

Paris, 9th June, 1985.

Dear Nimisha,

Your good letter dated May 20th reached me in time. My life is so busy, particularly the last few weeks have been so full of preoccupation & work that I could not make it possible to write. I will try to do so, however briefly.

I do understand your concern & your disappointment in relation to the art world in India & your desire to come to Europe. But I think, you do not sufficiently realise the difficulties of life here. I do not want to curb your enthusiasm, or disappoint you, but I do want to warn you so that you do not launch yourself into a risky adventure without full preparations & considerable ~~try~~. A painter's life is difficult in any part of the world, more so in the beginning. In Delhi or Bombay there are specific problems which you know. In Paris, London & New York all these problems exist - plus many more which are indeed acute, about which you haven't the faintest idea. Firstly the cost of living, the language, climate, visa, accommodation & an ~~is~~ incredible merciless competition in down to earth materialistic world. For a painter to get a gallery to show is not easy, he needs to put up enormous personal effort to find one or to get possibility to show in salons or group exhibitions. The sales are almost impossible in the beginning & at times, months, years pass by before one sees the first rays of hope.

My affectionate advice to you will be not to come, unless you have a scholarship or fairly good material resources - in hard currency - to be able to be out of material worries during your stay. I think a young Indian painter, if he comes to France, should be in good condition to see & study during his first visit. That is the only reason & justification to leave India. There is so much to see here & if one denies this experience, the trip is not worth while. With a scholarship, there is every possibility to survey the art of the world, ancient & modern, think, & get down to work without being bothered

My address in Gorbio - till end Sept:

RAZA

RUE DU CHATEAU,  
GORBIO

06500 MENTON, France -

about showing paintings, exhibitions or galleries or the art politics. There is a great pleasure in this pure experience, which to my mind is the only valid reason for us to visit European countries. Nothing irritates me more than a young painter asking me in the first few minutes of his visit to my studio - problems & questions of exhibitions & sales.

a bit to Eudine - together, both of you - with adequate preparation.  
My experience is not theoretical. I have lived it here, as a scholar of the French Govt. & later when I was without resources. I did not have my first individual exhibition before 6 years of my stay. Well, every one has a different approach & I do know that some smart artists have gone about their way successfully, but rarely they have painted or painted well. And I have constantly in mind & memory the young painter from Bombay - Emmanuel Fernandez who came here without resources, & against my advice & was completely stranded in England. His sad adventure left an ever lasting impact on me, & ever since I have never encouraged any artist to come here without resources or a scholarship.

Regarding your work, I did like very much the terra cotta's you showed at the Taj & later at the Tata Theatre. But I think you have yet to find your way in painting. I remember having advised you & Charan to get down to work, to hard work without bothering about art politics, intrigues, prejudices that are a part of art scene in any part of the world. Once a vision develops & a body of work realised, many problems get solved by themselves.

We are leaving for Gorbio end of this week - most probably Saturday 15th June for a period of 3½ months. We will be back in Paris again by end September. Two exhibitions are ahead me for the end of the year. So there is hardly time for other things than "PAINTING" - So this letter - with all my affectionate thoughts to you & Charan. His very touching letter was also received. I wish you both worked hard for 2 or 3 years more in India & then tried to plan