

April 4 1989

Shri S.H. Raza
101 Rue de Charonne
2 Citi du Couvent
Paris 75011.

Dear Raza Sahib:

It was a treat for us to have you and Janine visit India, and to meet both in Bombay and in Delhi and always, great fun. When I think of Paradise, as a garden, I think of Janine and Raza at Gorbio... and odd photos keep turning up from nowhere, to remind me of our visits together, to remind me that this is a very real and genuinely deep friendship — although you are miles away and into another world.

Last night I met Dileep and he reminded me of the article due for the Times of India on Janine's pictures. I still have to write it; but I am deliberately not doing so, since the TOI have still to publish (this weekend, I am now told) my first piece. I shall certainly send it to you, in print!

As far as the monograph is concerned, it was delivered to Mr. Sankho Chowdhury at Lalit Kala Akademin on March 13th (Monday), and this was complete with 10 Black and White photographs, and 6 transparencies, including the one selected for the cover, four for within the monograph and the painting with quote and Bindu (now with Grimaud). All this material is now with Mr. Bhargava, as well as the layout which we had designed together, at Gorbio. There should be no problems about the matter now, and they were only waiting for the beginning of the new financial year (April 1st) and to settle the fact of which printer, when I last spoke with Mr. Bhargava last week. Enclosed is my further letter dated today, of enquiry. I believe they will try to get the best colour printer in Delhi. Perhaps it may be in order if you were to drop a few lines to Sankho-da, to enquire further about dates.

Now, about the exhibition. I have just returned from a trip to Calcutta, fairly successful as far as the book with Seagulls is concerned, and most successful as far as the exhibition is concerned. Much material has been assembled, as far as Jogen Chowdhury is concerned, and as far as Meera Mukherjee is concerned — the latter through private collections. In addition, kanthas and jadu pats. Each of the artists has agreed to add three new works, which will be placed for sale abroad. Vincent Grimaud has finally agreed, with a little persuasion, some charm, and mainly your friendship, to loan La Terre, for only 2 weeks during the show in Delhi in late October or early November. We also are counting on the painting "MA" which is with Bal, and if possible, Dileep.

I enclose an official letter as Commissioner of the Exhibition, requesting you to submit three new works, and also a letter from the ICCR giving dates for the exhibition in Delhi. Thereafter it will in all probability travel in India, and then to Sweden and hopefully, Germany. Perhaps it is not too late to ask you more details about the gallery in Germany where you mentioned, there may be a possibility of showing in November. Could you please enquire and let me know, since this will determine the dates in Delhi. Forgive this note being so officious! There are so many letters to be written today, in connection with this show.

The questions today in India relate to the Thacker Commission Report, and whether Dhawan is cleared or guilty, in regard to Mrs. Gandhi and security arrangements... and most importantly, what effect will the Times of India Auction, held in Bombay and conducted by Sotheby's, have on the art scene: on prices and on the actual quality of art. I will add a little postscript to my book on the artists; that this was perhaps the last time when such a book could be assembled. Artists in India today no longer have the leisure time to give you 16 interviews! I admire Jogen for having retreated to Santiniketan, where he lives a relatively tranquil life and the quality of his work will not suffer.

Last week, a talk by the philosopher Ram GANDHI (grandson of Mahatma Gandhi) at Art Heritage gallery, on a triptych by Tyeb Mehta. More than 50 people to listen that is the new interest in art. Intellectuals from every field, film-makers, TV script writers, art critics, journalists, dancers, maybe collectors.... I would like to do a similar exercise one day, on one of your grand works.

That is all to say, for the present. There are good days, and bad days and far too much work with two books coming out, hopefully this year, apart from your monograph, and then the exhibition. Mrs. Jayakar has more or less declined to write the introduction to my work on the National Museum because of the ill-will between her and Dr. Bihare and then suggested that I might try Geeta Kapur! So I came away much disheartened, with the little that one is trying to do in the way of art. It may be a better idea to work with children instead.

Let me thank you and Janine once again, for the wonderful few days which we spent together.

With love to you both,

Geeta

Enclosures: Letter as Commissioner
Letter from the ICCR stating their compliance
(a separate letter mentions that all costs of insurance, packing and crating and transport, will be borne by them).
Letter to Lalit Kala Akademi.

1 Wear the pendant which you have given me, on every possible "occasion" and think of me - It is much admired.
Do you ever see Kenise? Give her my love, and please encourage her to come and stay with me in Delhi. I am probably away June-July in Simla, at the Indian Institute for Advanced Studies where I have a research fellowship → Rashtrapati Niwas Summerhill, SHIMLA (HP).
to start work on a new book