

**BID WHILE THE PAINT DRIES:  
BOLLYWOOD JOINS  
INDIA'S LEADING ARTISTS  
AT BONHAMS**

Bonhams, the international fine art auction house will help to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Indian Independence with a charity auction in association with TEHELKA, an iconic media house in India, and the country's fastest-growing English weekly newspaper.

**Art for Freedom** will take place at Bonhams, 101 New Bond Street, London on 7 June, 6 pm onwards. The sale will feature work by both established Indian masters and a newer generation of cutting edge, emerging voices.

A unique aspect of the auction is the fact that many of the canvasses are a collaborative effort between top-line Indian artists and high-profile Indian and British personalities. The proceeds of the sale will go towards TEHELKA.

The highlight of the evening will occur when two of India's biggest cultural brands – the legendary artist, 92-year-old **M F Husain** and Bollywood superstar **Shah Rukh Khan** – will paint on a blank canvas alongside each other. This painting will be sold as the paint dries at Bonhams to the highest bidder from among the art collectors, politicians, celebrities and industry magnates present at the auction.

Further collaborations include such diverse personalities as:

- **Angeli Sowani** (*London-based abstract expressionist*) and **Arun Sarin** (*global telecom czar, the India-born CEO of Vodafone, man in the news*)
- **Paresh Maity** (*30 solo shows in 10 years*) and **Sir Gulam Noon, MBE** (*a British businessman of Indian origin, famed for popularising Indian cuisine*)
- **Farhan Mujib** (*eminent artist famous for his ornate paper collages*) and **Naseeruddin Shah** (*one of India's most esteemed actors*)
- **Prasenjit Sengupta** (*a cutting edge new artist known for his ghostly realism*) and **Dr Kartar Lalvani** (*one of UK's most prominent NRIs, whose company, Vitabiotics sells some of Britain's largest selling vitamin supplements*)

The auction comes at an auspicious time for top Indian artists participating in the sale. Thanks to globalisation and changing artworld trends, the auction market for Indian art alone has spiralled from \$52million in 2006 to its current rate of \$150 million annually. Bonhams' recent public sales of Contemporary Indian and Pakistani Paintings are testament to this growth.

Prior to the auction at Bonhams on June 7, **Art for Freedom** will be on preview at Asia House, 63, New Cavendish Street from May 30 to June 11, 2007, 9.30 to 6 pm.

**SIR V S NAIPAUL SPEAKS**

This creative initiative, designed to support both art and media, forms part of the 60th anniversary of Indian Independence. It comes dovetailed with an unusual summit, **The Challenge of India**, being hosted by TEHELKA at the Royal Society of Arts, over 7 – 8 June. This summit brings together an impressive raft of speakers – a mix of influential corporate, civil society and political leaders cutting across party lines, from both India and the UK – and will feature talks and discussions led by such eminent personalities as the Nobel Laureate **Sir V S Naipaul** and India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, **Kamal Nath**.

**Sir VS Naipaul**, who has earlier spoken out on behalf of TEHELKA, says: **'I have backed TEHELKA for its independent voice, courage, and high public values. It has an important role in the vast changes sweeping India.'**

At a time when India is arousing tremendous interest in the world community. TEHELKA's summit offers an unusual window into India. It will tackle issues of public interest in India, rarely discussed in international forums. How is India really responding to globalisation? What are the new energies coursing through the country? How is one to approach its complex socio-political realities? What are the most creative responses to it?

The summit's agenda has been constructed to orchestrate means through which the world can develop a more enlightened and nuanced understanding of the subcontinent.

For more details: [www.criticalfutures.org](http://www.criticalfutures.org)

## ABOUT M F HUSAIN



Maqbool Fida Husain, born in Pandharpur, Maharashtra in 1915, is the best known face of modern Indian art. His idiosyncrasies – he always walks barefeet and carries a large paintbrush everywhere he goes – are the stuff of modern day Indian folklore.

At first a painter of film billboards, Husain was invited to join the Progressive Artists' Group by FN Souza, where he was exposed to and strongly influenced by the work of Expressionists like Emil Nolde and Oskar Kokoschka. His work, however, retains strong indigenous traditions, including Kufic calligraphy with its geometric forms.

In recent years, Husain's work – in particular, his nude renditions of Hindu goddesses – has often aroused a lot of controversy and backlash from extremist right wing groups in India. All of this is completely unwarranted. Husain's work is deeply rooted in ancient Hindu traditions, and he is infinitely more knowledgeable about Hindu aesthetics and theology than the lumpen who attack him.

Husain has had major retrospectives of his work around India and participated in group shows at the Royal Academy of Art, London; the Tate Gallery, London and the Hirschhorn Museum, Washington DC. His work can be found in the permanent collections of the Alkazi Collection; the Masanori Fukuoka Collection, Japan; the Chester and David Hertz Collection, Boston; the Jehangir Nicholson Collection, Mumbai and the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

Strongly influenced by Indian cinema, Husain has directed several films including *Through the Eyes of a Painter* which won the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival. He is a recipient of every top civilian awards in India. This spring he was the subject of a solo show at the Peabody Essex Museum in Massachusetts. He currently lives in self-imposed exile in Dubai, far way from the Bombay he loves and has lived in for the major part of his life.

## ABOUT SHAH RUKH KHAN



Shah Rukh Khan (November 2, 1965) is a superstar with a hysterical fan following in India. He started his career on a television series in 1988, capturing India's attention as a cheeky yet vulnerable army cadet. Since then he has starred in more

than 50 films, and won several national awards. He is the most saleable, most highly paid actor in Bollywood – widely referred to as 'King Khan'.

Unlike many of his peers, Shah Rukh's popularity spans the globe. He is a traffic stopper in the UK, and has millions of fans in countries as diverse as Germany, France, Afghanistan, Turkey, Poland, Japan, Morocco, Malaysia, Rumania and China, apart from nations with large Indian diaspora.

His 2002 historical romance *Devdas* took in twice as much abroad as in India. Tickets for his world tours are sellouts at up to \$300 a seat. With Bollywood's global audience running to 3.6 billion against Hollywood's 2.6 billion, *Time* magazine called Khan the world's most recognizable movie star. In April 2007, Shah Rukh's wax replica was included at Madame Tussaud's.

His recent return to television as the energetic, suave host of the popular game show, *Kaun Banega Crorepati* – the Indian version of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* – has been extremely popular

#### ABOUT TEHELKA

TEHELKA is a unique media brand in India, strongly associated with courage, integrity and independent reporting. It is committed to the two most crucial pillars of a free press: public interest journalism and the appetite to question. It is not aligned to any political party or business house.

TEHELKA first shot to international fame when it broke a sting investigation into defence corruption in India in 2001. This was hailed as a watershed in Indian journalism by global media. The government retaliated forcing TEHELKA to shut down. Tarun Tejpal, a reputed journalist, and founder editor of TEHELKA, stood his ground and fought back. TEHELKA's credentials emerged as impeccable, and his stand earned it immense public support.

In 2004, TEHELKA was relaunched as a national weekly English newspaper. In a campaign unprecedented in the history of media, thousands of ordinary Indian citizens supported the comeback of the paper with advance subscriptions. Also, 220 of some of India's most eminent citizens – writers, artists, film stars, politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen – paid Rs 1 lakh each to become Founder Subscribers of the paper.

In the three years since its relaunch, TEHELKA has re-established its reputation for hard investigative journalism, fine writing and in-depth analysis. Some of the most important public interest stories in India in the last three years have been broken by TEHELKA.

The paper is read by all the important intellectuals and decision makers in India. And some of the best Indian writers and columnists have written for TEHELKA – including **Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, Rana Dasgupta, Amit Chaudhuri, Meera Syal, William Dalrymple, Patrick French** and others.

TEHELKA's involvement with public interest issues is amplified by its Critical Futures series. Last year, TEHELKA hosted a path-breaking new forum **The Summit of the Powerless** in India. This brought together on a single platform the three stakeholders of a free society: money power, political power, and people power. It triggered many crucial new conversations and was widely hailed as a first in India.

This year, the TEHELKA Foundation – an adjunct of the paper – hosted a smaller, but highly successful mini conference on **Equality, Quality and Quantity – The Elusive Triangle in Indian Education**. The Foundation seeks to inspire young people to engage with the community and to work towards social integration. Frequent workshops and programs are held to raise awareness of citizen rights and responsibilities as well as helping individuals improve their life skills.

Tehelka's **The Challenge of India** summit in London is part of its **Critical Futures series**.

Further information and images: contact Julian Roup on 020 7468 8259 or [press@bonhams.com](mailto:press@bonhams.com)

art for freedom  
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Tehelka

Bonhams<sup>1793</sup>

**EDITOR'S NOTE** Bonhams, founded in 1793, is one of the world's oldest and largest auctioneers of fine art and antiques. The present company was formed by the merger in November 2001 of Bonhams & Brooks and Phillips Son and Neale UK. In August 2002, the company acquired Butterfields, the principal firm of auctioneers on the West Coast of America and in August 2003, Goodmans, a leading Australian fine art and antiques auctioneer with salerooms in Sydney, joined the Bonhams Group of Companies. Today, Bonhams is the third largest and fastest growing auction house in the world with a global network of offices and regional representatives providing sales advice and valuation services in 25 countries. It offers more sales than any of its rivals, through two major salerooms in London: New Bond Street, and Knightsbridge, and a further seven throughout the UK. Sales are also held in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Boston in the USA; Switzerland, Monaco, Hong Kong and Australia. For a full listing of upcoming sales, plus details of more than 50 Bonhams specialist departments, go to [www.bonhams.com](#). For other press releases, go to [www.bonhams.com/press](#).



**SATISH GUJRAL  
AND  
KP SINGH**

*Ballad of the Charioteer*



**SH RAZA**

*Ganga*



**ANGELI SOWANI  
AND  
ARUN SARIN**

*Identity in Abstraction*



**JAYASHRI BURMAN  
AND  
RAHUL MALHOTRA**

*GaneshJanini*



**PARESH MAITY  
AND  
SIR GULAM NOON**

*Eveing Raga*