Public access description
It is spring and bees swarm. On the left Radha, the beloved of the god Krishna (seen on the right), is told about his dalliance with the gopis (cow-girls).

The picture is one of a series illustrating the Gita Govinda, which tells the story of Krishna’s youth. This series was commissioned for a lady patron, probably named Malini, in 1730. Manaku was one of an influential family of artists from Guler, also in the Punjab Hills, and the family worked at various courts in the region. His younger brother was the well-known artist Nainsukh.

In this painting, iridescent green beetle wing-case fragments were used to represent jewels.

Descriptive line
Painting, Gita Govinda illustration, Radha’s messenger describes Krishna standing with gopis, opaque watercolour, gold and beetle-wings on paper, Basohli, ca. 1730-1735

Physical description
Painting, opaque watercolour, gold and beetle-wing fragments on paper, Gita Govinda illustration, Krishna approached by Radha and companion. Radha sits beneath a tree listening to her companion (sakhi) as she turns to watch Krishna at play with the cowgirls (gopis). Krishna in an orange dhoti stands with three gopis, his arms around two of them. The other offers him something from a bowl. Trees are shown in the centre and left; the river Jumna is at the bottom. Deep yellow background with mauve rocks, and two pairs of black bees shaped like dragonflies.

Dimensions
Height: 202 mm with border, Width: 253 mm, Height: 147 mm, Width: 308 mm with border

Museum number
IM.88-1930

Object history note

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O41855/radha-and-krishna-painting-manaku/