

19th-Century Masterwork by Edwin Lord Weeks Leads Saffronart's Evening Sale in New Delhi

- Saffronart will host its annual flagship Evening Sale in New Delhi on 14 September 2024
- The sale is led by *Hindu Temple, Bombay*, circa 1884, by renowned American Orientalist Edwin Lord Weeks and is one of two works exhibited by the artist at the 1884 Paris Salon
- The catalogue also includes significant works by members of the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group, such as S H Raza and M F Husain; Bengal School artists Ganesh Pyne and Bikash Bhattacharjee; and lots by Jehangir Sabavala, Jagdish Swaminathan, Amrita Sher-Gil, Jogen Chowdhury, B Prabha, and Jangarh Singh Shyam, among many others.

Mumbai, 29 August 2024: Saffronart returns with its annual flagship Evening Sale in New Delhi this September with a catalogue of 77 lots by prominent modern and contemporary Indian artists and sculptors with many curated from distinguished collections. The live auction will take place at The Oberoi in New Delhi on 14 September 2024.

Leading the sale is *Hindu Temple, Bombay, circa 1884*, ([lot 31](#), estimate: INR 14 - 18 crores, USD 1,686,750 - 2,168,675) by prominent 19th century Orientalist **Edwin Lord Weeks**. This monumental work exemplifies the artist's realistic draughtsmanship and masterful use of light and shadow. Weeks instils in this work a sense of theatricality and a feeling of being transported to another time and place. He vividly captures Bombay's tropical atmosphere through a saturated palette and a play of bright sunlight with deep shadows. The temple architecture adds a picturesque quality, reflecting the artist's deep interest in architecture and appreciation for the cultures he encountered. This painting, one of two exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1884, helped secure Weeks' reputation as an artist and eventually led to him receiving the Légion d'Honneur, the highest French order of merit, in 1896.

Also featured are two works by **S H Raza**, both from significant phases in his artistic career. *Untitled, 1957*, ([lot 13](#), estimate: INR 3.5 - 4.5 crores, USD 421,690 - 542,170), comes from a period when the Provencal French landscape took centre stage in Raza's art following his move from India to France in 1950. The solid, geometric forms of the early French landscapes are caught in the process of gradually dissolving in intimation of the artist's imminent gestural phase.

The Earth, 1986 ([lot 23](#), estimate: INR 2.5 - 3.5 crores, USD 301,205 - 421,690) by **S H Raza** represents a new phase in his career during which he integrated his expressionist techniques with geometric abstraction. This artistic renewal was driven by Raza's visits to India in the '70s and '80s, after nearly four decades in France, as he reconnected with his Indian identity and roots. In this work, horizontal

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and diagonal lines charge the canvas with energy and dissect it into triangles, which are further contained within concentric squares. The triangles are commonly understood in Indian thought to represent *purush* and *prakriti* or the male and female energies that combine to create life. At the top is a *bindu* or black circle, which became the central element of Raza's work from the late 1970s onwards. In this painting, the *bindu* is inscribed within a downturned triangle, alluding to its symbolism as the *bija* or source of life arising from the merging of the male and female energies.

Among other highlights from the sale are significant paintings by Jehangir Sabavala, Jagdish Swaminathan, and M F Husain. In *Earthenware, 1959*, ([lot 19](#), estimate: INR 2 - 3 crores, USD 240,965 - 361,450), **Jehangir Sabavala** adapts the Cubist traditions in which he was trained with his own personal artistic vision to create a still life inspired by a *kumbharwada* or potters' colony in Bombay. *Untitled, 1983*, ([lot 62](#), estimate: INR 1.8 - 2.4 crores, USD 216,870 - 289,160) by **Jagdish Swaminathan** is from his seminal *Bird, Mountain, Tree* series. In this work, these motifs are set against a flat colour field, creating a singular conceptual landscape. The work incorporates elements from Pahari and Kangra miniatures such as the flat perspective, fine details, and warm colour palette. Evoking calm and transcendence, it reflects Swaminathan's belief in art "generating its own life."

The paintings by **M F Husain** from the sale exemplify the qualities that were quintessential of Husain's art, including his love of the female form, his confident line, and his bold palette. *Untitled* ([lot 11](#), estimate: INR 1.8 - 2.2 crores, USD 216,870 - 265,065), revisits his rural motifs that first appeared in his works of the 1950s. One can discern the strong influence of classical Indian sculpture, music, and dance on Husain's art in *Foliage, circa 1960s*, ([lot 74](#), estimate: INR 1.5 - 2 crores, USD 180,725 - 240,965) and *Three Women, circa 1980s*, ([lot 53](#), estimate: INR 1.2 - 1.5 crores, USD 144,580 - 180,725). *Untitled, 1982*, ([lot 52](#), estimate: INR 1 - 1.5 crores, USD 120,485 - 180,725) brings together two of his most important subjects, the horse and the woman, and displays the distinct influence of two of Husain's formative inspirations: Bankura horses and the Chinese artist Xu Beihong.

Other highlights include two rare sketchbooks by Ganesh Pyne that provide a glimpse into the artist's formative influences—*Untitled (Sketchbook), 1959*, ([lot 15](#), estimate: INR 1.5 - 1.8 crores, USD 180,725 - 216,870) and *Untitled (Indian Temples), 1961*, ([lot 16](#), estimate: INR 15 - 20 lakhs, USD 18,075 - 24,100). These are presented alongside *Arati, 2005*, ([lot 46](#), estimate: INR 1.2 - 1.8 crores, USD 144,580 - 216,870) a tempera painting showcasing the medium he mastered in his later works.

The sale features lots of exceptional provenance, including six works that are part of a prominent Parsi family collection. These works, curated by dedicated collectors over many years, hold significant art historical value as they are by pioneering artists who have shaped the course of modern Indian art. Among these are *Untitled, circa 1950s* ([lot 10](#), estimate: INR 25 - 30 lakhs, USD 30,125 - 36,145) by **M F Husain**, **K H Ara's** *Untitled*, ([lot 7](#), estimate: INR 15 - 20 lakhs, USD 18,075 - 24,100) and *Untitled*, ([lot 6](#), estimate: 8 - 10 lakhs, USD 9,640 - 12,050) by **H A Gade**.

Other lots from the sale include early paper works by **Amrita Sher-Gil** — *Untitled* ([lot 34](#), estimate:

INR 80 lakhs - 1 crore, USD, 96,390 - 120,485) and *Untitled*, circa 1927, ([lot 33](#), estimate: INR 50 - 70 lakhs, USD 60,245 - 84,340); Jogen Chowdhury's *Man Dressing His Hair*, 1986, ([lot 24](#), estimate: INR 20 - 30 lakhs, USD 24,100 - 36,145); B Prabha's *Untitled*, 1978, ([lot 25](#), estimate: INR 35 - 45 lakhs, USD 42,170 - 54,220) and *Untitled*, 1983, ([lot 61](#), estimate: INR 30 - 40 lakhs, USD 36,145 - 48,195); and *Untitled*, 2001, ([lot 76](#), estimate: INR 60 - 80 lakhs, USD 72,290 - 96,390) and *Untitled*, 1999, ([lot 77](#), estimate: INR 5 - 7 lakhs, USD 6,025 - 8,435) by acclaimed Gond artist Jangarh Singh Shyam.

Dinesh Vazirani, Saffronart CEO and Co-Founder said, *"With a catalogue of works by pioneering modern and contemporary artists and sculptors, our annual flagship Evening Sale has been meticulously curated to provide significant value for both seasoned and first-time collectors. Many lots hold substantial art historical importance and represent pivotal phases in these artists' careers, making them especially compelling. We are delighted to present a canvas by 19th-century artist Edwin Lord Weeks as our leading lot—such a work by a renowned Orientalist is a rare offering at auction in India. Weeks' technical brilliance, combined with his adventurous spirit and deep interest in the Orient, particularly India, allowed him to transport viewers to another era through his art. Additionally, we are pleased to offer rare pieces like Ganesh Pyne's sketchbooks from his years as an art student in Calcutta and very early drawings by Amrita Sher-Gil, which provide a unique glimpse into the artistic development and inner thoughts of these celebrated artists."*

Saffronart's Annual Flagship Evening Sale will be held at The Oberoi in New Delhi on 14 September 2024 and will be preceded by viewings in Mumbai and New Delhi. All lots can be viewed on saffronart.com.

AUCTION DATES

Evening Sale | 14 September 2024, 7:30 pm

VENUE

Ballroom, The Oberoi
Dr Zakir Hussain Marg
New Delhi 110003

PREVIEW IN NEW DELHI

Thursday, 12 September 2024
6:30 pm to 10:30 pm

Saffronart Gallery and Ballroom, The Oberoi, Dr Zakir Hussain Marg

VIEWINGS

MUMBAI

19 – 31 August 2024

11 am – 7 pm, Monday to Saturday

Sunday (by appointment only)

VENUE

Saffronart, Industry Manor

Ground Floor, Appasaheb Marathe Marg,

Prabhadevi, Mumbai 400025

To make an appointment, please contact +91 22 6855 4100 or email us at auction@saffronart.com

NEW DELHI

6 – 13 September 2024

11 am – 7 pm, Monday to Saturday

Sunday (by appointment only)

VENUE

Saffronart, The Oberoi

Dr Zakir Hussain Marg

New Delhi 110003 (6 – 12 September)

14 September 2024

11 am – 5 pm

Ballroom, The Oberoi

Dr Zakir Hussain Marg

New Delhi 110003 (12 – 14 September)

To make an appointment, please contact +91 11 24369415 or email us at auction@saffronart.com

ABOUT SAFFRONART

Founded in 2000 by Minal and Dinesh Vazirani, Saffronart is a leading international auction house, and India's most reputed, with over three hundred auctions to its credit. Its flagship gallery is in Mumbai, with offices in New Delhi, London, and New York. At the forefront of selling Indian art, Saffronart has held online and live auctions, exhibitions, and Dialogues in Art, working with collectors, gallerists, and artists to develop a strong market for art and aesthetics. Its focus is to bring transparency to the auction process and provide easy access and information to collectors around the world. Saffronart's services go beyond auctions to include private sales, appraisals, and valuations for clients. Saffronart has set several global benchmarks for online auctions and was the subject of a case study at Harvard Business School in 2005.

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