

THE ESTATE OF RICHARD BARTHOLOMEW
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“Richard Bartholomew at his typewriter at his Jangpore home, New Delhi, 1984”

Critical theory

Richard Bartholomew: The Art Critic

A Critic's Eye, an exhibition of the late Richard Bartholomew's black-and-white photographs of his family and artist friends, was organised by his son Pablo at the Photoink gallery in 2009. These images had been shot while Bartholomew Senior was working as a painter, gallery director, critic and writer for *The Indian Express*, *The Times of India* and other publications. Now, Pablo has brought out a compilation of these writings, published between the 1950s and early 1980s, edited by him, his mother Rati, and Carmen Kagal.

The 640 pages are a treasure-trove of historical anecdotes to engross anyone interested in art: perceptive writings on the role of art criticism, contemporary Indian art, and “pen portraits” or profiles of artists such as MF Husain, Satish Gujral, Ram Kumar and Biren De, and his reviews of landmark exhibitions such as the First Indian Triennale in 1968. There are also provocative essays on public institutions like the National Gallery of Modern Art and the Lalit Kala Akademi (Richard was its secretary from 1977 to 1985) that seem relevant in the wake of the recent allegations of mismanagement at the Akademi. These writings are framed in context with an analytical introduction by critic Geeta Kapur and a more personal afterword by Pablo, who sums up the book in these words: “So this book needs to be out... to allow this man to breathe his words and as a toast [to] all those who have passed on and to the ones surviving; Memory, collectively lost, can now be somewhat regained.” *Bart*, ₹3,000. Available at a discount at www.richardbartholomew.info/artbook/pre_order.php.