

Kanpur
5th Jan 1961

Dear old Raza,

No news from you - possibly there isn't much to say just now. It's quite amazing isn't it that one should live through so many days and yet when it comes to adding up there isn't much accounting to be done. I suppose I am writing this because I am already starved for friendship and have a need to exchange ideas - so I am content to write ~~at~~ a kind of monologue & intersperse it with bit of news & views which I know would be of interest to you.

First things first - I am enclosing a letter which I received in response to mine from a high up in the Exchange Control Dept in Bombay. It speaks for ~~itself~~ itself. I hope Manuel has replied on the lines which I suggested in my last letter. I am sure he will get it eventually.

Ram Kumar spent an evening with us. He is an awfully good fellow & terribly honest. He has come to some sort of arrangement with Kumar who I believe buys one painting a month from him. Things have been much better for him this last year & he ascribes it mainly to tourist traffic. This in itself is not very encouraging.

Friend Hussein whom I haven't seen or heard from since my return, has been in the hub of "Artistic Activity" He has just

shown at Ashoka Gallery in Calcutta and
I am told that his exhibition was successful
though he had to lower his prices somewhat.
Himani Khanna (no relation but a very good
friend) is most encouraged by the response
she is receiving & though she had expected
to lose in the first year, she has broken
more than even and hopes to do much
better. Husain has broken with Kumar
and doesn't function on any sort of contract.
He sells to anyone who is interested
be it a gallery or a private individual.
He has a private secretary who manages
his affairs & I believe receives a pretty
good salary (500!) - I have seen some
black & white reproductions of his recent
work - The Regumale Series! & quite truly I
have not been smitten. They seem
attractive & appealing & their "charm" is
what makes for success. However I may
be speaking too prematurely - basically
they are all in line with the Catalogue I
left with you of his exhibition in Delhi.
Renu went to spend a few days in
Delhi & met him there. He told her that he would
be coming here on the 15th Jan - but as I have
said before - I shall believe this when I see
him.

Himani Khanna was here & spent
a night, left this afternoon. Is very keen that
I should exhibit in Calcutta at her gallery & I
have made a half promise which depends on

whether or not I shall have enough good
paintings to show. Kumar too is keen
that I should show at his Gallery in Delhi
and in Calcutta. Chap is go ahead but I am
not at all certain of his integrity - I am wonder-
ing where the heck old Bal has got to. I'm
expecting a telephone call from him any day.
I had a rip roaring letter from him from London.
He had seen Mr Phillips of Leicester Galleries and
spent an evening with him - drinking. I
am wondering if old Bal will conduct his
Gallery business seriously or will switch to
painting entirely. If he seriously wants to
pursue his Gallery business I shall through in
my lot with him. Himani has sunk quite a
lot of money in her Gallery and is quite
ambitious. She wondered if she could go
into partnership with Bal - I thought it a
good idea because she - aided by her
husband - is very methodical + serious
+ I think will go a long way if helped.
Have you any views on this subject?
As for myself - I don't even feel like painting
as long as I am tied up with the bank &
therefore quite naturally I am wanting
an opportunity to get the hell ^{out} of it. I must be
getting a bit old now - I find it difficult to ~~not~~
paint after ten hours of banking a day.
I am painting of course & the one I have
now on the easel is promising well. I shall
send you slides in due course when I get around to
photographing. Incidentally I don't know if I told

you in my previous letter, but my friend the German Doctor has bought three paintings of mine in London - the Gallery is mighty pleased - & so am I!

By-the-way you made no comments on the slides I sent you. I was particularly looking forward to your reaction to "Mohenjo Daro" and the painting which Kaman bought. I haven't heard from him either and I only hope that it is heavy work which has prevented him from writing. I am most anxious to know whether he approves of my choice or not. In any case if he does not he can always take another in exchange. I expect you have seen him this month because I remember he said he was going to London & to Paris in January - so convey to him my very good regards & tell him that I hope he will come and stay with us whether I am in or out of the bank. He seems to be an extraordinary person.

Did you receive the two magazines I sent you? I hope Komesh Thapar has also sent you the edition of Seminar devoted to Painting. It is an interesting document - for once only practicing artists have had a say. The photographs which I took casually in your flat have come out well - a la Cartier Bresson??!

I caught you off your guard boy so mine
is a more authentic photograph - same
goes for the snap I took of Janine.

12th It's the 12th already and I realise that
I have not sent you my customary salutations
over the New Year. When I think of it why should
we make such a hoopla over what is a quite artificial
& arbitrary division of time & choose to celebrate
over one day in the year. It really makes little
difference - & why not celebrate the whole of life.
I suppose that is a difficult proposition, certainly
as long as one works in a bank. However -
you know my good wishes & love are ever
with you & are not confined to a particular day.
I've just had a most touching & apologetic
letter from Maghool - although what he has to be
apologetic about I don't know. It's good to know
that one is loved. - I've just heard from my
father who has received two parcels (through my
brother) from Krishna who is in Delhi - I conclude
these must be my tie & the paintings knives -
many thanks for sending them! What news of old
Bal - do write - even a short letter - I hunger
for real friends - & when these are not available,
I look forward to their letters.
You both our warm greetings and our love.
As always,
Krishna