

**Grosvenor  
Gallery**

# INDIAN MODERNIST LANDSCAPES 1950–1970



**INDIAN MODERNIST LANDSCAPES  
1950–1970  
BAKRE / RIBEIRO / SOUZA**

3 – 25 November 2016

**Grosvenor Gallery**

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## INDIAN MODERNIST LANDSCAPES, BAKRE/RIBEIRO/SOUZA

The three artists whose work appears in our current show all made the difficult decision to leave their homeland and move to Britain. They chose to base themselves in London, and during the 1950s and 60s had varying degrees of success, however all contributed a great deal to the artistic landscape of Post-War Britain.

Sadanand K. Bakre and Francis Newton Souza were both founding members of the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group (PAG), established in 1947 following Indian Independence. Along with their contemporaries MF Husain, SH Raza, KH Ara and HA Gade, they established the group with the aim of revolutionising Indian modern art. They desired aesthetic freedom from the shackles of the imposed artistic teachings of the British, and sought to create an indigenous style of modernism based on the amalgamation of Indian society and imagery with contemporary Western artistic practices such as cubism and expressionism.

To better experience the developments being made in Europe, a number of artists left India to settle abroad, including Bakre, Ribeiro, Souza, Raza, Chandra and Shemza, to name a few. These artists created unique works, a combination of west and east in terms of subject, style and colouring. This exhibition focusses on the most fruitful period for this group, and shows the development of their styles over the years, as well as the influence they inevitably had on one another's work.



**BAKRE** (1920–2007) was a sculptor as well as a painter and was based in Ladbroke Grove, with many of his works bearing his address and telephone number on their reverse. He moved to London in 1951, and struggled to establish himself, working various jobs including as a hospital porter, postman and stone mason. In the late 1960s and early 70s he exhibited at the Nicholas Treadwell Gallery, which at one point operated out of an articulated lorry (pictured below), and where Bakre saw a great deal of success.

His style evolved throughout his time in London, but his main subject matter was the landscape, often painted in bold colours, and with a strongly sculptural quality to them. In 1961 The Times newspaper described Bakre as a sensitive man who *"does not go wrong with colour... strong, pure tones mix boldly and easily, and there is warmth in every picture."*



Treadwell in his first mobile gallery, 1963



Bakre and Treadwell at his solo-show, 1971

**RIBEIRO** (1933–2010) was never a member of the PAG, however was influenced by its ideals and the artistic sentiments its members stood for. Born into a Catholic family from Goa, Lancelot Ribeiro was Souza's half-brother and followed him to London in 1950, where he undertook an accountancy course, honing his artistic skills at St. Martin's School of Art, London. He returned to India in 1955 and continued to work as an accountant. His first solo-show at the Bombay Art Society Salon took place in 1961, and was a great success. Following this he was commissioned by the TATA institute to paint a large mural for their head offices, and the same year his work was included in the important international show '*Ten Indian Painters*', which then went on an international tour.

Ribeiro came to live in London in 1962, where he remained for the rest of his life. His work is characterised by bold lines and colourful depictions of landscapes, heads and figures. The 1960s were a successful period for the artist; however he was largely ignored during the latter part of his career. There has been a recent resurgence in interest in his work due to a major retrospective at Asia House in London, as well as a series of exhibitions in India and the UK.



Souza and Ribeiro in London, 1965



Ribeiro's solo-show at the Everyman Gallery, 1965

**SOUZA** (1924–2002) arrived in London in 1949, and would spend the next 18 years there. He struggled to establish himself until his work appeared alongside that of Padamsee and Raza at Paris at Galerie Raymond Creuze in Paris in 1953. This was followed shortly after by his seminal solo show at London's Gallery One in 1956, which coincided with his publication of his autobiographical essay *Nirvana of a Maggot*. In 1962 Anthony Blond published a seminal text '*Souza*' (pictured below), and in 1964 Souza left Gallery One to join Eric Estorick's Grosvenor Gallery, where he held some of his most important shows including; '*The Human and the Divine Predicament*', 1964 and '*Black Art and Other Paintings*', 1966.

Souza's oeuvre was inspired by his Catholic upbringing in Goa, as well as his experiences in London. His landscapes are boldly and skilfully executed and often feature the North London skyline of Hampstead and Belsize Park. His influence on post-Independence Indian art history cannot be overstated.



Souza in his studio, photographed by Ida Kar, c.1959



'Souza' by Edwin Mullins, 1962



**SADANAND K. BAKRE (1920 – 2007)**



1.

*Untitled, (Townscape with Blue Sky) 1961*

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated on the reverse

63.5 x 76.2cm. (25 x 30in.)

Provenance:

Private UK collection



2.

*Untitled (Cubist Townscape), 1962*

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated on the reverse

30 x 45cm. (11 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 17 <sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub>in.)

Provenance:

Purchased from a gallery in Ladbrooke Grove,  
London in the early 1960s by  
Mr & Mrs A. Witherick



3.

*Untitled (Townscape with Cathedral), 1965*

Oil on board

Signed and signed

121.4 x 60.5cm.

(47 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> X 23 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub>in.)

Provenance:

Private UK collection

4.

*Untitled, (Landscape with  
Sun) 1968*

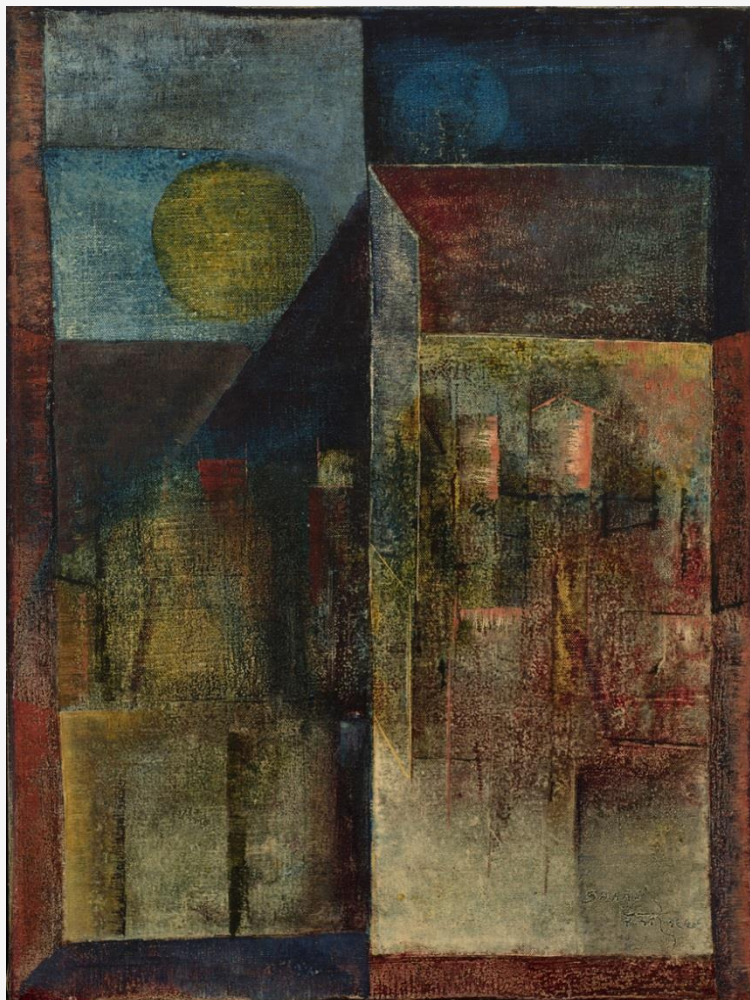
Oil on canvas

Signed and dated

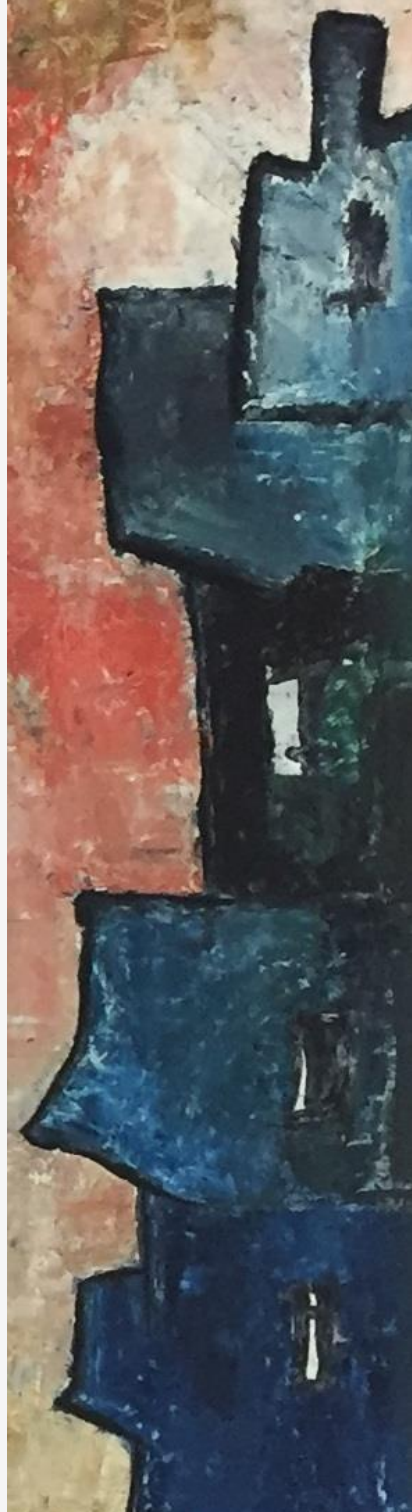
40.6 x 30.5cm. (16 x 12in.)

Provenance:

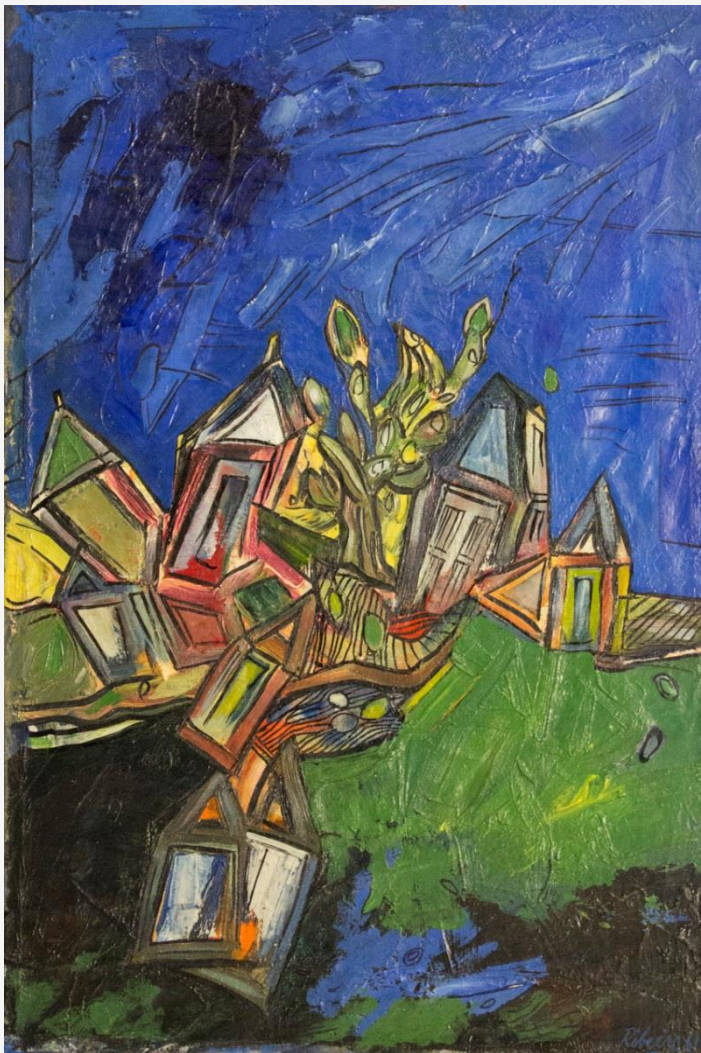
Private UK collection



**LANCELOT RIBEIRO (1933 – 2010)**



5. *Untitled*  
(*Blue and Green Landscape*)  
1961, Oil on canvas  
Signed and dated  
49.5 x 31cm. (19 ¾ x 12 ¼in.)



Provenance:  
The Estate of the Artist

6.

*Strange Town, 1962*

Oil on board

Signed and dated

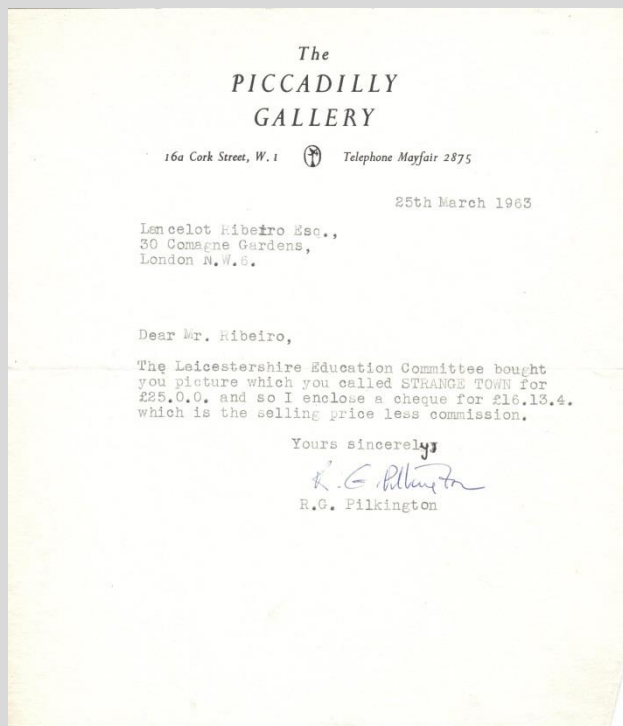
91.5 x 80cm. (36 x 31 ½in.)

Provenance:

Purchased from Piccadilly Gallery, London, 25.3.1963 by the Leicester Education Committee for £25.0.0

Golding, Young and Mawer, *150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Auction*, 4 September 2014

Acquired from the above by Roderick Burton, Caistor, Lincolnshire



Copy of the original sales document, 1963



**7.**

*Untitled (In The City I), 1963*

Oil on board

Signed and dated

61 x 91.4cm. (24 x 36in.)

Provenance:

Private UK collection





8.

*Landscape with Green Houses, 1964*

Oil on board

Signed and dated

33 x 37.2cm. (13 x 14 5/8in.)

Provenance:

The Estate of the Artist

(left) Ribeiro with the present work, c.1967



**9.**

*Untitled (Landscape with Domes), 1964*

Oil on board

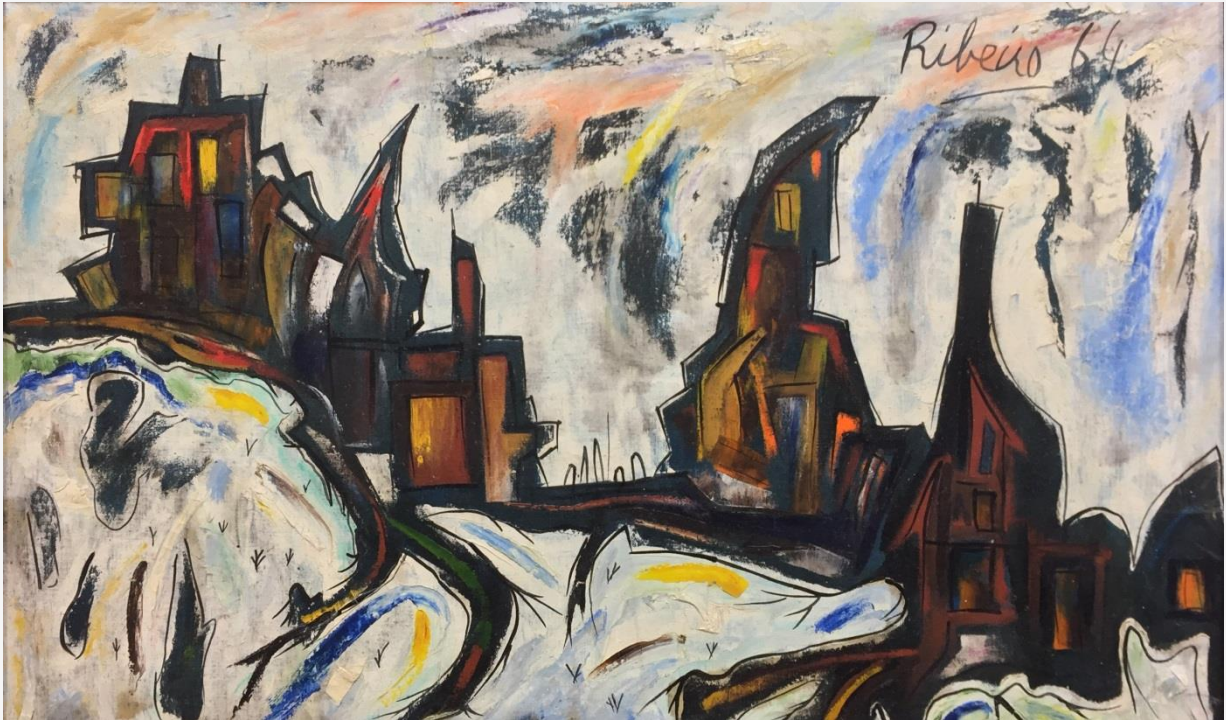
Signed and dated

18.5 x 25.5cm. (7 ½ x 10in.)

Provenance:

The Estate of the Artist





**10.**

*Untitled (Blue Landscape with Orange Sun), 1964*

Oil on canvas, signed

36 x 32cm. (14 1/8 x 12 5/8in.)

Provenance:

The Estate of the Artist

**11.**

*Untitled (White Townscape), 1964*

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated

25 x 18.5cm. (9 3/4 x 7 1/4in.)

Provenance:

The Estate of the Artist



**12.**

*Untitled (Landscape with Yellow Sun), 1965*

Oil on board,

Signed

25 x 18.5cm. (9  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 7  $\frac{1}{4}$ in.)

Provenance:

The Estate of the Artist



**13.**

*Untitled (Red Landscape with Dome), 1966*

Oil and polyvinyl acetate on canvas

Signed and dated

25 x 18.5cm. (9  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 7  $\frac{1}{4}$ in.)

Provenance:

The Estate of the Artist

Exhibited:

Artist's retrospective, Leicestershire Museum and Art Galleries

1986-87

**FRANCIS NEWTON SOUZA (1924–2002)**





**14.**

*La Place: Town Square, 1955*

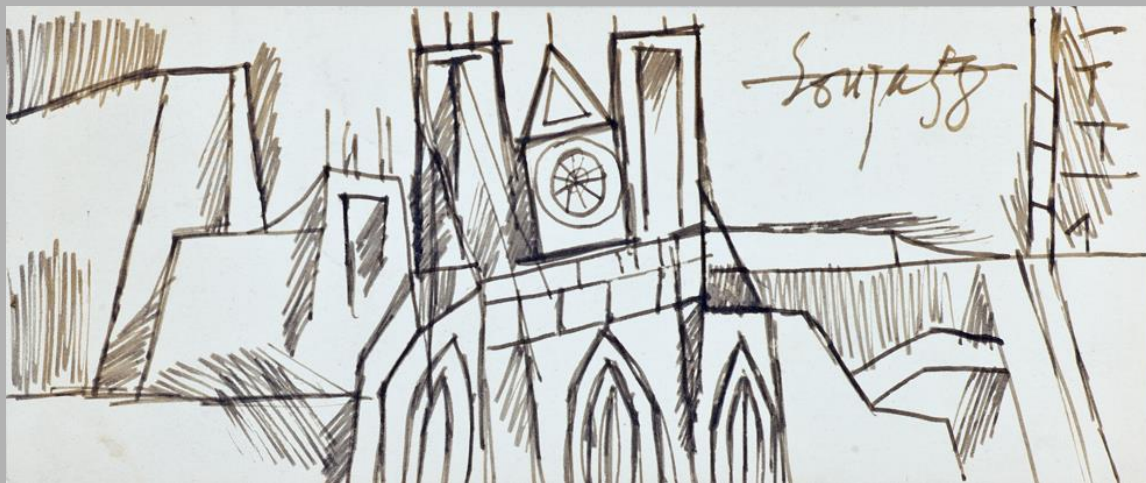
Oil on board

Signed and dated

61 x 76.2cm. (24 x 30in.)

Provenance:

Private UK collection





**15. *Westminster Abbey, 1958***

Pen & ink on paper, signed & dated  
8.8 x 20.6cm. (3 ½ x 8in.)

Provenance:  
The Estate of the Artist

**16. *Landscape with City, 1958***

Pen and ink on paper  
20 x 32.5cm. (8 x 12 ¾in.)

Provenance:  
The Estate of the Artist

**17. *Landscape with Church, 1958***

Pen and ink on paper  
Signed and dated  
19.4 x 25cm. (7 ¾ x 9 ¾ in.)

Provenance:  
The Estate of the Artist

**18.**

*Untitled (Red Townscape), 1964*

Oil on board

Signed and dated

60 x 75cm. (23 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 29 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>in.)

Provenance:

Gallery One, London

Private South African collection

Private UK collection



## Other relevant events during Asian Art in London 2016:

### Lecture: Indian Artists in 1960s Britain

Nicholas Treadwell – Gallery Proprietor, Austria

Sunday, 6 November 2016, 3:00–4:15pm.

The British Museum, Great Russell St, London WC1B 3DG

### Exhibition: Retracing Ribeiro

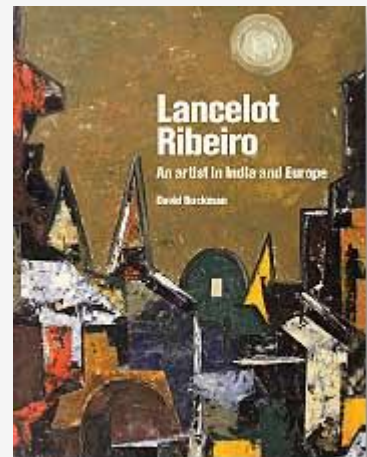
Until March 2017

Burgh House, New End Square, Hampstead, London, NW3 1LT

Copies of the recently published monograph by David Buckman:

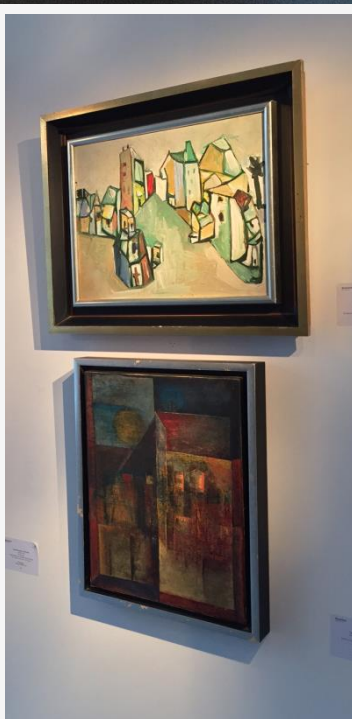
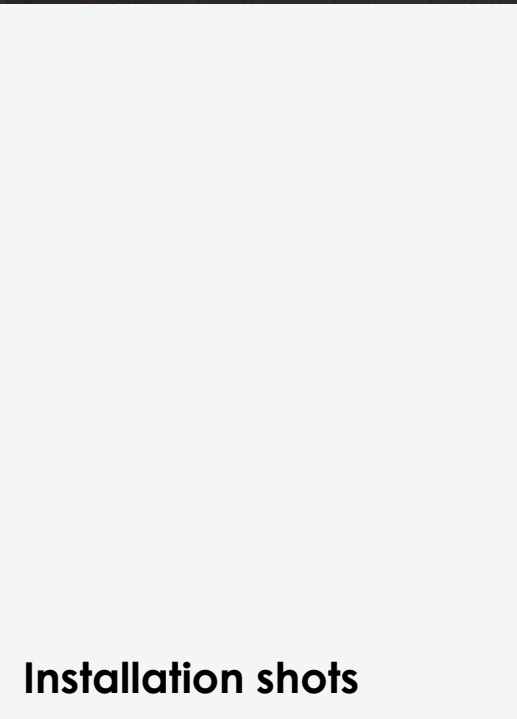
***'Lancelot Ribeiro. An Artist in India and Europe'***  
are available from the Gallery

Also available are copies of the catalogue  
***'Restless Ribeiro'***, the 2013 retrospective of the  
artist's work at Asia House, London





Installation shot



Installation shots

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