Luxury Facts

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13 Questions with Laila Khan Furniturewalla



A deeply sensitive individual, Laila Khan Furniturewalla brings a range of emotions to her artworks.

By: Soumya Jain Agarwal | March 26, 2025

Laila Khan Furniturewalla was born into stardom. Her father, Feroz Khan, was a superstar in Indian cinema, who was known as much for his powerful performances as for his flamboyant style. Her brother Fardeen Khan also chose the line of Bollywood. But Ms. Furniturewalla skipped the family business to express her creativity through another medium – art.



Trained at the Slade School of Fine Art and Central Saint Martins in London, Ms. Furniturewalla's artworks draw you in. Reflecting ancient wisdom in the garb of modern attire, she seamlessly blends mixed materials like sand, gold leaf, copper, pigment and acrylic, to create abstract compositions that explore spiritual themes with artistic innovation.

Since 2001, Ms. Furniturewalla has exhibited widely through solo shows at the Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, the India Art Show at Rossi & Rossi Gallery in London, and "Dreams Have No Titles" at ICIA, Kala Ghoda in 2007, along with multiple group shows and fundraisers. However, Ms. Furniturewalla is hosting a solo exhibition after a long hiatus of 18 years, next month.



Gauri I – An earlier artwork by Laila Khan Furniturewalla

Titled 'Untamed Heart', this exhibition unravels the surface to reveal layers of identity, vulnerability, and strength. The artworks – which have been developed over the past five years – are a series of faces that symbolize internal struggles, dualities, and the search for truth. "Most of these works began taking shape in 2020, during the pandemic," Ms. Furniturewalla mentions. "That time allowed me to slow down and immerse myself in my art."

Using deep shades to create soulful expressions, Ms. Furniturewalla invites viewers to contemplate and engage with each brushstroke. From 'I See Something' to 'Maya's Veil', each artwork is a thorough study, and open to interpretation. A person who seems to be acutely aware of her surroundings, with the ability to feel the many undercurrents that dictate people and their situations, this exhibition is in tandem with her depth.



'I See Something' – From Untamed Heart

As introspective as the pandemic was for the entire world, Ms. Furniturewalla was not unaffected by it as well. Her emotions and struggles of that time have seeped into these artworks as well. "Over time, I've turned inward, and that introspection has naturally found its way into my art....2020 was a turning point. The stillness of that time allowed me to reconnect with myself, and what I discovered naturally emerged through my work. *Untamed Heart* is about that rawness –

strength and vulnerability, the courage to be seen as you are," she says.

As we approach the exhibition, we took a moment to talk further about life, love and universe with Ms. Furniturewalla, through our 13 Questions series.

LuxuryFacts: What did you want to become as a child?

Laila Khan Furniturewalla: As a child, I was drawn to anything creative. I loved colours, painting, and the world of film. Acting fascinated me just as much as art did. There was a time I wanted to be an actor, and another when all I wanted to do was paint. Creativity was always at the center of it all.

What was the life experience that impacted you the most? How and why?

Losing my young aunt in a tragic car accident was the most impactful experience of my life. She was so full of life, and in an instant, she was gone. It made me see how fragile and fleeting life really is – how it can change without warning, no matter how young or full of promise someone is. It wasn't just about grief, it was about understanding impermanence, about seeing life as something fleeting yet deeply precious. That awareness has stayed with me and, in many ways, flows into my work.



What advice would you give to your 18-year-old self?

I would not advise because the advice that I'm giving now at this stage, my 18-year-old self would never comprehend. Some things you just have to learn by living them.

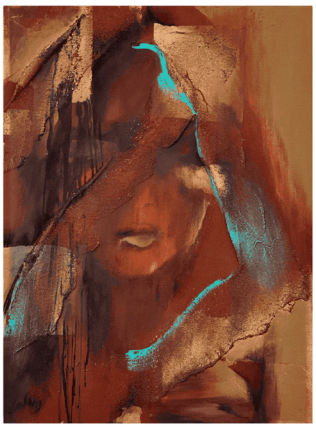
What was the last thing that made you genuinely laugh?

Recently, my brother, my cousins and I were all on a flight, and I laughed uncontrollably about a childhood incident involving my brother with his grand aunt. It reminded me of how those shared memories from childhood have a way of bringing us right back to who we were, no matter how much time has passed.

What is the most exciting part of your workday? And the most tedious?

The most exciting part of my day in the studio is when I'm completely lost in the flow. When the work takes over, and hours pass without me even realizing it. That feeling of being fully immersed, where everything just clicks, is what I love most.

The most tedious part? When that flow doesn't come. Some days, no matter how much I try, it just doesn't feel right. The work resists, and I have to wait it out, but I've learned that patience is part of the process.



'Meya's Veil' – From Untamed Heart

How do you decompress?

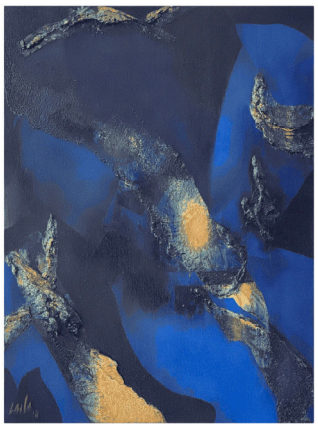
I truly decompress when I get lost in a really well-made movie, something that pulls me in completely. Music does the same for me. Both have a way of transporting me, shifting my state of mind almost instantly.

What was the first thing you thought about this morning?

The first thing I thought about was how grateful I am to be showing my work again and how, no matter what, art has always stayed with me.

What is the last thing you do before going to bed?

Before sleeping, I consciously focus on all the blessings and how wonderful this gift of life is. And then, of course, I try to fall asleep... which doesn't always happen as easily as I'd like!



What is the one luxury item or service you can't live without?

I think the luxury we all have is, you know, being able to have drivers. Being in the car is my little pocket of uninterrupted time where I can think, work, and catch up on messages while being seamlessly taken from one place to another. I love my time when I'm in the car. It's a luxury that makes a huge difference in my day

Another luxury for me is having my own art studio – a space that's entirely mine, where creativity flows freely. As an artist, having a place where I can just be, without distractions, and let my thoughts take shape is the ultimate privilege.

What is the meaning of life?

I think everyone is always trying to unravel the meaning of life and maybe that search itself is the meaning. We often chase happiness, but it comes and goes in fleeting moments. What really matters is staying curious, always questioning, always exploring. That sense of inquiry keeps life interesting. And perhaps the closest thing to peace is valuing what you have, allowing yourself to feel still in it.

What's love?

Love is the answer to so much in life. It's one of the most powerful emotions we have, but I think we hold back – we don't use it enough. Love is not corrupt. Real love isn't about expectations or conditions. It's just about feeling it, giving it, and being happy in that space.



Untitled – An earlier artwork by Laila Khan Furniturewalla

What are you most afraid of?

I feel incredibly lucky to have a spirit that never gives up. No matter what happens, my heart always finds the light. I've always been someone who looks ahead and has an optimistic and positive approach. If there's one thing I'd be afraid of, it's losing that part of myself, the ability to keep going, to stay hopeful, and to embrace whatever comes next.

What is one existential, difficult-to-answer question you wished you knew the right response to?

I often think about how we're all made of stardust – tiny fragments of something vast and infinite. And that makes me wonder... where do we go from here? It's one of those questions that has no real answer, but I can't help but wonder about it.

'Untamed Heart' is open to the public on April 5 & 6, 2025, at Snowball Studios, Mumbai; and April 16-20, 2025, at Gallery Art & Soul, Mumbai.