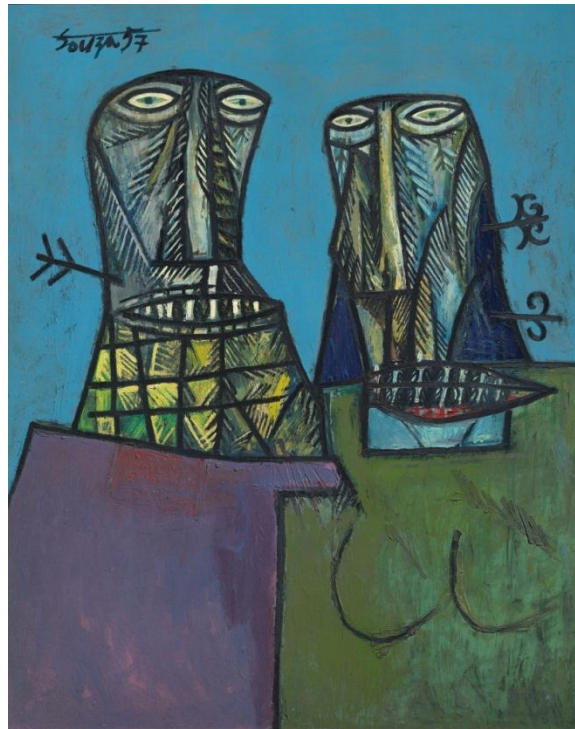


CHRISTIE'S

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SOUZA DOUBLE-PORTRAIT LEADS SALE

PRIVATE COLLECTION OF DUTCH GALLERIST, WILLEM BAARS,
FRIEND TO CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ARTISTS, TO BE OFFERED



Francis Newton Souza, *Man & Woman Grinding Their Teeth*, 1957. Lot 10
Estimate: £1-1.5 million
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London – Indian Modern masters and artists at the forefront of the contemporary scene, representing both the creative vitality of arts rooted in rich traditions, and the dynamism of India's newest generation of artists, will be represented in the sale of Modern and Contemporary South Asian art at Christie's London on **June 11**. Leading the sale is *Man & Woman Grinding Their Teeth* by Francis Newton Souza, a monumental painting from 1957 which is estimated at £1,000,000-1,500,000 (\$1,700,000-2,500,000). Works from the Collection of Willem Baars, a pioneering Dutch gallerist, critic and curator which includes an outstanding selection of contemporary works, will also be among the highlights.

This will be the second of this year's four sales for this international department which will conclude with our second sale in India, to be held in Mumbai this December. Christie's are also proud to be

supporting the **M.F. Husain: Master of Modern Indian Painting**, a special exhibition of his final nine paintings, running at the V&A Museum in London from 28 May until 27 July.

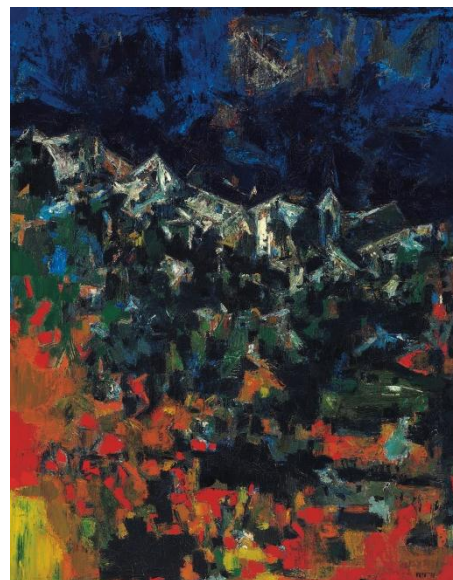


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The striking and rare double portrait (see page 1) painted by Francis Newton Souza (1924-2002) in 1957 borrows from traditional African art and cubism with both figures painted with mask-like faces and elongated features. The large-scale work was formerly owned by Harold Kovner, a wealthy American hospital owner and collector who was a great supporter of the artist during a critical period. Souza is seen with the work in his studio here in a photograph taken by Ida Kar in the same year it was painted. A second portrait, also formerly from the collection of Mr. Kovner, *Imbecile Girl in a Green Blouse*, an arresting three-quarter length portrait of a half-naked girl set against a crimson background, is estimated at £120,000-180,000

(\$210,000-300,000 – lot 11).

Elsewhere in the sale, and from a private collection in Canada, is a work painted two years after Raza became the first foreign artist to win the prestigious Prix de la Critique in Paris. *L'Orage* represents the epitome of the artist's experimentation with colour and structure in the 1950s and is one of the artist's largest and most ambitious works of the period. Raza uses gestural brushstrokes and a heavy impasto to build up this stormy autumnal scene, both stylistic devices that foreshadow his later, more abstract landscapes of the 1960s and 70s, (estimate: £300,000-500,000 / \$510,000-840,000 – lot 50).

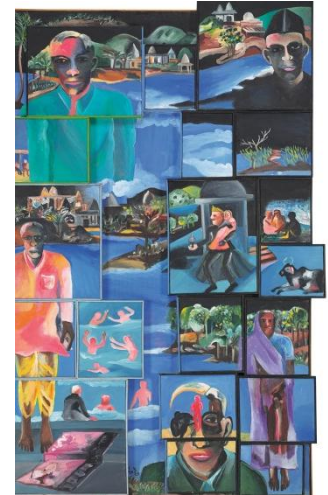


Alongside the Souza from the leading modern works in the sale is M.F. Husain's (1913-2011) *Untitled (Horses)* from 1965, an iconic representation of the powerful yet sensuous creatures that remained so central to M.F. Husain's career galloping towards a black sun (estimate: £180,000-220,000 / \$310,000-370,000 – lot 66). *Untitled (Elephant Family)*, from the 1960s with thick overlapping brushstrokes revealing the head and trunks of the intimate family group is also included in the sale (estimate: £90,000-120,000 / \$160,000-200,000 – lot 51). Tyeb Mehta (1925-2009) is represented by a vivid portrait in orange and blue, *Untitled (Seated Woman)* from the 1960s, a period when Mehta was experimenting with the use of

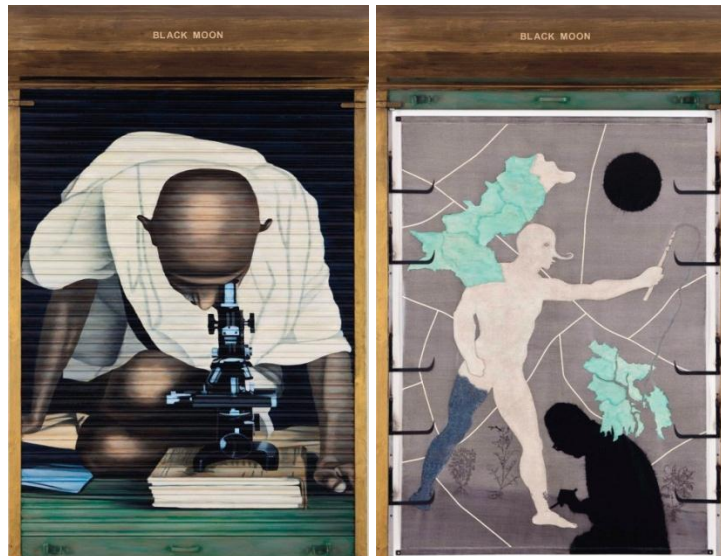
texture through thick impasto and bright colours having seen the work of the European expressionists on a visit to England in 1959 (lot 56).



Arpita Singh's (b. 1937) distinctive free-flowing composition *Untitled (Bhisma)*, addresses challenging social and political issues. In this oil from 1997 she depicts the story of Bhisma showing the final scene from the great battle fought between the Kauravas and the Pandavas in the Mahabharata epic. The warring sides are shown as modern day rival gangs waging a street war. It is estimated at £80,000-120,000 (\$140,000-200,000 – lot 6).



Bhupen Khakhar's (1934-2004) *Night* was shown in the exhibition for the artist held the year before his death in 2003 in Mumbai's National Gallery of Modern Art – a measure of the importance of this large-scale. *Night* is inexorably linked to Bhupen Khakhar's own background and sexuality, himself marginalized as an urban lower-middle class homosexual in India. A collage of various portraits and landscape including a group chatting on a beach, playing in the water to a larger solitary figure staring straight out of the picture, it is estimated at £180,000-250,000 (\$310,000-420,000- lot 9).



Atul Dodiya's (b. 1959) *Black Moon* is a traditional metal shop shutter painted in acrylic. Alluding to India's commercial capital and his home town, Mumbai, Dodiya's 'shutter works', involve a careful juxtaposition of images which he chooses to reveal or hide. The outer surface is Dodiya's version of the famous 1940 photograph of Gandhi. When the shutter is lifted, Dodiya presents himself as

artist, in silhouette under a black moon as if caught unawares working on the canvas. The whip-wielding painted protagonist happens to be caught between the maps of Pakistan and Bangladesh, a commentary on political and national violence, so anti-thetical to everything that Gandhi stood for. It is estimated at £70,000-90,000 / \$120,000-150,000 (lot 7).

Since the 1990s when Willem Baars made his first trip to India as a backpacking 19-year-old, he has become a great patron, respected collector and gallerist who was instrumental in making Amsterdam the unlikely artistic and creative haven for many Indian contemporary artists. His exceptional collection is a product of passion, a keen eye and, perhaps most important, a great friend to the many artists he met on his many trips to India. Artists such as Jitish Kallat, Bharti Kher, Bhupen Khakhar and Bose Krishnamachari would visit him in Amsterdam, riding on the back of Baar's bicycle. Thirty-one pieces from Baar's collection are now offered for sale in the auction including Jitish Kallat's (b.1974) *FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)* from 2003 showing the head of a boy in triplicate with the bold FAQ in the centre of the canvas (estimate: £40,000-60,000 / \$68,000-100,000 – lot 41).



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Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2013 that totalled £4.5 billion/ \$7.1 billion, making it the highest annual total in Christie's history. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers around 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totalled £760.5 million (\$1.19 billion) in 2013, an increase of 20% on the previous year.

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.

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