

Paramjit Singh-
Mystical encounters
on canvas

A Friendship
With Art

Cutting Chai:
An Exhibition
is Born

Those who can,
do teach...
Durre Waseem

What shall I
love if not
the Enigma?

nigaah

Arts & Culture from South Asia

Vol. 1 THREE 2009 • ISSN NO 2041-4595



nigaah

Arts & Culture from South Asia

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Nigaah's own Senior Editor Muniza Agha-Fawad interviews 'Professor' Durre Waseem, and art collector Qamar Jaffery. She also writes about Islamic Art. All in this issue!

Nafisa Rizvi is a writer, curator and teacher. Having been in the field of advertising for many years as copywriter, she decided to hone in on her passion for art and writing. She published her first novel *The Blue Room* in 2008 and has been writing on art in various magazines and newspapers for many years. She is married with two children.

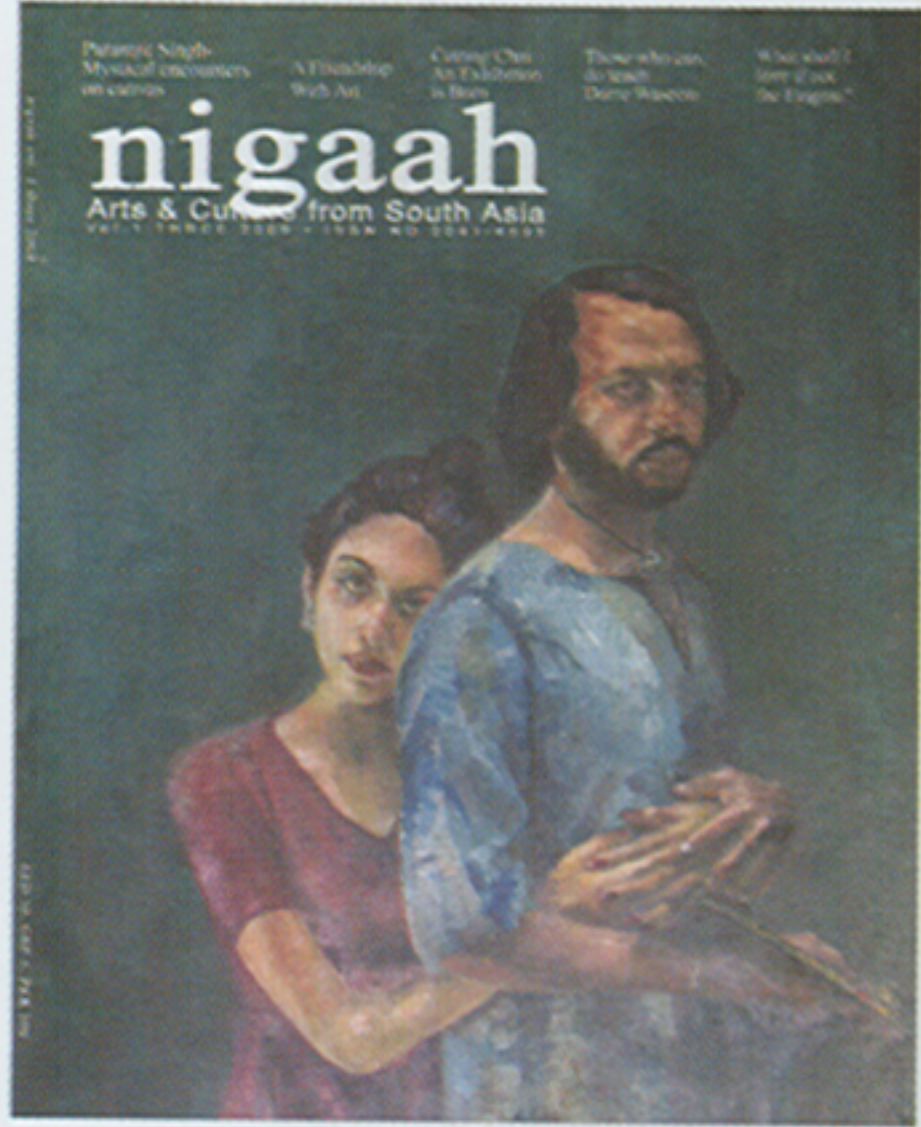


Based in Baroda, India, a vibrant city of art institutions, Sandhya Bordewekar reviews 'A new born Exhibition - Cutting Chai' Sandhya is Nigaah's correspondent in Baroda, India.

Vandana Shukla describes herself as nomadic by nature, scholastic by pursuit (having earned a Ph.D.). Living in India, she is an art critic, a poet, vocalist, writer and lecturer in cultural studies for media students. Shukla has worked with mainstream print media in various capacities for over a decade and half. Vandana is also Nigaah's correspondent in India.



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Title Painting: Iqbal Hussain



Title Painting: Durre Waseem

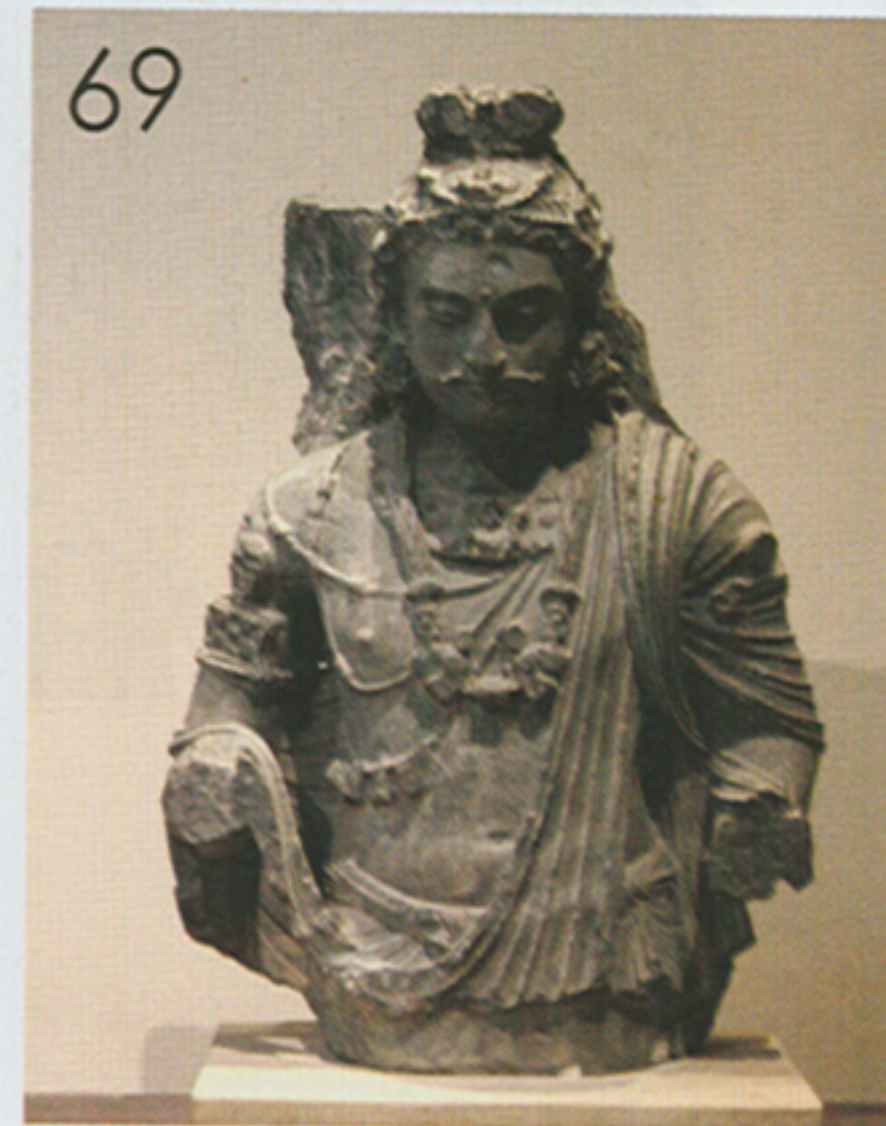
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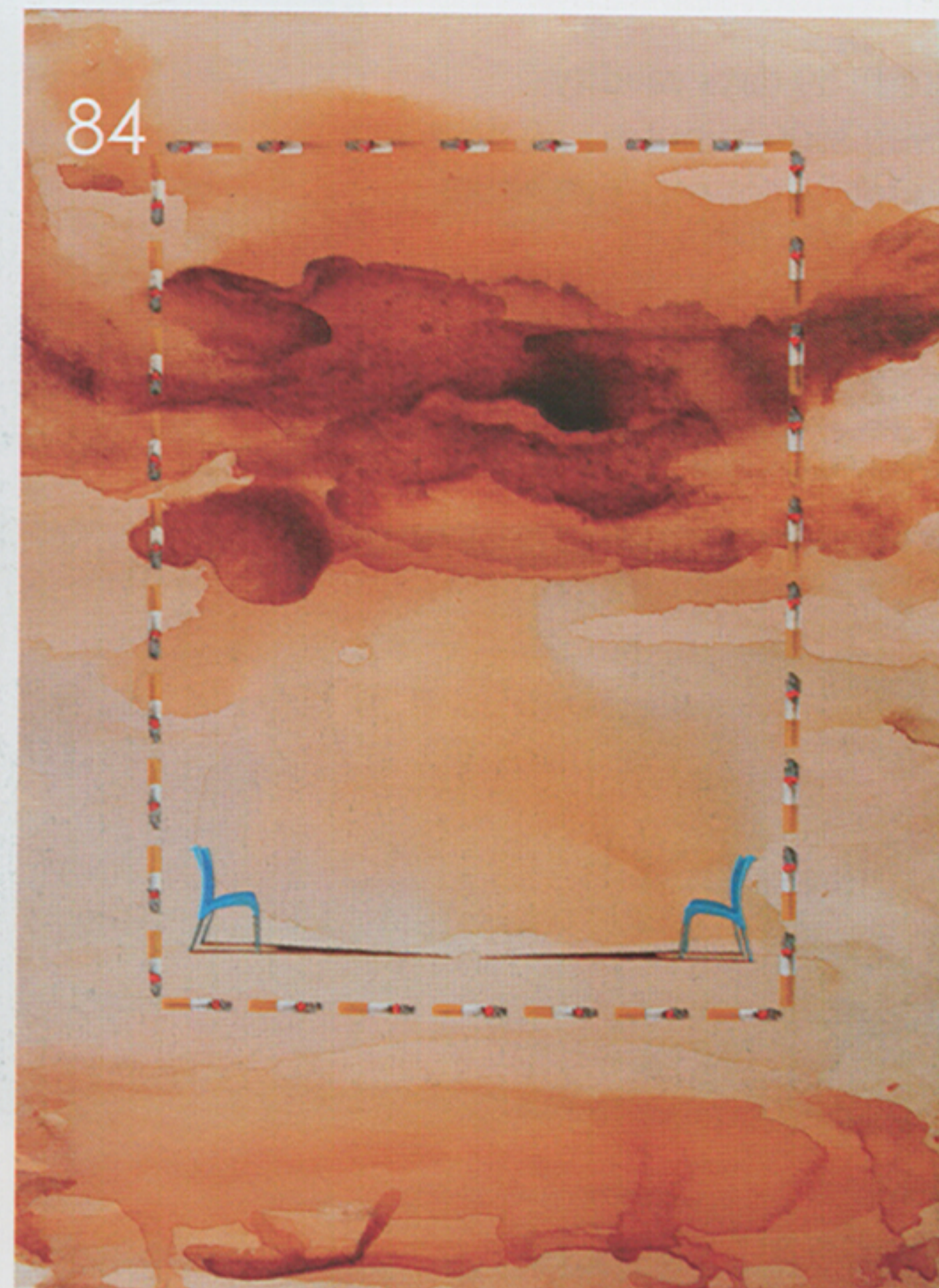
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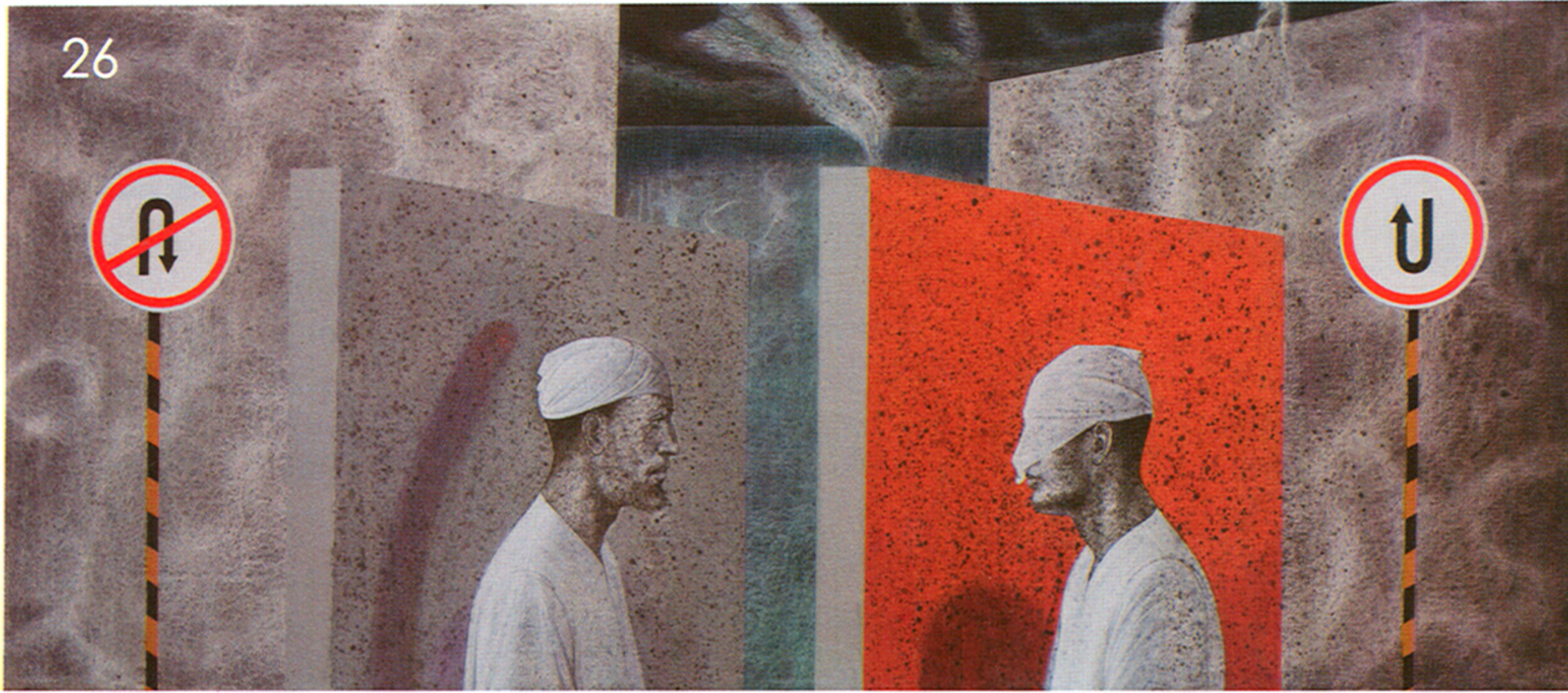
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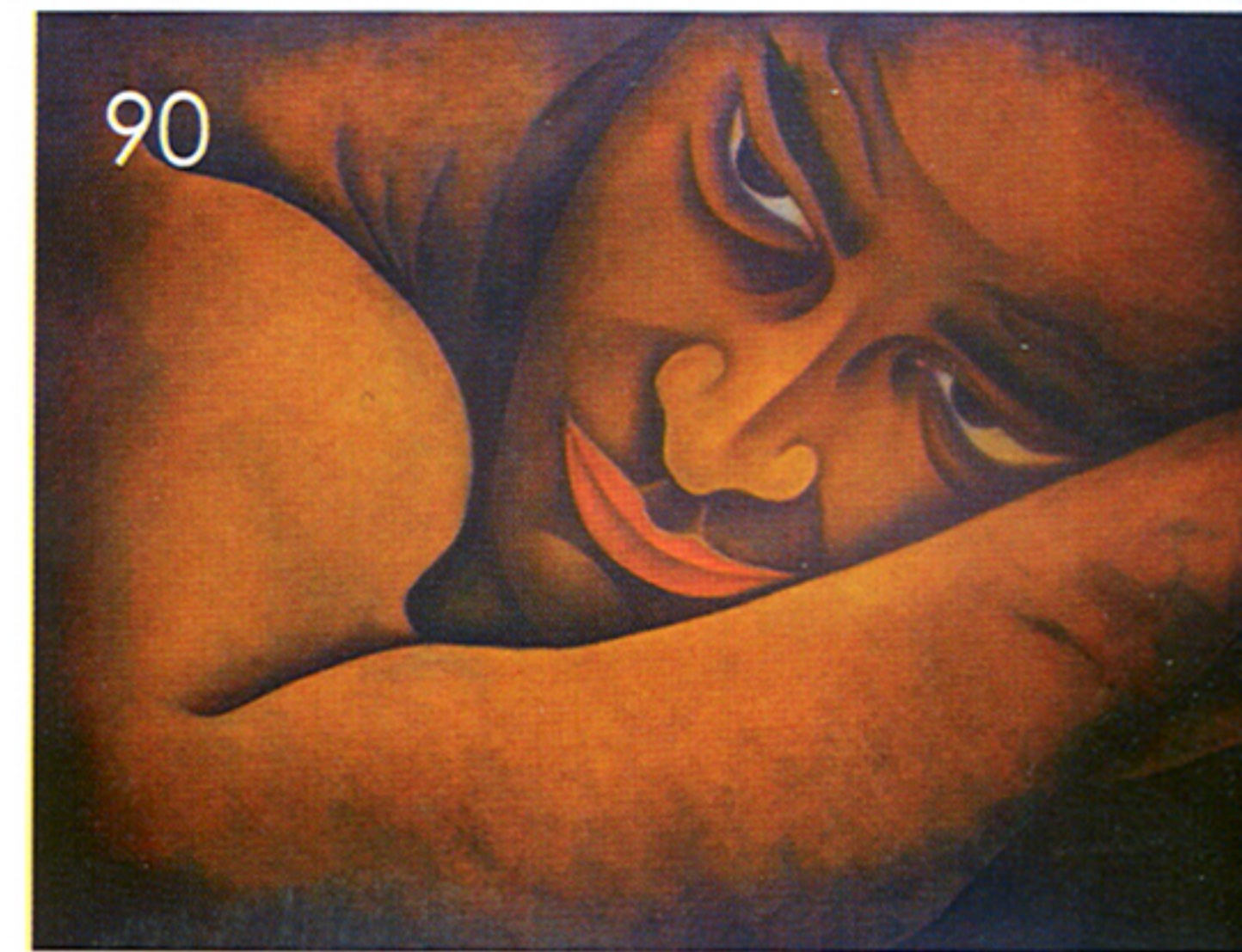
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“Art Makes
Us Human”
–Najib Tareque

Painter Najib Tareque was recently featured at Art Expo India 2009, which was held in September, in Mumbai. He talks to Nigaah about his career as a painter living and working in Bangladesh. Here we are featuring portions of our talk with the artist.

To start with, Najib Tareque was born in Dinajpur, Bangladesh, in 1970. Although he proclaims himself “... a self thought artist”, Najib did earn an MFA in print making at the Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. But despite having had such an academic career, he explains that “...my academic studies have no influence on my art. People like Safiuddin Ahmed, Mohammad Kibria, Rafiqun Nabi, Mahmudul Haq, Abul Barq Alvi, Shishir Bhattacharia want to help me to grow as an artist, but they in no way influence how or what I create”.

As a child, Najib recalls how much he enjoyed reading, and how often he spent his class time at the library. He describes to us an incident from when he was studying, and this was perhaps a life-changing event for the young Najib.

“I got admitted into IFA to show my family how serious I was about studying. However, I loved spending most of my time in the library, even when I should have been in class. After one year of this, a senior student named Sahid Kabir Liton said to me ‘Hi Tareque, why you are not in class?’ After 15 minutes of talking with him, I was in class! That was 1988. In 1989, there was the Dhaka University Central Student Union election, and I was a



campaign worker, carrying lots of leaflets in my hands, and in my off time I used to make drawings on the back side of the leaflets...one night a friend and I were seated on the table at my hostel, and the leaflets were on the table...one senior student Nurul Haq Minu came and he tried to get some leaflet to use as tissue...he found some interesting drawings in the back side of the leaflet and asked 'Who's drawing these?' My colleague said 'Tareque did it' Nurul Haq then asked 'Which year you are in?' and I replied '1st year'. He said to me 'keep practicing and save these drawings carefully. Don't show to others now, they will not accept your talent'. He was right and wrong also".

Nurul Haq Minu's words resonated with Najib. After the elections, the students were given a long leave and Najib went home to Dinajur. At home, he started painting with those drawings and soon "...people called them ' Salvador Tareque's' paintings (as in Salvador Dali)". In 1989, Najib and eight other students made enough works to put in an exhibition. In 1990, Najib recalls that "G.S. Kabir found me as a writer...he appointed me as a non-paid writer for his MFA dissertation (I was in 2nd year only). At that time I was upset about being seen as Salvador (Dali) Tareque. I wanted to have my own identity. One night G. S. Kabir said 'why are you upset, you should be proud, your works are like as Salvador Dali's work, not like Safiuddin-Kibria-Bashir's work...'. I was





proud, but not convinced, and I spent more time reading and researching about Dali and other European modern artists, in the library". The words of G.S. Kabir lead Najib onto a new path- a path of discovery.

"I knew about many of the artists before IFA, but now I feel as though I have discovered them because I discovered art history, at least European art history, from the Renaissance to David Hockney and Barbara Kruger. Artists from our region, such as Abanindranath, Nandalal, Binod Bihari, Jamini Roy, Rabindranath, Hokusai, Zainul Abideen, Quamrul Hassan, Chughtai, M. F. Hussain, F. N. Souza, Safiuddin, Mohammad Kibria, Murtaza Bashir, Baset, Tyeb Mehta, and K.G. Subramanyam, they were all the pioneers of my path. But I work hard to make my style of art, because it is through my art that I try to show what the intellectual, philosophical, political questions are of my time. I try to understand abstract concepts that are a part of our civilization and play an important part in our society, like religion, sexuality, and power dynamics".

I ask Najib Tareque if he had any final thoughts about art to share. "In the pre-historic era, people drew on the cave wall, why? By the school text we come know that they did it to learn hunting, but is it true? In the darkness of the cave, where people can't see easily, how could they learn? Now look at us today, our hunters are the armed forces, and because we have no need for hunting animals, they hunt man. I wonder if they are getting their training in dark? I think the artists of today draw because they feel an urge to save lives, while knowing they can't do that successfully, but they wish to, and that's magical. Art is not entertainment, art is the joy of seeing, joy of sowing the beauty of life and beauty. Art represents human quality, it's what transformed homo sapiens to human beings.