

Saffronart to Auction One of India's Most Eminent Collections of Classical Indian Art

- Auction includes important works from the collection of connoisseur Motichand Khajanchi, and exquisite Pahari miniatures
- Superbly carved Mahishasuramardini and majestic Vishnu lead sale of sculptures
- Total of 81 lots go under the hammer on 9 March 2017

Mumbai, 8 February 2017: Saffronart's upcoming auction of [Classical Indian Art](#) offers paintings from the collection of Motichand Khajanchi. Khajanchi discovered miniatures through his association with the royal family of Bikaner. His love for collecting also won him the friendship of artist Ramgopal Vijaivargiya and art historian Anand Krishna, with whom he exchanged scholarship and, at times, paintings. As his knowledge and collection grew, Khajanchi was recognised as an authority on Rajasthani miniatures. A selection of important works from his collection, curated by Karl Khandalavala and Rai Krishnadasa, was exhibited at the Lalit Kala Akademi in New Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta in 1960, and published in the accompanying catalogue. The lots on auction, which are from the late 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries and in excellent condition, are a testament to his fine aesthetic eye and will inspire new generations of collectors. Some of them carry artist signatures on the reverse, which is rare among miniature paintings.

Among the highlights is a fascinating portrayal of a battle scene. Lot 29: *Maharaja Bakhat Singh of Nagaur Proceeding for Battle, Nagaur, circa 1750*, is a dynamic and superbly detailed work showing a procession of riders on elephants, horses, camels and foot soldiers marching with their king to battle. The work is estimated at INR 50 – 70 lakhs.

Lot 3: *Ragini Basant of Raga Sri* features on the cover of the auction catalogue, and is being offered at INR 35 – 45 lakhs. The Provincial Mughal/Bikaner painting, dated circa 1660, shows Krishna being entertained by a group of musicians, resplendent with the colours of Holi. This beautifully delineated festive scene brings together music and social commentary, and is in extraordinary condition.

Among the Pahari paintings on auction are lot 45: *Shiva Tandava, Guler, circa 1780*, estimated at INR 20 – 30 lakhs, and lot 50: *Folio from the Sat Sai of Bihari, Guler, circa 1800*, with an estimate of INR 18 – 24 lakhs.

Some of the paintings on offer are from the personal collection of the Maharaja of Bikaner. Lots 1, 2, 4—which are signed by the artists—and lot 5, all estimated between INR 2 – 7 lakhs, and lot 11 at INR 15 – 20 lakhs, are exquisitely composed and speak to the skill and dedication of the artists.

Leading the sale of sculptures is lot 74: a superbly carved sandstone sculpture of Mahishasuramardini, 10th – 11th century. Ranking as a masterpiece of mediaeval sculpture from

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Central India and in remarkable state of preservation, it shows the moment of Durga's victory over Mahishasura, the buffalo demon. With every inch of the sculpture intricately detailed, it is a visually extravagant metaphor for the triumph of good over evil. The sculpture is estimated at INR 3 – 5 crores.

Also among the highlights are lot 69: a monumental Chola sculpture of Vishnu from Tamil Nadu, circa 12th century, estimated at INR 2 – 3 crores, lot 73: a magnificent *prabhavali* from Kerala, 15th – 16th century, estimated at INR 1 – 1.2 crores, lot 65: a sculpture of Saint Manikkavachakar from Tamil Nadu, circa 12th century, at INR 60 – 80 lakhs, and lot 57: a Torso of Buddha from Andhra Pradesh, circa 3rd century, at INR 25 – 35 lakhs.

Commenting on the collection, CEO Hugo Weihe said, "We are delighted to have sourced an excellent collection of miniatures and rare sculptures from eminent collections. They offer collectors a unique opportunity to acquire some of the best classical art to enter the auction market."

The auction is preceded by viewings in Mumbai from 3 March. The auction catalogue can be viewed on saffronart.com.

LIVE AUCTION

Thursday, 9 March 2017

Registration: 6.30 pm

Auction: 7.30 pm

VIEWINGS

3 – 9 March 2017

11 am – 7 pm

Till noon on 9 March

VENUE

Saffronart

Industry Manor, Ground Floor

Appasaheb Marathe Marg

Prabhadevi, Mumbai 400025

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About Saffronart

A global company with deep Indian roots, Saffronart was founded in 2000 on the strength of a private passion. Remaining committed to this passion and personal values, today Saffronart is a strong and successful international auction house that both embraces and drives change.

A platform for fine art and collectibles with over fourteen years of experience in auctions, Saffronart is committed to serving the growing community of Indian collectors, while also creating a cultural bridge to India for both the global Indian diaspora and the international community at large. Saffronart has set several global benchmarks for online auctions and is the subject of a case study at Harvard Business School.

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