

(Not) Reading the Signs: Writing and Script in Modern Asian and Islamic Art

Rebecca M. Brown, Johns Hopkins University, April 2020

KCS Paniker (1911-1977)

Southern Indian painter, served as Principal of the Madras College of Art, founded the Cholamandal Artists' Village. Born and lived in Tamilnadu, with family roots in Kerala, where they speak Malayalam.

Began his *Words and Symbols* series in 1963, continued until his death in 1977

Uses Roman script to write English words and phrases in some early *Words and Symbols* paintings but shifts to Malayalam script, using the latter to write words in Malayalam and Sanskrit.

Noted collections: Thiruvananthapuram Museum (KCS Paniker Gallery), National Gallery of Modern Art (New Delhi)

Artists working with Arabic and Persian Script

Ibrahim El-Salahi (b. 1930)

Sudanese painter, member of the "Khartoum School"

Noted collections: Tate Modern, MoMA, National Museum of African Art, Met, Newark Museum,

Siah Armajani (b. 1939)

Iranian-born American artist, three-dimensional works including sculptural installations and public sculptures/bridges. Based in Minneapolis.

Noted collections: MoMA, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Art Institute of Chicago, National Gallery (DC)

Charles Hossein Zenderoudi (b. 1937)

Iranian-born French artist, associated with the Saqqakhaneh movement that engaged with Persian letters and script as well as elements of philosophy and aesthetics from Sufi poetry and culture.

Noted collections: MoMA, NYU's Grey Gallery, British Museum, Centre Pompidou

Shirin Neshat (b. 1957)

Iranian-born American artist, known for her *Women of Allah* series and her film and video installations

Noted collections: National Museum of Women in the Arts, Guggenheim, MoMA, Met, Hirshhorn

Artists working with Chinese characters

GU Wenda (b. 1955)

Chinese-born American artist, known for pseudo-script projects working with ancient Chinese seal script forms and creating installations with hair and fake writing from a range of languages

Noted collections: MoMA, Asian Art Museum (SF), Guggenheim, Met, British Museum

XU Bing (b. 1955)

Chinese-born American artist, known for pseudo-script and English calligraphy projects, MacArthur Fellow, printmaking and installation art

Noted collections: National Museum of Asian Art (DC), MoMA, Asian Art Museum (SF)

QIU Zhijie (b. 1969)

Chinese artist, known for calligraphy works, performance, video

Noted collections: Guggenheim, Smart Museum (Chicago), Middlebury College, ICP (NY)

SONG Dong (b. 1966)

Chinese artist, known for performance, video, sculptural works that investigate the quotidian through medium, found objects, and photography

Noted collections: Met, Boston MFA, MoMA, Tate, Walker Art Center