

Rare paintings to be auctioned

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Indian art aficionados will have the opportunity to vie a rare collection of art that is being auctioned tomorrow. Works of V S Gaitonde and renowned artists of the Bengal School such as Rabindranath and Abanindranath Tagore have been put up for preview by the auction house, Bid & Hammer, at Hotel Imperial.

The rare paintings are from the pre-modern era and the modern era. Paintings from the Bengal School of Art and Company School which got patronage from the East India Company provide a rare visual delight.

Miniatures painted by Nandalal Bose from the Bengal School with the distinct influence of Pahari paintings will also be on auction. Works of Hemendranath Mazumdar, a contemporary of Abanindranath Tagore, will also be auctioned. His painting, 'Aviman' Broken Heart is

estimated to be between Rs 80 lakh and Rs 1.2 crore. Benode Bihari Mukherjee's paintings which signalled the beginning of the modern era are also on display. From the modern era, works of Ram Kumar, F N Souza, M F Husain and S H Raza who became part of the Progressive Artists' Group will be on auction.

Some paintings are part of national art treasure and, hence, by law non-exportable. These include works of Jamini Roy and Sailoz Mookherjee.

An early work of Raza depicts a scene from Bundi in Rajasthan. Painted in 1922, it forms part of his work from his early days when he travelled through Rajasthan. The work of art is estimated to cost between Rs 30 lakh to Rs 40 lakh. But the auctioneers said the price fetched might go much beyond the estimated value.

Vasudeo Santu Gaitonde's works which are in great demand nowadays among art collectors are also on auction. These include a 1980 painting. The untitled surreal work of art by the artist

is estimated to be between Rs 1.8 crore to Rs 3 crore which makes it the costliest painting on auction but it may be sold at a much higher price. One of his water colours is estimated to be between Rs 25 to Rs 40 lakh.

The sensuous portraits of Bikash Bhattacharjee will be put up for auction along with the austere portraits of V S Kulkarni and Narayan Ramkrishna Sardesai. "This is like walking through an art museum. The collection gives one a rare insight into the history of Indian art," said Ms Seema Bhalla, an art critic and curator. The chairman and managing director of Bid & Hammer, Mr M Maher Daddha, said it is their third auction in Delhi and the paintings are likely to fetch a whopping amount. The artworks are part of various collections including the Namrata Shirodkar Collection in which there are art pieces gifted by Husain to the actress. On auction are art pieces from the estate of Nandalal Bose as well as the estate of the Maharaja of Burdwan.