

At the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art – The must see exhibition of the year – Raqib Shaw

Eight works by renowned artist Raqib Shaw are on display to 28 October 2018 in an exhibition called Reinventing the Old Masters. This is the artist's first exhibition in Scotland, and it is one of the most fascinating you will see.

The works are placed alongside the two paintings which which he has long been obsessed : The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania by Joseph Noel Paton (1849) and An Allegory of Melancholy by Lucas Cranach which dates from 1528.

The works are colourful, fascinating, intricate and very detailed enamel paintings.

A couple of years ago Shaw painted a variation of Paton's work and now his most recent piece, a version of the Cranach painting is on display in Edinburgh. In Shaw's version he paints himself in place of the seated woman in the Cranach painting and the background is unmistakably Kashmir.

Go and feast your senses on all of it. The paintings are huge and you may need a seat to allow you time to take it all in.

Shaw was born in Calcutta in 1974 and lived in the state of Kashmir in his early years. His family are successful merchants dealing in luxury goods, selling rugs shawls jewels and antiques. The artist worked in the business when he was younger and this had a profound effect upon him and the development of his art.

He studied at Central Saint Martins College in London and

often visited the National Gallery to study the work of artists there. Now his own work has been exhibited at Tate Britain and in New York at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He lives in London in a former sausage factory which is both his home and his studio.



The Adoration (after Jan Gossaert)

Raqib Shaw's art is quite unlike any other artist's, past or present. While his imagery may be inspired by the Old Masters,

Shaw's technique constitutes an entirely unique kind of enamel painting. He spends months on preparatory drawings, tracings and photographic studies, then transfers the composition onto prepared wooden panels, establishing an intricate design with acrylic liner, which leaves a slightly raised line. He then carefully paints between the intricate web of lines, one tiny drip at a time, with a mixture of household gloss based paints and Hammerite, a tough enamel paint designed for outdoor metal surfaces. He uses needle-fine syringes and a porcupine quill, with which he manoeuvres the paint. Rhinestones and gems are sometimes added.

This focussed display will occupy one of the larger rooms at Modern One following successful exhibitions staged in the same way by Bridget Riley and Ed Ruscha over the last two years.

Simon Groom, Director of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, said: "We are thrilled to be showing Raqib Shaw's work in Scotland for the first time. The size, complexity, technical accomplishment and audacity of his work are something to behold – some of the pictures have, not surprisingly, taken years to paint. They are absolute visions of delight and awe, and I defy anyone not to lose themselves in the works."

Admission free.