

# SR Husain's last works set for London display

Courtesy of Mrs Usha Mittal © Victoria and Albert Museum, London



M F Husain's Three Dynasties, 2008-2011. The Indian Civilization series, which comprises eight monumental triptych paintings, was commissioned by steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal and Husain was working on them in the weeks leading up to his death in 2011

## TIMES NEWS NETWORK

For the first time, the final nine paintings by M F Husain, the artist who has often been described as India's Picasso, will go on public display at London's Victoria & Albert Museum this summer. The Indian Civilization series, which comprises eight monumental triptych paintings, was commissioned by steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal and Husain was working on them in the weeks leading up to his death in London in 2011.

His wife Usha Mittal has lent the paintings to the V&A, where the artist completed a residency in 1990. Husain was forced to flee the country in 2006 after his nude depiction of 'Bharat Mata' angered right-wing groups. But even in exile, the artist refused to turn his back on what he saw as his heritage of

Hindu myth and religion.

The V&A show opens with a painting of Ganesha, the elephant god who symbolizes beginnings, before going on to capture the vibrancy of festivals like Holi and important periods in Indian history. V&A curator Catrin Jones says Husain's final series, titled Indian Civilization, or Vision of India through Mohenjo Daro to Mahatma Gandhi, is a reflection on the themes that preoccupied the artist throughout his career. "Combining tradition and modernity, secular life and politics, Husain observes the changing face of India and its enduring cultures. Through the paintings' thematic compositions, Husain celebrates India's history from its ancient civilizations to its place as a complex modern democracy."

The paintings will be on show from May 28 to July 27, 2014.