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Arts: What to watch out for in 2016

VISUAL ART

Nasreen Mohamedi

In March 2016, the Metropolitan Museum will inaugurate their new Breuer building with an exhibition of work by Nasreen Mohamedi. It should propel the Indian abstractionist into the global spotlight after too long as the best-kept secret of connoisseurs of south Asian art. Steeped in Zen and Sufi, influenced by Indian abstractionists such as V.S. Gaitonde as well as western modernists including Mondrian and Malevich, Mohamedi's starting point was the grid. Her tools were pencil, pen and paper. Yet her frail, monochrome geometries possess a charisma that few oil paintings can rival.

By her death in 1990, her shapes had taken flight into transcendence. Ellipses, triangles and chevrons soar across the page in silky blacks and diaphanous whites. Buoyed by cosmic energy, they fulfill Mohamedi's ambition to "break the cycle of seeing [so that] magic and awareness arrives." This exhibition should see Mohamedi (who died in 1990) recognized as one of the greatest artists of the 20th century.

Rachel Spence
