

M. F. Husain | *Restless Traveler*

October 26th – December 1st, 2018

Opening Reception: Friday, October 26th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones Street, New York N.Y. 10012

Aicon Gallery is proud to present **M. F. Husain | *Restless Traveler***, an exhibition themed around Husain's constant travels throughout the world and the significant inspiration they had upon his work. The centerpiece of this exhibition is a monumental masterpiece on canvas over sixteen feet long, which has never before been publicly exhibited. This one-of-a-kind work, the largest single canvas painting by the towering giant of Indian modernist art, comes directly from Husain's Estate.



M. F. Husain, *Beyond Theora*, 1992, Acrylic on canvas, 72 x 194 in.

Long considered a pioneer of Modern Indian art, Husain initially made a living as a billboard painter and children's furniture designer, painting at first in his spare time until joining the **Bombay Progressive Artist's Group** (PAG) in 1947. The PAG grew to be the most influential group of Modern artists in India, fusing Indian subject matter with Post-Impressionist colors, Cubist forms and Expressionist gestures, forging a synthesis between early European modernist techniques and the ever-shifting cultural and historical identities of India.

Nonetheless, Husain's vision as an artist remained firmly rooted on Indian soil: 'I paint the nation and the nation sees itself in my paintings' he once famously declared. The declaration is all the more poignant from an artist of such towering stature who had the land he loved brutally ripped away from him on facile grounds of sectarian difference. This work thus foreshadows the erosion of Nehruvian secularism and India's frightening descent into tribalism. Just as in Picasso's great ode to the horrors of war, *Guernica* would take on a life beyond the canvas as it later came to stand-in for Dresden, Berlin, Hiroshima, synonymous with all and any place where defenseless civilians had come under attack. And for the attacks on Husain that hit at the very core of his humanity, the Nehruvian dream for India lay in tatters. This was undoubtedly an act that left him restless and in search of a homeland for the rest of his life.

Husain himself combined this internationalist outlook with iconography and vistas that drew on India's teeming metropolises, her epic mythology, the Raj, and the unending valorization of the Indian people. The common man was ever the hero of his work, the Indian city the new vista of opportunity. But while many in the Progressive group would quickly take their chance to move away to London, Paris or New York, Husain remained in India until he was forced into self-imposed exile at the hands of his detractors following communal rioting in the early 1990s and a litany of cases against him on the grounds of 'obscenity'. This 'war of attrition' played out in his shows that were desecrated and through the courts that waged war against him the length and breadth of the country. Despite all of this, his deeply emotional



M. F. Husain, *Autobiography Pechwel*, Oil on canvas, 60 x 60 in.

and cinema hoardings. Thus the vitality of gargantuan advertising art depicting the larger-than-life glamour and dreams of filmic images became emblazoned on the artist's mind at an early and crucial phase of his career. Unusually, this work seems to be read from right to left, as the artist and protagonist has pictured himself standing on the far right of the canvas, his head buried in a broadsheet reading the news.

What is he reading? Does the work reference the plague that broke out in Surat in 1994 that claimed hundreds of lives across multiple states? Or does it reference the big news of the preceding year, which undoubtedly still reverberated across the land in 1994: the devastating series of terrorist bombings that were deployed across Bombay and claimed the lives of 257 civilians and leaving more than 1000 injured? Buried in his paper the artist, is clearly identified by his bare feet. The drama of the painting, however, unfolds beyond the post. To his proper right, a large black disc, or sun, takes up the entire height of the canvas. A bearded figure extends out and across the length of the canvas, reaching out toward the two seated women whose aura reminds us of Husain's depictions of Mother Teresa who appeared repeatedly throughout multiple works during the 1990s.

The reference to the Sistine Chapel is unmistakable. Husain had the self-belief to liken himself to Michelangelo in a natural and uncomplicated way. Is this the hand of God reaching out to humanity, here enshrined in the figures of two women, whose heads are covered but remain faceless and unlit? The images hark back to Husain's many depictions of Mother Theresa, whose significance in rescuing the abandoned children of Calcutta cannot go unnoticed in relation to Husain's own biography. The ubiquitous bullock cart pulls away from the torsos tumbling out of the orb as the women sit, silently watching the scene unfold. Or is it the artist himself, reaching out towards the mother figure he never knew? At the far left another popular image of Hanuman is poised to move out of the picture but looks back at the scene of devastation behind him. It is a curious work, replete with images familiar from Husain's oeuvre yet strangely, almost hauntingly, ambiguous. Where Souza's figures are savage, Husain's are primordial. Here was an artist who did not idealise woman but depicted her shorn of adornments - enigmatic and powerful. The women in Husain's world are perceived as objects of beauty and mystery.

In the 1950s a New York gallerist was purported to have asked Husain why he was not painting like an abstract expressionist. To which the artist retorted "there is nothing abstract about a billion people". The statement was peculiarly appropriate for the Indian painter who came to represent India and Indian art itself. Our reading of Husain is influenced by the popular biography of him as an iconic artist, a nomad and a rebel, who moved from Delhi to London to Frankfurt to Paris then Dubai and Doha. This extraordinary figure of Indian modernism, the "barefoot artist" died in London in self-imposed exile at the age of 95. As for Husain, he summed up his own work and life with the words: "I reach for the sky, the stretch of my canvas is unknown to me." For, while India may have forsaken Husain, the artist never gave up on the land he loved and called his own.

- Sona Datta, October, 2018

commitment to the land of his birth remained absolute. The biography of the boy born into a Muslim family from Indore - who grew up without means or the unconditional love of a mother - is well known. These two factors alone would undoubtedly have deeply colored Husain's early experience staining it with the need both to find affirmation and belonging coupled with the desire for economic security. While he achieved the latter many times over in later life, the millions of rupees his works fetched would never replenish the wound left by the child abandoned as a result of the early death of his mother.

Husain was no stranger to scale and "Theora" is a large work, stretching almost 16 feet in length. His works lend themselves to complex, multiple, sometimes competing, narratives. With no formal training, he moved to the city of dreams in his teens and began his career as an impoverished painter of billboards

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Beyond Theora*, 1994, Acrylic on canvas, 72 x 194 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Devdas*, 2002, Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 70 in.

M. F. Husain



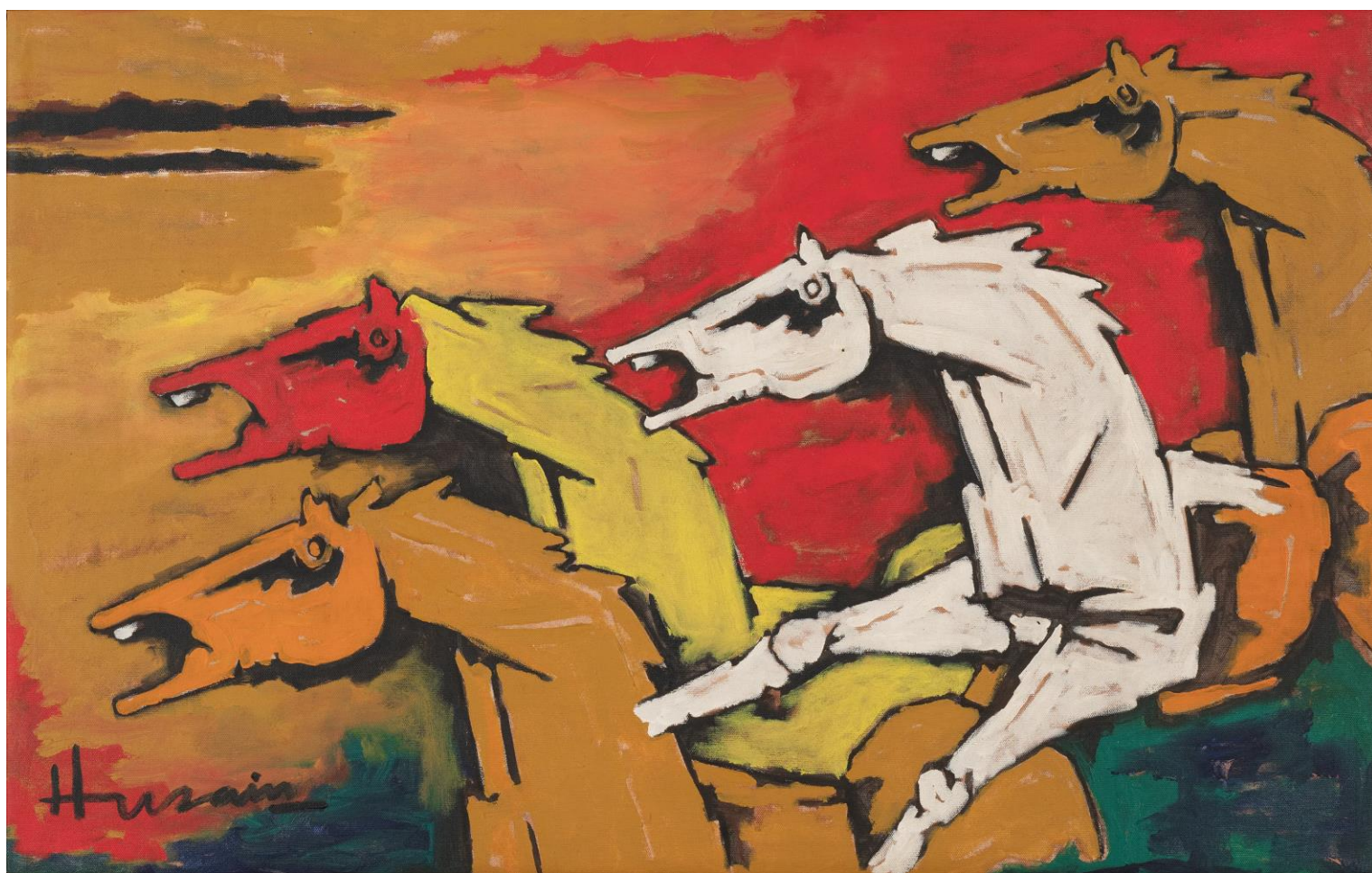
M. F. Husain, *From the Valley of Kashmir to the Valley of Caracas*, 1983, Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 204 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Autobiography Pechwel*, ND, Oil on canvas, 60 x 60 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Untitled (Four Horses)*, 2003, Acrylic on canvas, 34.5 x 54.5 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Untitled (Pieta with Mother Teresa)*, 1994, Acrylic on canvas, 71.5 x 92 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Untitled (Mother Teresa)*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 30 x 22 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain, *Women from Yemen*, 2006, Acrylic on canvas, 58.5 x 46.5 in.

MAQBOOL FIDA HUSAIN

Born 1915, Maharashtra, India

Commonly known as M.F., Husain was an eminent Indian painter. Widely regarded as the “Picasso of India,” he is arguably the most recognizable figure of modern and contemporary Indian art, influencing a whole generation of artists in the country. A self-taught artist, Husain moved to Mumbai at an early age and began his artistic career by painting the billboards for cinemas. He recalled, “We were paid barely four or six annas per square foot. That is, for a 6x10 feet canvas, we earned a few rupees. And apart from the New Theatre distributor, the others did not pay us at all. As soon as I earned a little bit, I used to take off for Surat, Baroda and Ahmedabad to paint landscapes.”

Husain became associated with Indian modernism in the 1940s. A dashing, highly eccentric figure dressed in impeccably tailored suits, he went barefoot and brandished an extra-long paintbrush as a slim cane. He never maintained a studio, but he spread his canvases out on the floors of whatever hotel room he happened to be staying in, always paying for damages when he checked out. He created four museums to showcase his work, and had a collection of classic sports cars. Enormously prolific, a gifted self-promoter and hard bargainer, he claimed to have produced some 60,000 paintings. When questioned about such prolificacy by Michael Peschardt of the BBC in one of the last interviews he gave on May 27th 2011, he replied, “All this talk about inspiration and moment is nonsense. Excuse us”. He amassed a fortune, but maintained a bank balance of zero. He applied the formal lessons of European modernists like Cézanne and Matisse to scenes from national epics like the Mahabharata and Ramavana, to the Hindu pantheon.

His first exhibition took place in 1947 with his painting *Sunhera Sansaar*, shown at the annual exhibition of the Bombay Art Society, and Husain decided to stay in India during the Partition in 1947. Between 1948 and 1950, Husain's work caught the public eye in a series of exhibitions across India. Through the fifties and sixties, he traveled outside India, with his first foray into China in 1951. The following year, he had his first solo exhibition in Zurich, and so began a series of exhibitions across Europe and the United States. In 1966, the Government of India awarded him the Padmashree.

Over the following decades, Husain's fame spread and was glorified by what was deemed to be a rather controversial approach to his art. His *Shwetambari* exhibition at the Jehangir Art Gallery consisted of two halls shrouded in white cloth, whorls of which also shared the floor with torn newspapers. Later, he gave a public performance at the Tata Center in Calcutta. For several days, a crowd watched as he painted pictures of six goddesses. On the last day of the exhibition, he destroyed his paintings by over-painting them in white. Several of his paintings in the 1990s were named after the film actress Madhuri Dixit, perhaps displaying a childhood obsession originating from his time spent painting billboards. As reported in *The Times* of India, “The Padma Vibhushan awardee continues to paint events that are topmost on contemporary minds, be it the solar eclipse, the cricket mania or the victory at Kargil.”

Themes in Husain's work often returned to his cultural roots, but he embraced diverse influences – from the cinematography of Buñuel, to themes that have blended folk, tribal and mythological figures – to create vibrantly contemporary, living art forms in his work.

Icons of Indian culture through the ages seek to capture the quintessence of his subjects, like Mother Teresa and Gandhi, to religious icons as Krishna and Saraswati.

His narrative paintings, executed in a modified Cubist style, can be caustic and funny as well as serious and somber. His themes—usually treated in series—also include hallmarks of Indian culture and history, such as the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the British Empire, and motifs of Indian urban and rural life. One of the most celebrated and internationally recognized Indian artists of the 20th century, he also received recognition as a printmaker, photographer, and filmmaker.

Besides painting, he also made feature films, including *Through the Eyes of a Painter* (1966), which won the 'Golden Bear Award' at the Berlin Film Festival (1967), and was also awarded the 'Gaja Gamini' in 2000. The Government of India honored him with the 'Padma Bhushan' and the 'Padma Vibhushan' awards, both prestigious civilian awards. In 2007, Husain received Honorary Doctorates from Benaras Hindu University, Jamia Millia Islamia University, and Mysore University.

Died 2011, London, UK.

Education

2007 Honorary Doctorates from Benaras Hindu University, Jamia Millia Islamia University, and Mysore University

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2015 *Husain at Hundred*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2014 *M. F. Husain: Master of Modern Indian Painting*, Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London
 2010 *M.F. Husain 2010 – The World is my Canvas*, organized by Museum of Islamic Art (MIA), Qatar Foundation and as part of 2010 Arab Capital of Culture
 2010 *M.F. Husain: Early Masterpieces 1950s–70s*, sponsored by the Year of India, the Cogut Center for the Humanities, and the David Winton Bell Gallery at David Winton Bell Gallery, Providence
 2006 – 2007 *Epic India: Paintings by M.F. Husain*, Herwitz Collection of Contemporary Indian Art, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA
 2006 *Early Masterpieces 1950-70's*, Asia House Gallery, London
 2005 *Exhibition of Prints*, Collector's Paradise Gallery, Mumbai
 2004 *Husain (An Exhibition of Graphic Prints in Honor of M S Subbalakshmi)*, Lakshana Museum of Fine Arts, Chennai
 2004 National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai
 2004 *'Husain: Graphic 2004*, Pictures and Frames, Mumbai
 2003 *'88 Husains in Oils 2003*, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
 2003 *Husain Hieroglyph*, Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
 2003 *M F Husain in Oils*, Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
 2003 *Thief of Baghdad*, Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
 2003 Gallerie 88, Kolkata
 2002 *Paintings and Serigraphs by Husain*, Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda
 2002 *M .F Husain, Limited Edition Graphics and Reproduction*, Sakshi Gallery in association with Archer Art Gallery, Ahmedabad
 2002 *Madhuri as Saratchandra's Chandramukhi: The Eternal Enchantress of Devdas*, Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai
 2000 *Paintings, Murals and Drawings, Husain Ki Sarai Collection*, New Delhi
 1998 *Maqbool Fida Husain: The Beacon of Energy*, The Window, Mumbai
 1998 *Husain Now*, Centre for International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata
 1996 *From Sinhasan to Peacock Throne to the Chair of the 21st Century: M. F Husain and Jehangir Nagree Exhibition of Furniture*, organized by The Living Room at Taj Mahal Hotel, Mumbai
 1996 *Exhibition of Water Colors and Object Based Works*, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
 1996 Screening of Film *'Gaja Gamini'*, along with an exhibition of lithographs and selected works, New Delhi

1995	<i>Maqbool Fida Husain</i> , Art Today, New Delhi
1995	<i>14 Serigraphs on Madhuri Dixit</i> , Surya Gallery, Hyderabad
1995	<i>A Visual Script of 'Untitled Film on Madhuri</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1994	<i>Tapestry Show</i> , Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
1994	<i>Oils on Canvas</i> , 31st Anniversary Exhibition, Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1993	<i>Let History Cut Across Me Without Me</i> , organized by Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi at National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi
1993	<i>Civilization, Violence and Pather Panchali</i> , at National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi
1992	<i>Six Days of Live Painting</i> , Tata Centre, Kolkata
1991	<i>Knight Watch</i> , Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
1991	<i>Shwetambari</i> , Installation at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
1991	<i>Front Page</i> , Centre for Contemporary art (CCA), New Delhi
1990	<i>Theatre of the Absurd</i> , Installations, New Delhi
1989	<i>Calcutta 300</i> , Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
1988	<i>Husain</i> , Hunter Museum of Art, Tennessee, USA
1986	<i>Images of the Raj</i> , Sista's Art Gallery, Bangalore
1983	<i>Story of a Brush</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1982	<i>Culture of the Streets</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1981	<i>Culture of the Streets</i> , Art Heritage, New Delhi
1981	<i>Les Otages – Mere Theresa</i> , Galerie Jourdan, Montreal, Canada
1980	<i>Mother and Child: A Tribute to Mother Teresa</i> , Calcutta Art Gallery, Kolkata
1979	<i>Husain in Malaysia</i> , The Hilton, Kuala Lumpur
1978	<i>Ragmala Paintings</i> , Centaur Hotel, Mumbai
1978	<i>Sufi Paintings</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1978	<i>Portrait of an Umbrella</i> , Art Heritage, New Delhi
1978	<i>Retrospective</i> , Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
1975	<i>Maqbool Fida Husain</i> , Sarla Art Centre, Chennai
1974	Commonwealth Art Centre, London, UK
1974	Moscow Museum of Oriental Art, Moscow
1974	<i>Paintings by Husain</i> , Worcester Art Museum, USA
1973	<i>Retrospective</i> , Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata
1973	Espace Cardin, Paris
1972	<i>Paintings 1971</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1971	Ashoka Hotel, New Delhi
1969	<i>21 Years of Painting</i> , Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
1968	<i>Images of Kerala</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
1968	<i>Six Days of Making: Movements and Moods in Paintings</i> , Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi
1967	New York, Poland and Czechoslovakia
1966	Mumbai
1966	Oberoi Hotel, New Delhi
1965	<i>Drawings: The Arab Image</i> , Gallery Chemould, Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi; Gallery Waisty, Baghdad and Kabul
1964	Dhoomimal Art Gallery, New Delhi
1962	Ashoka Gallery, Kolkata
1962	Mumbai and New Delhi
1961	Ashoka Gallery, Kolkata
1961	Gallery Chemould, Mumbai
1960 – 1961	Gallery Palse, Rome
1960	Kunst Kabinet, curated by Hanna Bekker vom Rath, Frankfurt, Germany
1956	Gallery Palette, Zurich
1956	Gallery Mannes, Prague
1950	Bombay Art Society, Mumbai

Selected Group Exhibitions

2017 *Culture of the Streets*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2016 *Masterpieces of Indian Modern Art*, Dag Modern, New York
 2016 *Mysteries of the Organism*, AkaraArt, Mumbai
 2016 *India Art Fair 2016*, Aicon Gallery
 2015 *The Naked and the Nude: The Body in Indian Modern Art*, Dag Modern, New York
 2015 *Palo Alto 2015 The Story of Indian Modern Art*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2015 *"Subcontinental Masters"*, Dubai Pop Up, Aicon Gallery
 2015 *Abby Grey and Indian Modernism: Selections from the NYU Art Collection*, Grey Art Gallery, New York
 2014 *Shifting the Paradigm*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2011 *Continuum*, Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi
 2011 *Roots in the Air, Branches Below: Modern & Contemporary Art from India*, San Jose Museum of Art, CA
 2011 *Time Unfolded*, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), New Delhi
 2011 *Celebrations 2011*, Kumar Gallery, New Delhi
 2010 – 2011 *Figure/Landscape: Part Two*, Aicon Gallery, London
 2010 *Figure/Landscape: Part One*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2010 *Who Has Seen Gandhi?*, presented by Tangerine Art Space at Raj Bhavan; Kynkyny Art Gallery and Tangerine Art Space, Bangalore
 2010 *The Modernists*, RL Fine Arts, New York
 2010 *The Progressives & Associates*, Grosvenor Gallery, London
 2010 *From Miniature to Modern: Traditions in Transition*, Rob Dean Art, London in association with Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
 2010 *Symbols and Metaphors*, Centre of International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata
 2010 *Masters of Maharashtra*, collection from Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi at Piramal Gallery, National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai
 2010 *Evolve: 10th Anniversary Show*, Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai
 2010 *Art Dubai 2010*, presented by Aicon Gallery, New York
 2010 *Manifestations IV*, Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi
 2010 *Roots, 25th Anniversary Exhibition of Sakshi Gallery*, Mumbai at The Park, Chennai
 2010 *Celebration 2010*, Kumar Art Gallery, New Delhi
 2009 – 2010 *Master Class*, The Arts Trust, Mumbai
 2009 *Bharat Ratna: Jewels of Modern Indian Art*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
 2009 *In Search of the Vernacular*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2009 *Indian Harvest*, presented by Crimson, The Art Resource, Bangalore at S.G. Private Banking, Singapore
 2009 *Long Gone & Living Now*, Gallerie Mirchandani + Steinreucke, Mumbai
 2009 *Kalpna: Figurative Art in India*, presented by The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) at Aicon Gallery, London
 2009 *Progressive to Altermodern: 62 Years of Indian Modern Art*, Grosvenor Gallery, London
 2009 *Spirit of India*, co-exhibition with S.H. Raza, Kings Road Galleries, London
 2009 *Armory Show New York*, presented by Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
 2009 *Ltd. Edition*, Gallery Threshold, New Delhi
 2008 – 2009 *Signs Taken for Wonders: Recent Art from India and Pakistan*, Aicon Gallery, London
 2008 *Modern India*, presented by Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM) and Casa Asia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture at Valencia, Spain
 2008 *Indian Highway*, presented in Collaboration with Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo at Serpentine Gallery, London; Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark
 2008 *Paz Mandala*, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
 2008 *Winter Moderns*, Aicon Gallery, New York and London
 2008 *Frame Figure Field: 20th Century Modern and Contemporary Indian Art*, Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi
 2008 *Modern and Contemporary Indian Art*, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi

2008	<i>Multiple Modernities: India, 1905-2005</i> , Philadelphia Museum of Art
2008	<i>Freedom 2008 – Sixty Years of Indian Independence</i> , Centre for International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata
2008	<i>Tales, Reflection and Constructs</i> , Galerie 88, Kolkata
2008	<i>Exhibition of Seri-Prints</i> , Studio Vasant, New Delhi
2008	<i>Moderns</i> , Royal Cultural Centre at Amman, Jordan; organized by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, with Embassy of India, Amman, Jordan
2008	<i>Harvest 2008</i> , organized by Arushi Arts at The Stainless Gallery, New Delhi
2007 – 2008	<i>From Everyday To The Imagined: Modern Indian Art</i> , Museum of Art, Seoul National University, Seoul
2007	<i>Epic India: Paintings by M.F. Husain</i> , Peabody Essex Museum, Massachusetts, USA
2007	<i>From the Vault</i> , Aicon Gallery, London and New York
2007	<i>Gateway Bombay</i> , Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA
2006	<i>Pictorial Glimpses</i> , National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai
2006	<i>Summer Show</i> , Centre for International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata
2006	<i>M.F. Husain: Early Masterpieces 1950s-70s</i> , Asia House, London
2006	<i>The Moderns Revisited</i> , Grosvenor Vadehra, London
2006	<i>Shadow Lines</i> , Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
2006	<i>Making of Divinity</i> , Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai
2005	<i>Manifestations III</i> , curated by Delhi Art Gallery at Nehru Center, Mumbai, and Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.
2005	<i>Drishti/Vision: Indian Contemporary Artists</i> , Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur
2005	<i>Evoking Rasa in Luminous Visions: Indian Art</i> , Worcester Art Museum, Worcester
2005	<i>Ashta Nayak: Eight Pioneers of Indian Art</i> , Aicon Gallery, New York
2005	<i>The Sacred Feminine</i> , Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi
2005	<i>Still Life: The Inscrutable Genre</i> , Art Motif, New Delhi
2004	<i>20 / 20 – A Vision: Looking Back / Looking Forward</i> , Apparao Galleries, Chennai
2004	<i>Ruminations</i> , Taj Mahal Hotel, Mumbai; The Forum, New Delhi; Windsor Manor Hotel, Bangalore; Museum Gallery, Mumbai
2004	<i>Jiva / Life</i> , Bodhi Art, Singapore
2004	<i>Portrait of a Decade</i> , Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
2004	<i>Manifestations II</i> , curated by Delhi Art Gallery at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai and Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi
2004	<i>Concept and Form</i> , Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
2003	<i>Anniversary Master Strokes</i> , Art Musings, Mumbai
2003	<i>Manifestations I</i> , organized by Delhi Art Gallery at World Trade Center, Mumbai and Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi.
2002	<i>Art Musings 2002</i> , Art Musings, Mumbai
2002	<i>Colors of India</i> , organized by Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata at Mumbai
2001	<i>Anniversary Return to Eden</i> , Art Musings, Mumbai
2001	<i>Modern Indian Art</i> , Metropolitan Pavilion, New York
2001	<i>Jubilant Gold: 50 Years of Artists</i> , Artists' Centre, Mumbai
2000	<i>Distillations</i> , Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata
2000	<i>Timeless Vision: Contemporary Art from the Herwitz Collection</i> , Haggerty Museum of Art, Milwaukee, WI
2000	<i>New Works</i> , The Fine Art Resource, Berlin
1998	<i>Ruminations</i> , Apollo Apparao Galleries, Mumbai
1998	<i>The Window</i> , Mumbai
1997	<i>Indian Painters Having Lives in France</i> , Alliance Francaise, Pondicherry
1997	<i>The Indian Beast</i> , Apparao Galleries, Chennai
1997	<i>Inaugural Exhibition</i> , Art Indus, New Delhi
1997	<i>Tribute to Mother Teresa</i> , Art Indus, New Delhi
1997	<i>The Keehn Collection: Important Paintings of Post Independence India</i> , Bose Pacia, New York
1997	<i>Colors of Independence</i> , National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi

- 1996 *Contemporary Indian Paintings: The Chester and Davida Herwitz Collection, Pt. II*, Sotheby's Auction, New York
- 1996 *Modern and Contemporary Indian Paintings: One Hundred Years*, Sotheby's Auction, London
- 1995 *River of Art*, Art Today, New Delhi
- 1995 *Contemporary Indian Paintings: The Chester and Davida Herwitz Collection, Pt. I*, Sotheby's Auction, New York
- 1995 *Art India Now: Important Contemporary Artists*, Bose Pacia, New York
- 1995 *Mithuna*, 91C Jermyn Street, London
- 1994 *Art Today*, New Delhi
- 1994 *Pundole Art Gallery*, Mumbai
- 1993 *Reflection and Images*, Mumbai
- 1993 *Wounds*, Centre of International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata
- 1991 *National Exposition of Contemporary Art*, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi
- 1991 *Husain, Husain and Husain*, Egypt
- 1991 *Remembering Kali Pundole on its 28th Anniversary*, Mumbai
- 1991 *State of Art*, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
- 1991 *Nine Indian Contemporaries*, Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA), New Delhi
- 1988 *Festival of India*, Takoka Municipal Museum of Art & Meugro Museum of Art, Tokyo
- 1987 *Indian Drawing Today*, Mumbai
- 1987 *Festival of India*, Russia
- 1987 *Coups de Couer*, Halle de l'Ile, Geneva
- 1986 *Indian Art Tomorrow*, The Phillips Collections, Washington D.C
- 1986 *Contemporary Indian Art*, Grey Art Gallery, New York
- 1985 – 1986 *Festival of India*, Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Art, New York University, NY
- 1985 *Indian Art Today: 4 Artists*, Washington D.C, USA
- 1985 *Contemporary Art in India*, Worcester, USA
- 1985 *Bharat Bhavan Biennale*, Bhopal
- 1985 *100 Jahre Indische Malerei*, Altes Museum, Berlin
- 1985 *Six Indian Painters*, Tate Gallery, London
- 1982 *Indische Kunst Heute*, Kunsthalle Darmstadt
- 1982 *Contemporary Indian Art*, Festival of India, Royal Academy of Arts, London
- 1982 *India: Myth and Reality*, Aspects of Modern Indian Art, Oxford, UK
- 1982 *Modern Indian Paintings*, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC.
- 1982 *Pundole Art Gallery*, Mumbai
- 1973 *Gallery Chanakya*, New Delhi
- 1972 *A Painter Makes a Film*, Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
- 1971 *São Paulo Biennale*, special invitee with Pablo Picasso, Brazil
- 1970 *Art Today II*, Ashoka Gallery, Kolkata and Shridharni Gallery, New Delhi
- 1969 *Art Today I*, New Delhi
- 1967 *25 Years of Paintings seen in Bombay*, Mumbai
- 1966 *Commonwealth Art Exhibition*, London
- 1966 *Art Now in India*, London and Brussels
- 1964 *Indian Paintings Now*, London
- 1962 *Asoka Art Gallery*, Kolkata
- 1961 *Gallery Chemould*, Mumbai
- 1960 *Tokyo Biennale*, Japan
- 1959 *São Paulo Biennale*, Brazil
- 1959 *Tokyo Biennale*, Japan
- 1958 *Eight Painters*, International Culture Centre, New Delhi
- 1955 *National Exhibition*, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
- 1955 *Venice Biennale*, Italy
- 1953 *Venice Biennale*, Italy
- 1951 *Salon de Mai*, France

1950	Calcutta Group and Progressive Art Group, Kolkata
1950	Bombay Art Society's Salon, Mumbai
1948 – 1956	Group Exhibitions with Progressive Art Group

Cinematography

2011	<i>Pehla Sitara</i> (Writer)
2008	<i>Halla Bol</i> (Thanks, as M.F. Husain)
2004	<i>Meenaxi: Tale of 3 Cities</i> (Director/Writer)
2003	<i>Tehzeeb</i> (Thanks, as M.F. Husain)
2000	<i>Gaja Gamini</i> (Director/Art Department/Writer/Actor)
2000	<i>Fiza</i> (Thanks – as M.F. Husain)
1997	<i>Mohabbat</i> (Actor, as himself)
1991	<i>Henna</i> (Art Department/Paintings); tribute to Raj Kapoor
1967	<i>Through the Eyes of a Painter</i> (Director/Writer)

Awards and Honors

2007	Raja Ravi Varma Award, Government of Kerala
2007	Honorary Doctorates, Benaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi
2007	Honorary Doctorates, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi
2007	Honorary Doctorates, Mysore University, Mysore
2004	Lalit Kala Ratna, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
1997	Aditya Vikram Birla 'Kalashikkar' Award for Lifetime Achievement
1991	Padma Vibhushan, Government of India
1973	Padma Bhushan, Government of India
1968	National Award for 'Best Experimental Film' <i>Through the Eyes of a Painter</i> , India
1967	Awarded 'Golden Bear' for film <i>Through the Eyes of a Painter</i> , International Berlin Film Festival, Germany; purchased by Museum of Modern Art, NY
1966	Padma Shree, Government of India
1959	International Biennale Award, Tokyo
1955	Padma Shree, Government of India
1955	First Prize at National Exhibition of Art, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
1947	Bombay Art Society, Mumbai