



Ticket Tika Chaap:

The Art of the Trademark in the Indo-British Textile Trade

Press Preview: Saturday, 28 February, 2026, 5:30 PM

Exhibition Preview: Saturday, 28 February, 2026, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Walkthrough with the Curator: 6:30 PM

Exhibition on view from 1st March to 7th June 2026

Dr. Bhou Daji Lad Museum, Byculla, Mumbai



Textile Label, Late 19th–early 20th century, Chromolithograph, H. 13.1 x W. 17.0 cm, From the collection of the Museum of Art and Photography (MAP), Bengaluru

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai in collaboration with the *Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), Bengaluru* and *Impart* are thrilled to present the exhibition ‘**Ticket Tika Chaap**’. Bringing these intricate and evocative textile tickets into focus, it explores them as both commercial tools and cultural artefacts—objects that shaped consumer behaviour while also capturing the political, social, and artistic shifts of their time.

An Exhibition Unraveling the Visual Legacy of Colonial-Era Branding and Advertisement

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the vibrant, teeming bazaars of 19th and early-20th century India, a new visual language emerged in the cloth shops that had increasingly begun selling British and Indian mill-made cloth.

Glossy, brightly coloured paper labels, bearing elaborate images accompanied each bolt of cloth that arrived from Britain. These labels had many names — textile ticket, shippers’ ticket, *tika*, *chaap*, and mark. Each of these stunning chromolithographed labels served a myriad of purposes. They were legally registered trademarks, offering protection against counterfeiting; and advertisements generating brand recognition amongst buyers. The visual language of these textile labels would go on to define the very foundations of branding, advertisement and commercial image-making of that period. As artworks in their own right, these tickets were also collected, repurposed, and treasured in homes as decorative elements or even objects of worship.

When Branding Became Art

Visually expressive branding was essential for a market as culturally and linguistically diverse as India. This is where textile tickets came in handy. Their striking imagery served as instant identifiers for quality, origin, and trust. Some featured deities and religious symbols, appealing to notions of auspiciousness; others showcased Indian monuments, portraits of rulers, or even European motifs — signifying modernity and aspiration. What’s truly remarkable is that the images often had little direct connection to the cloth itself. A label featuring a Hindu goddess or a British royal was not necessarily a reflection of the fabric’s design, but rather an invitation to aspire — an emotional trigger that made a buyer reach for one kind of textile over another. In this manner, these tickets helped shape consumer memory and preference by creating an association between the image representing a product and the personal desires and aspirations of the customer.

A Window into History, Industry, and Technology

Apart from serving a commercial purpose, textile tickets offer a richly layered glimpse into colonial histories of production. They chart the expansion of British textile mills, which dominated global textile production, and the counter-narratives of India's own industrial development. They also bore witness to the rise of mass printing technologies, particularly chromolithography, which revolutionised the way images were produced and consumed.

As the world entered an era of mechanised production and visual mass communication, these tickets mirrored the changing artistic sensibilities of their time. In their search for new ideas, they borrowed liberally from Indian and international artistic traditions. The bold colours of a chromolithographed ticket might follow the compositional technique of a centuries-old miniature painting or the appearance of a photograph. Due to such intermingling of tradition and technology, these tickets embody the constantly developing visual idiom in the advertising world.

More Than a Label: A Story of Image, Identity, and Influence

Ticket Tika Chaap invites visitors to step into the world of these labels, which are not just remnants of trade, but also artefacts of identity, technology, and visual culture. How did their designs influence people's response to textiles in the market? What do they reveal about the colonial understanding of Indian commerce and culture at large? In an age where advertising and branding continues to dominate visual culture, why do these century-old labels still feel familiar?

Through a curated selection of nearly 300 textile tickets, alongside historical photographs, paintings, and printed ephemera, this exhibition transforms the overlooked into the extraordinary — shedding light on a fascinating intersection of art, commerce, and history.

Ticket Tika Chaap marks the continuation of a sustained, years-long collaboration between MAP and Impart—an online platform fostering greater public engagement with the art and cultural histories of South Asia.

The exhibition has been made possible with the support of Bank of America.

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About the Curators

Nathaniel Gaskell is a curator based in Singapore. He served as the director of the Museum of Art & Photography and then Executive Director of the MAP Academy. In 2024, Nathaniel joined the STPI Gallery, Singapore as Assistant Director. Nathaniel holds a BA (Hons) in Fine Art from Arts University Bournemouth and an MRes (Master of Research) in Cultural Studies from the London Consortium.

He is the co-author of *Photography in India: A Visual History from the 1850s to the Present* (Prestel), and the editor of William Dalrymple's *The Historian's Eye* (HarperCollins India), Derry Moore's *In the Shadow of the Raj* (Prestel) and *Hikari: Contemporary Photography from Japan* (Japan Foundation).

Shrey Maurya is a writer, researcher and curator based in India. She serves as the MAP Academy's research director, and leads its Special Projects. Shrey holds a BA (Hons) in Political Science from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University, and an MA in Visual Art from Ambedkar University, Delhi.

Gaskell and Maurya are frequent collaborators, having worked on various exhibitions and research projects. Together, in 2020, they set up the MAP Academy — an organisation that develops and provides open-access resources on the art and cultural histories of South Asia.

About Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum is Mumbai's oldest museum, established in 1857, and is the erstwhile Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay. The chief cornerstone of the Museum was laid on 19 November 1862 and the Museum opened to the public at the present site on 2 May 1872. The Museum building has been recently renovated by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, and was opened to the public by the Honourable Chief Minister, Shri Devendra Fadnavis on January 8, 2025.

In 2003 the BMC set up a public trust to manage and promote the Museum through a pioneering public-private partnership. At the same time, the Museum building and collections underwent a comprehensive, UNESCO-Award winning restoration, that was spearheaded by the Museum Director, Tasneem Zakaria Mehta and supported by the BMC and the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation. It opened to the public in 2008, and has pioneered the promotion of contemporary art and design which is presented in the extraordinary 19th- century building, one of the finest in India, in an attempt to rethink obsolete notions and challenge colonial and European enlightenment precepts.

The Museum's robust exhibition and outreach programme invites artists and experts to engage with the collections and archives to bring new readings to both. Over 85

exhibitions have been presented, over the past 15 years. These include collaborations with both local and international institutions and organisations. Past exhibitions have showcased creative practices in contemporary art and design, crafts and textiles, architecture, urbanism, and film and video art.

About the Museum of Art & Photography (MAP)

The Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), Bengaluru, was built to preserve South Asian visual art and heritage, and cultivate a museum-going culture in India. Housed in the heart of Bengaluru on Kasturba Road, the museum rests in a state-of-the-art, 44,000 square foot building, designed by the acclaimed Indian architectural practice Mathew & Ghosh. The steely fixed facade of the building is enclosed by a wall that is always in flux: carrying the art of acclaimed contemporary artists such as Marco Santini, Bhuri Bai, etc. MAP's five-story building on Kasturba Road includes multiple galleries for frequently changing exhibitions, an auditorium, a research library, an education centre, a conservation lab, a members' lounge, a restaurant and bar.

MAP is focused on inclusion, and using technology, and public-facing scholarship, to develop interdisciplinary exhibitions and research initiatives that connect history to contemporary concerns. Having launched online in December 2020, at the height of the pandemic, as India's only digital-first museum, and then physically in February 2023, MAP has been bringing its collection to life through multiple pathways. The museum's online and offline programming enables us to reach broad and diverse audiences, from young students and emerging artists to seasoned researchers and international collaborators. The museum works with local artists and collaborators while also bringing leading international artists to the region and fostering trans-national collaborations in Asia, and beyond.

Our mission is to harness the transformative potential of art, to enrich lives, ignite creativity, and connect people. We make art accessible and engaging for everyone through innovative experiences, meaningful dialogue and building communities. MAP's collection includes more than 100,000 works predominantly from South Asia: Modern and contemporary art, living traditions, textiles, craft and design, pop culture, pre modern art and photography, dating from the tenth century to contemporary times.

About IMPART

Founded in 2022, Impart (formerly MAP Academy) is an online platform dedicated to fostering deeper engagement with South Asia's art and cultural histories. The organisation develops comprehensive, freely accessible resources that bridge connections between museums, universities, cultural institutions, and the public.

Impart's initiatives include the first-ever *Encyclopedia of Art* from South Asia,

spanning over 2,000 entries; a suite of *Learning Resources*, including courses, live lectures, online talks, and videos; *Perspectives*, an editorial programme featuring contributions from across the region and beyond; and a range of *Special Projects*, including multimedia efforts, grants, and organisational partnerships. With more than 1.5 million annual visitors, over 15,000 active learners, and a growing network of collaborators, Impart is building a robust online community for art from South Asia.

Impart is a unit of the Art & Photography Foundation and an institutional partner of the Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), Bengaluru.

The exhibition is on view at: Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Botanical Udyan and Zoo (Rani Bagh), 31-A, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Road, Byculla (E), Mumbai – 400027

Timings: 10 am to 5:30 pm | Closed all Wednesdays and certain public holidays

Museum entry tickets applicable.

For further enquiries, please contact:

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