

# *The Rhythms of Refuge*

Sudhir Ranjan Khastgir

08.08.2024 – 14.09.2024

# The Rhythms of Refuge

Project 88 is pleased to present *Sudhir Khastgir: The Rhythms of Refuge* – a retrospective of the noted modernist and pedagogue, Sudhir Ranjan Khastgir (1907 – 1974), in collaboration with Galerie 88, Kolkata. For the first time, an expansive curation of his paintings, drawings, and prints, will be exhibited in Mumbai, curated by art historian Prof. R Siva Kumar, as a tribute to the reclusive artist, who was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri by the Government of India in 1957. Covering a dynamic range of subjects and artworks, across nearly three decades of the artist's oeuvre, this exhibition traces Khastgir's distinct painterly style, wherein his brush often turned into a dynamic chisel, as art critic Mukandi Lal (1885 – 1982) noted, “[Sudhir] produces very large, powerful, expressive drawings and paintings; vitality and pose being their great quality. He is always moving onward and often changing.” [1]

Born in 1907 in Chittagong in present-day Bangladesh, Sudhir Khastgir was an early student of Nandalal Bose, at Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, and a classmate of Ramkinkar Baij. Subsequently, the artist continued his studies in Lucknow and Bombay, before joining the Scindia School, Gwalior, as a teacher, followed by the Doon School in Dehradun, where he continued to teach for over twenty years – giving many of India's future bureaucrats, political leaders, and artists their first taste of visual arts and crafts. Recollecting Khastgir on the occasion of his birth centenary, a student wrote: “He was truly soft spoken, gracious, and caring; he never displayed any trace of the grievous tragedy that struck him early in his married life. He bore his wound with the courage and fortitude and never allowed it to shroud his cheerful disposition.” His daughter, Shyamali Khastgir, who was only ten months old when her mother died, remembering her father on the same occasion wrote: “[He] was a very introvert person by nature. Neither deep emotion nor cheerfulness of his mind were ever expressed.” Yet a dynamic depth of emotion emerges in his art, as Prof. R Siva Kumar notes in his curatorial essay on this exhibition:

“Anyone looking at his paintings and drawings carefully will not fail to notice that his flowering trees and dancers are not merely joyful but as ecstatic as his representations of passionate lovers. An energy that borders on libidinal outpouring runs through their bodies. Far from being superficial and repetitive, they spring from a deep and insatiate desire tamed and expressed in choreographed dance rhythms, almost as forceful as the inner anxiety that set Van Gogh's landscapes awl. Art, for [Sudhir Khastgir], was a refuge from a disquiet life, a means of vicarious fulfilment, and as personal as it could get.” [2]

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[1] 'An Exhibition of Khastgir's Art', by Mukandi Lal, *The Orient Illustrated Weekly*, 17 August 1947.

[2] 'Sudhir Khastgir: The Rhythms of Refuge', Prof. Siva Kumar, Exhibition Essay, 2024.

Sudhir Khastgir  
*The Rhythms of Refuge*  
Installation View  
2024



Sudhir Khastgir  
*The Rhythms of Refuge*  
Installation View  
2024



Sudhir Khastgir  
*The Rhythms of Refuge*  
Installation View  
2024



Sudhir Khastgir  
*The Rhythms of Refuge*  
Installation View  
2024



Sudhir Khastgir  
*The Rhythms of Refuge*  
Installation View  
2024



Sudhir Khastgir  
*The Rhythms of Refuge*  
Installation View  
2024



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
13 x 19 inches  
1939



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal on Paper  
9 x 16 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
9 x 11.5 inches  
1946



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Suicide of a Widow for Food*  
Charcoal on Paper  
6.5 x 13 inches  
1943



Sudhir Khastgir  
*The End of a Village*  
Charcoal on Paper  
7 x 12 inches  
1943



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Agarwal Bathing*  
Charcoal on Paper  
8 x 13 inches  
1943



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Ink on Silk Pasted on Paper  
7.5 x 9.5 inches  
1940



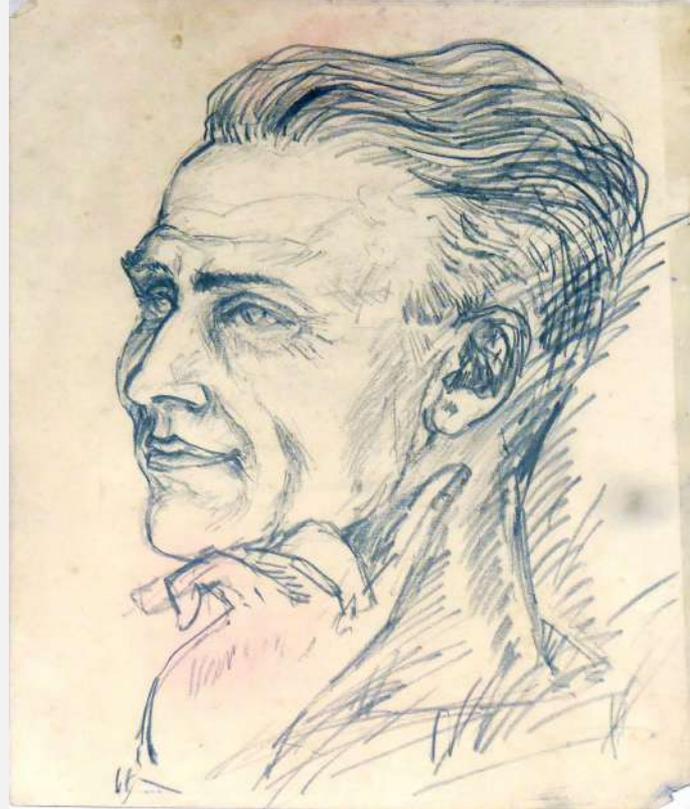
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Ink on Silk Pasted on Paper  
8 x 10.5 inches  
1940



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Rabindranath Tagore*  
Pencil on Paper  
11 x 7.5 inches  
1951



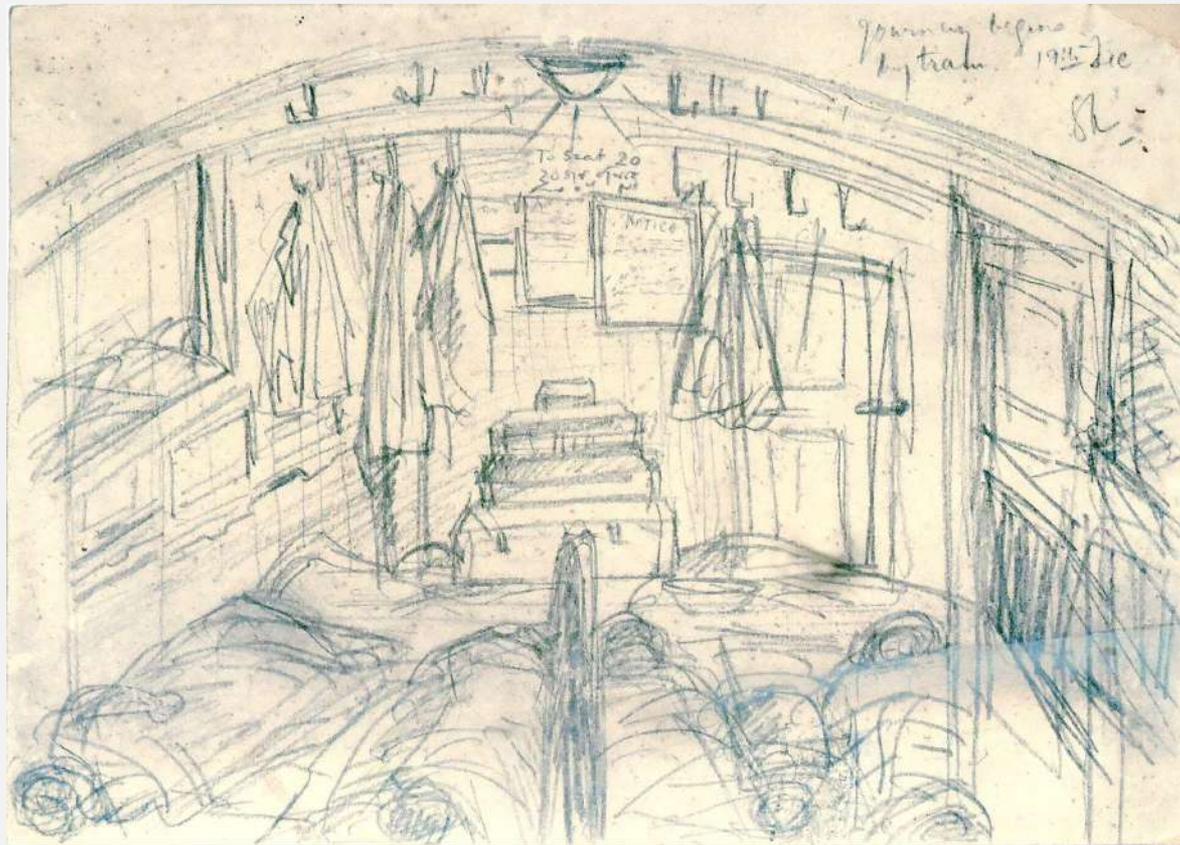
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal on Paper  
9 x 7 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal on Paper  
5.5 x 8.5 inches  
1948



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Journey begins by train*  
Charcoal on Paper  
9 x 11.5 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Paris Exhibition*  
Charcoal on Paper  
6.5 x 9.5 inches  
1937



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Fishing in a dirty canal*  
Pencil on Paper  
8 x 13 inches  
1946



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
9 x 11.5 inches  
1946



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
11 x 15.5 inches  
1944



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal on Paper  
8.5 x 4.5 inches  
1946



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal on Paper  
9.5 x 6.5 inches  
1937



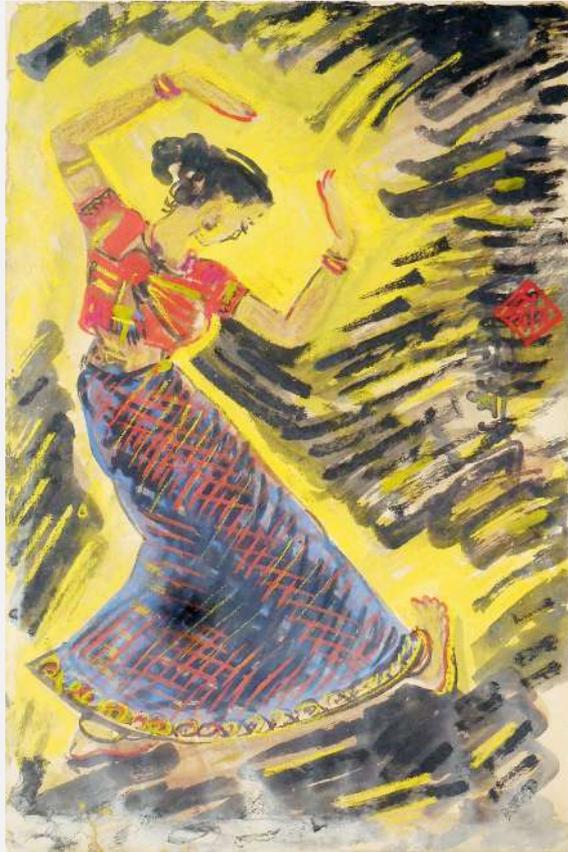
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Dancing Men*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
36 x 22 inches  
1961



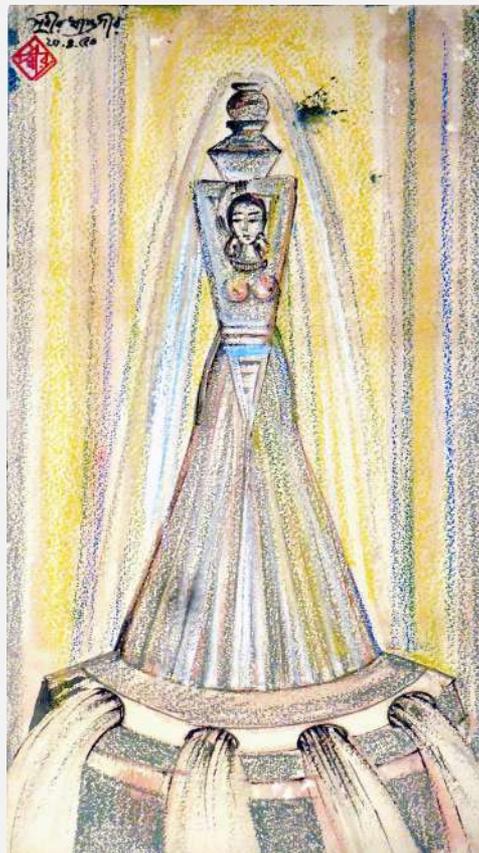
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
48 x 24 inches  
1961



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
17 x 11 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
18 x 10 inches  
1950



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
15 x 10 inches  
1956



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
30 x 24 inches  
1963



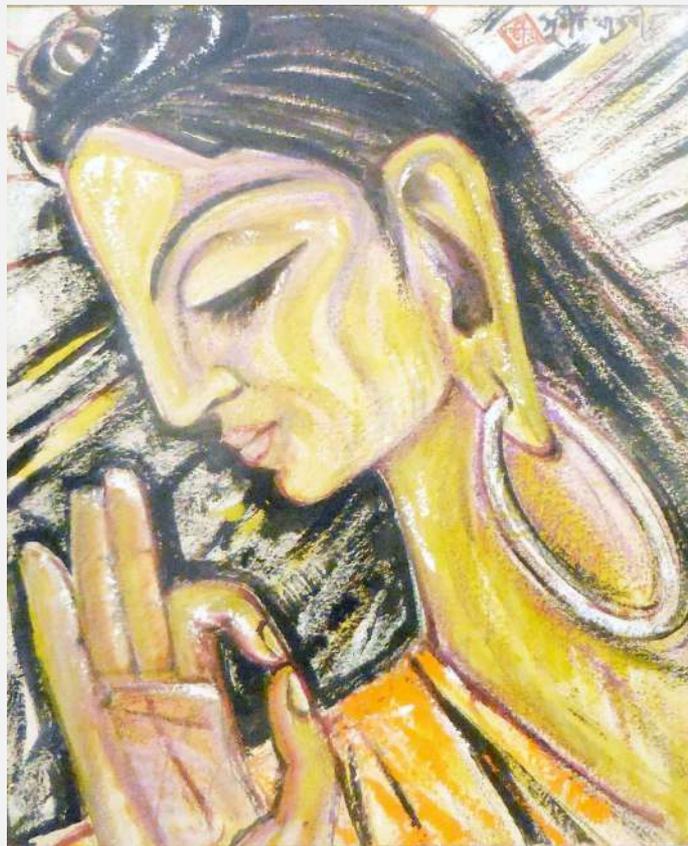
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper Board  
30 x 25 inches  
1959



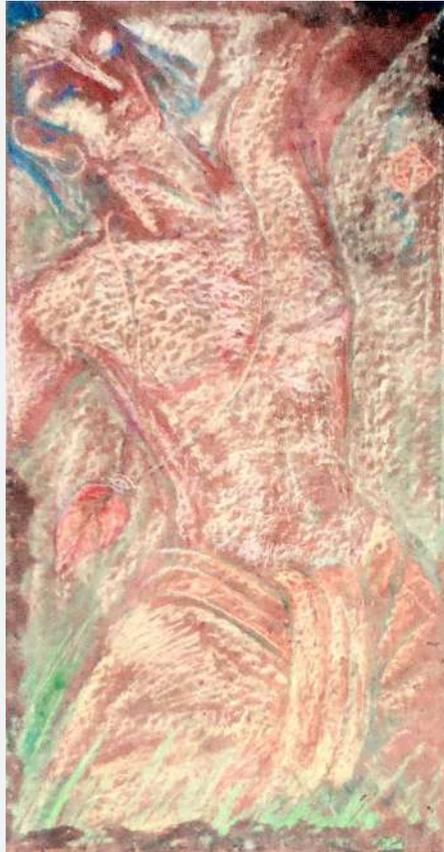
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper Board  
29 x 25 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper Board  
30 x 22 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
26 x 13 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
18 x 24 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
18 x 24 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Pastel on Paper Board  
25.5 x 30.5 inches  
1951



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper  
19 x 12 inches  
1956



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
16.5 x 13 inches  
1944



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
14 x 10 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper  
10 x 14.5 inches  
1946



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper Board  
19 x 13 inches  
1951



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
28 x 24 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Oil on Canvas  
16.5 x 9 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
14.5 x 10 inches  
1953



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
10 x 14 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



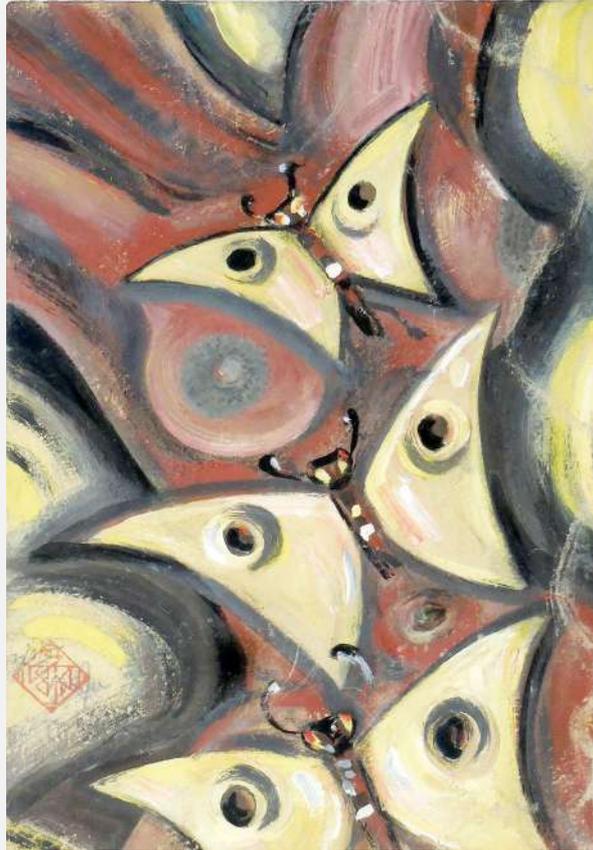
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
24 x 30 inches  
1964



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Pastel on Paper  
24 x 14 inches  
1962



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper  
15 x 10 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
18 x 18 inches  
1947



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
14.5 x 10 inches  
1951



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
10 x 15 inches  
1953



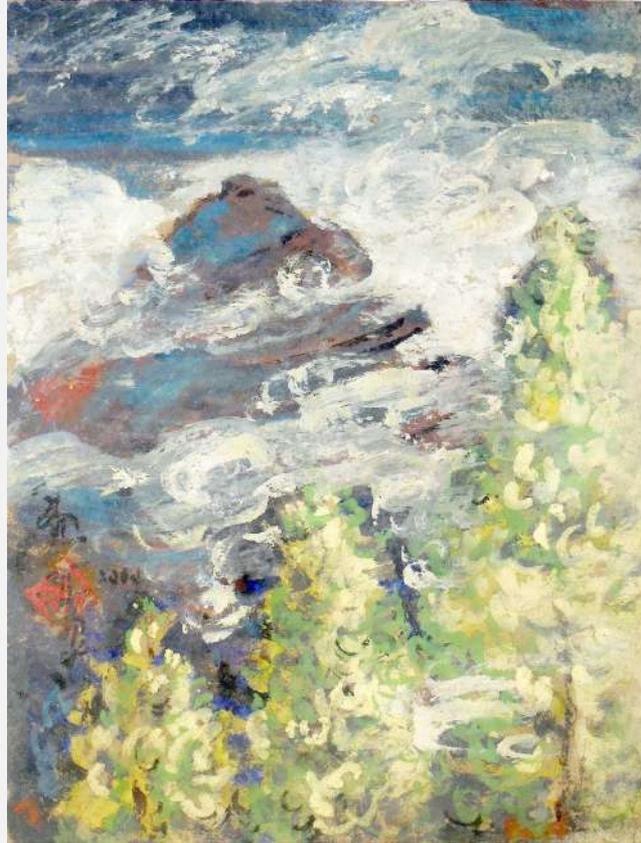
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper  
9.5 x 15 inches  
1955



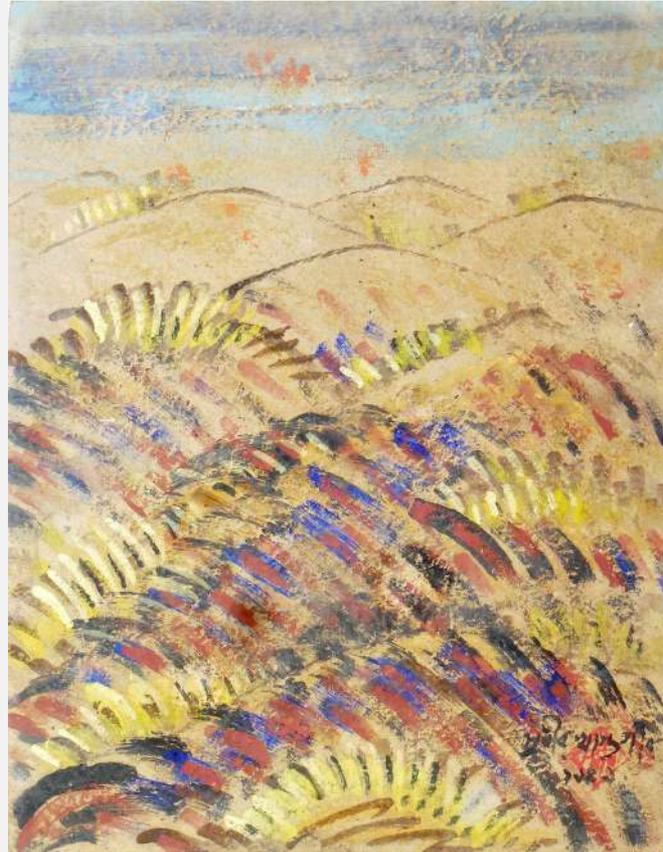
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
9 x 12.5 inches  
1955



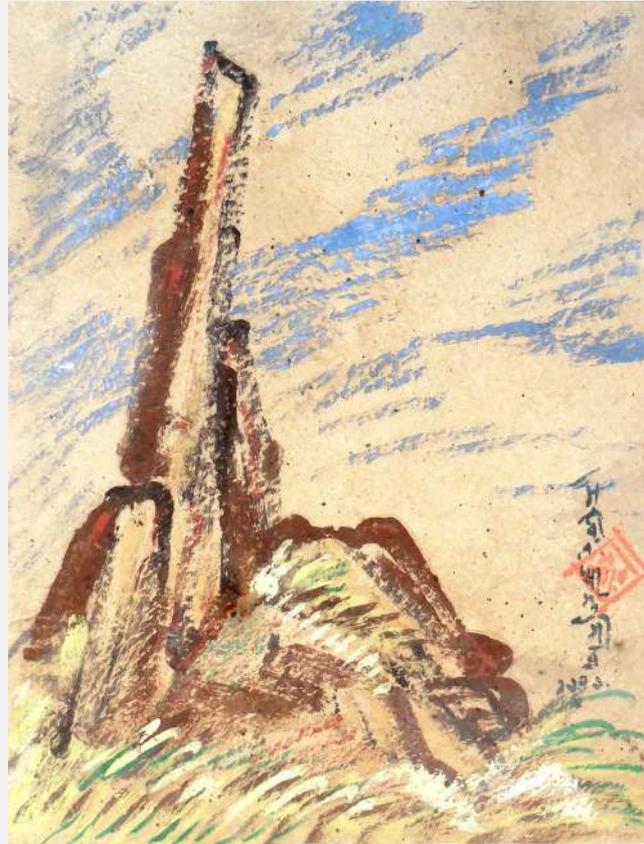
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper Board  
17.5 x 13.5 inches  
1949



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper Board  
17.5 x 13.5 inches  
1949



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper  
16.5 x 13 inches  
1939



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
9.5 x 13 inches  
1959



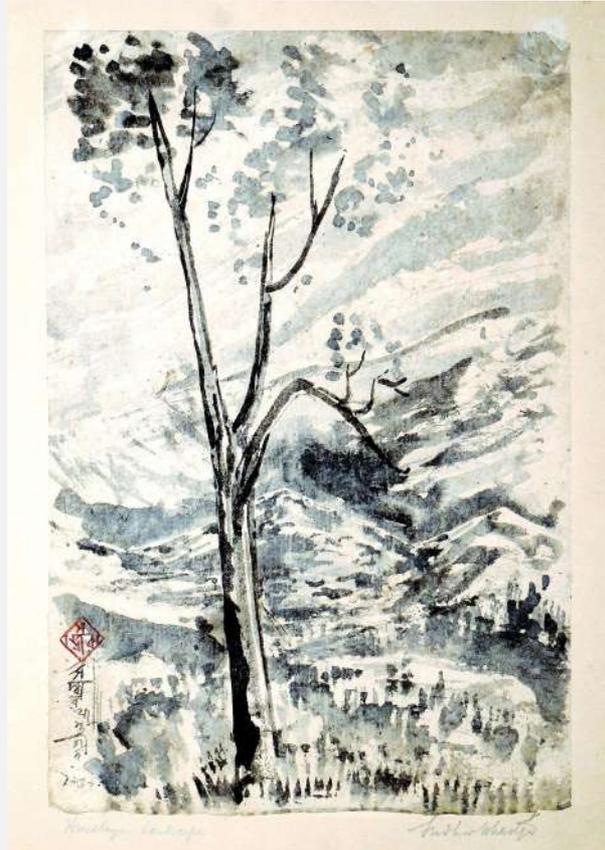
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
6.5 x 9.5 inches  
1959



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Kurseong*  
Watercolour on Paper  
13 x 8.5 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Himalayan Landscape*  
Watercolour on Paper  
13.5 x 9 inches  
1959



Sudhir Khastgir  
*On the way to Village*  
Charcoal on Paper  
8 x 13 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Canvas  
12 x 17 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



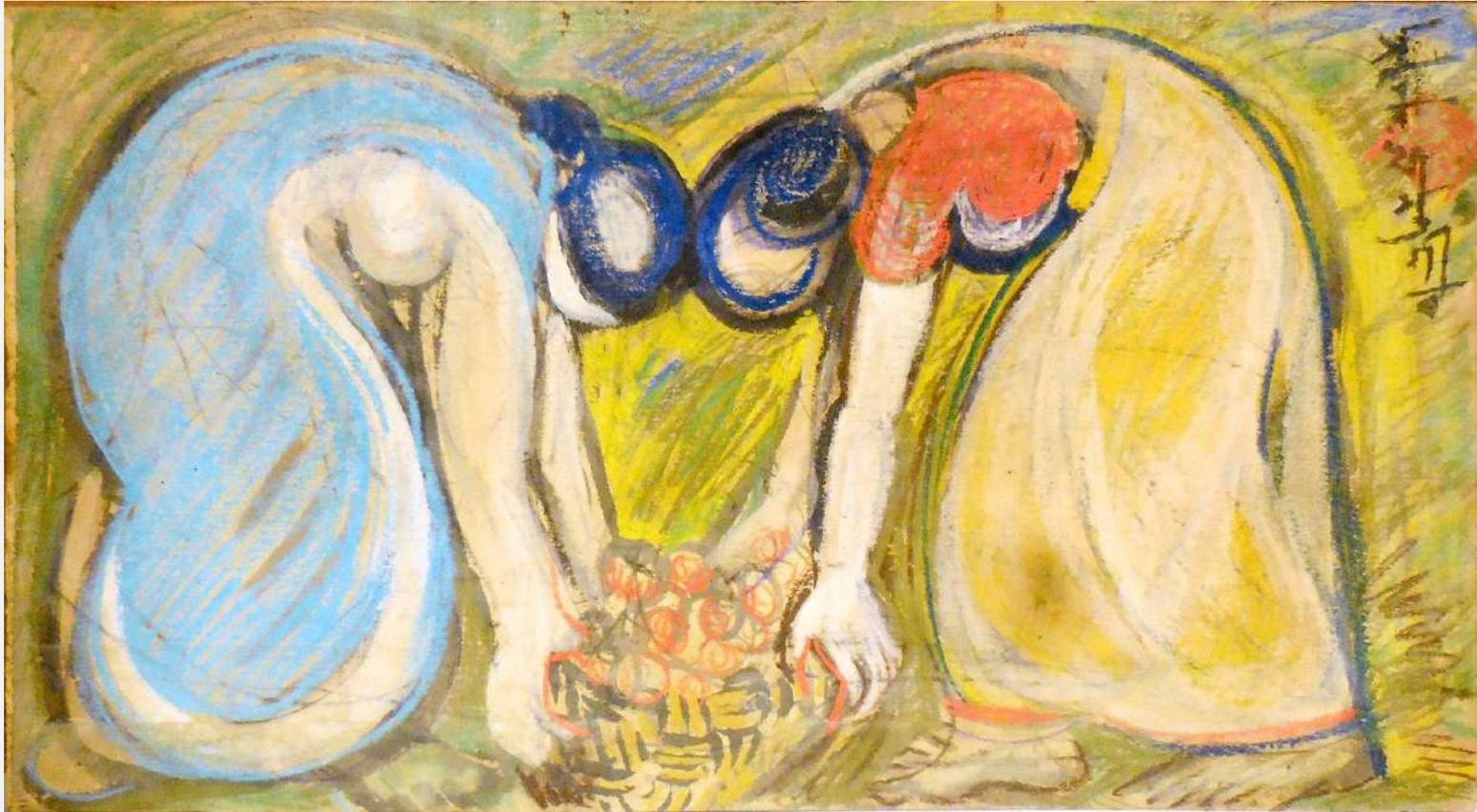
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
24 x 48 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



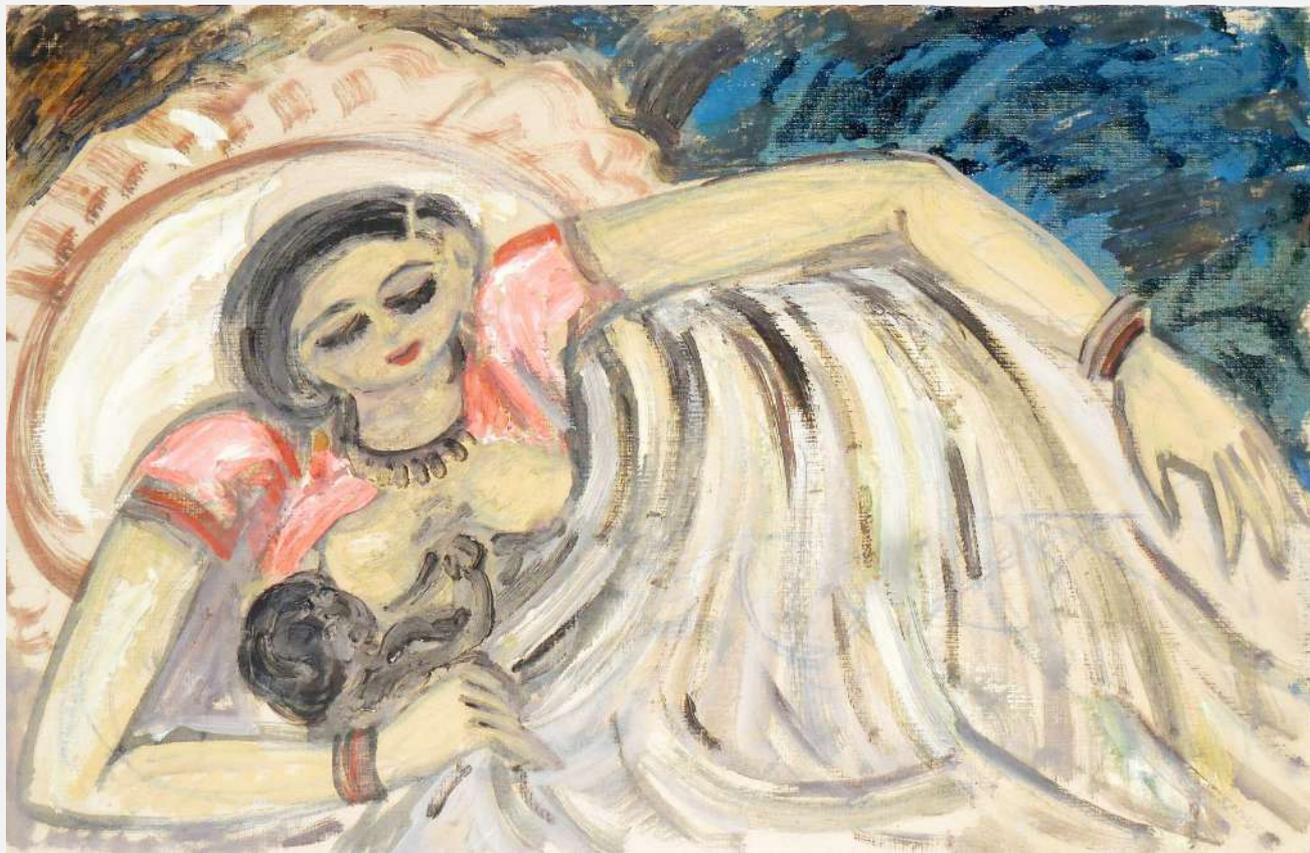
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Landscape*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
23 x 47 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper  
12 x 23 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Paper Board  
12 x 19 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper Board  
12 x 19 inches  
1956



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Paper  
13 x 20 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Working Woman*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
47 x 23 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Hungry Family*  
Woodcut on Paper  
8 x 6 inches  
1942



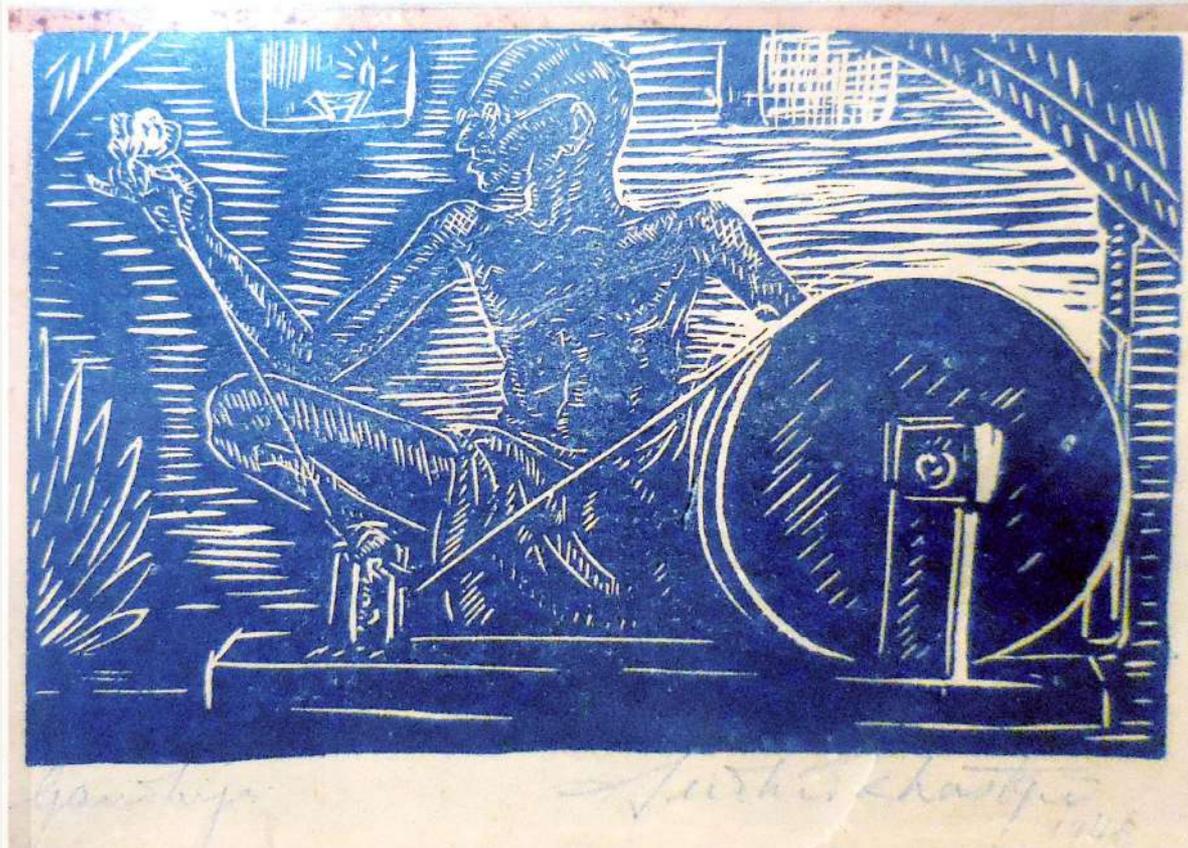
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Woodcut on Paper  
6 x 5 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Drummer*  
Woodcut on Paper  
4 x 7 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Gandhiji*  
Woodcut on Paper  
5 x 7 inches  
1946





Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
6.5 x 9.5 inches  
1959



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
30 x 24 inches  
1962



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Pastel on Paper Board  
30 x 22 inches  
1965



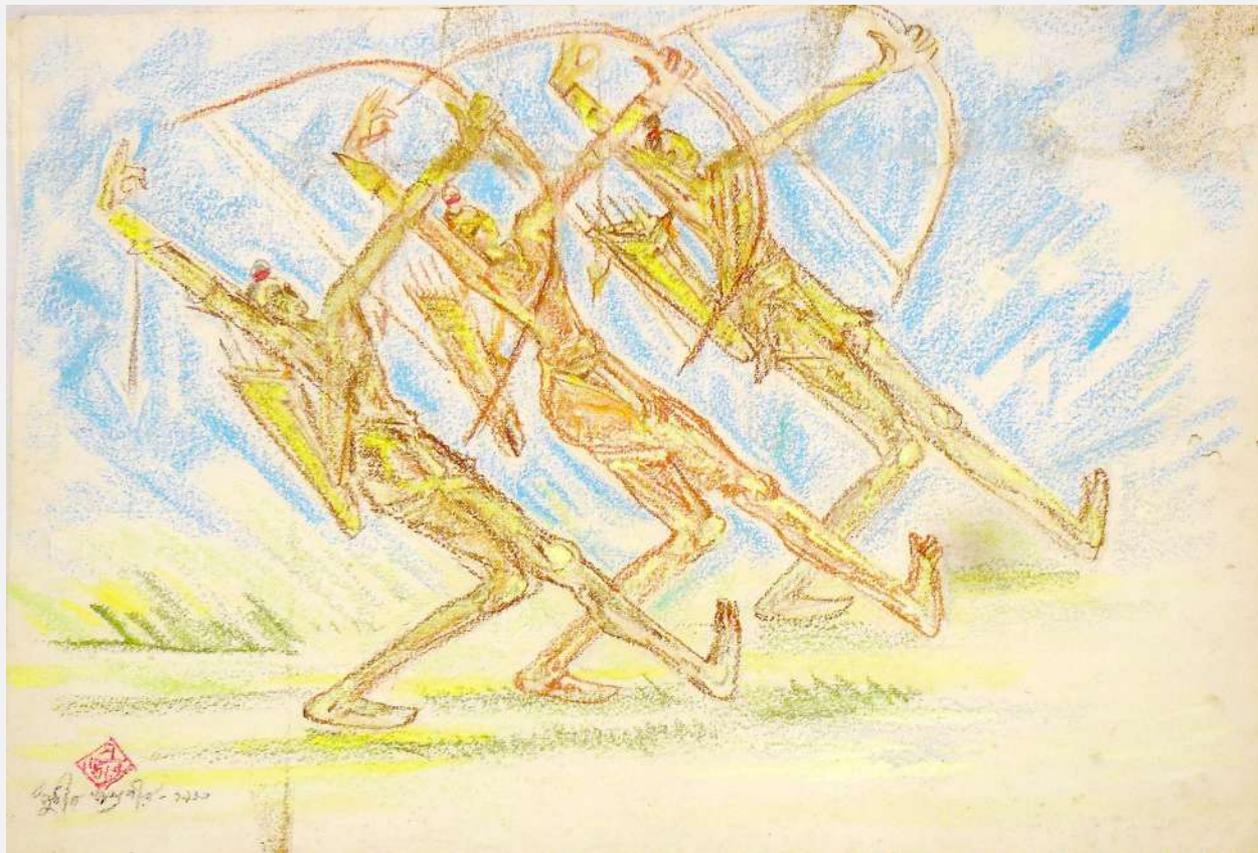
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Mixed Media on Masonite Board  
36 x 12 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



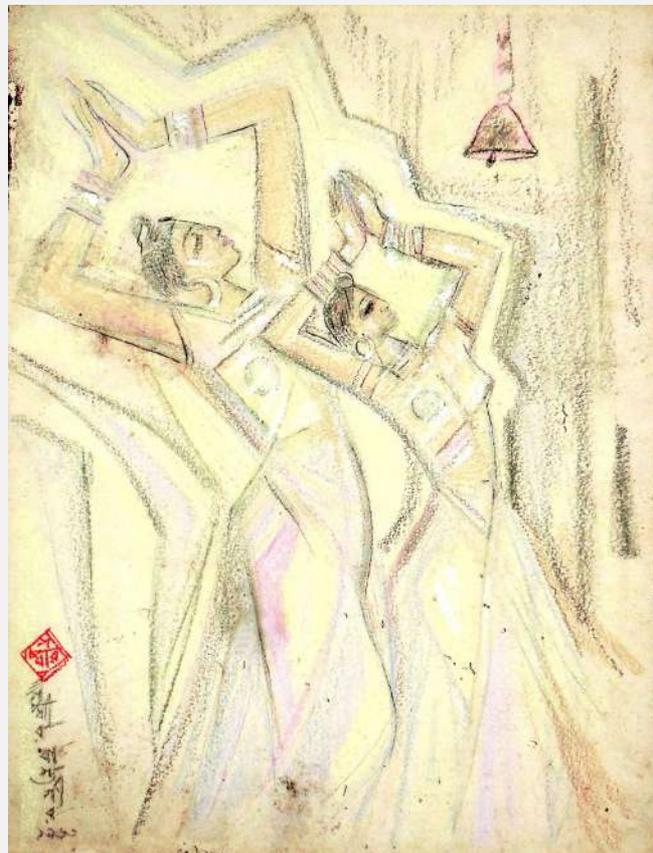
Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Gouache on Canvas  
20 x 26 inches  
Undated (1907 – 1974)



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Pastel on Paper Board  
22 x 30 inches  
1963



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Pastel on Paper Board  
30 x 22 inches  
1963



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
10 x 13.5 inches  
1945



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Watercolour on Paper  
7 x 7 inches  
1945



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Gopalpur*  
Charcoal on Paper  
10 x 13 inches  
1944



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Santiniketan*  
Pencil on Paper  
17 x 10.5 inches  
1928



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Untitled*  
Charcoal on Paper  
12 x 9 inches  
1943



Sudhir Khastgir  
*Worried Farmers*  
Charcoal on Paper  
5.5 x 10.5 inches  
1943



Sudhir Khastgir  
Paris  
Charcoal on Paper  
9.5 x 6.5 inches  
1937



Recto



Verso