. Both Husain and Souza painted portraits of each other at important moments throughout their lives.

Image Credit: F N Souza, *Portrait of Husain*, 1948. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 5. Image courtesy of Saffronart



Untitled (1961), estimated at INR 65 – 85 lakhs (USD 103,175 – 134,925) is a rare canvas by Nasreen Mohamedi that is possibly influenced by the vast, scaleless expanses of the desert landscape of Bahrain. Mohamedi painted only a few canvases during her remarkable career, and by the 1970s had ceased working with the easel altogether.

Image Credit: Nasreen Mohamedi, *Untitled*, 1961. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 16. Image courtesy of Saffronart



This monumental sculpture, *Devi* (1998), by Ravinder Reddy, is estimated at INR 2 – 3 crores (USD 317,465 - 476,195), and leads the contemporary section. A striking combination of tradition and kitsch, it references the various iconic forms of the Goddess since antiquity. *Devi* has been exhibited at several important exhibitions around the world, and was part of the 5th Biennale de Lyon in 2000.

Image credit: G Ravinder Reddy, *Devi*, 1998. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 71. Image courtesy of Saffronart



Subodh Gupta's *Untitled (Guldasta)*, estimated at INR 30 – 40 lakhs (USD 47,620 – 63,495), offers an ironic interpretation of the cultural connotations of flower arrangements. Using everyday kitchen tools, Gupta uses the formal language of art to create a dialogue about commoditisation and value.

Image credit: Subodh Gupta, *Untitled (Guldasta)*. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 72. Image courtesy of Saffronart



Bharti Kher's *Train'D To Kill 1* (2008) consists of four 5 x 5 ft panels with concentric velvet cut-outs. This hypnotic work is estimated at INR 80 lakhs – 1.2 crores (USD 126,985 – 190,480).

Image credit: Bharti Kher, *Train'D To Kill 1*, 2008. Saffronart, *Evening Sale*, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 81. Image courtesy of Saffronart



Nataraj Sharma's *Urban Animal (Horse)* departs from his otherwise machine-oriented works, and introduces the dichotomy between nature and the urban environment.

Sharma's art is informed by socio-political events, combined with his experiences of growing up in Egypt, UK and Zambia, and studying art in India. The diptych is estimated at INR 40 – 60 lakhs (USD 63,495 – 95,240).

Image credit: Nataraj Sharma, *Urban Animal (Horse)*, 2006 – 2012. Saffronart, Evening Sale, New Delhi, 21 September 2017, lot 76. Image courtesy of Saffronart

About Saffronart

Founded in 2000 by Minal and Dinesh Vazirani, Saffronart is a leading international auction house, and India's most reputed, with over a hundred auctions to its credit. It is headquartered in Mumbai, with offices in New Delhi, London and New York. At the forefront of selling Indian art, we hold online and live auctions, exhibitions, and prime property sales throughout the year. Our focus is to bring transparency to the auction process, and providing easy access to bidders around the world.

Saffronart's services go beyond auctions to include private sales, art storage, appraisals and valuations for our clients, and supporting the efforts of the Indian art world by holding fundraiser auctions. We have set several global benchmarks for online auctions, and were the subject of a case study at Harvard Business School in 2005.

Website: saffronart.com

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