Victoria Memorial Hall cordially invites you to an illustrated talk

Our Treasure of European Paintings on Bengal

Speaker

Jawhar Sircar
Chairman
Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata

Monday, 18 December 2017, 5.30 pm

Victoria Memorial Hall (Eastern Quadrangle)
1 Queen's Way, Kolkata 700 071

Please note that cars are not allowed inside the Victoria Memorial premises. Golf-cart shuttle service available for elderly persons from the North Gate.
Even before the British established their rule in India, European painters started arriving on its shores in search of patrons and wealth. Some were also driven by curiosity and the spirit of adventure. From the middle of the 18th century to the mid-19th when photography arrived, the only sources of visual history were these life-like paintings. Literally thousands of paintings and sketches were made by European artists, mainly in colour, with perfect photo-like accuracy and scale that were quite different from existing Indian art. In fact, India is thus singularly blessed with this immense treasure of photo-like art works that very few countries have of their visual history before the coming of photography. They look like photographs and cover every detail of the life and times: from scenery and monuments to nature and buildings, from flora and fauna to people, dresses and occupations. This fascinating talk will cover the colourful history of old Calcutta and Bengal and also explain why this treasure is indeed unique.

(Image – Taj Mahal from the other side of the Jumna, by William Daniell, from the Victoria Memorial Hall collection)