



BIROn - Birkbeck Institutional Research Online

Mehra, R. and Sharma, D. and Bowye, S. (2024) Paper cuts: art, bureaucracy, and silenced histories in colonial India. [Show/Exhibition]

Downloaded from: <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/54644/>

Usage Guidelines:

Please refer to usage guidelines at <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/policies.html>
contact lib-eprints@bbk.ac.uk.

or alternatively

PAPER CUTS

ART, BUREAUCRACY, & SILENCED HISTORIES IN COLONIAL INDIA

Peltz Gallery

25 April – 12 July 2024

The British governed India by paper as much as by force. Reams of it circulated in the form of records, contracts, and trade receipts. Taxation and other methods of extracting wealth likewise relied on paper.

Paper also created a visual record. In 1851 Scottish engineer George Turnbull arrived in India tasked with building its first long-distance railway. While there, Turnbull collected drawings and watercolours by his colleagues, creating an archive that depicts the region from the perspective of the British engineers building the railway. Paper Cuts is the first time these images have been publicly displayed.

Like many colonial archives, the Turnbull Collection foregrounds the British while silencing the stories of the Indian people portrayed. How can we remember what has been forgotten? This exhibition invites two Indian artists, Ravista Mehra and Divya Sharma, to intervene through contemporary artworks. Combining past and present, we can create a more equitable future.

Paper Cuts is curated by Surya Bowyer.

Supported by the British Art Network, the British Society for the History of Science, and Birkbeck, University of London.

The Turnbull Collection was acquired in 2017 by the Science Museum Group, without whose support this exhibition would not have been possible.

Peltz Gallery: Generously supported by Elizabeth and Daniel Peltz OBE.

PELTZ
GALLERY



BRITISH ART
subject specialist
NETWORK

PAUL MELLON CENTRE
for Studies in British Art

Yale



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

