

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"SEER: THE ART OF SOHAN QADRI" OPENS IN NEW YORK

January 8 - 31, 2009



Hara, 1974. Oil on Canvas, 48 x 48"

New York, NY, January 8, 2009 – SUNDARAM TAGORE GALLERY is pleased to present new works on paper as well as early oils by yogi painter Sohan Qadri. An artist, poet and Tantric guru, Qadri is one of the only internationally acclaimed artists deeply engaged with spirituality and yoga. Famed art critic Donald Kuspit has hailed Qadri to be “the pre-eminent aesthetic mystic of modernism.” Known for tableaux of luminous color, his work recalls the lush palette of India. The show opens with a cocktail reception on January 8, 2009, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and runs through January 31.

Qadri abandons representation in search for transcendence. His works have a floating quality, a characteristic he achieves by bathing paper in liquid and carving it in several stages while he applies inks and dyes with a brush. Imbued with vibrant hues, the serrated surfaces have a strong

sense of energy and rhythm about them. In the hands of Qadri, the very nature of paper is transformed into a three-dimensional medium.

Born into a Hindu and Sikh family, Qadri’s art is deeply influenced by a spiritual journey which began at a young age. He was initiated into yogic practice at the age of seven. As a teenager, he ran away to a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in search of higher truth. He spent days on end in remote temples in the Himalayas and Tibet. The isolation he experience at that time was one of his influences to paint. Later in life, he became fascinated with Sufism and Vajrayana Buddhism, which became potent sources of inspiration for later works.

“Qadri owes as much to Western experimentation as to Eastern tradition, and his work is unique because it is truly a quest for his true self – through Tantric yoga and silent meditation,” says Curator, Sundaram Tagore. Throughout the course of his career he interacted with an array of intellectual figures including the architect Le Corbusier, the surrealist painter René Magritte and the Nobel laureate Heinrich Böll.

There is a tranquil coexistence of binary opposites in Qadri’s work—male and female, known and unknown, physical and spiritual. It is more than a literal translation of the symbols of Oriental philosophy. When Qadri paints, he explains, “First I empty my mind of all images. They dissolve into primordial space. Only emptiness, I feel, should communicate with emptiness of the canvas.”

(continued on reverse)

new york 547 WEST 27TH STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10001

beverly hills 9606 SOUTH SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA 90210

hong kong 57-59 HOLLYWOOD ROAD, CENTRAL, HONG KONG

WWW.SUNDARAMTAGORE.COM

Qadri has had more than 50 exhibitions across the United States, Europe, Asia and Africa. Tagore, says, "I am pleased that Qadri's work continues to inspire; he is expanding the dialogue of being and what this means, and our audiences are responding to it in a significant and profound way."

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Qadri was born in 1932 in Punjab, India. He studied and received his MFA from the Government College of Art in Simla, India. After finishing his degree, Qadri taught, painted and formed the Loose Group of painters and poets in India in 1964. In 1965, he left India and began a series of travels that took him to East Africa, North America, Paris and Zurich. Later he set up a studio in Zurich. Today, he lives in Copenhagen, Denmark. His solo shows have included ones in his hometowns, in addition to major gallery exhibitions in Bombay, Vienna, Brussels, London, Oslo, Stockholm and many other cities. In addition, he has published numerous volumes of his own poetry and writings, and he conducts international workshops on aesthetics and metaphysics as well as intensive courses in advanced meditations from Tantras. His work is included in many official and private collections worldwide.

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For more information, please contact gallery@sundaramtagore.com or call 212 677 4520

Sundaram Tagore Gallery

NEW YORK
547 West 27th Street
New York, NY 10001
t: 212 677 4520
f: 212 677 4521
gallery@sundaramtagore.com

BEVERLY HILLS
9606 South Santa Monica Boulevard
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
t: 310 278 4520
f: 310 278 4525
beverlyhills@sundaramtagore.com

HONG KONG
57-59 Hollywood Road
Central, Hong Kong
t: 852 2581 9678
f: 852 2581 9673
hongkong@sundaramtagore.com