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themes in this painting as well. In the first panel, there are pink, white and green blooming lotus flowers, significant symbols for Buddhists and Hindus. Right next to the lotus flowers is flowing water, painted in the same way as in *Yogi and the River of Time*, which again reminds me of the Christian idea of water as life-giving. These two objects are mirrored in the last panel with the black mushroom cloud and the woman. The black cloud is reminiscent of the petals of a lotus, except it's now dark, round and looming. This paradoxical pairing emphasizes the poignancy of the bomb. The woman is crouched and tightly wound, the exact opposite of the sprightly lotus flowers. This juxtaposition of different religious themes in one painting commemorating the Hiroshima bombing also points to how important



*Body is Just a Garment*

human life is, and how devastating events can affect human life, regardless of religion.

In many of her paintings, she dresses, shapes, and adorns the human body with different religious themes and aspects, depicting them in the same space. In her painting, *Body is Just a Garment*, the faceless blue body, reminiscent of Hindu deity Krishna, is filled with entangled bodies from different religions. I can spot the face with a long white beard of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, and the Muslim musician, Mardana, who traveled with him on his divine journey to Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Jainist centers of worship. There are faces with long earlobes, reminding me of the Buddha. The

limbs of these bodies are splayed out everywhere; they are naked, some tangled up and some in tender embraces. These bodies are uncovered and vulnerable, relying on each other for support. This painting is enlivening, it is a visual exploration of the different identities and religions that make up the world. However, the title could also be read as an ironic question. Is the body just a garment? Or do the ways in which we carry, portray and curate ourselves to look and act certain ways matter?

## Conclusion

Caur's ability to display vulnerable and traumatic memories on paper make her work especially commemorative. Her sense of interfaith understanding enables her to reach across religious boundaries. Drawing on the different parts of her religious and cultural influences, she is able to confidently explore them through bold strokes and powerful images. The following quote illustrates the essence of the impact of her work. She writes, "it is when there is an exhibition that you are out in the open and totally vulnerable. When a painter is exhibiting, your feelings, your thoughts are there for all to see" (Caur 219). Caur is a model for all; her ability to draw upon aspects of her own Sikh faith in her work while also touching on motifs and commonalities between other faiths makes her work accessible for many. She creates a physical and theoretical meeting spot; a place to respect the beauty of difference.

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