

## Indian art attracts over \$1.7 mn in Sotheby's spring auctions

Works by Indian artists Subodh Gupta, Anish Kapoor, T.V. Santosh, Chintan Upadhyay, Riyas Komu, Raqib Shaw and Bose Krishnamachari attracted high prices at Sotheby's spring series of contemporary art auctions here, exceeding expectations with the total sale amounting to \$1,748,500.

The highlight of the May 14-15 auctions was a work by Gupta, one of the most important contemporary artists to emerge from India in a generation. His 'Saat Samunder Paar VII' fetched \$825,000, a record for the artist at auction.

This work came from a series the artist completed in 2003 entitled 'Saat Samundar Paar' (Across the Seven Seas). In these works, he has depicted scenes from bustling airports, thereby tapping into a theme central to his entire oeuvre: man's experience in contemporary society. An untitled 2006 sculpture by Gupta also fetched \$193,000 at the sale as against an estimate of \$80,000-\$120,000.

Scott Nussbaum, specialist in Sotheby's Contemporary Art department, said: 'Zara Porter Hill, Sotheby's head of Indian and Southeast Asian art, and I are thrilled at the strong prices achieved across the board for works by Indian artists in our series of sales, which was an outstanding team effort.'

'Interest was global for these works, demonstrated by the record prices achieved for works by Subodh Gupta and Pakistani artist Rashid Rana.'

Highlighting the offering of other works by contemporary Indian artists was Kapoor's lacquered bronze sculpture 'Blood Solid', 2001, which sold for \$301,000. Sotheby's set the record for a work by Kapoor at auction in its November 2007 evening sale of contemporary art when it sold an untitled work for \$2.8 million.

High prices were also obtained by Santosh's 'Test II', 2005, which was estimated at \$60,000-\$80,000 but fetched \$157,000 and Shaw's untitled 2004 work that sold for \$91,000 against an estimate of \$40,000-\$60,000.

Komu's 'Systematic Citizen XIV', 2006, went for \$79,000, Upadhyay's 2007 work 'Smart Alec' brought \$73,000 and Krishnamachari's 'Untitled (Stretched Bodies)', 2006, brought \$39,400.

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