

For Immediate Release

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**EXCEPTIONAL SOUTH ASIAN MODERN + CONTEMPORARY ART
SALE TO CAPTIVATE COLLECTORS AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK**



Maqbool Fida Husain
Untitled
oil on canvas, painted in 1971
Estimate: \$500,000-700,000



Maqbool Fida Husain
Culture of the Streets, executed circa 1980s
(1 of 32)
Estimate: \$12,000-18,000

**South Asian Modern + Contemporary Art
19 March 2009**

New York – On March 19th, Christie's *South Asian Modern + Contemporary Art* Sale will offer a fine selection of over seventy of works including some from the most important collections in the category, including the Abrams Family Collection, the Collection of Daniel Herwitz and Lucia Saks, the Estate of F. N. Souza and the Family Collection of Krishna Shamrao Kulkarni. Leading this emerging market since its inception, Christie's continues to bring exceptional works from Indian and Pakistani artists to the global art scene such as F.N. Souza, M.F. Husain and K.S. Kulkarni alongside choice works by some of today's most innovative contemporary artists such as Surendran Nair, Ravinder Reddy, Subodh Gupta, and Rashid Rana.

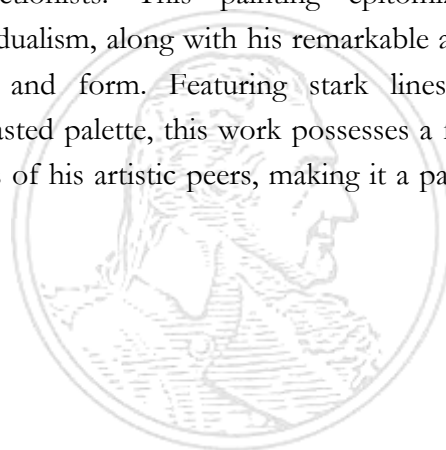
The highlight of the sale, M. F. Husain's *Untitled*, oil on canvas (*above left*- estimate: \$500,000-700,000), from the Abrams Family Collection is a *tour de force*. With monumental scale, sophisticated subtlety of line and a classical palette, *Untitled* depicts five women in a joyous dance of life. Referred to as the 'Picasso of India' by *Forbes* magazine and a founding member of the revolutionary Progressive Artists Group (PAG), Husain developed a style that elegantly fused native Indian and the foreign influences of European Modernism. This outstanding work, with its subtle colors and monumental stature presents Husain's dexterity-- which developed from his humble beginnings as a billboard painter.

Another highlight of the sale is M. F. Husain's *Culture of the Streets*, circa 1980's (*page 1, right*- estimate: \$12,000–18,000), a group of thirty two color photographs. This photographic exploration of India's rich and vibrant street culture illustrates the fascinating juxtaposition between the urban landscape of the Indian under-classes, and the glitzy imagery used in Indian cinema.

Representing F. N. Souza's never before seen New York oeuvre, Christie's is pleased to present five exceptional works from the Estate of F. N. Souza, including *Tom B. Scott Jr., Vice President U.S. Savings & Loan League*, 1968 (*right*- estimate: \$200,000-300,000). With its vibrant colors, exhilarating lines and poignant socio-economic subtext, this painting is a testament of Souza's ability to constantly reinvent and refine his prodigious style. The bold delineation of the financier, with its black contours, dangling tendrils and protruding eyes silhouetted against a void of silver spray paint reflects Souza's personal encounter with poverty and isolation upon moving to New York and his ability to sustain his own particular style within a new terrain or life and art.



Also among the highlights is V. S. Gaitonde's *Untitled*, 1965 (*left*- estimate: \$300,000-500,000). Known for his stark independence and distinctive artistic identity, Gaitonde is recognized among India's foremost abstractionists. This painting epitomizes Gaitonde's individualism, along with his remarkable ability to convey color and form. Featuring stark lines and a highly contrasted palette, this work possesses a freshness that is rare within both his paintings, and the paintings of his artistic peers, making it a particularly salient example of Gaitonde's highly coveted work.





Featuring among the contemporary highlights in the auction is cutting-edge artist, Ravinder Reddy's *Untitled* (left- estimate: \$150,000-200,000). Reddy references ancient Indian sculptural traditions in his massive polyester-resin heads. The glamorous gilt head of a woman is a fabulous example of Reddy's 'super-sizing' technique where he inflates the busts of traditional Indian goddesses into gargantuan proportions. The artist imbues his work with a sense of serenity and docility while at the same time these brightly colored and gilded sculptures possess many of the characteristics of Pop Art.

Surendran Nair's *Forty Winks – 1* (*Corollary Mythologies*), 1997 (right- estimate: \$70,000 – 90,000) is from his celebrated 'Corollary Mythologies' series. *Forty Winks – 1* is an excellent portrayal of the artist's ability to fuse mythology and the visual aspects from both Western and Indian art as a means of initiating new and idiosyncratic icons. Here, the subject is depicted with an umbilical 'thread of life' stemming from the abdomen, communicating notions of belonging and decent, that run throughout the 'Corollary Mythologies' series. For this work, Nair implements a range of religious and cultural iconography, which ultimately constructs a rich visual lineage of cultural and artistic histories.



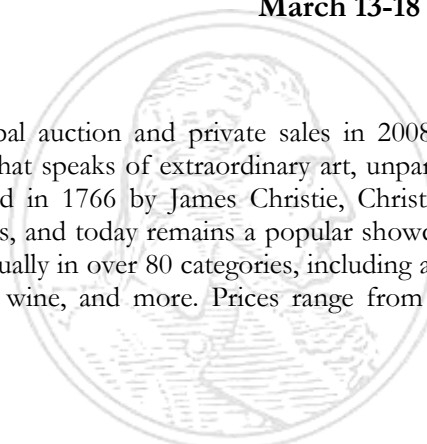
Another highlight comes from Rashid Rana, Pakistan's most celebrated and well-known artist. *Twins*, 2007, (estimate: \$40,000-60,000) depicts the twin towers of the World Trade Center as a composite image made from 'pixels' of everyday street Pakistani street scene. Rana uses his native urban environment for inspiration and combines the two cultures tackling the underlying issues of inequality and violence binding them.

Auction: South Asian Modern + Contemporary Art
Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

March 19, 2009
March 13-18

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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