

Manifestations of Vishnu, Rare Patna School Paintings and Folk and Tribal Art Headline Saffronart's April Auctions



Left - right: *Head of Vishnu*, Madhya Pradesh or Uttar Pradesh, 11th – 12th century and *Holi Scene* by Hulas Lal, Patna, circa 1830.*

March 2018: Saffronart's upcoming online auctions, ***Classical Indian Art and Living Traditions: Folk and Tribal Art***, will be held from **10 – 12 April**. With a focus on India's court, colonial and indigenous art forms, the auctions feature artworks whose visual appeal harks back to traditions which are centuries old. Both auctions should appeal to collectors looking to diversify their art collection. The lots on offer are attractively priced, ranging from INR 1 to 35 lakhs for *Classical Indian Art*, and INR 30,000 – 5 lakhs for *Living Traditions*.

CEO Hugo Weihe commented, "We are pleased to announce Saffronart's spring online auctions: a sale of *Classical Indian Art* followed by *Living Traditions*. We have expanded the range of works offered in both sales. The exquisite miniatures and exceptionally carved sculptures in *Classical Indian Art* are complemented by a selection of rare books on art. These books underscore the scholarship that was crucial in providing a deeper understanding and appreciation of antiquities from the subcontinent. The group of *Patna Company School* paintings are important as they are a very rare group with an excellent provenance. They are an extraordinary rediscovery as they have not been seen since English art historian Mildred Archer published a study on them in 1947."

Classical Indian Art ([link](#)) features 88 lots spanning a variety of sculptures, miniature paintings, Company School paintings and rare books. Among the Medieval stone sculptures are two exceptional renditions of Vishnu, the Vamana (lot 52, estimated at INR 30 – 50 lakhs) and a Head of Vishnu (lot 74, estimated at INR 15 – 20 lakhs), with an exquisite quality of carving rarely matched. The Company School paintings are of special significance. Company School refers to paintings made in British India between the late 1700s and early 1800s, which document local customs, flora and fauna. Auction highlights include works by Patna artists Hulas Lal and his descendant, Bani Lal, who were masters of the Company School style. Hulas Lal is one of the few, rare artists whose works have survived from this early period. Bani Lal, who developed a naturalistic style of painting, was known for his vivid and precise documentation of life in colonial India. Paintings by both artists were the subject of English art historian Mildred Archer's *Patna Painting*, an essay on Company School paintings with select examples of this style.



Vamana Vishnu, Rajasthan, circa 10th century. *

For further information, high-res images and interview requests please contact Rashmi Rajgopal:

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*Image courtesy of Saffronart

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Paintings by both artists also feature in the collections of leading museums such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Leading the category of rare books is Ordhendra Chandra Gangoly’s *Masterpieces of Rajput Painting* (lot 34), a rare publication from 1926 which features select examples of Rajput painting. Estimated between INR 2 – 2.5 lakhs (USD 3,125 – 3,910), the book is numbered “70” from a limited edition of 210 copies, and is presented in a portfolio box. Gangoly was a leading authority on Indian art. He founded the Indian Society of Oriental Art in 1907, and subsequently published *Rupam*, an illustrated quarterly journal of Indian art which was in circulation between 1920 and 1930.



Sita Devi, *Untitled (Baghai Devata)*, circa 1970s *

Living Traditions ([link](#)) features paintings, embroidery and sculpture that exemplify India’s indigenous traditions. Highlights from the sale include *Bhuta* masks from Karnataka and Kerala, Chamba *rumals* from Himachal Pradesh, as well as Gond, Madhubani and Bastar art. *Baghai Devata* (lot 24), an endearing painting by Sita Devi, leads the auction at INR 4 – 6 lakhs (USD 6,250 – 9,375). Mithila artist Sita Devi was famed for the Bharni style of painting, which involves outlining the subject in black, and filling the areas with colour. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 1981, and her work was

admired by many noted dignitaries including President Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and Prime Ministers Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi. *Bhagai Devata* captures the vibrancy and colourful essence that is the embodiment of Mithila painting. Also among the highlights is Jagdamba Devi’s *Untitled (Krishna with Gopis)* (lot 29), offered at INR 1.5 – 2 lakhs (USD 2,345 – 3,125). Jagdamba Devi is credited with bringing official recognition to Mithila painting, when she received the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award in India, in 1970. She has been extensively covered in the press for her achievements. Also on offer are Gond artist Jangarh Singh Shyam’s *Untitled*, 1997 (lot 13), at INR 60,000 – 80,000 (USD 940 – 1,250); two Maisandaya bull masks from Karnataka or Kerala (lots 9 and 10), estimated at INR 2.5 – 3 lakhs (USD 3,910 – 5,470) each; a circa 19th century Pilichamundi mask from Karnataka or Kerala (lot 23), estimated at INR 3 – 4 lakhs (USD 4,690 – 6,250); a circa 20th century Banta mask from Karnataka or Kerala (lot 56), estimated at INR 4.5 – 5.5 lakhs (USD 7,035 – 8,595); and a painting by Warli artist Jivya Soma Mashe (lot 61), estimated at INR 70,000 – 90,000 (USD 1,095 – 1,410).

“*Living Traditions is a celebration of tradition and craftsmanship. We wanted to include a range of art forms from across India which showcase the depth and diversity of imagination and skill. These traditions are passed down from generation to generation, and form an aesthetic continuum with contemporary art forms. To illustrate this, we have included paintings by artists who have infused a very old tradition with the vibrancy of contemporary scenes,*” said Weihe.

Both auctions will take place on saffronart.com, and are preceded by viewings in Mumbai from 2 – 12 April 2018. All lots can be viewed on saffronart.com ([link](#))

Auctions

Classical Indian Art
10-11 April 2018

Living Traditions: Folk and Tribal Art
11-12 April 2018

Viewings

2 – 11 April, Classical Indian Art
2 – 12 April, Living Traditions
Monday to Saturday, 11am – 7pm
Sunday by appointment

Venue

Saffronart, Industry Manor,
Ground Floor
Appasaheb Marathe Marg
Mahalaxmi, Mumbai 400 025

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*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, Saffronart holds online and live auctions, exhibitions, and prime property sales throughout the year. Saffronart's focus is to bring transparency to the auction process, and to provide 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. Saffronart has set several global benchmarks for online auctions, and was the subject of a case study at Harvard Business School in 2005.

Website: www.saffronart.com | **Facebook:** [@saffronart](https://www.facebook.com/saffronart) | **Instagram:** [@saffronartindia](https://www.instagram.com/saffronartindia)

Images List - Highlights
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Classical Indian Art

Lot 25

Set of Patna Paintings

Saffronart, *Classical Indian Art*, 10-11 April 2018, lot 25



a) *Donkey* by Bani Lal, Patna, circa 1890
Watercolour on paper
Image: 8 x 9.75 in



b) *Camel Rider*, attributable to Bani Lal, Patna, circa 1880
Watercolour on paper
Image: 10 x 8 in

Lot 32



Holi Scene by Hulas Lal, Patna, circa 1830
Watercolour on paper pasted on paper
Image: 10.75 x 14.75 in
Saffronart, *Classical Indian Art*, 10-11 April 2018, lot 32

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Lot 52



Vamana Vishnu, Rajasthan, circa 10th century
Phyllite, 14.5 in high
Saffronart, *Classical Indian Art*, 10-11 April 2018, lot 52

Lot 74



Head of Vishnu, Madhya Pradesh or Uttar Pradesh, 11th – 12th century
Sandstone, 13.75 in high
Saffronart, *Classical Indian Art*, 10-11 April 2018, lot 74

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Living Traditions**Lot 10**

Maisandaya Bull Mask

Karnataka/Kerala, circa 19th century

Bronze, 15.5 in

Saffronart, *Living Traditions: Folk and Tribal Art*, 11-12 April 2018, lot 10

Lot 24

Sita Devi, Untitled (Baghai Devata), circa 1970s

Natural pigments and ink on paper, 59.50 x 97 in

Saffronart, *Living Traditions: Folk and Tribal Art*, 11-12 April 2018, lot 24

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Lot 29



Jagdamba Devi, *Untitled (Krishna with Gopis)*

Natural pigments and ink on paper, 59.25 x 59.25 in

Saffronart, *Living Traditions: Folk and Tribal Art*, 11-12 April 2018, lot 29

Lot 56



Banta

Karnataka/Kerala, circa 20th century

Bronze, 18 in

Saffronart, *Living Traditions: Folk and Tribal Art*, 11-12 April 2018, lot 56

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