

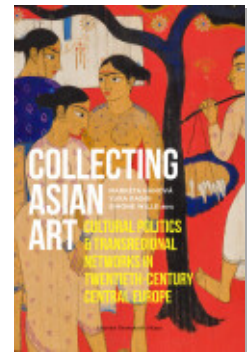


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M. F. Husain's Work in the Collection of the National  
Gallery in Prague: Connecting East and West

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# M. F. HUSAIN'S WORK IN THE COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY IN PRAGUE: CONNECTING EAST AND WEST\*

*Simone Wille*

The Indian artist Maqbool Fida Husain (1915–2011) is considered to be India's most important postcolonial modernist artist. He is intrinsically linked with India's Nehruvian nation-building project and is said to have given form to early post-colonial modernist art in the country. In terms of art history, Husain has been widely researched. There is hardly an account of Indian modernism without due acknowledgement of his contribution.<sup>1</sup> In all of these narratives, it is undisputed that Husain gave form to artistic modernism in post-partition India. From early on in his career, he had the opportunity to travel extensively and internationally, and these journeys can be seen as directly related to the global post-war environment. Along with a general shift in power, decolonisation made new cultural and political connections and alliances possible in every direction. As a nationally and internationally celebrated artist, Husain received invitations to exhibit in many countries.

## TRAVEL ABROAD AND FIRST CONTACTS WITH PRAGUE

Husain's first journey outside India took him to Beijing, where he travelled with Indian delegates to the 1952 Asia-Pacific Peace Conference. In 1953 he undertook trips to Egypt and Europe and, thereafter, to many more places. In 1956 he was invited by the Czechoslovak Cultural Ministry to exhibit his works at Prague's Mánes Exhibition Hall, and in the following years, he maintained close ties with Prague and some Praguers, and he returned regularly for different exhibition formats. In 1957 he was commissioned to paint a mural for Air India's Prague office which, however, no longer exists.<sup>2</sup>

In 1976 he travelled across Czechoslovakia and documented this journey in the form of an artist's book or diary, with twenty-three original drawings. These drawings form part of the collection of the National Gallery in Prague (NGP).

The narrative of some of these drawings, together with the memory of a live drawing performance by Husain at Prague's Fragner Gallery in 1976, were eventually repurposed in his second feature film, *Meenaxi: A Tale of Three Cities*, produced in 2004, where Prague is featured as one of the three cities. The works in the Prague collection and the circumstances of their making are not well known. This article will therefore introduce Husain's Prague works and examine their place in the nationally and internationally celebrated artist's oeuvre, as well as within the collection of the NGP. Husain's multifaceted practice, which included painting, sculpture, toy-making, performance, and film, has been said to have bridged 'boundaries of cultural practices associated with East and West'.<sup>3</sup> Following art historian Sonal Khullar's assessment of Husain's 'cosmopolitan orientations and world historical ambitions of the artist's work',<sup>4</sup> I will also examine to what extent Husain's frequent returns to Prague contributed to the artist's understanding of East and West. Given Husain's personal contacts and institutional connections with Prague – and the political environment of the Cold War, which enabled and facilitated these connections – the question arises as to how we can understand them as constitutive of the artist's creative navigations between the political and cultural environment, both nationally and internationally.

## EARLY INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE

When Husain travelled as an Indian delegate to the 1952 Asia-Pacific Peace Conference in Beijing, he was already a celebrated artist in India. He was part of the famous but short-lived Progressive Artists Group, a six-member avant-garde group formed in Bombay in the wake of India's independence in 1947.<sup>5</sup> These artists rejected the academicism practised at the J.J. School of Art,<sup>6</sup> which was also favoured by the Bombay Art Society. They developed a formal artistic language which employed not only Indian traditional art but also Expressionism and Cubism. After visiting the exhibition *Masterpieces of Indian Art* at the Government House in Delhi in 1948 – a major exhibition surveying five thousand years of Indian art and culture that travelled from London to New Delhi, accompanying the transfer of power, as it were, from the empire to the nation state – Husain turned to local motifs and art, studying popular and folk art and early Indian sculpture, which he often reduced to their linear and structural minimum.<sup>7</sup> Through his international travels, however, Husain was exposed to a wide range of post-war artistic developments, and not all these impressions have been thoroughly studied.<sup>8</sup> Art historian Susan Bean has referred to Husain's meeting with the artists Qi Baishi (1864–1957) and Xu Beihong (1895–1953) during his trip to China in 1952. According to Bean, Husain was impressed by the calligraphic quality of these artists' brushstrokes, which she sees as impacting on his works to come. She draws connections between the Chinese artists' famous horse drawings and those of Husain.<sup>9</sup> At the peace conference in Beijing, it is likely that Husain saw a repro-

duction of Diego Rivera's famous *Nightmare of War, Dream of Peace* (Pesadilla De Guerra, Sueño De Paz) from 1952, which was displayed on the wall of the meeting hall opposite Picasso's *Dove of Peace* from 1949.<sup>10</sup> Even if he was 'boldly dismissive of those who followed the socialist realism of the Soviet Union',<sup>11</sup> he may well have enjoyed the simple graphic line drawing of Picasso's work. The point here is not so much to judge these works as having an influence on the artist, but rather to draw a larger picture of what he was exposed to, as a result of which one can assess how he positioned himself in relation to these experiences.

As an artist who enjoyed immense international exposure, Husain was well aware of the cultural diplomacy that facilitated these journeys. Therefore, many of the invitations he received had less to do with a genuine interest in modern Indian art, but were rather intended to accompany political and diplomatic networking efforts. This becomes clear from Husain's Rockefeller Fellowship in 1959. He left the United States after six days with a sense of disappointment, finding that his work as an artist within the programme, which was designed to promote friendship between India and the United States in the climate of the Cold War, was met with little interest.<sup>12</sup> In addition to Husain's exhibitions and stays in Prague, this article is therefore also concerned with examining the nature of the artist's relationship with this city, where a close circle of friends – a mix of private individuals, Indologists, and art enthusiasts – followed and nurtured his international career and participated in it in a non-hierarchical way. In contrast to his experience with the Rockefeller Fellowship, in Prague, it seems, he was celebrated as a modernist artist, both from India and internationally, on the basis that his art demonstrated a commitment to his nation but was, at the same time, transnational and transregional in character.

## HUSAIN'S CONNECTION WITH PRAGUE

Husain's first trip to Prague in 1956 was connected to an invitation by the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education and Culture to hold a solo exhibition at Prague's Mánes Exhibition Hall, the requirement being that the invited artist was to carry out a so-called study tour of the country. The resulting studies, mainly of drawings and sketches of Prague and its surroundings, were then exhibited together with a series of paintings that he had brought with him for the occasion. Archival images from his first exhibition in Prague show a young and shy Husain in a suit and tie, trying to fit in. In pictures from later stays, he is seen as much more confident, dressed in Indian clothes and wearing a beard, often barefoot, which became his trademark. His engagement with the culturally rich city of Prague was stimulated, not least, by some of his personal contacts. The Czech Indologists and cultural networkers Miloslav Krása and Lubor Hájek were both instrumental in nurturing the city's as well as the personal connection with Husain. But perhaps more important was Husain's attraction to Marie Žurková, a young interpreter

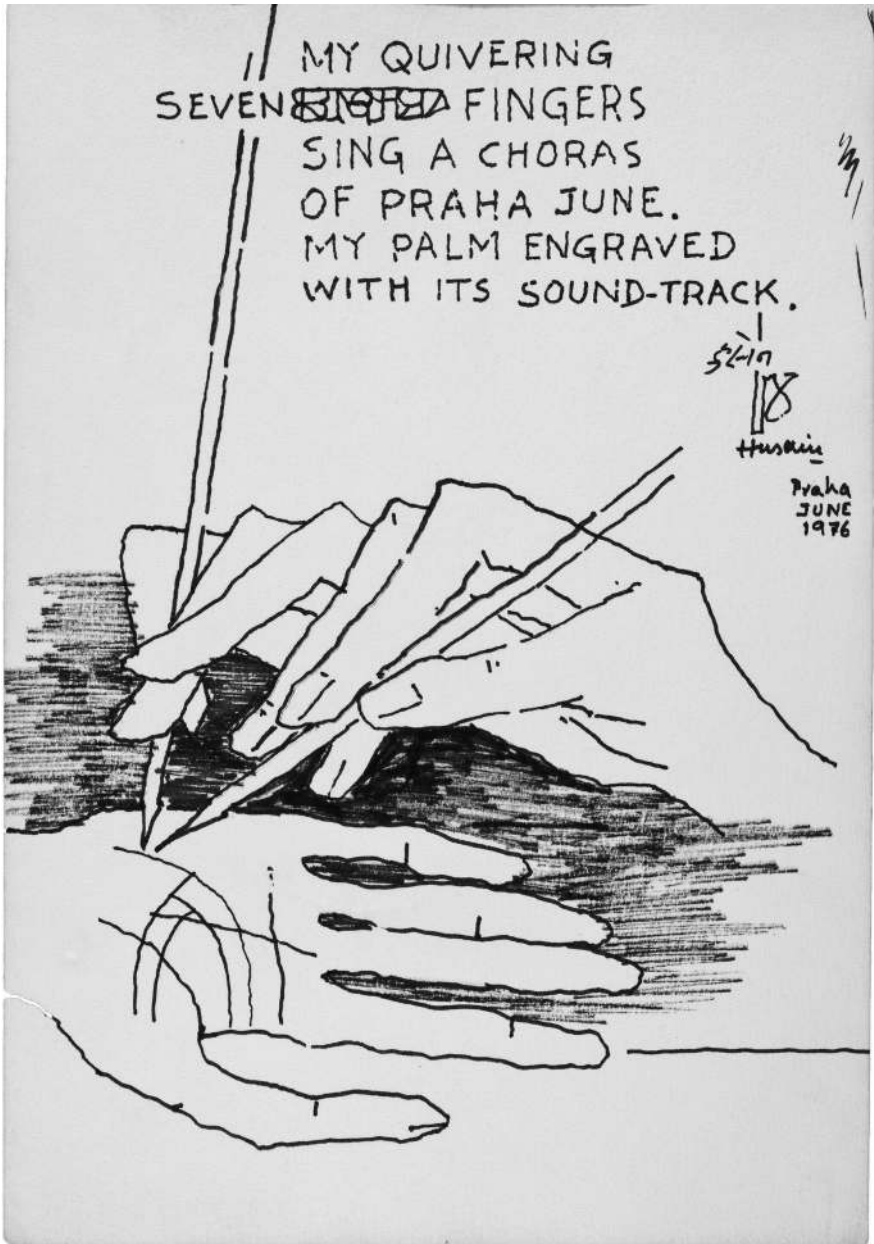


Figure 1. Cover of *Praha* by M. F. Husain. June 1976. Ink-on-paper drawing, 23 × 15.5 cm. National Gallery in Prague. Photograph © National Gallery in Prague 2023.

from Prague, with whom he fell madly in love. The Indian painter met Marie at the opening of his 1956 exhibition, gave her a collection of his paintings as a gift, returned to Prague regularly over the following years, and even proposed marriage to her.<sup>13</sup> According to author Khalid Mohamed, Marie was the 'impossible' love of Husain's life, and the two are said to have shared an enthusiasm for Eastern and Western writers and philosophers as well as for music.<sup>14</sup> Both Marie and references to her appear in drawings and writings from that period.<sup>15</sup> However, Marie declined Husain's marriage proposal on the grounds that it would be culturally difficult for her to live in India as his second wife. She eventually married another man and moved to Australia.

Husain continued to return to Prague and, while he reminisced about Marie, he nurtured his friendships with Krása and Hájek. Both of them were instrumental in facilitating his Prague trips and were active in maintaining good, personal connections with the Indian artist over the years. Both men are thus visually acknowledged in the series of twenty-three drawings he made in 1976. Krása even appears as a character in *Meenaxi: A Tale of Three Cities*, and Hájek in fact, played a leading role in purchasing Husain's work for the Collection of Asian Art at the NGP, even lamenting that he should have made more effort to purchase further works by the artist for the collection.<sup>16</sup>

The twenty-three drawings that the artist created in 1976 were – not unlike the 1956 drawings – produced on a study tour through Czechoslovakia. They document places and people which Husain visited. In terms of style and content, however, they are much more attentive to detail, which can perhaps be attributed to Husain's familiarity with and extensive knowledge of the country, its capital city, and its culture and people. These ink drawings were executed on paper and still remain in a Grumbacher sketchbook.

The small format of twenty-three by fifteen and a half centimetres gives the drawings an intimate character. Some of them are vertically oriented, others horizontally. From the title page (fig. 1) onwards, followed by pages *Praha 1* to *18* and *Bratislava 1* to *4*, the series is marked by movement and theatricality, and it is presented almost as a storyboard for a film. On the cover page, we see a finely drawn hand with seven fingers holding two pencils, drawing lines on the palm of another hand. This handwritten portrayal references the artist's perception of Prague as a musical city, and this impression runs through the whole series, both iconographically and stylistically. The triangular lines of the drawing hand (fig. 1) recur, for example, at some point framing the orchestra in *Praha 17* as arches or forming a superstructure over the church in *Praha 18*. The artist has captured a number of recognisable sites, such as the National Theatre in *Praha 1* (fig. 2), the Charles Bridge in *Praha 3* (fig. 3), the Capuchin monastery in the centre of *Praha 5* (fig. 4), and the old town quarter Nový Svět adjoining it.<sup>17</sup>



Figure 2. *Praha 1* by M. F. Husain. 1976. Ink-on-paper drawing, 23 × 15.5 cm. National Gallery in Prague. Photograph © National Gallery in Prague 2023.



Figure 3. *Praha 3* by M. F. Husain. 1976. Ink-on-paper drawing, 23 × 15.5 cm. National Gallery in Prague. Photograph © National Gallery in Prague 2023.

The scenes and motifs in these works have been ‘collaged’ and composed so that we see, for instance, at the far end of Charles Bridge (fig. 3), an allegory of the Vltava River, a popular sculpture in Prague, which is located at Mariánské place at about ten minutes’ walking distance from the bridge. Personal and emotional associations can be made with the wedding ceremony in *Praha 5* (fig. 4), allowing us to draw a connection to Husain’s marriage proposal to Marie. His biographer, Khalid Mohamed, noted that, after having proposed to Marie, the artist bought a wedding dress in London and a Volkswagen car in Germany, both of which he then delivered to the doorstep of the convent in Prague, where Marie was living.<sup>18</sup> The artist depicts these details and this period of his life in *Praha 5* (fig. 4), where we see a church complex framed by a wall. A larger-than-life female figure leans over the wall and looks down at a car parked in the passage partly inside and partly outside the wall. Opposite this scene sits a sorrowful male figure at the bottom of the church steps as a happy bride and groom emerge from the church. This scenario is complemented by a winged figure, some clouds and a crescent moon that has slipped to the lower edge of the picture, proverbially referring to this episode in the artist’s life as a disappointment. But Husain moves on and documents his close friend Krása and his family in *Praha 8*, and the fact that he dedicates one drawing to the Czech painter Jaroslav Hněvkovský in *Praha 6*, by reproducing a detail of this artist’s oil painting of Rabindranath Tagore in Santiniketan, signals that he was well informed about this Czech artist, who had lived and worked in



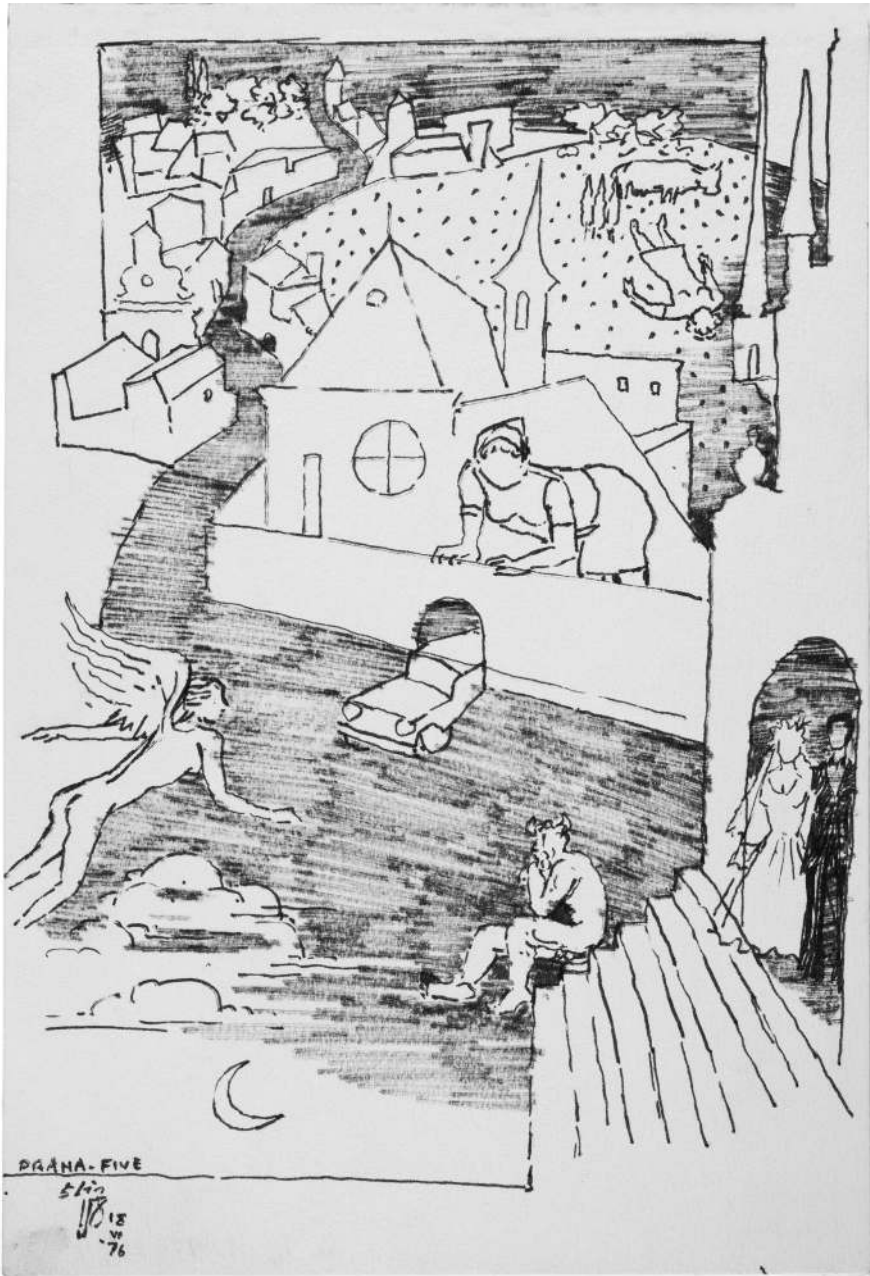


Figure 4. *Praha 5* by M. F. Husain. 1976. Ink-on-paper drawing, 23 × 15.5 cm. National Gallery in Prague. Photograph © National Gallery in Prague 2023.

India for several years. In *Praha 6*, with Žebrák written in the upper left of the painting, Husain even refers to the fact that he visited Hněvkovský's home town on his tour.

The way Husain treats historical templates and local impressions in these drawings is consistent with his approach to similar models from the South Asian context.<sup>19</sup> According to anthropologist Karin Zitzewitz, the artist was thereby able to identify 'formal strategies that he considered to be essentially Indian', which, she continues, 'came to be recognized as his own modern, individual style'.<sup>20</sup> The formal process of adaptation that the artist continues to undertake in a process of transformation in the Prague drawings is here seen less as cultural essentialism and more as resistance to it. Take the work *Bratislava 1*. (fig. 5). Here we see patterns that Husain may well have noticed in the rural area in Čičmany in today's Slovakia, famous for its log houses with white ornamentation.

The artist has applied these folkloristic symbols to the couple's clothing, partly true to the original and partly in a modified form. They thus appear like formulas, a strategy he had already used in earlier works. Here, I think, for example, of his iconic work *Between the Spider and the Lamp* from 1956, where he placed a random selection of Devanagari alphabets in the upper part of the picture, which were intended to be more symbolic than to actually be deciphered.<sup>21</sup>

When we revisit *Praha 3* (fig. 3), we are attracted by the simplified group of sculptures on Charles Bridge, which the artist has freed from their cultural-religious affiliation. Husain thus transforms these templates and, in the process, adapts and deploys them according to his own vision and rules by 'transfiguring them on to paper'.<sup>22</sup> The artist's transformative strategy to arrive at a general understanding of formal cultural properties can perhaps best be described as a manifestation of a transculturality, where relationships between cultures are explored and one is not privileged over the other.<sup>23</sup> In Husain's staging, these sculptures are reminiscent of a theatrical act and draw a connection with the musical theme that he attests to this cycle of drawings in the prelude. A certain degree of theatricality is also evident in the performance of his live drawing, which he enacted for an exhibition at the Fagner Gallery in Prague during the same trip and where the drawings and a set of other works were also exhibited.<sup>24</sup> Alena Vosečková, who attended the opening and reported about it in the journal *Nový Orient*, noticed that Husain's unexpected act of painting directly in front of the Prague audience was only possible in such a casual way because he was so familiar with and at home in the city.<sup>25</sup> Vosečková described in detail how, after the official speeches, Husain took off his shoes, approached the large, empty canvas that had already stirred curiosity among the audience and began to paint, while Hájek, simultaneously and informally, spoke about the artist's life from his personally collected memories.<sup>26</sup> The theme of the work that developed in front of the audience was related to the *Mahabharata* epic, on which Husain had begun to work intensively since the late 1960s. Vosečková then elaborated on what unfolded in front of the audience in Prague. She emphasised that the artist moved in a 'pantomime-like,



Figure 5. *Bratislava 1* by M. F. Husain. 1976. Ink-on-paper drawing, 23 × 15.5 cm. National Gallery in Prague. Photograph © National Gallery in Prague 2023.

performative act' in front of the huge white canvas and that, without much effort, an image emerged.<sup>27</sup> Husain actively began to paint in front of audiences in India in 1968, emphasising the process along with the act of doing, or 'situating' the artwork, as suggested by Khullar, 'within the community of viewers.'<sup>28</sup> This art historian thereby argues against claims that view the artist's performative work as his awareness of international developments and his 'talent for showmanship'.<sup>29</sup> A point that needs to be kept in mind here is that Husain's early experience as a billboard painter and toy designer in 1940s Bombay meant that he was accustomed to painting and designing, not in seclusion, but surrounded by others. I agree with Khullar, who views the achievements of Husain's performative strategies in their capacity to translate not only 'between media' but also 'between sites', which includes 'categories of East and West'.<sup>30</sup> Husain's performance at the Fragner Gallery was thus an act to include his Prague viewers and to make them part of his viewership, by incorporating them into an audience that stretched over the seven continents. The 'quivering seven fingers' to which he refers on the title page of the Prague drawings (fig. 1) can therefore be interpreted as a statement about the seven continents or about the 'dialogue between the seven points' that he poetically describes in the prologue to a volume that was published in New York in 1971.<sup>31</sup> In this publication the seven points were listed by the artist as follows: 'Kyoto, Mahabalipuram, Samarkand, Palermo, Provence, Liverpool and Alaska',<sup>32</sup> running symbolically from East to West. This confirms that, through his practice with different media and in different locations, Husain was interested in connecting rather than dividing. Likewise he was perceived by his supporters in Prague as a link to a world that was seen as allied by the official governments of India and Czechoslovakia but also to the world that lay outside that alliance. But above all, and this was underlined by Hájek, who accompanied the artist's painting performance with personal words, Husain developed long-term friendships with Prague inhabitants, who established a firm understanding of and a connection to his work over the years.

The Prague painting measures one and a half by five metres and is titled *The Goddess Kunti in a Car Drawn by Ten Horses*. It was acquired by the NGP, as were the ink drawings that Husain did during his two-week sojourn. According to Vosečková the artist also made a film about Prague during his journey through Czechoslovakia. She stated that he saw it as a 'kaleidoscope of images and drawings',<sup>33</sup> which, although untraceable, can be imagined to complement some of the twenty-three drawings. When, in 2004, Husain produced his second feature film, *Meenaxi: A Tale of Three Cities*, he may well have revisited his 1976 cinematic diary as an inspiration for the Prague part of the film, or perhaps he remembered the twenty-three drawings that he had created while travelling through the country. *Meenaxi* is about a writer who finds his muse and overcomes his writer's block. The muse's name is Meenaxi, and she performs several different roles. In Hyderabad she is the mysterious perfumer; in Jaisalmer, the exotic woman from the desert; in Prague, the orphan Marie Žurková. Both Hyderabad and Jaisalmer

are important cities for Husain in India, to which he returned frequently. Jaisalmer was one of the locations where, in 1967, he shot his first experimental film in black and white, *Through the Eyes of a Painter*. Prague thus joins a series of places that were important to the artist as stages, settings, and production sites.

The Prague episode in *Meenaxi* moves between locations and scenes that had already appeared in Husain's drawings many years before. It opens with an aerial view of the historic city, zooming in on monuments, statues, churches, and the Vltava River. What follows is the main character, Maria,<sup>34</sup> stepping out of the entrance of a convent, pushing her bicycle<sup>35</sup> to a riverside café where she works and then to a theatre rehearsal, which she hastily leaves to hurry to Prague's main train station, Praha hlavní nádraží, in order to receive Kameshwar Mathur, whose name she holds up on a handwritten sheet of paper. After shots of moving and crossing trains, and of people coming and going, Maria leaves the station disappointed, without having met her expected visitor. A chance encounter between the two follows in the local tram, where the narrative reveals that Maria was sent by Dr Krása to pick up his guest from India. In the next scenes Maria leads Kameshwar through historic Prague, and the two grow visibly closer. The Prague part ends after approximately twenty-five minutes, with a theatrical performance by Maria and the theatre company, closely followed by Kameshwar as part of the audience. The stage backdrop clearly bears Husain's signature of oversized rearing horses. In a discussion about the making of the film, Husain's eldest son, Owais, who was responsible for the Prague interlude, recounts that, as a location, Prague was interesting because he sees the city as a corridor between East and West Europe. Not dissimilar from Husain's first feature film, *Gaja Gamini*, from 2000, which is better known, *Meenaxi* was commercially not very successful. As to the plot of *Gaja Gamini*, Patricia Uberoi has said that it is about 'the universal woman who takes many forms in many times and places',<sup>36</sup> and the same could be said about *Meenaxi*. The film's soundtrack, for which award-winning composer Allah Rakha Rahman was responsible, underscores the special features of the three locations with distinctive music. In the Prague section the music accompanies the camera's gaze, which often pans between historic architecture and monuments and their elongated shadows. Apart from the autobiographical element, then, it is music, movement, and a sense of theatricality that makes *Meenaxi*'s Prague scenes especially relatable to the twenty-three Prague drawings from 1976.

In summary, not only the drawings, the large-scale painting, and the film *Meenaxi* but all the works that the artist produced in Prague and with reference to Prague, most of which have only been mentioned here in passing, are a material reminder of a special relationship that the artist nurtured over many decades with this city and its people. In terms of numbers, these form a considerable body of work and therefore deserve attention. His correspondence, personal visits in both directions, and above all, the reviews of his works in local media testify to a connection that goes far beyond the political framework of the Cold War.<sup>37</sup> A detailed reading of his Prague works, as undertaken here on the basis of selected examples,

can establish an understanding of how the artist viewed Prague as a nexus where East and West connected under non-hierarchical conditions. Husain's works on paper, together with works by other Indian modernist artists,<sup>38</sup> are part of the Collection of Asian Art at the NGP. While they were regularly on display during the communist era, they have not been shown or dealt with since the early 1990s. Together with the team at the NGP, I am currently preparing an exhibition of South Asian modernist masters from the Prague collections that will draw on the transregional connections that were forged and cultivated there during the Cold War period and contributed to an understanding of Indian art which may well have been rare at the time outside of India.

## NOTES

- \* The completion of this study was made possible thanks to the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (P29536-G26).
1. There is a large amount of literature on M. F. Husain's art and life available in both Hindi and English. I am listing a selection of titles that are representative of this literature: Richard Bartholomew and Shiv S. Kapur, *Husain* (New York: Abrams, 1971); Geeta Kapur, *Contemporary Indian Artists* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1978); Monica Juneja, 'Reclaiming the Public Sphere: Husain's Portrayal of Saraswati and Draupadi', *Economic and Political Weekly* 32, no. 4 (1997): 155–157; Yashodhara Dalmia, *The Making of Modern Indian Art: The Progressives* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Susan S. Bean, 'Husain's Mahabarata', in *Epic India: M. F. Husain's Mahabarata Project*, ed. M. F. Husain, Susan Bean, and Sashi Tharoor (Salem, MA: Peabody Essex Museum, 2006), 27–44; Daniel A. Herwitz, 'Maqbool Fida Husain: The Artist as India's National Hero', *Third Text* 20, no. 1 (2006): 41–55; Sumathi Ramaswamy (ed.), *Barefoot Across the Nation: Maqbool Fida Husain and the Idea of India* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011); Karin Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism: The Cultural Politics of Modernist Art in Contemporary India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 17–37; Sonal Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations: Artistic Practice, National Identity, and Modernism in India, 1930–1990* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 90–129;
  2. In 1955 he was commissioned to produce a mural for Air India's reservation office in Geneva. See <https://www.airindiacollector.com/blog/m-f-hussain-and-his-air-india-creations> (last visited 2 February 2022). Prague, Hong Kong, and Bangkok followed. The Air India Prague office was located at Na Příkopě 858/20, Prague 1. I would like to thank Zdenka Klimentová for this information.
  3. Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 90.
  4. Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 90.
  5. The group included Francis Newton Souza, Syed Haider Raza, Krishnaji Howlaji Ara, Sadanand Krishnaji Bakre, and Hari Ambadas Gade.
  6. The J.J. School of Art was established by the British in 1857 and administered by them until 1947.
  7. Early in his career, Husain travelled to study the Khajuraho complex, famous for its tenth- and eleventh-century erotic sculptures. See Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism*, 24; see also Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press), 237–267.
  8. Art historian Atreyee Gupta has recently pointed to Egyptian figurative influences that preoccupied the artist after a trip to Egypt. See Atreyee Gupta, 'After Bandung: Transacting the Nation in a Postcolonial World', in *Postwar: Art Between the Pacific and the Atlantic, 1945–1965*, ed. Okwui Enwezor, Katy Siegel, and Ulrich Wilmes (London and Munich: Presetel and Haus der Kunst, 2016), 632–637 (exh. cat.).
  9. Susan S. Bean, 'East Meets East in Husain's Horses', in *Lightning: From the Private Collection of Marguerite and Kent Charugundla* (New York: Tamarind Gallery, 2007), 11–20.
  10. <https://www.aaa-a.org/programs/mexican-muralists-in-china-a-presentation-by-zheng-sheng-tian-and-marisol-villela-balderrama> (last visited 4 February 2022). For more information on Pablo Picasso, visit <https://www.pablopicasso.org/dove-of-peace.jsp> (last visited 24 July 2023); <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/picasso-dove-p11366> (last visited 24 July 2023).
  11. Bean, 'East Meets East in Husain's Horses', 12.
  12. Susan S. Bean, 'Viewed from Across the Globe', in *Barefoot Across the Nation*, ed. Sumathi Ramaswamy, 248.

13. Marie returned the so-called Maria Collection to Husain in the early 2000s, and it is currently with the Stellar International Art Foundation.
14. Khalid Mohamed, *Where Art Though: An Autobiography* (Mumbai: M. F. Husain Foundation, 2002); <https://www.thequint.com/entertainment/mf-husain-maria-zourkova-an-incomplete-love-story-tabu-meenaxi-a-tale-of-3-cities#read-more> (last visited 2 February 2021); see also Pradeep Chandra, *M.F. Husain: A Pictorial Tribute* (New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2011), 132.
15. A number of these drawing appear in an auction catalogue from Pundole's: *Husain: Works from the Collection of the Late Badrivishal Pitti* (Mumbai: Pundole's, 2013) (exh. cat.).
16. See Zdenka Klimtová's contribution, 'Lubor Hájek and Indian Modernist Art', in this book.
17. I would like to thank Zdenka Klimtová for her help in naming and locating monuments and places in these drawings.
18. See Mohamed, *Where Art Though*.
19. See Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism*, 24. See also note 38 in that publication.
20. Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism*, 24.
21. See Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 94; see also Gupta, 'After Bandung', 635.
22. Ila Pal, *Beyond the Canvas: An Unfinished Portrait of M. F. Husain* (New Delhi: Indus Books, 1994), 84, here quoted in Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism*, 24.
23. On processes of transculturality, see Monica Juneja and Christian Kravagna, 'Understanding Transculturalism: Monica Juneja and Christian Kravagna in Conversation', in *Transcultural Modernisms*, ed. Model House Research Group (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013), 22–33. On transculturality, see *Engaging Transculturality: Concepts, Key Terms, Case Studies*, ed. Laila Abu-Er-Rub, Christiane Brosius, Sebastian Meurer, Diamantis Panagiotopoulos, and Susan Richter (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2019).
24. See fig. 4 in Zdenka Klimtova's article in this volume.
25. Alena Vosečková, 'Neobyklá vernisáž' [An Unusual Exhibition Opening], *Nový Orient*, no. 7 (1976): 217–218. See also Zdenka Klimtová's text 'Lubor Hájek and Indian Modernist Art' in this volume.
26. Vosečková, 'Neobyklá vernisáž', 217.
27. Vosečková, 'Neobyklá vernisáž', 218.
28. Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 97.
29. Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 97.
30. Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 97.
31. Epigraph: Maqbul [Maqbool] F. Husain, quoted in Bartholomew and Kapur, *Husain*, in Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 90.
32. Bartholomew and Kapur, *Husain*, in Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations*, 90.
33. Vosečková, 'Neobyklá vernisáž', 218.
34. Note that in the film Marie becomes Maria.
35. Note that Maria doesn't ride her bike but pushes it.
36. Patricia Oberoi, 'The Bliss of Madhuri', in *Barefoot Across the Nation*, ed. Sumathi Ramaswamy, 218.
37. In my forthcoming single authored book with the working title *South Asia in Central Europe*, I focus on the role played by a range of media as discursive platforms.
38. See Zdenka Klimtová's contribution to this volume.

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