

## PRESS RELEASE

### JEHANGIR SABAVALA, *Ricorso*

1 November – 15 November, 2008

Opening 31 October, 2008 6.30 – 9.00

In his first London solo exhibition since 1969, Jehangir Sabavala presents 20 works, executed over the last two years, which convey the shape of the artist's career from the early 1950s until present day, detailing his progression using past themes and new muses.

The work of Jehangir Sabavala is heavily influenced by his spiritual affiliation with nature. His canvases capture the open and majestic changeability of a landscape, reflecting his own liberation of spirit, freed of repression through the process of his work. Sabavala's visual depiction of nature are the visual equivalent of his emotions; an outlet for his sensationalist subject matter. In *Sunflower, Field Vinchurni I*, Sabavala creates a vista from a series of sketches made during a visit to a farm in rural Satara, set in the shadow of the Sahyadri Mountains. The yellow dots of flowers stand out amidst the painting's gentle hue, indicative of the artist's ability to merge both impressionist and semi-cubist style with subtle grace and charm.

Far from sentimental, Sabavala's paintings depict the ambivalence of nature with its transcending beauty and sublime magnitude masking, in comparison, the terrifying inconsequence of humankind. His paintings of figures and faces often poignantly mirror the tragic destiny of man. In the subdued *They Seek but do not Find* (a negative connotation of the teachings of Christ) the viewer comes upon two boys, tired and downcast, sitting among rocks, drawing attention to the mottled gradation of tones that unifies stone, shadows, the leached desert soil, and the hint of vegetation.

Jehangir Sabavala prefers veiled light and middle tones to pure colours and loud imagery, creating geometric wedges out of paint, which he puts together to form vast tranquil scenes. His art is a mixture of academic, impressionist and cubist texture that plays with form and colour to create a quiet rendering of the scene's atmosphere. Having acquired a distinct style by the mid 60s, Sabavala has continued to carry reoccurring themes forward into new works yet also touching on unfamiliar territory, breaching new frontiers so that the spirit of adventure and discovery is not fossilized, but remains alive and vital. In particular, Sabavala's later works have developed into a type of autobiographical trajectory. The works are a form of self-archiving, as he revisits ideas from his earlier preoccupations or reinterprets images in a fresh light.

## Notes to Editor

In a career spanning more than sixty years Sabavala has participated in many solo and group exhibitions including, the 7th Triennale in India, the Masters of India Art Show in Mumbai, the Sothebys Islamic & Indian Art show and the Christies Indian Contemporary Paintings, as well as the Venice Biennale in 1954. He has earned many laurels including the prestigious Padma Shri, awarded by the Government of India in 1977.

**For further press information and visuals, please contact**

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**Aicon Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday, from 10am to 6pm.**

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