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, Plot #4 & 5, Scheme 7, Block 4  
Dhoraji  
Karachi  
Pakistan

FRONT PAGE

FATHER FIGURE

South Asian Art through the eyes of Wahab Jaffer  
Rangoonwala Foundation



Signed Photograph of Latif Kapadia, Bashir Mirza, Wahab Jaffer and Francis Newton Souza  
FN Souza's first exhibition at Indus Gallery October 1975  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive



Bashir Mirza and Marjorie Husain  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive

## **Father Figure: South Asian Art Through the Eyes of Wahab Jaffer**

In today's world, collecting art has become a primarily luxury investment. The relationship between the artist and collector is often purely transactional, but for Wahab Jaffer, the connections he formed were far deeper. As a patron, he was able to support the artists, whilst they offered him artistic inspiration.

*Father Figure: South Asian Art through the Eyes of Wahab Jaffer* offers visitors an introduction to Jaffer's collection and own works, whilst considering the relationship between collector and artist. This is a particularly significant discussion in light of the recent rise in young collectors and patronage in South Asia. The exhibition asks: what does it mean to collect works of art within a society where there is a lack of institutional structures? How do we host and build the contemporary structures of art, and its history with these collectors? And finally, what is the responsibility of such art collectors, if there is any?

Focusing on the figure within South Asia art, the first half of the exhibition centres around one of Wahab Jaffer's artworks from 1984 entitled *Father Figure*. The second half offers an insight into abstraction within South Asian art, centring around the first artwork created by Jaffer in 1973. While reviewing these works, the exhibition takes visitors on a tour of how South Asian art was depicted via selected artists, bringing to light their relationship with Jaffer and how these relationships influenced the collector as an artist.

## **An Introduction to Wahab Jaffer & His Collection**

Wahab Jaffer is known as one of the most prominent and prolific collectors of South Asian art. Based in between Karachi, Pakistan and Toronto, Canada, Jaffer began collecting works of art in 1969 from artist Ali Imam. As their friendship grew, so did Jaffer's passion and fascination for art. In February of 1972, he joined Imam's studio art classes at his home, which later became Indus Gallery (1971 – 2010), a well-known Karachi art institution. Jaffer attended these art classes three times a week for six months. Imam was particularly impressed by Jaffer's attention to the abstract style and encouraged him to continue painting beyond the classes. As Jaffer's practice grew, so did his collection.

As a regular guest at Imam's home, Jaffer was introduced to several significant artists including Sadequain, Ismail Gulgee, Jamil Naqsh, Ahmed Parvez and Bashir Mirza amongst many others. He formed a particularly important relationship with the artist Ahmed Parvez, who influenced Jaffer not only as a patron, but also as an artist. In *Image & Identity: Painting & Sculpture in Pakistan 1947 – 1997* Akbar Naqvi claims: 'Wahab had learnt to paint technically from Ali Imam and stylistically from Parvez' (p.115).

Jaffer also formed close relationships with Bashir Mirza and Indian artist Francis Newton Souza, who ended up living in Jaffer's home for periods of time. This led to Jaffer creating collaborative works with several of the artists including Mirza, but also to the formation of a close circle of artists in Karachi.

Since Imam exhibited artists from all around the subcontinent, Jaffer was able to create an extensive collection of South Asian art from his gallery purchases within Karachi, but encouraged by his friends such as Ahmed Parvez, he also collected works whilst travelling abroad for business.

Many of the artists in his collection, who were emerging at the time are now referred to as Modern Masters. As such, the collection has become an important microcosm of South Asian Art history.



Ismail Gulgee, Wahab Jaffer, Ali Imam, Mrs. Zareen Gulgee, Mrs. Nighat Sultan Ahmed and Mrs. Shahnaz Ali Imam  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive



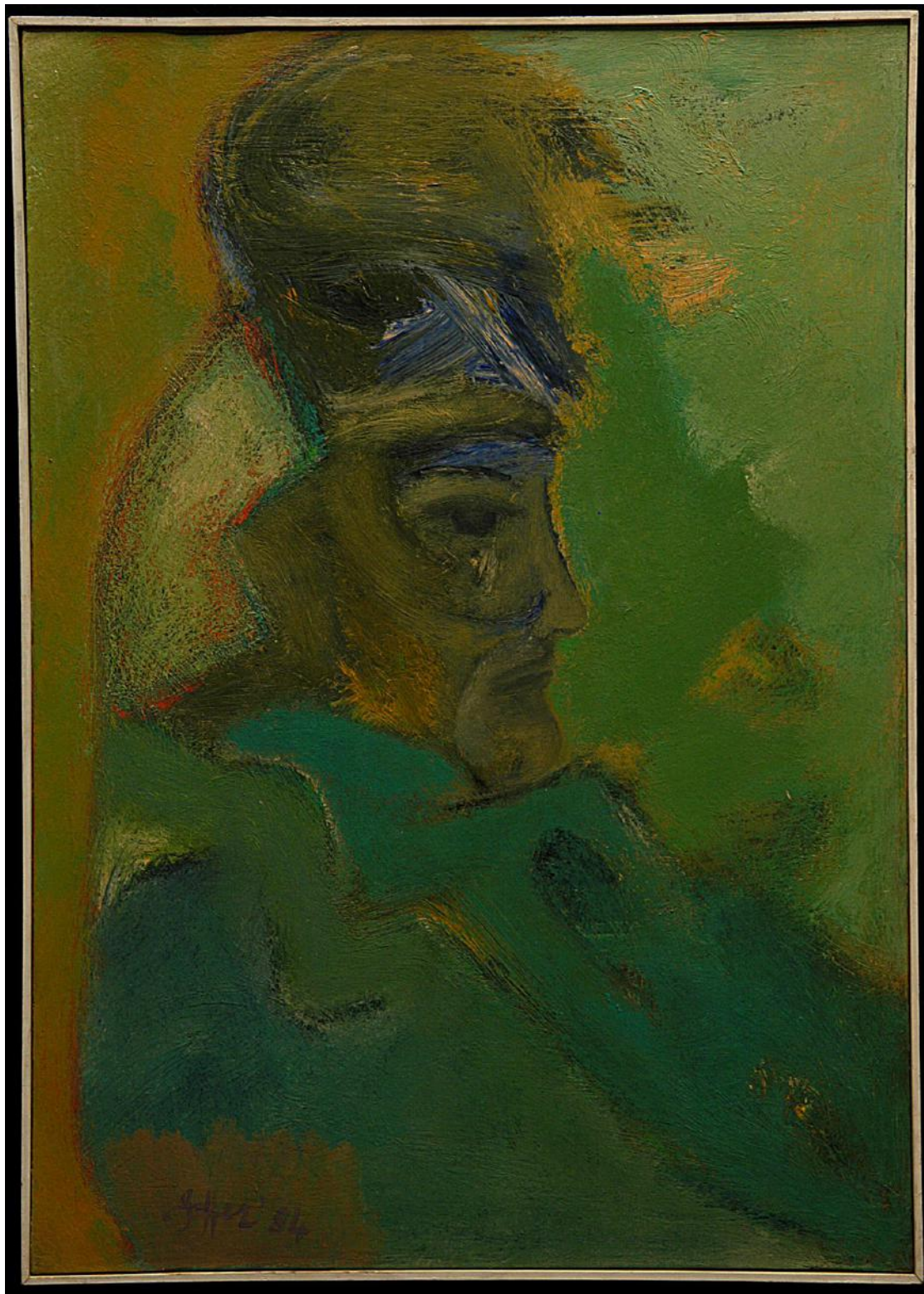
Sadequain, Wahab Jaffer and A.S. Nagi  
Photo Courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive

Wahab Jaffer (b. 1941)  
*Father Figure* (1984)  
Acrylic on Canvas  
Signed and dated 'Jaffer 84' lower left  
Signature, date, medium and price inscribed on reverse  
28.2 x 19.9in  
71.6 x 50.5cm

This work was created by Jaffer in 1984. The Soviet Ambassador was invited to the exhibition and admired this figure work greatly. After the exhibition ended, the painting had not sold. Imam and Jaffer had the idea of presenting the work to the Soviet Ambassador, however he had already left the country by then. Jaffer decided to title the work *Father Figure* alluding to the Soviet Union's large presence in South Asia at that time.



Image of Wahab Jaffer in his home  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive







Kazi Abdul Baset (1935 – 2002)  
*Untitled*  
Oil on Board  
Signed lower right  
23.5 x 16in  
59.7 x 40.6cm

Acquired from a Private Collection in Pakistan



Shahid Sajjad (1936 – 2014)  
*Untitled* (1975)  
Bronze on Board  
Signed and dated 'Shahid Sajjad – 75' lower right  
7.3 x 10in  
18.5 x 25.4cm

Acquired from Indus Gallery in the 1970s

## Ali Imam & Wahab Jaffer

Jaffer credits Imam for the development of his artistic practice and patronage of South Asian Art, as it began in his studio. When it came to collecting artworks, Imam always gave Jaffer first pick of any pieces he acquired from private collectors, before putting them on the market. Jaffer eventually became the primary buyer at Indus Gallery exhibitions. Even after Imam's death in 2002, Jaffer continues to be inspired by the legacy he left.

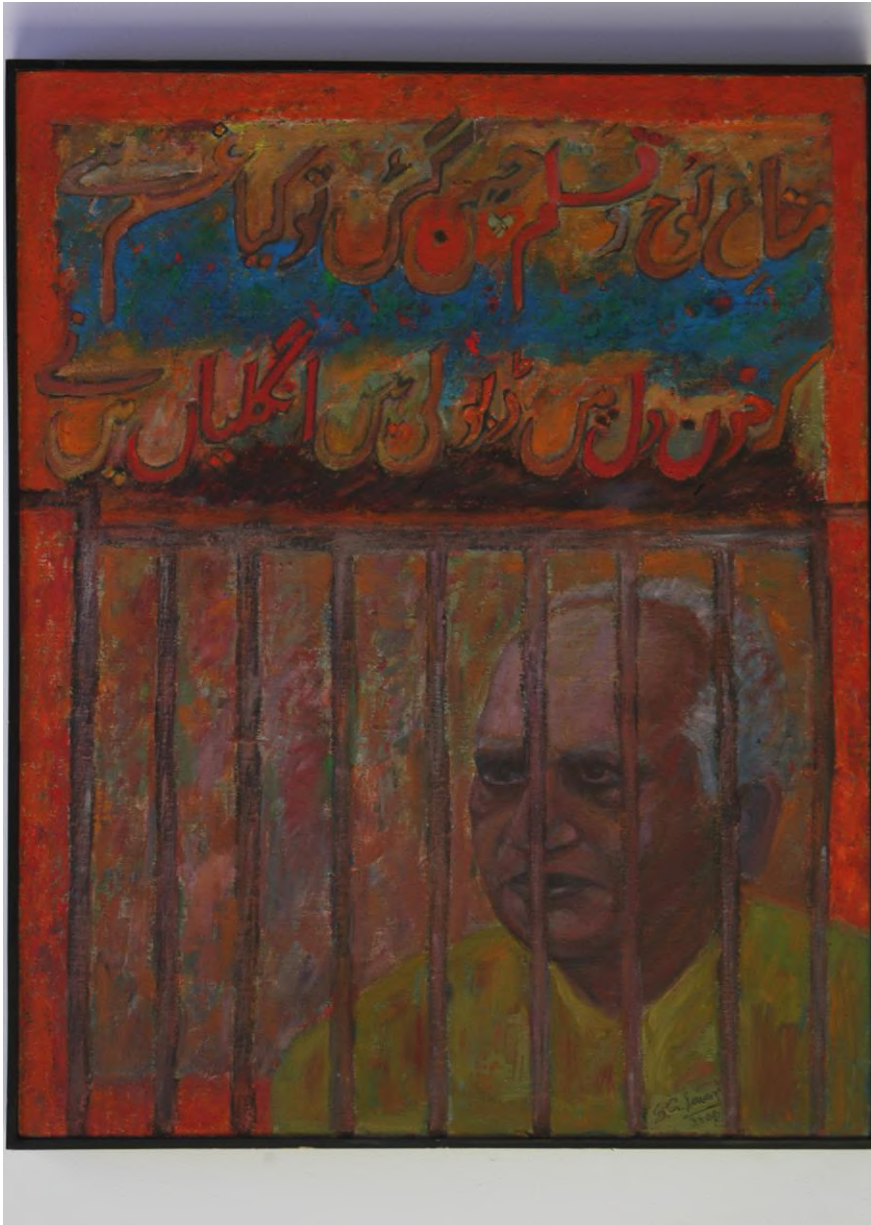
This artwork is a portrait of Faiz Ahmed Faiz in jail with verses from his poem *Santza*

*Maata-e-loh-o-qalam chin gayi to kya ghum hai  
Ki khun-e-dil men dubo li hain ungliyan main ne  
(Urdu)*

If they snatch my ink and pen, I should not complain,  
For I have dipped my fingers, in the blood of my heart, I should not complain  
(English translation)



Ali Imam and Wahab Jaffer with Painting  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive

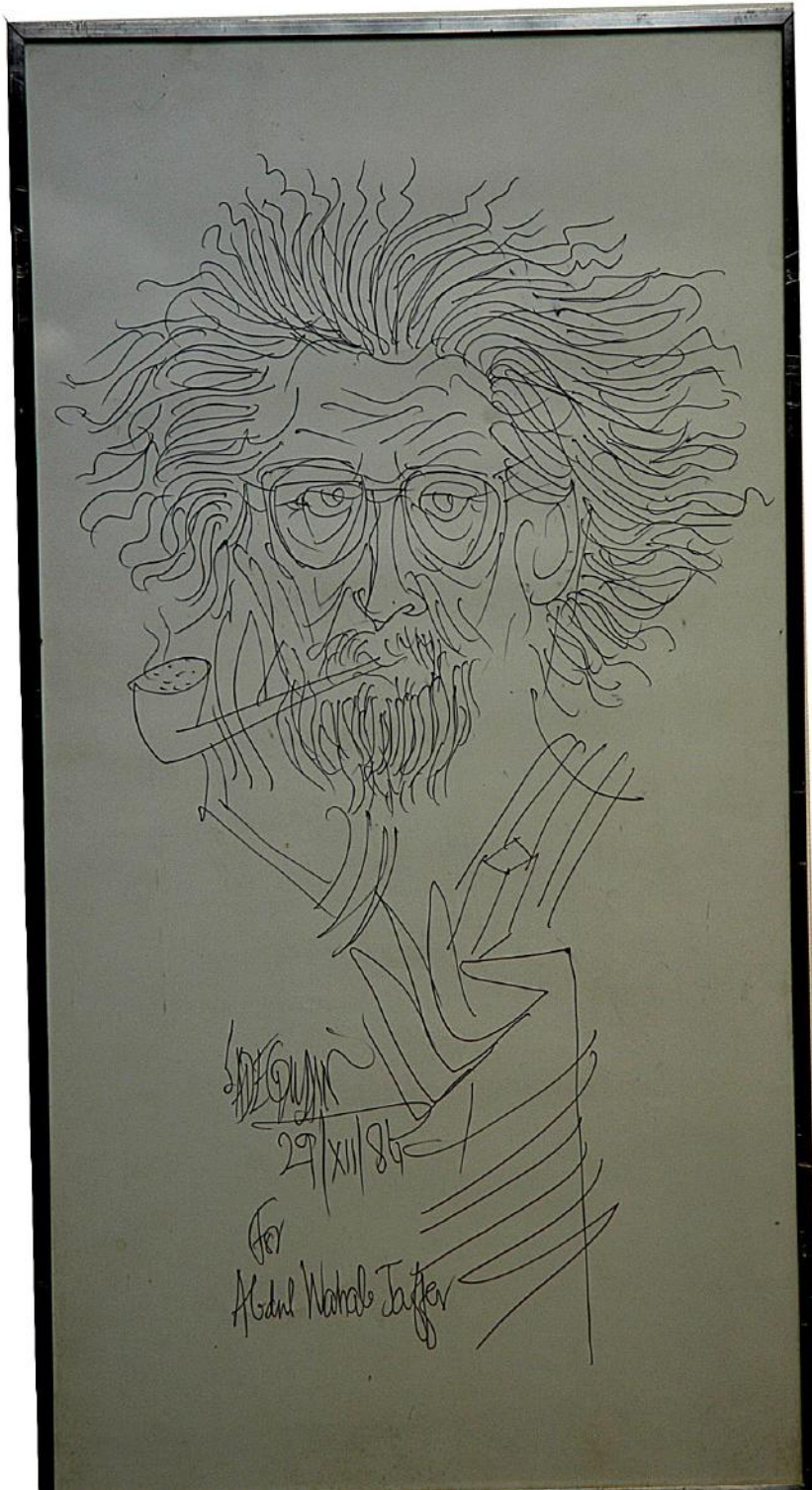


Ali Imam (1924 – 2002)  
*Portrait of Faiz Ahmed Faiz* (2000)  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed and dated lower right 'SA Imam 2000'  
Signature and date inscribed on reverse  
30 x 24in  
76.2 x 61cm

Acquired directly from the artist in 2000

## **Sadequain**

Sadequain is recognised as one of the most internationally well-known artists from Pakistan. This portrait of Ali Imam was done by the artist as he lay in his hospital bed. Jaffer was visiting Sadequain as he had been admitted due to serious liver damage. While they were chatting, Sadequain was inspired and created this sketch portrait of Ali Imam within three to four minutes, according to Jaffer.



Sadequain (1923 – 1987)  
*Portrait of Ali Imam* (1984)  
Pen and Ink Paper  
Signed and dated 'Sadequain 29/XII/84 For Abdul Wahab Jaffer' centre left  
23 x 12in  
58.42 x 30.5cm



Sadequain (1923 – 1987)  
*Sketch of the Great Poet Ghalib* (1968)  
Marker on Paper  
Signed and dated in Urdu 'Sadequain 68' centre right  
11.9 x 8.9in  
30.2 x 22.6cm

Acquired from Private Collector



Francis Newton Souza (1924 – 2002)  
*Untitled* (1962)  
Pencil on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Souza 62' centre right  
19.2 x 13.4in  
48.8 x 30cm

Acquired from Souza's first exhibition at Indus Gallery in 1975



## Salima Hashmi

Although better known as an academic, professor and curator, Hashmi has been a prolific artist for years. She worked, and continues to work around the themes of politics, human rights and the patriarchy within Pakistan.

*The Life and Times of...* was part of a series done in the early 1980s, against the backdrop of extreme repression during the regime of military dictator General Zia Ul Haq. Women's rights were almost entirely abolished and edicts of obscenity took place on a day to day basis. Hashmi chose to look at the female figure as 'a site of rebellion as well as the embodiment of lyrical beauty and physical desire.' She used newspaper clippings as collage to frame the context of the work and juxtapose the macrocosm of conflict in the country.

Hashmi also states: 'It may be mentioned that exhibiting such works was not without risks at the time, and I salute the late Ali Imam for the space his gallery provided in Karachi, as well as the Rohtas Gallery in Islamabad.'



Salima Hashmi (b. 1942)  
*The Life and Times of...* (1983)  
Mixed Media on Paper  
Signed 'SH' lower left  
Signature, date, title, medium and price inscribed on reverse  
28 x 36in  
71.1 x 91.4cm

Acquired from Indus Gallery, 1983



Quddus Mirza (b. 1961)  
*Sleep Walker Holding a Flower* (1989)  
Acrylic on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Quddus Mirza 89' upper right  
16.4 x 11.6in  
41.7 x 29.5cm

'The work has genesis in several sources, including Eric Fischl's painting *Sleepwalker*, Indian miniature painting, and art of untrained hands. Like Fischl's, it has a strong sexual connotation. Elements from Indian miniature painting are visible in its structure, rendering and chromatic scheme. The dreamlike air in the work was intended, since in a sexual act – or in any act of our life, for that matter — we are unable to differentiate between reality and its perception, between memory and imagination, between realisation and recollection. I feel that dream is another side/kind of reality, so I tried to present a person on the brink of two existences/experiences.' – Quddus Mirza

Acquired from Chawkandi Gallery, 1992.



Quddus Mirza (b. 1961)  
*This is a Cancelled Portrait*  
Title inscribed on reverse  
Mixed Media on Canvas  
15.7 x 15.9in  
39.9 x 40.4cm

'A portrait, normally, is about identity, individuality and recognition, but in the painting, you don't see any of these *features*. Any link to identification is crossed out. The work deals with the situation in a society in which you are required to present your identity, produce your belongings and prove your innocence – in the times of terror and turmoil. Facing that perpetual trial, the man has disappeared in the mid or/and under layers of paint, suggesting that the only home of a painter is his paint – his art.' – Quddus Mirza

Acquired from artist Nahid Raza.

Bashir Mirza (1941 – 2000)  
*Head in Ochre* (1978 - 9)  
*The Lonely Girl* series  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed 'Bashir Mirza' upper left  
Signature, date and location inscribed on reverse  
23.7 x 17.2in  
60.2 x 43.7cm

*The Lonely Girl* series was first presented to Ali Imam, Maqsood Ali and Gulgee in 1971 at Indus Gallery. At first, the women were fully nude, however he was advised to add clothing as he would not be able to exhibit the works in Pakistan, where they would be showcased. The series was already considered controversial due to the suggestive positions of the female figures. The work was shown at Indus Gallery in two separate exhibitions in the 1970s. His artistic influences for the exhibition include Mirza's professor Shakir Ali and Modern Indian Master painter, Amrita Sher Gil (Naqvi, p. 166-7).

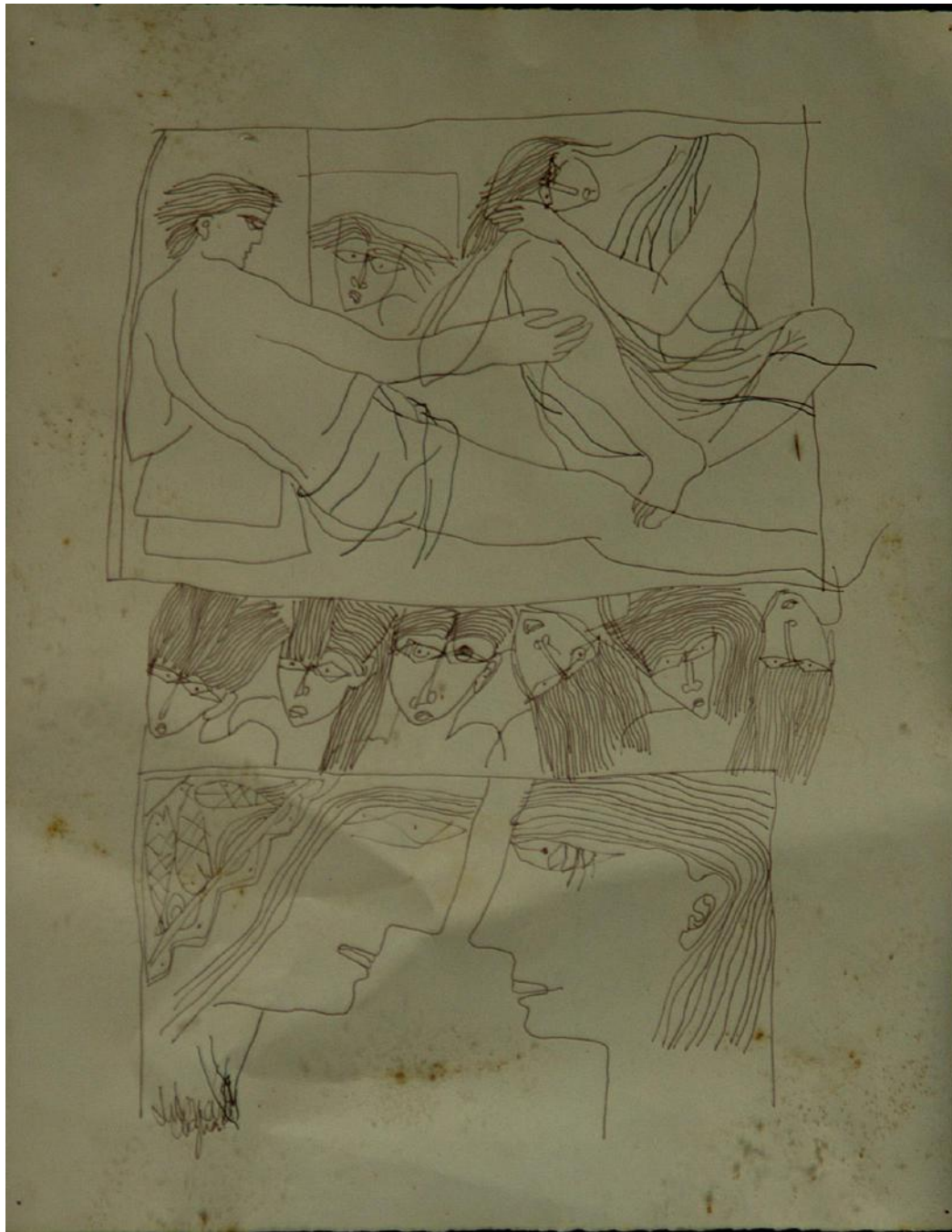
Jaffer bought this work directly from a private collector. He immediately took it back to Mirza to show him the acquisition, after which Mirza began to clean the work for him. Jaffer credits Mirza as a major influence on his artistic practice.





Bashir Mirza (1941 – 2000)  
Figure with Bird (1965)  
Pencil on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Bashir Mirza 1965' lower left  
29 x 22.9in  
73.7 x 58.2cm

Acquired directly from the artist.



Lubna Latif Agha (1949 – 2012)  
*Untitled*  
Pen and Ink on Paper  
Signed 'Lubna Agha' lower left  
Signature inscribed on reverse  
13.5 x 10.7in  
34.3 x 27.2cm

Acquired from Chawkdani Gallery, Karachi.



Zahoor Ul Akhlaq (1941 – 1999)  
*Untitled (Portrait of Jamil Naqsh)*  
Oil on Canvas  
35 x 45in  
88.9 x 114.3cm

'This unusual figurative work by Zahoor is striking for its portrayal of another painter, his contemporary, Jamil Naqsh. The work utilises formal elements that he was experimenting with at the time (line work which was inspired by Islamic Calligraphy), constructing a stylised portrayal of Naqsh, and his own symbolic use of pigeons. Akhlaq's use of disembodied floating forms against a flattened perspective, and the scratched textures and layers allow the viewers eye to wander. The depiction of hands in the work is noteworthy, both on the left side, subtle against the white pigeon and then again holding a bird on the right has a visceral primal quality. The iconography of the hand is one Zahoor would employ and experiment with consistently in his oeuvre, in painting, printmaking and logo design.' – Nurjahan Akhlaq

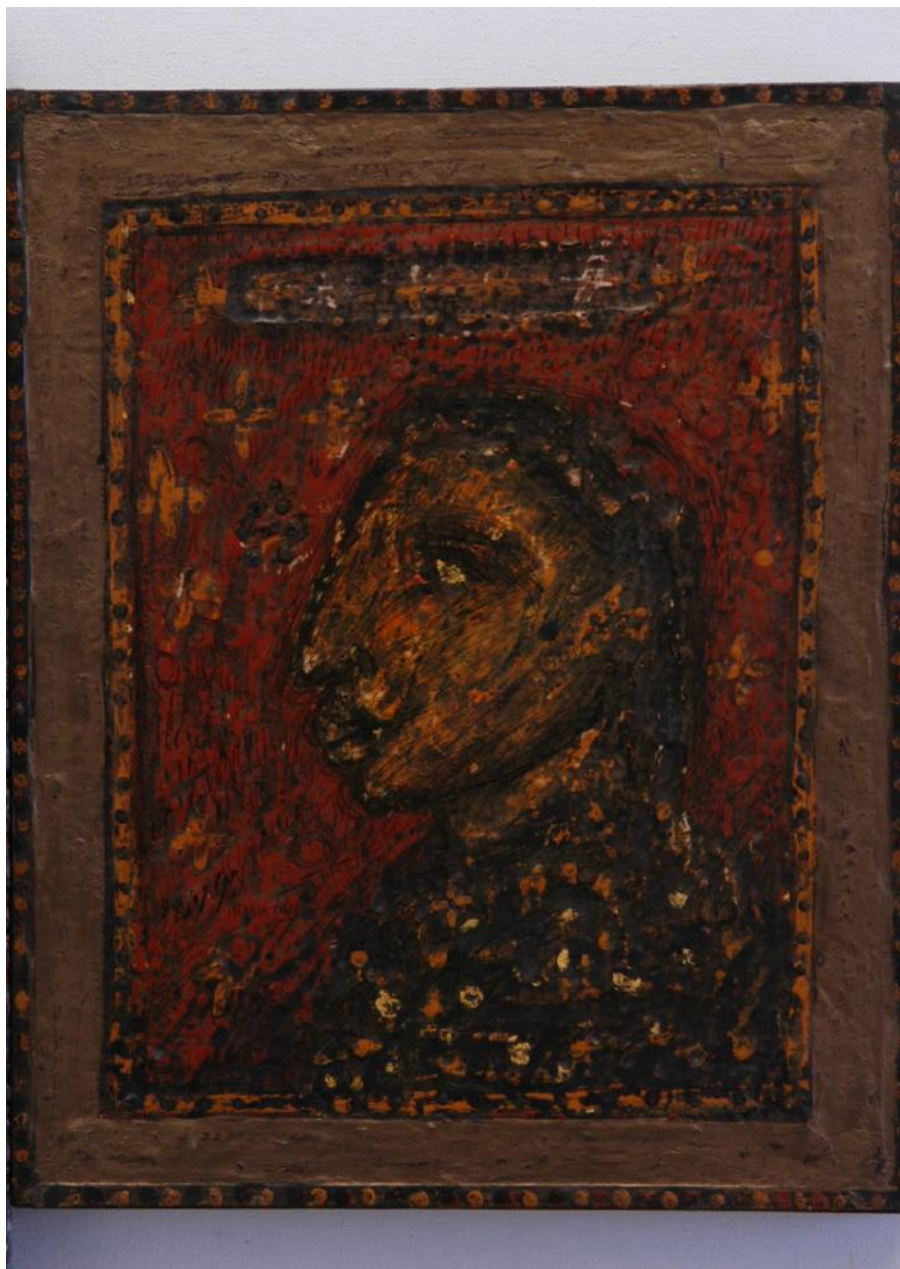


Image of Zahoor Ul Akhlaq with Jamil Naqsh and Shahid Sajjad  
Photo Courtesy of the Estate of Zahoor ul Akhlaq



Zahoor Ul Akhlaq (1941 – 1999)  
*Untitled (Portrait of Jamil Naqsh)*  
Oil on Canvas  
35 x 34.5in  
88.9 x 87.63cm

Acquired from fellow artists Maqsood Ali



Meher Afroz (b.1948)  
*Untitled* (1997)  
Mixed Media on Gesso  
Signed in Urdu, 'Meher Afroz' lower left  
Signature and date inscribed on reverse  
15.6 x 12.6in  
39.6 x 32cm

Acquired from Chawkandi Gallery in 1997/1998



Nahid Raza (b. 1948)

*Untitled*

Acrylic on Board

Signed and dated 'Nahid '96' lower left

Date and price inscribed on reverse

13.7 x 9.7in

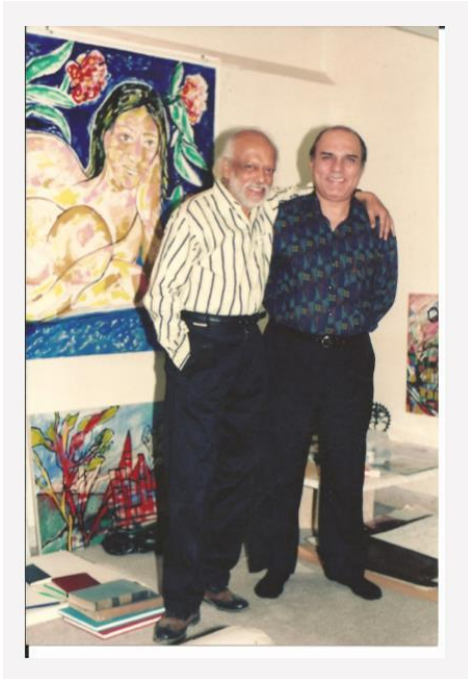
34.8 x 24.6cm

Acquired from Chawkandi Gallery

## Francis Newton Souza

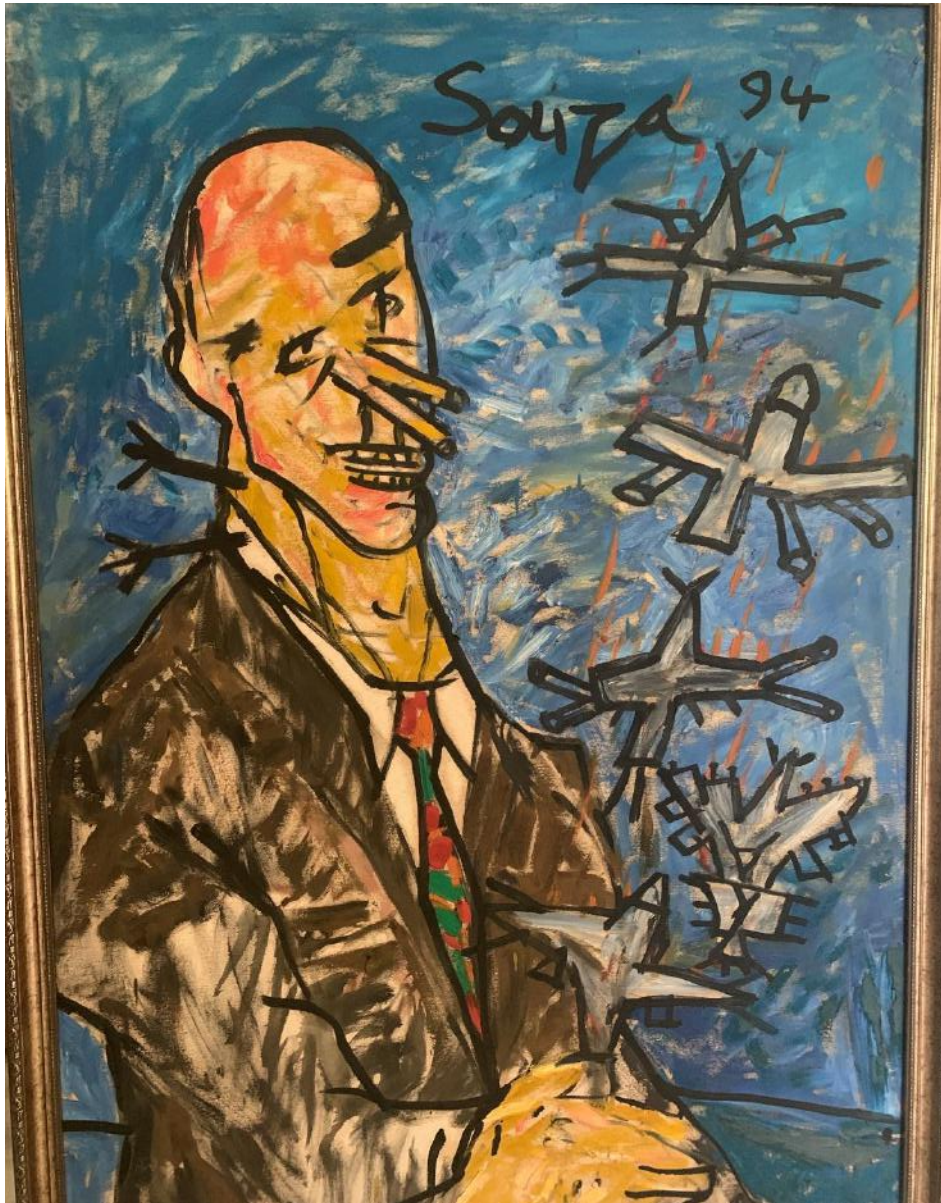
Souza was a frequent guest at the home of Jaffer, where he painted this particular work. Souza came to visit Karachi for the first time due to Victor Anant, an Indian writer based in London and a friend of John Berger's. Anant wrote to Jaffer to let him know that Souza was travelling to India and insisted that he also visit Karachi and meet Jaffer.

Jaffer introduced Souza to several different people in Karachi, including Imam. Souza also struck up a friendship with Bashir Mirza. He stayed with him in 1988, after having stayed with Jaffer previously, and was able to help him through a creative block, which eventually led Mirza to work with acrylics (Naqvi, p.165-6) As their friendship grew, and Souza's visits to Karachi became more frequent, he began to exhibit at Indus Gallery whilst also creating several works in Jaffer's home.



Francis Newton Souza and Wahab Jaffer  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive

Acquired directly from the artist in 1994.



Francis Newton Souza (1924 – 2002)  
*Untitled* (1994)  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed and dated 'Souza 94' upper right  
Date and location inscribed on reverse  
47.5 x 29.5in  
120.7 x 75cm

## Ahmed Parvez

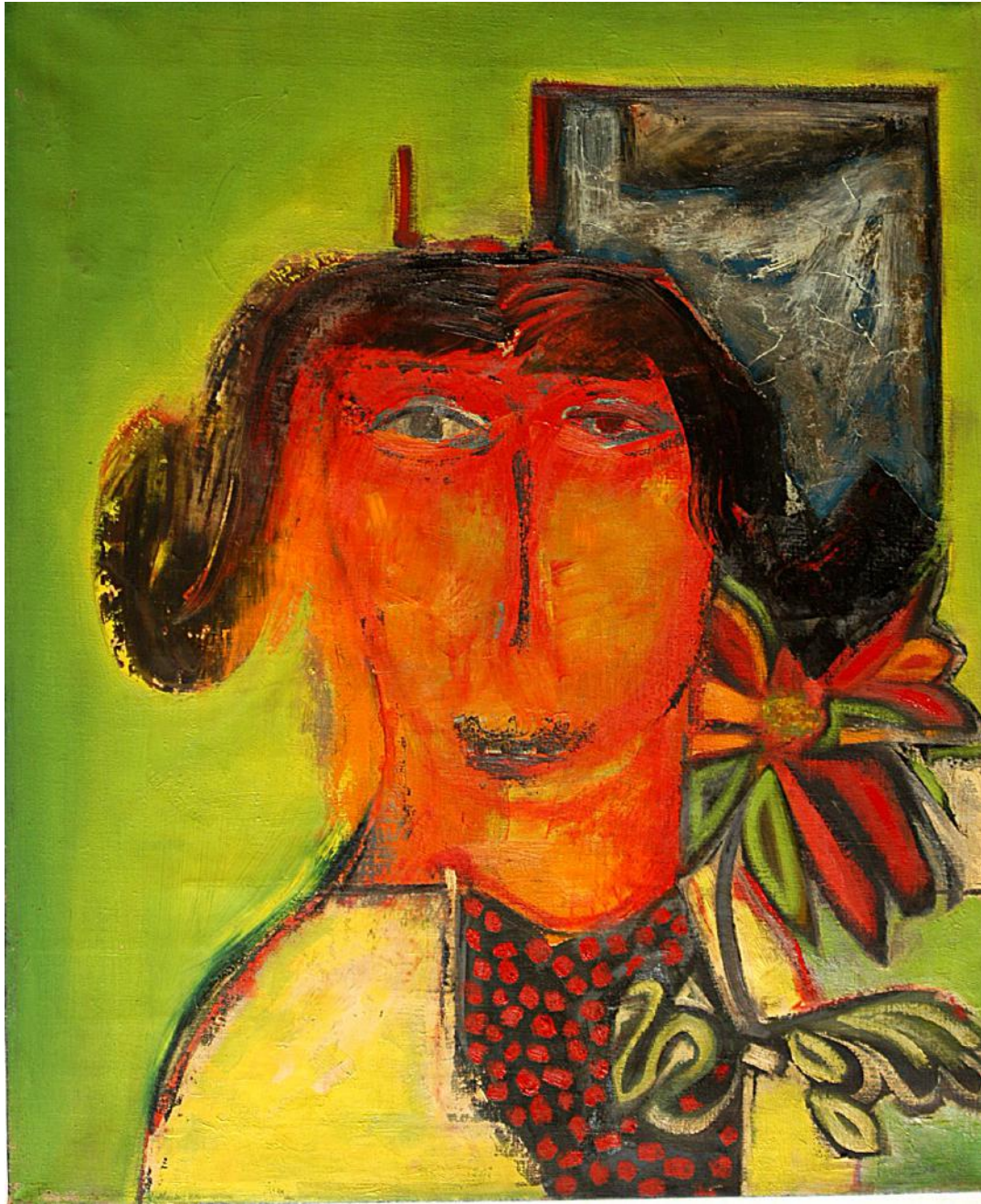
This portrait of a woman was defaced by Parvez as he quarrelled with the woman depicted. Jaffer cannot recall what the argument was about, however, Parvez was a passionate man who extended his emotions onto the canvas, which he taught Jaffer how to do as well.

In his early years, Parvez worked out of his uncle Jacobus Michael's commercial studio in Lahore and the figurative work he created during this time was more plump, solid and erotic as he surveyed the books on European masters, such as Pablo Picasso (Hassan, p.69). His style changed in later years influenced by his travels and his peers such as Francis Newton Souza. Like Souza, Parvez's emotions became more visible on canvas as he began to depict people and specifically, women he had relationships with.

This work was acquired by Jaffer from the owners of Gallerie International New York, Mr & Mrs Kalifano, after the gallery had shut down. Jaffer had asked Mrs. Kalifano, to bring Ahmed Parvez's works to his hotel. As he continued to travel to New York for business purposes, he was able to purchase more works by Parvez from Mr. and Mrs. Kalifano.



Wahab Jaffer and Mrs Kalifano with Paintings by Ahmed Parvez  
Photo Courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive  
Asia Art Archive



Ahmed Parvez (1926 – 1979)

*Untitled* (1966)

Oil on Canvas

Signed and dated 'Parvez '66' lower right

Signature, date and location inscribed on reverse

24 x 20in

61 x 50.8cm



Tassaduq Sohail (1930 – 2017)  
*Portrait* (1991)  
Oil on Board  
Signed 'SOHAIL' centre left  
Title and price inscribed on reverse  
4.3 x 3.4in  
10.9 x 8.6cm

This work was bought directly from the artist. Sohail painted his works to fit the frames he purchased from the UK hence the small sizes of some of the works he created.



## Zainul Abedin

Abedin moved to Pakistan after the 1947 partition, and then moved to Bangladesh in the 1970s, and frequently travelled throughout the subcontinent. He worked on creating works of art that depicted the people of Santhal, more specifically the women. This rare work of art illustrates three figures from the tribe. He was extremely aware of the social, political and economic battles Bangladesh had to fight for as the South Asian subcontinent divided, which led him to focus on the struggles of humanity, including his most well known works of art entitled *The Famine Series*.

Zainul Abedin (1914 – 1976)

*Three Figures* (1968)

Oil on Canvas

Signed and dated 'Zainul 68' lower right

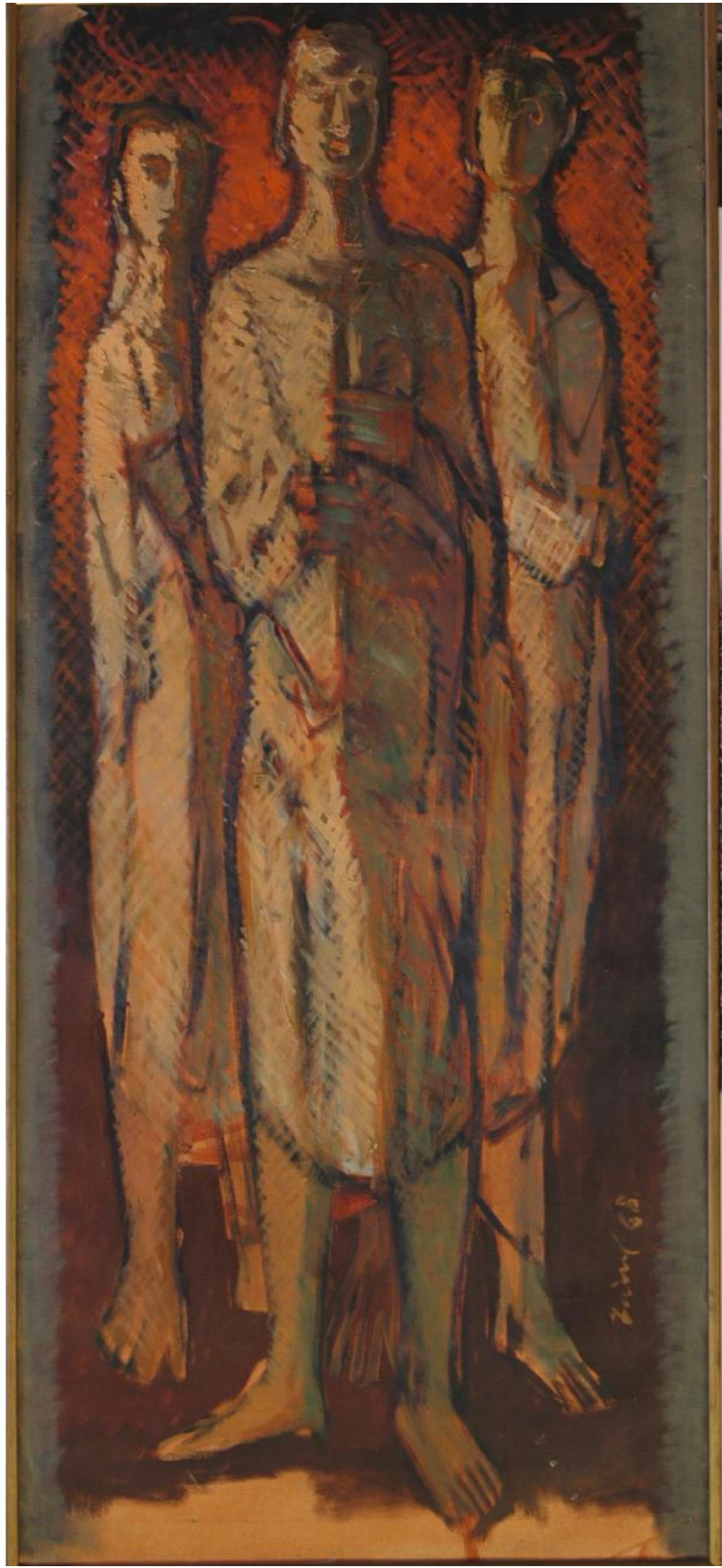
60.6 x 26.6in

153.9 x 67.6cm



Ismail Gulgee and guest examining Zainul Abedin artwork  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive

Acquired from Private Collector in Karachi.



## Wahab Jaffer & Abstraction

Wahab Jaffer (b. 1941)

*Untitled* (1973)

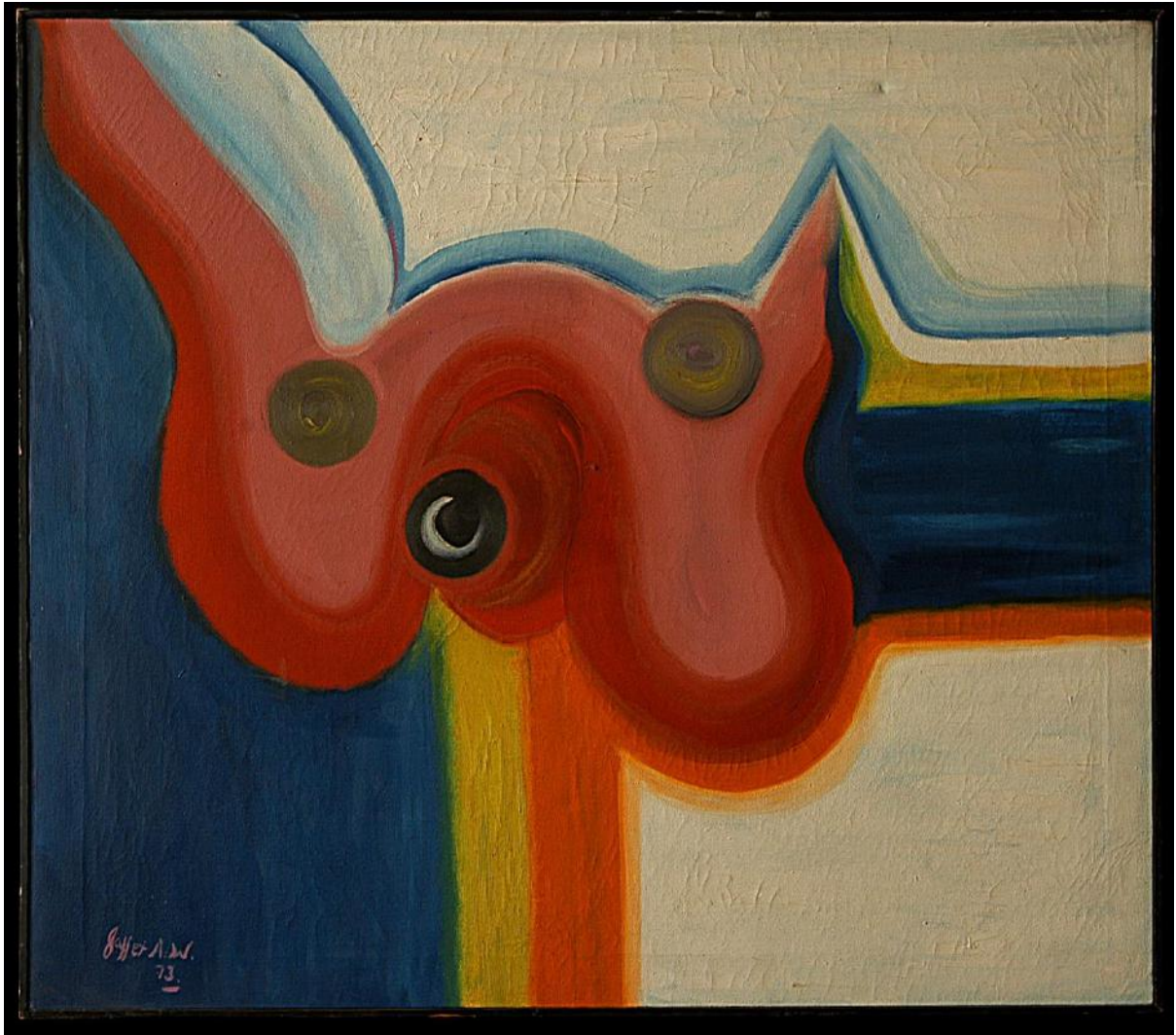
Oil on Canvas

Signed and dated 'Jaffer A.W. 1973' lower left

23.9 x 22.9in

60.7 x 58.2cm

This work of abstraction was one of the first artworks Jaffer created. He was in Ali Imam's studio class for painting and was told by Imam that he had captured the essence of abstraction quickly compared to others. Jaffer credits his practice of abstraction to artists Ali Imam, Bashir Mirza, Ahmed Parvez, Sadequain and Gulgee.



Ahmed Parvez (1926 – 1979)

*Untitled* (1969)

Oil on Canvas

Signed and dated 'Parvez '69' lower left

Signature and price inscribed on reverse

24 x 29.9in

61 x 75.9cm

Parvez and Jaffer were exceptionally close. In Akbar Naqvi's *Image & Identity: Painting and Sculpture in Pakistan 1947 – 1997* he speaks of their relationship: 'A few years before Parvez's death Wahab Jaffer gave him a roof over his head and hospitality in his home. He had a studio to himself and plenty of colour and canvas to paint....To have the master with him was a very exciting experience... he painted some of his most serendipitous paintings under Wahab Jaffer's roof, his last port of call' (p.115).

Acquired from Collectors Art Gallery, Karachi.







Ahmed Parvez (1926 – 1979)  
*Black Mound* (1968)  
Acrylic on Canvas  
Signature, title and date inscribed on reverse  
23.8 x 30in  
60.5 x 76.2cm

Acquired from Mr & Mrs Kalifano, after the closure of Gallerie International, New York.



Unver Shafi Khan  
*Untitled* (1986)  
Oil on Canvas  
Signature, date and price inscribed on reverse.  
28.1 x 20.1in  
71.4 x 51.1cm

Acquired from Indus Gallery, Karachi, in 1986. This was the first solo exhibition for the artist.

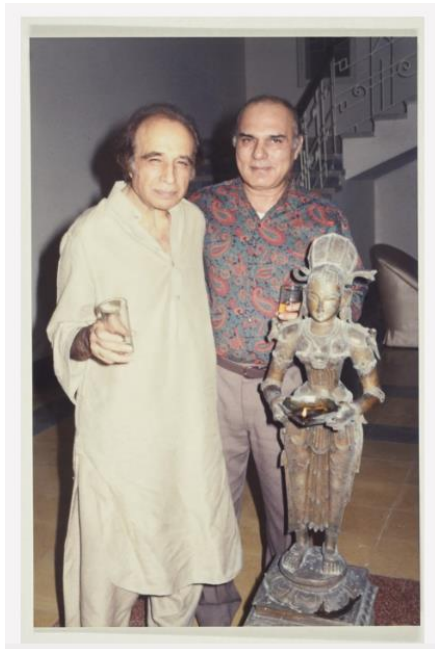
Francis Newton Souza  
*Untitled (Mosque) (1975)*  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed and dated 'Souza 75' upper left  
17 x 23in  
43.2 x 58.4cm

Newton Souza frequently visited Karachi and particularly enjoyed the train journey between the city and Lahore. He was often inspired by the landscape that he witnessed on the journey. This painting of the mosque was created during one such train ride. As the train sped by, he depicted what he saw, which was the jaunting image of the vertical building slightly angulated.



Sadequain  
*Bull in Studio Mirror* (1960)  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed and dated in Urdu 'Sadequain 6/60' on lower right  
Signature, title, date and location inscribed on reverse  
35 x 48in  
89 x 121.9cm

As Jaffer had a friendship with most artists living in Pakistan, specifically those in Karachi, he was able to barter deals with them. Gulgee visited Jaffer's home and saw a large work by Sadequain which he admired. He asked Jaffer if he was willing to exchange it with this work, *Bull in Studio Mirror*. After much persuasion, Jaffer relented and the paintings were exchanged.



Gulgee and Wahab Jaffer  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive





Gulgee  
*Untitled* (1987)  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed and dated 'Gulgee '87' lower left  
10.6 x 10.6in  
26.9 x 26.9cm

Acquired from Indus Gallery, Karachi, in 1987. This work was the cover of the catalogue for the exhibition.



Shakir Ali  
*Still Life, Pineapple & Apple* (1955)  
Oil on Board  
Signed and dated 'Shakir Ali 1955' lower right  
20.5 x 23in  
52 x 58.4cm

Acquired from a private collector in Karachi.



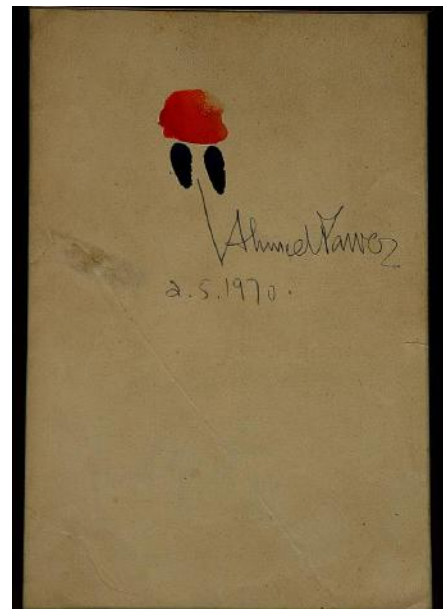
### Wahab Jaffer & Ahmed Parvez

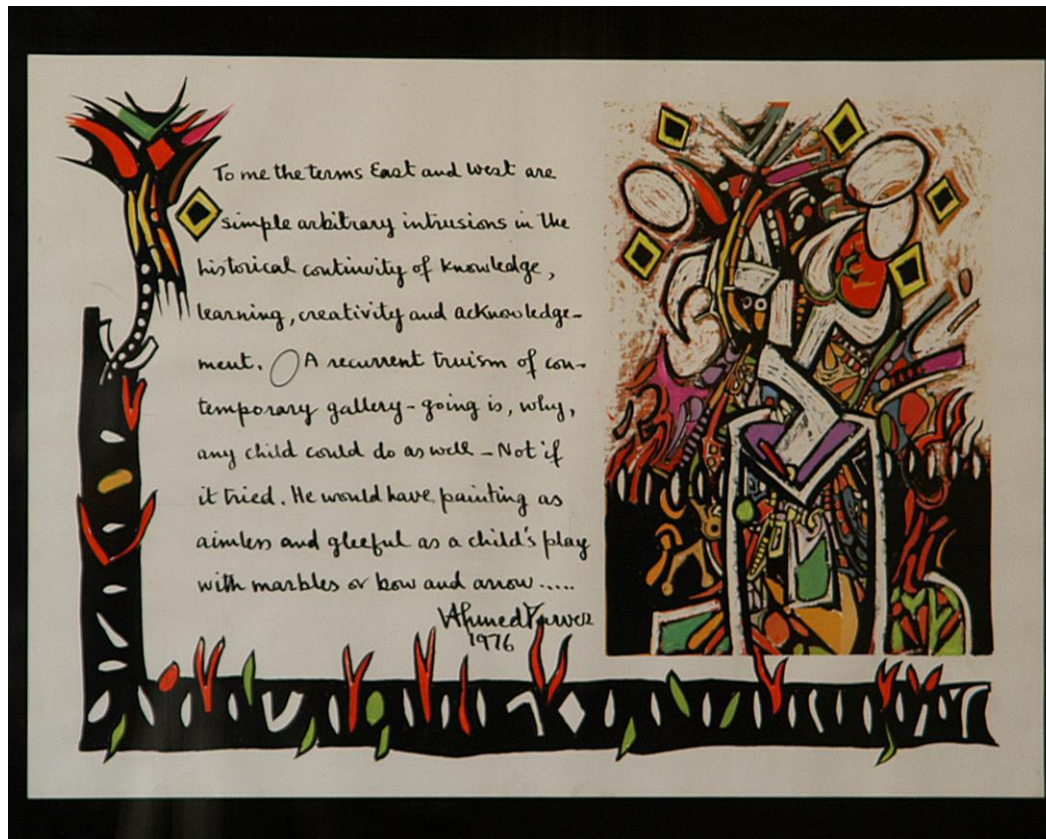
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There was clear admiration, respect and comfort in the friendship between the two. Anytime Parvez did a sketch, Jaffer would immediately collect it. This small sketch was given to Jaffer by Kamal Ahmed Rizvi, an actor and writer based in Karachi.

Jaffer made several visits to the UK and US where Parvez was based from time to time. As he struggled to make a living in the West, he witnessed several acts of discrimination aimed at artists who were not part of the Western art canon. He illustrated his thoughts and feelings in this note in Karachi in 1976/77, many years after he left the West.

Ahmed Parvez  
*Untitled* (1970)  
Watercolour on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Ahmed Parvez 2.5.1970' centre right  
8.7 x 5.9in  
22.1 x 15cm

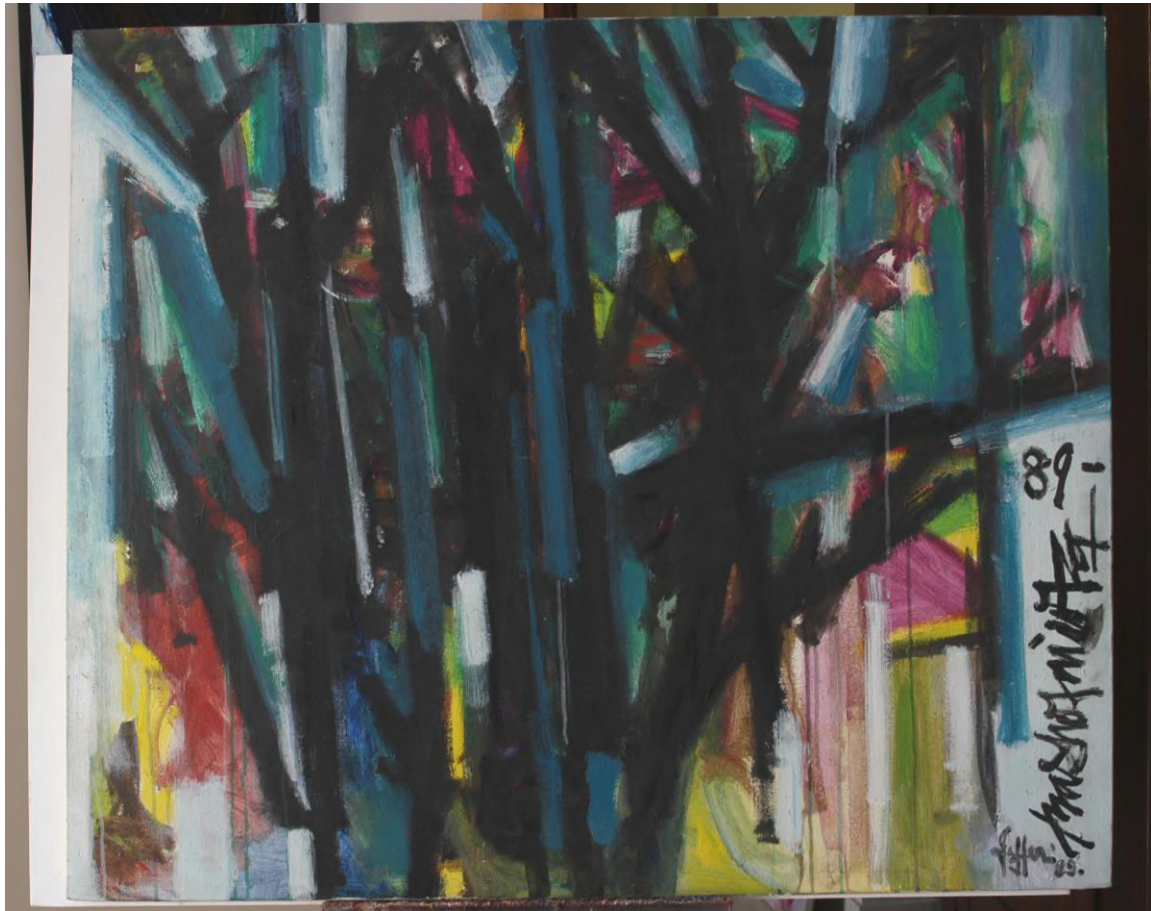




Ahmed Parvez (1926 – 1979)  
*Illustrated Statement* (1976)  
Gouche and Ink on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Ahmed Parvez 1976' lower centre  
10.2 x 15.8in  
25.9 x 40.1cm

## **Bashir Mirza & Wahab Jaffer**

Jaffer was visiting his friend Mirza one day and decided to watch while he was painting a new work. Mirza asked him to come over and join him in painting, but only if he wanted to. The two ended up working on this piece together, and Mirza asked Jaffer to sign his name alongside his. The strokes on the left and right side of the artwork have been done by Jaffer, whereas the bolder strokes have been done by Mirza.



Bashir Mirza (1941 – 2000) & Wahab Jaffer (b. 1941)  
*Untitled* (1989)  
Acrylic on Canvas  
Signed and dated 'Bashir Mirza 89- / Jaffer 89' lower right  
36 x 47.9in  
91.4 x 121.7cm

Riffat Alvi  
*Roots* (1995)  
Earth on Board  
Signed 'Riffat' lower right  
19.2 x 23in  
48.8 x 58.4cm

Alvi has been director of VM Art Gallery since its establishment in 1987 and is another artist who formed close relationships with Jaffer, Mirza and Parvez.

'I was fascinated by the different colours I found in the earth, and used them for this painting. Working with the clay was difficult, but I also wanted to test its endurance and see how far I could push the material to stay on the board. I was inspired by the movement of water with the earth at the seaside - the way the waves wash up new formations of sand every time they crash to leave behind new shapes and landscapes,' commented the artist.



Riffat Alvi and Shirin Jaffer  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive





Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935)  
*Untitled* (1963)  
Woodcut Print on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Rasheed Araeen' lower right  
13.5 x 12.5in  
34.3 x 31.8cm

Gift from the artist



Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935)  
*Untitled* (1963)  
Woodcut Print on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Rasheed Araeen' lower right  
13.5 x 12.5in  
34.3 x 31.8cm

Gift from the artist



## Murtaja Baseer

As a young man, Baseer spent some time in Pakistan and was taught by his professor Zainul Abedin about the social, economic and cultural crises within the subcontinent. His first introduction to the artists of Pakistan was at an exhibition held in Dacca in 1954, which included work by Shakir Ali, Zubeida Agha and Allah Bux. In 1958, he exhibited in London with Ali Imam, Anwar Jalal Shemza, Safiuddin Ahmed and Ahmed Parvez in the exhibition *Five Modern Painters* at Woodstock Gallery. This led to Baseer forming a friendship with Imam and subsequently, exhibiting at Indus Gallery.

Baseer was first inspired to create *The Wall* series in 1967, after viewing old walls in the city of Dhaka, more specifically the walls around Dhaka Central Jail. He was interested by the barriers created between human politics and how we misunderstand each other more frequently than not. This series was exhibited in Dhaka, Lahore, Rawalpindi and finally Karachi between the years of 1967 – 1970.

Baseer changed his name from 'Murtaza Bashir' to 'Murtaja Baseer' in 1971 to reflect the Bengali pronunciation and as an act of protest against the war, according to art historian Gemma Sharpe (Hye, p.111).

Jaffer bought this work from Imam and then had the pleasure of hosting Baseer in his home to see the work.



Murtaja Baseer and Wahab Jaffer  
Photo courtesy of Wahab Jaffer and Asia Art Archive



Murtaja Baseer (b. 1932)  
*Wall* (1967)  
Oil on Canvas  
Signed and dated 'Murtaja Baseer/ June '67' lower right  
Signature, title, date and location inscribed on reverse  
35 x 48in  
88.9 x 121.9cm

Nahid Raza (b. 1948)  
*Chawkandi – Tomb Series* (1982)  
Mixed Media on Paper  
Signed and dated 'Nahid 82' lower centre  
13.1 x 19.7in  
33.3 x 50cm

Acquired from Indus Gallery, this painting was created before Raza married fellow artist Maqsood Ali and after a visit to the Chaukhandi Tombs, which were built during the Mughal rule between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century and serve as a graveyard for the Jokhio trip, now known as Baloch. Raza was particularly influenced to create this series of work as she was struck by the 'aura of death in life and pain in mirth' (Naqvi, p. 211) as a female artist in Pakistan, who felt as though her voice, along with other female voices, were not elevated as much due to the country's patriarchy.



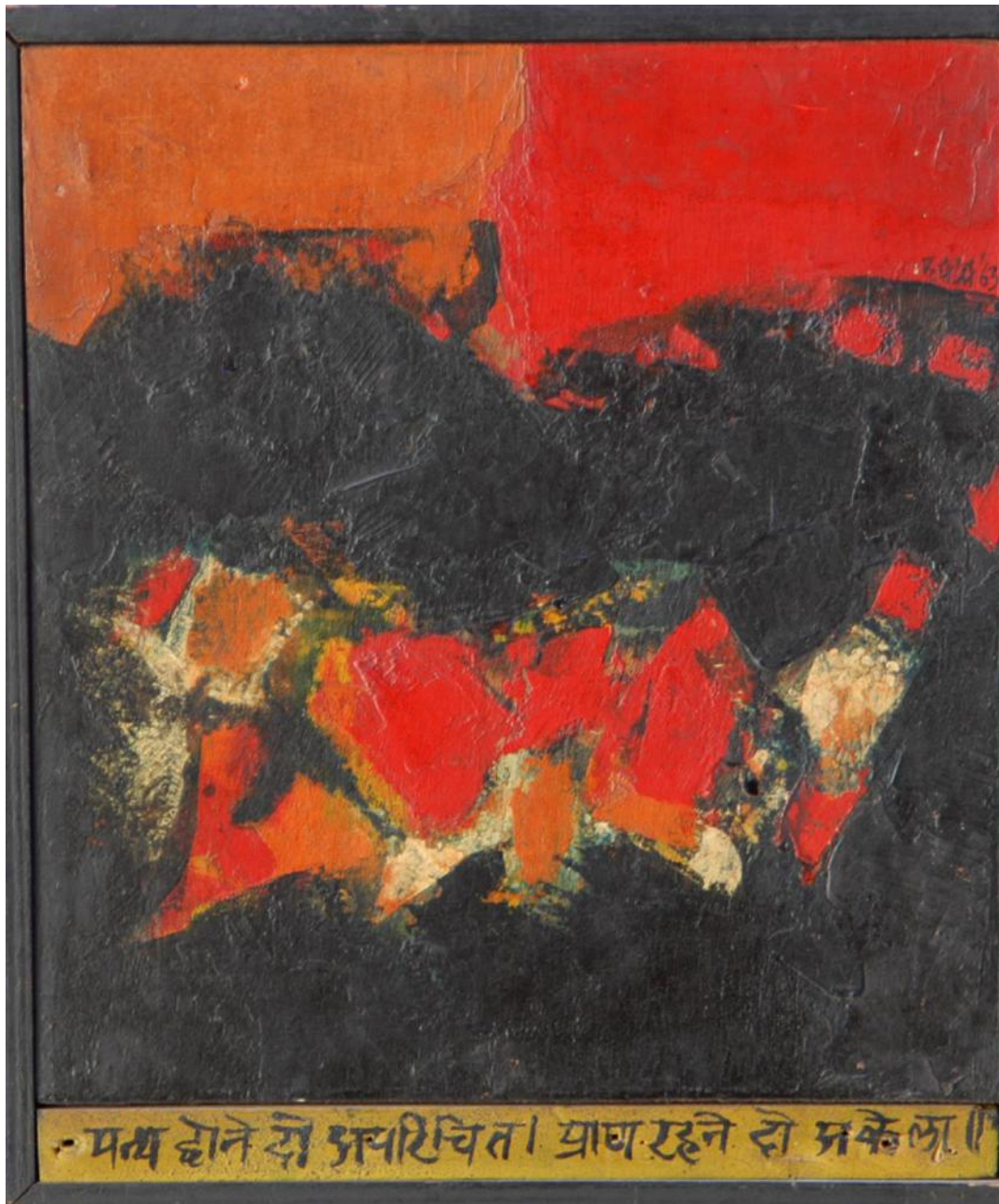
## Sayed Haider Raza

Indian artist Haider Raza was the brother of Ali Imam. This work was gifted to Imam by his brother with a quote from the poem *Panth Hone Do Aparichit* by Indian poet Mahadevi Verma.

The verse from the poem translates to 'Let the path be unknown, and you, me, alone.'

After the Partition of 1947, Raza stayed in India, whilst Imam and their other siblings moved to Pakistan. Even though they were on different sides of the conflict, the brothers remained as close as they could and every now and then, Raza would send his artworks to brother. Imam always wanted Raza to exhibit in Pakistan, but Raza refused on several occasions. Raza eventually moved to France in the early 1950s and settled there for several years before moving back to India where he passed away in 2016.

A special thanks to Ishrat Kanga, Deputy Director, and Manjari Sihare-Sutin, Assistant Vice President for Sothebys Indian & South Asian Modern & Contemporary Art department for their help in translating.



Sayed Haider Raza (1922 – 2016)

*Untitled* (1963)

Acrylic on Wood

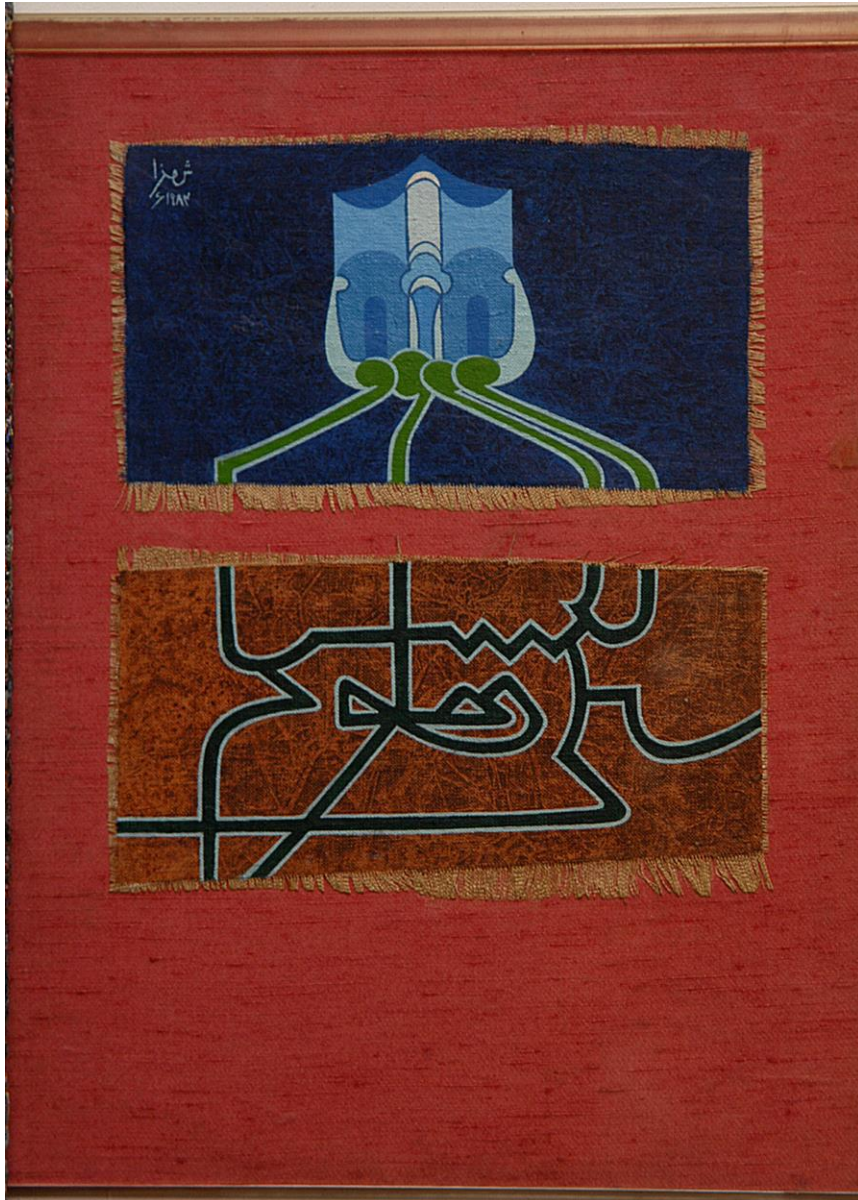
Signed and dated 'Raza '63' upper right

Signature, size, year, location, date and note to Ali Imam inscribed on reverse

11.5 x 9.9in

29.2 x 25.1cm

Acquired from Indus Gallery, 1980s



Anwar Jalal Shemza (1941 – 1985)

*Root Series* (1984)

Oil on Canvas on Silk on Hard Board

Signed and dated in Urdu 'Anwar Jalal Shemza 1984' upper left

Signature, title, medium, date and size inscribed on reverse

16 x 12in

40.6 x 30.5cm

'After Shemza died, his wife Mary Shemza, decided to take the exhibition to Pakistan as this had been Anwar's wish and did a touring exhibition called *Roots: Memorial Exhibition* which was exhibited in 1985 at Indus Gallery Karachi, Alhamra Art Centre, Lahore and Pakistan National Council of the Arts Gallery in Islamabad and Peshawar Pakistan' – Aphra Shemza

Acquired from Indus Gallery, 1985



Anwar Jalal Shemza (1983)

*Rain*

Oil on Cloth on Board

Signed and dated in Urdu 'Anwar Jalal Shemza 1983' upper left

Signature, title, medium, date and size inscribed on reverse

11.6 x 7.5in

29.5 x 19.1cm

'Before his death Anwar was creating this body of work called *Roots* and the other piece would have been created at the same time. The pieces were done at a certain scale so that he could carry them by hand to Pakistan and do the show, unfortunately he died before he was able to take that show home. The *Roots* series is particularly important because it showed his nostalgia for going back to Pakistan and returning to his roots.' – Aphra Shemza

Acquired from Indus Gallery, 1985





Ahmed Parvez (1926 – 1979)  
*Untitled* (1979)  
Mixed Media on Canvas.  
Signed and dated 'Parvez '79' lower right  
20 x 16in  
50.8 x 40.6cm

Jaffer bought this work from Parvez before he went to Sri Lanka. Parvez came back distraught as he had been robbed during his trip. The work was created during the last year of Parvez's life.



Wahab Jaffer (b. 1941)

*Untitled* (1994)

Acrylic on Canvas

Signed and dated 'Jaffer '94' lower centre

Price inscribed on reverse

19 x 11in

48.3 x 27.9cm

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

### Zainul Abedin (1914 – 1976)

Bengali artist Abedin was born in Kishoregang, East Bengal in 1914. He studied at the Government School of Art in Calcutta (1933 – 1938) where he learnt the European and British style of art. After the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, he worked as chief designer in the Pakistan government's Information and Publications Division, and also became principal of the Institute of Fine Arts in Dhaka (later known as the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts), which he helped to found in 1948 and where he remained until 1967. An exhibition of his work in Lahore in 1953 became the starting-point for a series of exhibitions aimed at promoting contemporary Pakistani art. Since Bangladesh became independent in 1971, he has been regarded as the founding figure of modern Bangladeshi art. His works embraced a variety of styles, from the realistic sketches of the Bengal famine to semi-abstract and abstract paintings. Examples are preserved in a number of collections including the Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala at Mymensingh, the Academy of Fine Arts in Calcutta and the Lahore Museum.

### Meher Afroz (b. 1948)

Born in Lucknow, India, Afroz now lives and practises in Karachi, Pakistan. Afroz completed her undergraduate studies in fine arts from the Government College of Arts and Crafts in Lucknow in 1971. She began her formal art practice in the early '70s and has drawn much critical acclaim for her printmaking and painting. Some of her most important series are *The Mask and Puppet*, (1988-89), *Portrait* (1990-91), *Amulet* (1992-3), *Zindaan* (2001), *Pindaar* (2002-3), *Dastaavez* (2007), *Naqsh-bar-Aab* (2012), and others. Afroz co-founded ASNA in 1998, a collective for research, exhibition and dialogue of the local *kumbhar*, or clay artisan, with the mainstream studio potter/artist. She has taught art at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture in Karachi, and led workshops and short-term classes at Karachi's Central Institute of Arts and Crafts.

### Lubna Latif Agha (1949 – 2012)

Born in Quetta, Latif Agha graduated from the Karachi School of Art in 1967. The following year, she taught painting at Ali Imam's Central Institute of Art. She had her first solo exhibition at the Pakistan American Cultural Institute in 1969. She met her husband, Yusuf Agha in 1973 and moved to the USA in 1981. She continued to study, and exhibited frequently in California before the family moved to Boston in 1995 where she died in 2012.

### Zahoor ul Akhlaq (1941 – 1999)

Born in Delhi in 1941, Akhlaq moved to Pakistan in 1947 after the Partition. In 1958, he went to study art in Lahore at the Mayo School of Arts (now, the National College of Arts) where the well-known Pakistani painter Shakir Ali was a professor. Shakir Ali greatly influenced his artistic studies and after graduating Akhlaq began teaching at the same college in the Fine Arts Department. Shakir Ali encouraged him to learn the Cubist style and other modern ideas of that time. Akhlaq attended the Royal College of Art between 1968 and 1969, and received a Fulbright Research Fellowship at Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Religion and the Arts and at Yale School of Art from 1987 to 1989. Akhlaq exhibited internationally and nationally at RCD Biennale, Tehran (1965), Sao Paulo Biennale (1976), Hershorn Museum (1982), the Lahore Museum and Pakistan Art Council, Karachi.

### Shakir Ali (1916 – 1975)

Ali first joined Mayo School of Art as a lecturer in 1954 and after changing the name of Mayo School to National College of Arts in 1958, he became its first Pakistani principal in 1962. Widely known to have inspired cubism among the artists of Lahore, he had a huge following of artists in Pakistan, most of whom were his students including Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Jamil Naqsh, Bashir Mirza, and Ahmed Parvez. One of Ali's major artworks is still hanging in his house which has now been turned into Shakir Ali Museum in Lahore.

### Riffat Alvi (b. 1948)

Alvi graduated from Karachi School of Art in 1973. She has been the director of V.M.Art Gallery Karachi since its inception in 1987, and has exhibited work both nationally and internationally. Alvi is renowned for her work in ceramics as well as for the earth pigment technique which she discovered in Africa and used to create a series of paintings titled *Mohenjodaro*. She has travelled extensively and shown her work in Pakistan and overseas including a solo exhibition of work evolved into a complex synthesis of ground earth, resins, oils and binders, mounted at the Commonwealth Institute, UK.

### Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935)

Born in 1935 in Karachi, Pakistan, Araeen trained as a civil engineer and is best known for his formal, geometric sculptures, which are often created from industrial materials. Araeen curated the Hayward exhibition *The Other Story: Afro-Asian Artists in Post-War Britain* and is the founding editor of important critical journals including *The Third Text*. Araeen has been at the forefront of the politically charged discourse between artists, institutions and audiences for many years. He has exhibited in international solo and group exhibitions throughout his extensive career including *Zero to Infinity* at Tate Britain, London (2013), and *Before and After Minimalism* at Sharjah Art Foundation Art Spaces, Sharjah, UAE (2014). A retrospective of the artist's work was exhibited at the VanAbbe Museum in 2018, later travelling to the MAMCO, Geneva, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, UK and finally, to the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow

#### Murjata Baseer (b. 1932)

Baseer was born in Dacca, Bangladesh in 1932. Baseer enrolled in Dacca Art College (now the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka) in 1949. After graduating in 1954, he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts of Florence before specialising in mosaic and etching at École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts (ENSBA) in Paris from 1971–73. Baseer has written several novels including *Ultramarine* (1954), *Kanch-er Pakhir Gaan* (1969), *Mitar Shangey Char Shandha* and *Amitakkhar*. He was a regular contributor to now defunct literary journals such as *Dilruba*, *Sa-makal*, and *Saogat*. His first published poem was *Parbe Na*. In 1964, he was the screenwriter, art director, and chief assistant director on the 1965 Bengali film *Nadi O Nari (The River and the Women)*. He was also art director on the 1965 Urdu film *Kaise Kahoon*. Baseer was active in leftist politics during the 1950s and was sent to prison during the erstwhile Pakistan government. In 1987, he received a fellowship from British Council to carry out research on folk and traditional art of Bangladesh.

#### Kazi Abdul Baset (1935 – 2002)

Baset was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 1935. In 1956, he completed his bachelor's in fine arts from the Government Art Institute (later known as the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka) in Dhaka. With a Fulbright Fellowship he received higher training in painting at the Art Institute of Chicago University during 1963-1964. He then joined the head of Drawing and Painting Department of the Government Art Institute. He retired from the institute in 1995 and was awarded Ekushey Padak in 1991 by the Government of Bangladesh.

#### Ismail Gulgee (1926 -2007)

Gulgee was born in 1926 in Peshawar, Pakistan. He studied civil engineering at Aligarh University before travelling to the US to continue his higher education. While he was an engineering student at Columbia University in the United States, he started to paint. Ismail Gulgee, as he was famously known, received many requests for his paintings internationally, from the likes of the the Saudi royal family to the Islamabad presidency. Many of his works are on display in the Faisal Mosque in Islamabad.

#### Salima Hashmi (b. 1942)

Hashmi was born in 1942 in New Delhi, India, but migrated with her family to Lahore during the Partition of India in 1947 and was raised in Lahore. After studying design at Lahore's National College of Arts (NCA), she moved to England in the early 1960s, where she studied at the Bath Academy of Art in Corsham, receiving a diploma in art education in 1965. Hashmi also studied at RISD (Rhode Island School of Design) in the US. She has served as Dean of the School of Visual Arts & Design at the Beaconhouse National University Lahore, Pakistan, and has curated several exhibitions, including *Hangin Fire* at the Asia Society in 2009 and *This Night Bitten Dawn* at Devi Art Foundation in 2016. Hashmi has been a member of Amnesty International, and Pakistan Peace Initiative to India since the 2009 Mumbai Attack. She is also vice-chair person of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. Hashmi continues to teach, curate, write and work on her artistic practice to this day.

#### Ali Imam (1924 – 2002)

Imam was born in Narsinghpur, Madhya Pradesh in 1924. In the early 1940s, he went to the Nagpur School of Art. After which he studied for two years at the Bombay-based J. J. School of Art. After independence in 1947, Imam and some of his family members migrated to Pakistan where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1949 from the University of Punjab in Lahore. He got involved with the Progressive Writers Movement and the Communist Party of Pakistan and paid a heavy price for it. He was imprisoned three times for his socialist views in the early 1950s. As he was under constant police surveillance due to his political beliefs, he decided to move to London, where he lived for almost eleven years. In London, he studied art at Central Saint Martins from 1959–1960 and later at Hammersmith College of Art from 1962–1963. Upon returning from London in 1971, Imam founded the Indus Gallery in Karachi. He played the role of art critic, art promoter and art educationist to many of the artists at the gallery, which closed in 2010.

#### Unver Shafi Khan (b. 1961)

Born in Karachi, Khan set up his studio in the same city in 1984 after returning from Kenyon College, USA with a BA in English Literature. His first solo show was at the Indus Gallery in 1986. This came about because of a meeting at the gallery with the late Dr Akbar Naqvi, F.N. Souza and Ali Imam. Khan has mostly exhibited in Lahore and Karachi, but also took part in SLICK Art Fair with Aicon Gallery in 2010.

#### Bashir Mirza (1941 – 2000)

Born in Amritsar, British India in 1941, Mirza joined the Mayo School of Arts in Lahore (now the National College of Arts) where he was one of Shakir Ali's favourite art students. Mirza graduated in 1962 from the department of design. He opened an art gallery (the first ever in Karachi) at Kutchery Road in 1965, but in 1969 left town to go abroad. He also published an Art Journal called *Artistic Pakistan* which he sold in 1968. The *Lonely Girl* painting series was shown at and gifted to the Seoul Olympic Art Museum when he was invited by the Seoul Olympic Committee. In 1994, Mirza departed for Australia as Pakistan's cultural attaché, but he soon got tired of the diplomatic life and returned to Pakistan in 1996. By then he was also sick. On his return, he opened another art gallery and an advertising agency in Karachi. He died in 2000.

#### Quddus Mirza (b. 1961)

Mirza is an artist, art critic and independent curator. He is the head of the Fine Art Department at the National College of Arts, Lahore, where he studied, before receiving an MA in painting from the Royal College of Art, London. Mirza has participated in numerous group exhibitions, along with several solo exhibitions held in Pakistan and the UK. He has also curated a number of exhibitions including *Trade Union* and *Take Away* at Zahoor ul Akhlaq Gallery, NCA and *One to One* at Alhambra Art Gallery, Lahore. His other exhibitions include *Celebrating Art and Love* at National Art Gallery, Islamabad, *Beyond Borders: Art from Pakistan* at National Gallery of Modern Art in Mumbai, India, and *Exotic Bodies*, based on the miniature paintings from the collection of Victoria and Albert Museum, that was displayed at Preston Museum, UK. As a critic, he writes a weekly column for Pakistan's major newspaper, *The News*, and contributes regularly to many other publications. He is the co-author of *50 Years of Visual Arts in Pakistan* and has written essays on Pakistani art for various international catalogues. He is also the editor of online magazine *Artnow Pakistan*.

#### Ahmed Parvez (1926 – 1979)

Parvez was born in 1926 in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. He was a member of the Lahore Group in Pakistan and founded the Pakistan Group in London. He was among the few early modernists of Pakistani origin to have garnered considerable critical acclaim, with solo exhibitions at the New Vision, Lincoln, and Clement Stephens galleries in London, London's Commonwealth Institute and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. From 1955 to 1964, Ahmed lived and worked in London, UK. In the late 1960s, he spent two years living and working in the United States before returning to Pakistan. During this time, he exhibited his work at the Galerie Internationale in New York City and married Reiko Isago. Parvez passed in 1979.

#### Nahid Raza (b. 1948)

Raza was born in Delhi in 1948. Her life in art began in 1966 when her uncle Ali Imam helped her to join the Central Institute. Later, in 1968 she held her first group exhibition whilst she was still a student. In 1969, she won her first award, the 'Best Entry Award' at the Karachi Arts Council. She was deeply inspired by the intricate stone carvings of Sindh, which resulted in her first major landmark works on the Chawkandi Tombs. Soon, the mounting appreciation of her work abroad led to solo exhibitions in Japan, Bangladesh and India. On her return to Karachi in 1987, she began teaching art full-time. In 1992, Raza established Studio Art in Karachi, and for over a decade, nurtured several promising talents. She was awarded a residency at the New York State University in 1998 and in 2002, her work was displayed in a solo exhibition at the Vienna Museum. In August 2007, Raza was awarded the President's Pride of Performance Award, the highest art honour in the country.

#### Sayed Haider Raza (1922 – 2016)

Raza was considered one of the most prominent Indian painters of his generation. Born in Babaria in India, Raza studied art from an early age, before moving to Paris in 1950 to study at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. Raza was a co-founder of the revolutionary Bombay Progressive Artists' Group (PAG), along with Indian artists Krishna Hawlaji Ara (1914–1985) and Francis Newton Souza (1924–2002). This movement sought to turn away from the influences of European Realism—which dominated much of the academic art of India—and embrace *Antar gyan*, a uniquely-Indian inner vision. His early works include landscapes, and later moved towards abstraction as he became increasingly influenced by Modernist principles. 1970 was a turning point in Raza's career, when he developed the concept of *Bindu* (a personal rebirth) in his art. The works from this period are more intricately linked to Indian cultural themes, and were influenced by his trips back to India. Raza is a founder of the Raza Foundation in India, which gives the Annual Raza Foundation Award to emerging artists. His work is part of many international collections.

#### Sadequain (1923 – 1987)

Sadequain was born in 1923 in Amroha. In the late 1940s he joined the Progressive Writers and Artists Movement. On the eve of Partition, Sadequain painted anti-British, nationalistic slogans in Delhi and these politically charged works gained the artist a wider audience both abroad and in Pakistan among the 1960s intelligentsia. He has created several murals throughout Pakistan and India including one in the Lahore Museum, State Bank Pakistan, Banarus Hindu University, and Frere Hall, which he was unable to finish due to his untimely death in 1987. He exhibited extensively throughout his career at Ghalib Academy in New Delhi, State Museum of Oriental Arts, Moscow, Museum of Cairo, Egypt and National Gallery of Kuwait. His work was also exhibited at the Paris Biennale in 1961.

#### Shahid Sajjad (1936 – 2014)

Born in Muzaffarnagar, Sajjad worked in an advertising agency before deciding to quit to travel around Asia by motorbike. His journey left him at the Louvre in Paris. There, Sajjad was inspired by a Tahitian wood carving crafted by French artist Paul Gauguin. In 1965, he returned to the South Asian subcontinent to a remote village called Rangamati in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), located within the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Sajjad visited Japan just eight years later, where he learned the lost-wax casting method from sculptor Akio Kato.

#### Anwar Jalal Shemza (1928 – 1985)

Born in Simla in 1928, Shemza attended Mayo School of Arts in Lahore, Pakistan, graduating in 1947. In 1956, already an established artist and writer in his homeland, he relocated to England to study at the Slade School of Fine Art. Despite being better known as an artist, Shemza published several Urdu novels and books of poetry in the 1950s and wrote plays performed on Radio Pakistan. In 1952, he co-founded the Lahore Art Circle, a group of

young artists interested in modernism and abstraction rebelling against the uniform socialist realist style espoused by some progressives. Shortly after his death, Shemza's painting *The Wall* (1958) was selected for inclusion in the seminal exhibition *The Other Story: Afro-Asian Artists in Post-War Britain*, organised by Rasheed Aareen at the Hayward Gallery in 1989. In more recent years, his work has been exhibited at Tate Britain (2015-16) and included in significant exhibitions such as Haus der Kunst's *Postwar: Art Between the Pacific and the Atlantic, 1945– 1965* in Munich (2016 – 17). These exhibitions have cemented the artist's position as a central figure in a post-colonial reappraisal of 20<sup>th</sup>-century modernism.

#### Tassaduq Sohail (1930 – 2017)

Born in Jalandhar in 1930, Sohail went on to study at London-based Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. He spent 40 years in London before eventually moving to Karachi. A striking feature of his work are the titles of his paintings. They seem to have a profound connection with the images, depicting the cynicism and the scorn of the artist. His work is almost in miniature style and detail. He once claimed that the best of his works stemmed from bouts of depression. Sohail exhibited extensively in London at The October Gallery and Boundary Gallery, as well as in Pakistan at Nairang Gallery, Lahore and Indus Gallery, Karachi.

#### Francis Newton Souza (1924 – 2002)

Born in Goa in 1924, Souza was a founding member of the [Progressive Artists' Group of Bombay](#), and was the first post-independence Indian artist to achieve significant recognition in the West. He attended [St. Xavier's College](#) in Bombay, but was expelled for drawing graffiti in a toilet which he claimed he was correcting, before studying at the [Sir J. J. School of Art](#) in Bombay from where he was also expelled in 1945 for his support for the [Quit India Movement](#). In 1949, Souza moved to London, where he initially struggled to make an impact as an artist, and worked as a journalist. His career as an artist took off following the publication in 1955 of his autobiographical essay *Nirvana of a Maggot* in [Stephen Spender's \*Encounter\* magazine](#). Spender introduced Souza to the art dealer [Victor Musgrave](#), the owner of [Gallery One](#). Souza's 1955 exhibit completely sold out, leading to ongoing success throughout his career. His work has been included at exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery, Tate Britain, Haus Der Kunst in Munich, Philadelphia Museum of Art, National Portrait Gallery and many other institutions.

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