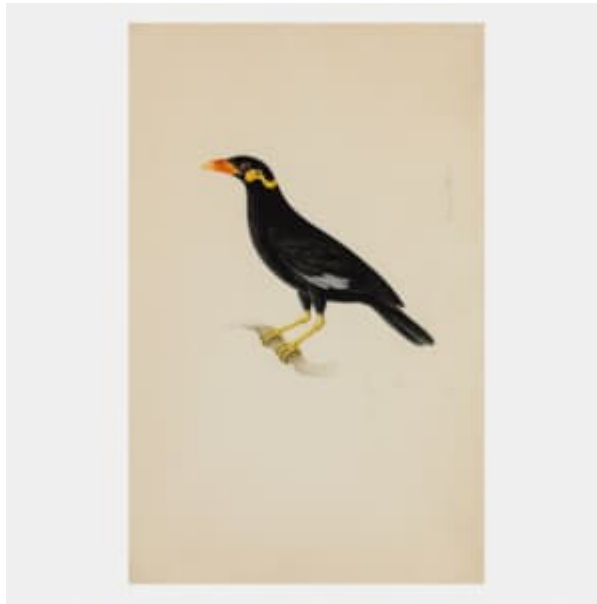


AMIR MOHTASHEMI



Collection of Six Company School Paintings of Birds

India, probably Calcutta, early 19th century

Watercolour on paper

Each roughly 49 x 32cm

Provenance: French private collection.

Six fine Company School paintings of Indian birds, likely from the Calcutta school:

Hill Myna (*Gracula religiosa*)

A common member of the starling family found across South and Southeast Asia. Its specific name, *religiosa*, may reference its ability to mimic prayers. The hill myna is featured in the album of Lady Mary Bentinck, held in the Natural History Museum, London (ref no. [Z88 f BEN](#)), dated to 1833.

Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)

A wide-ranging heron, found across much of Africa, Asia, and Europe. This bird is also illustrated in the Wellesley album, painted by the Indian artist Gurudayal in Barrackpore, near Calcutta (see British Library [NHD2/2766](#)) in c. 1805.

Black Francolin (*Francolinus francolinus*)

A scrub and grassland pheasant, with a range across Turkey, Iran, northeast India, and Bangladesh. This bird was painted by Ram Das in Calcutta, c. 1777, for the Impey album, and for the Wellesley album c. 1798-1805 (see British Library [NHD 29/78](#)).

Rufous Treepie (*Dendrocitta vagabunda*)

This corvid has a large range, covering the Indian subcontinent and much of Indochina. They are adaptable, found in agricultural areas, forests, and gardens. They call attention with their loud calls. This bird appears in both the Impey and Wellesley albums.

Male Painted Spurfowl (*Galloperdix lunulata*)

Erroneously labelled as a different member of the pheasant family, 'Hill Partridge' (*Arborophila torqueola*), this is the male painted spurfowl. Though the two species look similar, the bird in the painting is identified as a spurfowl from the eponymous spurs on its tarsus, or the back of the leg.

Female Painted Spurfowl (*Galloperdix lunulata*)

The female of the species, with small tarsal spurs.