Drishti

YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

GLORIOUS SINCE 1971

Volume 55 • Issue 5 • September - October 2026



Inside | Featured Article: Ladakh: Where Mountains meet the Stars | Just Grasp It: Fisheye Lenses

YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

SINCE 1971

Ideals

A Club. Not a Classroom
Don't wait to be taught. Start a conversation

Don't just attend. Belong
Be the family

Workshops teach technique
Member discussions teach vision

Talk. Share. Question. Disagree
That's where photography begins

The Internet gives answers
Members give understanding

Sit with a senior. Walk with a peer
Encourage a beginner

No hierarchy. No hesitation
Only passion

The best lessons happen...
After the session ends

This club was built in 1971
By people who showed up for each other
Keep that alive

Welcome to the real darkroom— where minds develop.

PASSION | CONNECTION | GROWTH | VISION

Youth Photographic Society® (YPS)

Patronage: Directorate of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Karnataka
Corporate Member (CM - 203) of Federation of Indian Photography
Club Member (991620) of Photographic Society of America

Executive Committee

President
Mr Manju Vikas Sastry V, AFIP, ESFIP

Vice President
Vacant

Secretary
Ms Prema Kakade, ESFIP, EFIAP, EFIP, GPAPESGSPC, CMoL, ECPE

Jt Secretary
Ms Anitha Mysore, EFIAP/d2, MFIP, GMPSA, ARPS, GPUCR-4, c***MoL

Treasurer
Mr Kakade M S

Directors
Mr Ganesh Prasad U P
Mr Kartik Raman EFIAP, EFIP, A APS
Mr Koushik Rao R
Dr Minnu Kejriwal

Dṛṣṭi Journal

Editor
Mr Manju Vikas Sastry V, AFIP, ESFIP

Editorial Team
Mr Digwas Bellemane, EFIAP/p, EsFIAP, EFIP, EsFIP, EPSA
Mr Kakade M S
Dr Minnu Kejriwal
Mr Prakash B V
Ms Prema Kakade, ESFIP, EFIAP, EFIP, GPAPESGSPC, CMoL, ECPE

Design
Layout: Mr Rajasimha Sathyanarayana, EFIAP, EFIP, CMoL
Design: Mr Digwas Bellemane, EFIAP/p, EsFIAP, EFIP, EsFIP, EPSA

Feedback and contributions
drsti@ypsbengaluru.com

Dṛṣṭi (दृष्टि) in Samskrit language means vision. The vision in the mind of a photographer, aligned in a creative manner with what one sees around, produces an artistic image. This resonates with the spirit of YPS, which strives to promote the photographic art.

© Copyright 2026

Views expressed in this journal are purely of the respective author(s) and YPS may not have the same views.

All the content including images are protected by the Copyright act. You need to obtain author's written permission before using the image or text content in any form.

Follow us on social media

facebook.com/ypsbengaluru
instagram.com/ypsbengaluru
twitter.com/ypsbengaluru
youtube.com/ypsbengaluru

Contents



Kitakitsune of Hokkaido © Yogesh Mokashi

04	**Editorial: Capture the Festivities**	- Manju Vikas Sastry V, AFIP, ESFIP
05	**Spotlight: Durgesh Nandini Bais**	- Kakade M S
07	**Featured Article: Ladakh: Where Mountains meet the Stars**	- Dr Kalyanpur Anandh
10	**Dṛṣṭi Exclusive: Flashbacks and Film Rolls: Evolution of Salon Photography - Part 2**	- Satish H, MFIAP, MICS, ARPS, PPSA,cMoL, Hon YPS
15	**Framing the Frame: The Walking Wardrobe**	- Rajaram K S, AFIAP, Hon FIP, Hon YPS
17	**Camera Diaries: Beyond What the Eye Can See: Photographing the Invisible in Faith**	- Thejas K R, AFIAP, AFIP
22	**ಹಂಪಿ - ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಮಲಗಿರುವ ಅವನತ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ**	- ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್
26	**Just Grasp It: Fisheye Lenses**	- Ashok Kandimalla, Hon FIP, Hon YPS
29	**YPS Saturday Meet Sessions**	- Prakash B V
30	**YPS Wildlife Week Presentations**	- Dr Minnu Kejriwal, PhD
34	**YPS Wildlife Week Macro Photo Walk – A Morning of Discoveries**	- Keshava Murty Y
35	**From Pixels to Presence: The Art of Making a Photograph - Create. Shoot. Print.**	- Goutham Ramesh
36	**HIRIYARA JAATRE - A Celebration of Life**	- Arun Kumar Madhan
38	**New Member Corner**	

Front cover: The Ritual of Transformation © Satish H
Rear cover: Sakunthala At Stream © Katukuri Surya Prakasa Rao

Capture the Festivities

Dear YPS Family,

Season's greetings to all YPS Members. A sincere thank you to all our members who regularly join us for YPS programs - your enthusiasm and presence inspire us to keep raising the bar. At the same time, it is always disappointing when members miss out on these carefully curated events. I strongly encourage everyone to actively participate in upcoming activities to get the most out of your membership and contribute to the growth of YPS. With most of the festivals around September and October, I hope all our members have made the best use of the opportunities and have clicked some colourful and creative pictures this season during the Krishna Janmashtami and Gowri Ganesha festivals.

Don't miss out!

While YPS continues to enjoy strong engagement across our growing community, many members have not yet followed our official YPS WhatsApp Channel. Going forward, direct broadcast messages will be reserved primarily for exclusive member communications. To ensure you don't miss out on general event announcements and program updates, we strongly encourage everyone to join the channel today.

Also, we have seen that there are a lot of participants in the YPS WhatsApp groups, such as Macro, Salon and Street groups, who have not renewed their membership. Communication has been sent in multiple instances to remind on the same. We were forced to remove all those who have not renewed from such **YPS Member Exclusive Groups**

While the first batch of the YPS Mentorship Program, under the leadership of Prema Kakade, is coming to an end, we have received excellent feedback and wish to continue the program as long as there are motivated and committed members willing to learn from the mentors.

MONOCHROME: Vision Without Color, a wonderful presentation by our past president Satish H, gave an excellent opportunity to understand the intricacies of making a good quality monochrome picture. The attendance for this program was excellent and encouraging.

YPS organised a special workshop and hands-on experience, **Create | Shoot | Print** on photo printing in collaboration with EPSON, which was led by our past Jt secretary Hardik P Shah, who took this initiative, which gave a very good insight into various printers and print media that Epson provides to all the members who attended the same. We wish to collaborate for more such events in the upcoming days.

Come October, it's time for the Wildlife Week Celebration at YPS. This year we had some unique presentations: The **Vanishing Stripes** by our past president Mr Praveen Kumar H V on 3rd Oct, **Earth Through My Lens** by eminent wildlife photo artist Mr Mohan Thomas on 4th Oct, and **Heart of Indian wilderness – Untamed, Unscripted, Unforgettable** by our past president Satish H on 8th Oct 2026, in addition to activities such as Macro Walk at forest area adjacent to Valley School led by Mr Ganesh Prasad U P to and a few online contests

Shooting After Dark by Mr Saurabh Chatterjee was yet again an exclusive presentation which dealt with the genre of Astro Photography and its nuances. Definitely the ones who did not attend this, missed a mind-blowing presentation for sure!

YPS photo tour to **Autumn in Japan - 2026** is full house with respect to registrations and we have had queries for more seats as well. Wishing all the participants a wonderful photo tour and awaiting to see some stunning captures back home.

Another photo tour that is happening from the YPS Street group is the **Echos of Kolkata–NOV 2026** led by Kishan Harwalkar, which also had an overwhelming response. All the best to the entire team who are headed to capture some wonderful moments in the streets of Kolkata.

While the National Salon 2026 submission ended on 20th Sep and the results were published on time, the committee is heading towards the preparation of the culminating Exhibition on 19th & 20th Dec 2026. Expecting our members to visit in large numbers and make the event a grand success.

We are already working towards the next YPS International Salon, and work is in progress with Anitha Mysore being the Salon Chairperson and Kakade M S being the Salon Secretary for the 2nd consecutive edition. Wishing the entire team success in advance.

We had a unique opportunity from **VTVO (V the Volunteers)** to shoot **Hiriyara Jaatre 2026,** and I thank all the members who attended and shot some candid moments of the elderly people at the event. The Team has specially thanked Arun Kumar Madhan (IM-0786) and Sai Prakash K (LM-322) for their contribution.

We from the Executive Committee request all the Life Members and Active Individual Members to at least revive 2 memberships by connecting with your friends who were members of YPS and have not renewed their membership for various reasons.

I hope to see active participation from all our members in all the activities and programs of YPS. Wishing you all the best!



Manju Vikas Sastry, V AFIP, ESFIP
President, YPS
Editor, Dṛṣṭi



← Back

Durgesh Nandini Bais





Two on job of incense sticks © Durgesh Nandini Bais

A Journey Through Two Eras

Ms Durgesh Nandini Bais's (LM 346) journey as a photographer spans two very different eras—one shaped by film, patience, and technical discipline, and another defined by digital technology and new creative possibilities.

She began when every frame mattered. Photographers captured photographs on film, carefully composed and exposed, and brought them to life in the subdued light of a darkroom. There were no instant previews and no opportunity to simply delete a mistake and try again. A poorly exposed frame could mean a lost moment, and sometimes an entire roll revealed its lessons only after processing.

From Student to Teacher

As a college lecturer at Government Women's Polytechnic, Durgesh had the opportunity to teach photography as part of the students' curriculum. The photographer in her thus became an educator, translating practical experience into lessons on the camera, aperture, shutter speed, depth of field, exposure, composition, film processing, and the use of light and shadow.

For her, however, the most valuable lesson extended beyond technical knowledge. She encouraged students to develop the ability to observe differently—to notice details, relationships, and possibilities that might otherwise remain unseen.

When Life Took Centre Stage

Life, however, rarely follows a straight path. As her professional career progressed, increasing administrative responsibilities at the college demanded her time and attention. Family commitments added to those responsibilities, and photography gradually moved into the background.

Although there was little opportunity to pursue it actively, she never lost her affection for the art. Whenever circumstances permitted, she found ways to keep the interest alive.

Sometimes a cherished pursuit has to wait. That does not mean it has been forgotten.

Finding Her Way Back

When she eventually returned seriously to photography, Durgesh discovered how dramatically the field had evolved. The transition from film to digital required her to learn new tools and techniques, but her earlier experience gave her a strong foundation.

She adapted to the digital world while retaining the habits developed during her film years: patience, careful observation, and thoughtful composition.

Her interests have never been confined to a single genre. She enjoys street photography, landscapes, travel, wildlife and still life. Each offers a different way of exploring light, form, atmosphere, and the character of a moment.

This diversity reflects her approach—one driven more by curiosity and discovery than by the need to fit within a particular category.

A New Chapter

After retirement, she began participating regularly in photography salons and going on photography tours. What began as a



Smart Cub © Durgesh Nandini Bais



After Chath Puja © Durgesh Nandini Bais



Solitary Yellow Bloom © Durgesh Nandini Bais



Wrinkles of Happiness © Durgesh Nandini Bais



Black N Red Steps © Durgesh Nandini Bais

renewed interest became an important part of her life. Durgesh describes photography almost as meditation—a source of peace, satisfaction, and creative fulfilment.

Her husband, a retired Indian Army officer, accompanies her on most of her photography tours. Her family has been equally supportive, serving as both her strongest critics and her most enthusiastic admirers. Their encouragement has allowed her to pursue this chapter with renewed energy and enjoyment.

Her Association with YPS

Durgesh's association with the Youth Photographic Society (YPS) started in July 2022 and began through participation in national and international salons. She was impressed by the organisation's efficient functioning, prompt responses, and willingness to assist participants.

She first became a member and later a Life Member in 2024. Her participation in the FIP Convention hosted by YPS in Mysore brought her closer to the organisation and deepened her appreciation of its contribution to the photographic community.

Durgesh says, "YPS is doing an outstanding job in the World of Photography in India by organising workshops, salons, competitions, exhibitions and creating a knowledge-sharing platform which is so exclusive and a boon for all having an interest in the field of photography. I have become an ardent admirer of their work."

The Journey Continues

Durgesh's story has come full circle—from student to teacher, from an early experience with film to the possibilities of digital photography, and from a long period of interruption to an active and fulfilling chapter after retirement.

What makes her journey especially meaningful is not simply the years she has spent with a camera, but the willingness to return to something she loved after life had taken her in other directions.

Today, she carries the experience of two photographic eras with her. The precision of the film years and the freedom of the digital age coexist naturally in her work.

Her journey is a quiet reminder that some interests are more than hobbies. They become part of who we are. They may recede when circumstances demand it, but when the time is right, they can return with renewed meaning.

And perhaps that is the most beautiful part of her story: she did not simply return to photography; she returned to a part of herself.



Kakade M S Treasurer, YPS
Member, Dṛṣṭi Editorial Team

← Back

Ladakh: Where Mountains meet the Stars

A personal travel and photography account



Through The Window © Dr Kalyanpur Anand

Introduction

A trip to Ladakh is an unforgettable journey through high-altitude deserts, dramatic mountains, deep blue skies, monasteries, and unique wildlife. For photographers, Ladakh offers opportunities in almost every genre, including street, wildlife, landscape, and astrophotography.

My wife and I travelled to Ladakh in August 2026 for eight days, despite the warnings about low oxygen levels, altitude sickness, and breathing difficulties. Thankfully, Ladakh did not disappoint us, and we returned with wonderful memories and a possible revisit. We flew from Kochi, where we live, to Delhi and then from Delhi to Leh.

We took an early-morning flight to Leh and made sure to reserve a window seat on the left side of the aircraft so that we could photograph the Himalayas. We could see the mountains through swirling clouds, illuminated by the golden sunlight piercing the white clouds. It was a unique experience. A wide-angle lens is useful for capturing such scenery, and I made sure that my window was clean. The air hostess was understandably surprised by my enthusiasm for photographing the landscape from the aircraft.

Leh is located at approximately 11,480 feet above sea level. To acclimatise to the high altitude, we spent the first day drinking plenty of fluids and ORS and taking gentle walks in the evening. Some people use acetazolamide (Diamox) to help prevent altitude sickness, but medication should be taken only after appropriate medical advice.

The following day, we hired a car with a driver-guide for the rest of our trip. Our driver and guide also helped us identify birds and wildlife. We visited Shanti Stupa, Leh Palace, Thiksey Monastery, and the Sangam, where the Indus and Zanskar rivers meet. Leh also has a wonderful market that comes alive in the evening.

From a birding perspective, I was able to photograph birds such as the blue-throat, common rosefinch, and lesser whitethroat. The Sangam was particularly beautiful, with the emerald-green waters of the Indus meeting the contrasting waters of the Zanskar. The area is also a starting point for white-water rafting.

Ladakh is a delight for landscape photographers, with its mountains, rolling hills, and textured sand formations. I carried two Nikon camera bodies, along with a 180–600 mm lens, a 24–120 mm lens, a 14–30 mm lens, and a Sigma 20 mm lens for astrophotography, although I was unfortunately unable to use the 14-30 mm lens effectively. For wide-angle photography, I found the 14-120 mm lens more useful

Nubra Valley, Hunder

We started early the next morning and, after about two hours, reached Khardung La, one of the world's highest motorable passes. After a short tea break, we descended into Nubra Valley, home to rugged mountains and sand dunes. This area is famous for safaris on double-humped Bactrian camels and remnants of the ancient Silk Route.

It is an ideal place to practise landscape photography and experiment with techniques such as slow shutter speeds and intentional camera movement (ICM).

We also visited Diskit Monastery, which has a towering statue of Maitreya Buddha.

Shakti and Merak

We started early in the morning in search of high-altitude birds such as the red-faced rosefinch, robin accentor, and chukar partridge. We also encountered mammals such as pikas and marmots.

The landscapes accompanied us throughout the journey: long, winding roads with bikers zipping across pothole-free roads, lush meadows where yaks grazed, marmots appearing among the rocks, and tall peaks capped with snow.

After spending a day in Shakti, we reached Merak, travelling via the beautiful Pangong Lake. Pangong is a stunning high-altitude lake that extends across India and China. Its waters are known for changing shades throughout the day, appearing blue, green, or golden depending on the sunlight and cloud cover.

The lake is also associated with the film '3 Idiots'. Visitors can see the well-known three-seat installation connected with the movie on one side of the lake.

Hanle

We then travelled to Hanle, the final destination of our trip. Hanle is famous for its star-filled nights and is a favourite destination for astrophotographers. Light pollution is relatively low, and efforts to control artificial lighting help create dark skies. Hanle is also home to an observatory.

During our stay, I was fortunate to see the iconic black-necked crane in its landscape, as well as its behaviour of being paired for life, like the Saurus crane found in the plains. This bird is held in high regard in Buddhist culture and associated with the region, as well as the horned lark, with its unique pair of horns on its head. I was able to get the graceful and petite Tibetan gazelle and the Tibetan ass against the background of the mighty Himalayas, surely storytelling images where the land meets the living.

After spending two days in Hanle, we drove back to Leh and then travelled



Nubra Valley © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Hanle © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Blue Throat © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Diskit monastery © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Kiang © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Pangong Lake © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



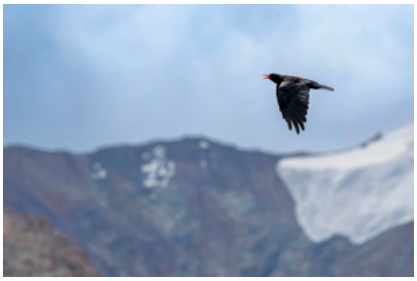
Prayer Time © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Sacred Bird © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Rose Finch © Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Top Of Himalatas © Dr Kalyanpur Anand

onwards to Kochi. In some ways, the journey did not end at the airport. Ladakh has left us more than photographs. There were fleeting moments that still lingered; the sudden appearance of the marmot among the rocks, the bonded-for-life black-necked crane, the quiet presence of a Tibetan gazelle against the rugged mountains, the ever-changing colors of Pangong Lake. And then there were landscapes, immense, silent and seemingly endless, where a winding road or a solitary animal could suddenly give scale and meaning to a frame.

As Photographers, we often travel in search of the perfect image. In Ladakh, I found myself gradually looking for something beyond the perfect frame-the pause before pressing the shutter, the light falling across an empty valley, the stillness of a bird in the high-altitude desert and the feeling of standing beneath a starry night untouched by artificial light.

We returned with beautiful memories and memory cards filled with photographs, including several lifers. I wonder whether I will go once again, looking for an excuse, possibly the elusive snow leopard, a sequel possibly.

· Dr Kalyanpur Anand



Dr Kalyanpur Anand, a paediatrician working in Kochi, started his photography journey about 6 years ago, focusing mainly on nature, stage, and macro. Since then, he has received many awards.

← Back

Flashbacks and Film Rolls: Evolution of Salon Photography

(Continued from previous issue)

The Anticipation of Result Cards and Physical Exhibitions

In the golden era of photographic salons, every stage of the journey was personal, tangible, and filled with anticipation. Months after submitting our entries, we would eagerly await the arrival of the postman, hoping he carried the much-awaited result card from a distant salon. Each card was meticulously prepared and posted by the organising club, recording the fate of every photograph with the simplest of notations—A (Accepted), R (Rejected), or AW (Award). Those few letters carried immense emotional weight, capable of transforming an ordinary day into one of unforgettable celebration.

The announcement of results, however, was only the beginning. Every salon organised a physical exhibition displaying all the accepted and award-winning prints, often complemented by an audio-visual presentation of the accepted colour transparencies. These exhibitions were invaluable learning experiences, allowing photographers to study the finest images from across the country, appreciate different styles and techniques, and gain inspiration from the work of their contemporaries.

A spirit of healthy competition flourished among photographers nationwide. Although we competed vigorously for acceptances and awards, we were united by a common passion for the art. Every salon challenged us to refine our vision, improve our craftsmanship, and create photographs worthy of recognition in both the colour transparency and print sections.

Sadly, this wonderful tradition has all but disappeared. Today, nearly ninety-eight percent of photography clubs no longer organise physical exhibitions of accepted salon entries. Only a small number of distinguished clubs continue to invest the time, effort, and resources required to present exhibitions worthy of the remarkable photographs they celebrate. With the decline of these exhibitions, an invaluable avenue for learning, appreciation, and artistic fellowship has quietly faded into history.

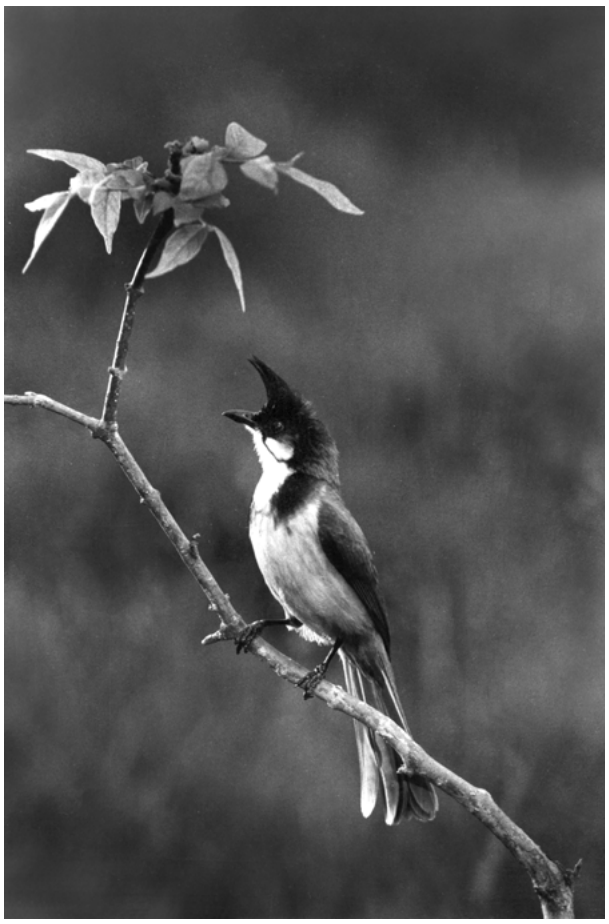


The Charm of Catalogues and Souvenirs

Once the exhibition concluded, every participant eagerly awaited another cherished possession—the printed salon catalogue, often affectionately referred to as the salon souvenir. Carefully packaged and sent by post, these catalogues recorded the names of all participating photographers, listed their acceptances and awards, and reproduced a selection of the exhibition's finest photographs.

Judged by modern printing standards, these publications were modest. The reproduction quality was often limited, and many images lacked the richness and detail of the original prints or transparencies. Yet that scarcely mattered. Producing a printed catalogue was an expensive undertaking, and even a simple publication was regarded as a mark of prestige and commitment by the organising club. To photographers, these catalogues became treasured keepsakes—lasting reminders of their achievements and the salons in which they had participated. Over time, many evolved into prized collectors' items, preserving an important chapter in the history of Indian salon photography.

Today, beautifully printed salon catalogues have become increasingly rare. The Youth Photographic Society (YPS) remains a commendable exception. Since 2018, the Society has produced







These images won many top awards

magnificent, coffee-table-quality catalogues—typically in large formats such as 12 × 18 inches or 9 × 12 inches—printed in full colour and featuring every accepted and award-winning photograph. Participants have the opportunity to purchase these exceptional publications, which stand as fitting tributes to the photographers and their work.

Most contemporary salon organisers, however, have understandably embraced digital alternatives. To reduce costs, save time, and simplify distribution, they now provide catalogues exclusively as PDF publications. While these digital editions are convenient and instantly accessible, they cannot fully replicate the simple joy of opening a freshly printed catalogue, turning its pages, and reliving the excitement of seeing one's photographs preserved in print for generations to come.

The Perils of Postal Returns: Scratched Slides and Dog-Eared Prints

The return journey of our colour transparencies and exhibition prints from photographic salons was often a long and anxious saga in itself. Because producing exhibition-quality prints was an expensive affair, most of us could afford to make only two or three copies of any successful photograph. These precious prints travelled continuously from one salon to another. As soon as a print returned from one exhibition, it was carefully repackaged and dispatched to the next, beginning yet another journey across the country—or sometimes across the world.

Colour transparencies, unfortunately, were particularly vulnerable. Many organisers handled them with great care, but others were far less meticulous. It was not uncommon for original slides to return bearing scratches, fingerprints, bends, or even folds. Since a colour transparency is itself the original positive image, with the emulsion forming the image on one delicate surface, any damage was irreversible. Unlike a print, it could not simply be reproduced. A scratched or creased transparency was effectively ruined, leaving no option but to discard it.

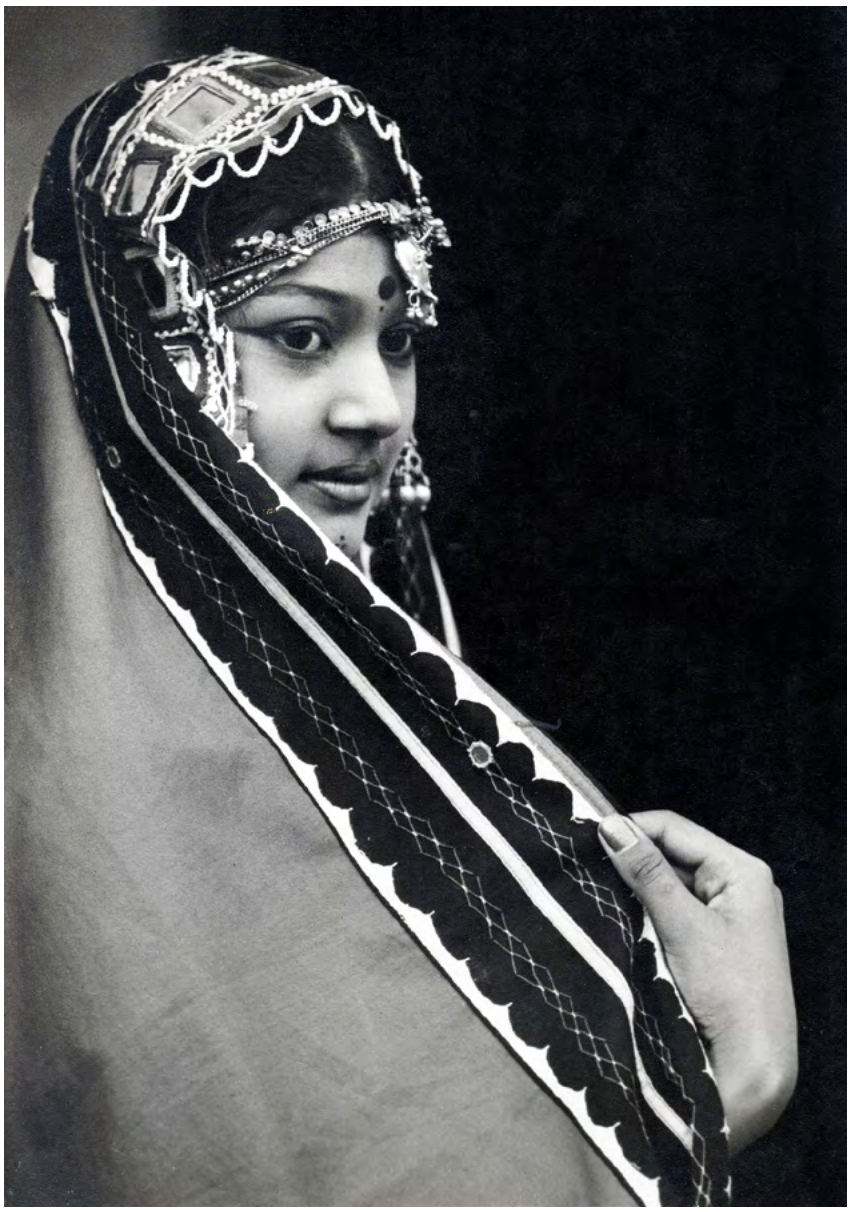
To minimise this risk, we often photographed the same subject on multiple frames, ensuring that different originals could be sent to different salons. Even then, many veteran salon photographers gradually watched their finest original transparencies deteriorate through repeated handling and postal journeys. I vividly recall witnessing the judging of a North Indian salon in a hotel room in Bangalore, where colour slides were casually tossed into a plastic bucket after viewing and later hurriedly stuffed back into envelopes. For those of us who had painstakingly created those images, it was a heartbreaking sight.

Exhibition prints fared little better. In an effort to reduce postal expenses, many organising clubs repacked returned prints in lightweight envelopes rather than using the sturdy protective packaging in which they had been received. Consequently, prints frequently arrived with bruised edges, creased surfaces, or bent corners—the familiar 'dog ears' that every salon photographer dreaded. It is perhaps for this very reason that most contemporary print salons no longer return exhibition prints; instead, the entries are disposed of once the exhibition has concluded.

Yet, despite its many inconveniences, the postal era possessed a charm that is difficult to describe to today's generation. The bundles of returned exhibition prints were often so large and heavy that my local postman would telephone me and request that I collect them directly from the post office, as they were simply too cumbersome to carry on his daily delivery round. I must have made that journey well over fifty times, each visit filled with the excitement of wondering what treasures awaited me inside those well-travelled parcels.

One particular incident remains etched in my memory. A parcel reached the post office with almost the entire address label torn away. Only my name and the words "Bangalore – 560076" remained legible. Remarkably, despite such scant information, the postal authorities still managed to trace me and place the parcel safely in my hands. It was a small miracle—and a testament to the dedication and remarkable efficiency of the postal system of those days.

Looking back, every scratch on a slide, every dog-eared print, every delayed parcel, and every anxious wait at the post office became part of the extraordinary journey of salon photography. Those hardships, frustrating as they often were, made every acceptance, every award, and every safely returned photograph infinitely more meaningful.



Picture printed in my dark room

The Modern Salon: A Race for Distinctions over Creativity

I often consider myself fortunate that my generation of photographers had the privilege of experiencing what I regard as the true Golden Age of photographic salons. Those were years when salons existed primarily to celebrate artistic excellence, encourage learning, and foster friendships among photographers. Today, the landscape has changed dramatically.

In recent years, the emphasis has shifted increasingly towards distinctions, star ratings, and the accumulation of honours. For many organisations, conducting photographic salons has also become a significant source of revenue. In an effort to minimise costs, numerous organisers have discontinued many of the traditions that once defined the salon experience. Beautiful trophies and thoughtfully crafted mementoes have, in many cases, been replaced by inexpensive medals. Printed catalogues have disappeared almost entirely. Exhibition prints are seldom returned, largely because of the expense involved in packaging and postage. After the exhibition concludes, many carefully prepared prints—into which photographers have invested considerable time, effort, and money—are simply discarded.

The motivations of many participants have also evolved. In earlier decades, photographers entered salons to learn, to measure themselves against the best, to exchange ideas, and to grow as artists. Today, many appear to participate primarily to accumulate acceptances, awards, and distinctions as rapidly as possible. International recognition systems, while invaluable in acknowledging achievement, have also created an environment in which photographers are encouraged to enter an ever-increasing number of salons to qualify for the next level of distinction. In many respects, it has become a self-sustaining cycle that benefits both organisers and recognition bodies while encouraging ever-greater participation.

Amid this relentless pursuit of titles and distinctions, I sometimes feel that originality, creativity, and the search for genuinely fresh ideas no longer receive the attention they once deserved. Increasingly, success appears to depend as much on navigating the distinction system as on producing truly exceptional photographs.

The evolution of judging has also contributed to this transformation. During


Exhibition for Excellent Prints from 2001 China the 9th International Photographic Art Exhibition

CERTIFICATE

Dear Ms./Mr. H. SATISH

Your print(s) titled « RAJPUT OLDIE »

has(have)been exhibited in the exhibition held in Chengde City, China in September. 2001.

Congratulations!

Chinese Photographers Association

Chengde Municipal Government

September, 2001 Chengde City




THE PRINTERS (MYSORE) LIMITED

Mr.H.Satish,
Bangalore

Ref. No. AC/124/3945

Dear Sir,

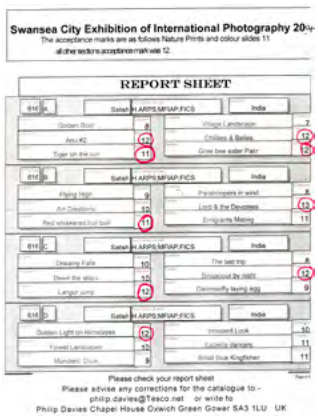
We enclose the following cheque (s) / Demand Draft(s) towards the Particulars given below:

Cheque / DD	Amount	Particulars
chq.009631/30.10.81 for Rs.25/-towards DH contin/sept.'81		

Please acknowledge and let us have your official stamped receipt per return of post.

Yours faithfully,
for THE PRINTERS (MYSORE) LIMITED

Chief Accountant.


Swansea City Exhibition of International Photography 20

REPORT SHEET

Please check your report sheet
Please advise any corrections for the catalogue to:-
philip.davies@Tesco.net or write to
Philip Davies Chapel House Oxwich Green Gower SA3 1LU UK


YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, (Regd.) BANGALORE

PLAQUE

Awarded to Sri H. Satish, AIIPC, Bangalore

for his Nature Slide 'RED WENTED BUL BUL WITH YOUNG ONES'

at the Society 12th All India Salon of Photography 1988

M.S. HEBBAR
Salon Chairman

G. S. KRISHNAMURTHY
President-YPS

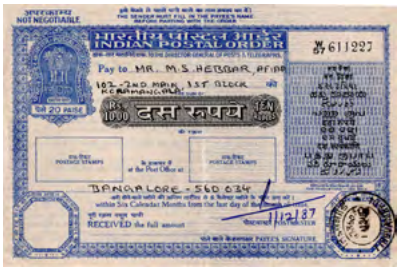

YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, BANGALORE

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Awarded to Sri H. Satish, Bangalore

for his slide titled "Afro wives"

at the Society's 9th All India Salon of Photography 1986.


INDIAN POSTAL ORDER

Pay to MR. M.S.HEBBAR

BANGALORE - 560 034

RECEIVED the full amount


1ST BIENNIAL ALL INDIA NATIONAL SALON - 2006

Organised By : INFINITY

17L, Nalin Sarkar Street, Kolkata - 700 004, West Bengal

NOTIFICATION

Entrant No.	NAME	Monochrome Print	Colour Print	Nature Print	Photo Travel Print	Photo Journalism Print
104	MR. H. SATISH		R R R R A A R A			
105	MR. M.S. Arun Kumar		R R R R			
106	Mr. Anjan Roy Mahamud	R R A A R R R R	A A R			

A = Accepted R = Rejected M = Medal C = Certificate of Merit

Date of Exhibition - 22nd to 25th March, 2006

Venue - GAGANENDRA SHILPA PRADARSHASALA

GOPAL GANGULY
Salon Chairman

A few old certificates, newspaper clippings and salon result cards from my personal archive.

the formative years of salon photography, India had only a small number of highly respected judges whose experience, scholarship, and artistic vision commanded universal admiration. Their opinions carried enormous weight because they had earned that respect through decades of outstanding photographic achievement and dedicated service to the art.

Today, the number of salon judges has grown exponentially. While this expansion has undoubtedly made it easier to organise the large number of salons now being conducted, it has also resulted in considerable variation in experience, subject knowledge, and judging philosophy. Not every judge possesses equal expertise across every photographic discipline, and this inconsistency can occasionally influence the outcome of competitions. Consequently, deserving photographs may sometimes fail to receive the recognition they merit—not because of any deficiency in the work itself, but because of the inevitable subjectivity and varying levels of experience among judging panels.

Photography, after all, is an art before it is a competition. Distinctions, medals, and titles are gratifying milestones, but they should never become the ultimate destination. The enduring legacy of a photographer lies not in the letters that follow a name, but in the originality of the vision, the integrity of the work, and the ability to create images that continue to inspire long after the certificates have faded.

Conclusion: The Changing Landscape of Photography Salons

Participating in—and later helping to organise—national and international photography salons has been one of the most enriching experiences of my life. Over the decades, these salons taught us lessons that extended far beyond photography: they instilled discipline, patience, humility, teamwork, and an

unwavering pursuit of excellence. Yet, the salon era spanning the early 1980s to about 2005, defined by colour transparencies, darkroom craftsmanship, and traditional printmaking, was fundamentally different from the digital salon culture we witness today.

Those were years when the salon was driven not by distinctions or statistics, but by a genuine passion for photographic art. Every participant aspired to reveal the very best creative vision to the world. Originality was treasured, technical excellence was expected, and every accepted photograph represented months of dedication and perseverance. The quality of the image—not the quantity of acceptances—was the measure of a photographer's success.

Exhibition week transformed the salon into a major cultural event. Local newspapers and other media covered our programmes extensively, publishing photographs of the award winners and reporting on the exhibition's success. Seeing our work featured in the press brought immense pride—not only to the photographers but to every volunteer who had worked tirelessly behind the scenes. It was a powerful source of encouragement and inspiration for the entire club.

Securing sponsorships was another formidable challenge. Countless hours were spent approaching local businesses, offices, and factories, requesting advertisements for the salon souvenir or financial support for the exhibition. It was rarely an easy task, yet we never felt embarrassed to ask. We did so with confidence because we believed wholeheartedly in what we were building. We were not merely raising funds—we were nurturing a culture of photography, strengthening our society, and contributing to an art form that had enriched our lives.

Today, technology has transformed almost every aspect of salon photography. Digital cameras, online submissions, electronic judging, and instant communication have made participation faster, simpler, and more accessible than ever before. These advances deserve appreciation, for they have opened the doors of salon photography to countless new enthusiasts around the world.

Yet, whenever I look back on those unforgettable years, I realise that the true legacy of the golden era was never confined to film, slides, or darkrooms. It was found in the friendships we forged, the mentors who guided us, the volunteers who worked selflessly, the excitement of awaiting a result card, the joy of seeing our photographs displayed on exhibition walls, and the immense satisfaction of creating an image that had endured months of effort before earning its place among the finest.

Photography continues to evolve, and rightly so. But for those of us who were privileged to experience that remarkable period, the Golden Age of salon photography was far more than a chapter in photographic history—it was a way of life. It shaped our artistic vision, our values, and our character. No matter how advanced technology becomes, those memories will remain timeless, serving as a constant reminder that the greatest photographs are created not merely with cameras, but with patience, perseverance, passion, and the unwavering pursuit of excellence.

The Shift from Art to Accolades

In the formative years of photographic salons, participation was relatively modest, with most competitions attracting only a few hundred entrants. Every image was evaluated on its own artistic and technical merit, and an exceptionally gifted photographer could quite legitimately receive multiple awards within the same salon if several of his or her photographs stood out as truly outstanding. The emphasis was firmly on the photograph—not on the photographer.

Today, the landscape has changed dramatically. Many international salons receive well over two thousand entries, making the task of judging considerably more demanding. In an effort to recognise a larger number of participants, many salons appear to follow the informal practice of limiting photographers to a single major award, even when several images from the same entrant may be deserving of recognition. While such an approach undoubtedly broadens the distribution of awards and encourages wider participation, it can also leave exceptionally talented photographers feeling that their finest work has not been judged solely on its individual merit.

This naturally raises an important question: What is the primary purpose of the modern photographic salon? Is it to identify and celebrate the finest photographs, or is it to ensure that a greater number of participants leave with a sense of achievement? There is no simple answer, but the philosophy of many salons has unquestionably evolved over the years.

Part of this transformation can be attributed to the increasingly comprehensive regulations established by international recognition bodies and salon organisers. While these rules have undoubtedly brought greater consistency and fairness to competitions, they have also, in some instances, narrowed the scope for personal interpretation and artistic freedom. Contemporary photographers often find themselves creating images that conform to an established framework, knowing that work falling outside these accepted conventions may struggle to gain recognition.

As a consequence, many photographers now approach salons primarily as a pathway towards stars, distinctions, and honorary titles rather than as opportunities for artistic exploration and learning. Within the salon circuit, the letters that follow a photographer's name frequently carry considerable prestige. Yet distinctions alone can never substitute for a deep understanding of light, composition, storytelling, natural history, visual design, or the countless other elements that together define truly exceptional photography.

Even so, photographic salons continue to serve an important purpose. They provide an invaluable benchmark against which photographers can measure the quality of their work, compare their progress with that of their peers, and challenge themselves to reach ever higher standards. Winning an award remains a significant achievement. More importantly, consistently producing photographs capable of earning recognition across multiple national and international salons demand unwavering dedication, technical mastery, originality, and artistic vision. That, perhaps, is the greatest distinction of all.

• **Satish H,** MFIAP, MICS, ARPS, PPSA,cMoL, Hon YPS



Satish H has been a member of YPS for 45 years and has served as Secretary, Vice President and President of the club. He has been conferred the title 'State Artist' of Karnataka by Karnataka Lalitkala Academy for his achievements in the field of Art of Photography.

← Back

The Walking Wardrobe



The Walking Wardrobe © Digwas Bellemane



"*Committed to authentic Images created using minimal editing techniques, ensuring that the raw essence of the captured moment remains intact, relying on natural light throughout framing and in-camera processes to achieve my artistic vision using techniques of exposures, intentional camera movement, sometimes combining both to produce complex visuals, allowing me to explore the interplay of light, motion, and textures, crafting images that are as much about feeling as they are about form. Further, blur, distortions, noise, vignettes and textures are not seen as flaws but as essential tools to create imagery that is raw, poetic and evocative." These are his "Quotes" to explain his new philosophy and style for the portfolio album by Mr Digwas Bellemane, EFIAP/p, EsFIAP, EFIP, EsFIP, Hon MoL. He pre-visualised best opportunities to meet his challenging ideas, as explained in the opening paragraph, in his own words. I am sure these lines will secure a remarkable place among world-famous photography quotes of Alfred Stieglitz, who described the creation of his famous street photograph as "My Picture- Fifth Avenue Winter, is the result of a three hours' stand during a fierce snow-storm on February 22nd, 1893, awaiting the proper moment. My patience was duly rewarded. Of course, the result contained an element of chance, as I might have stood there for hours without succeeding in getting the desired pictures.*"

In support of this unique concept, Digwas has presented to this Framing the Frame column, his picture "The Walking Wardrobe", which he exposed at the Ayodhya - Ram Path during the last Prayagraj Maha Kumbh, around 6 pm amidst a huge influx of pilgrims. He further explains that he has been into the art of photography for the last two decades, and while he undertook travels to such eventful locations, he would make detailed studies of the historical and cultural specialities, season and time and also equip himself with essential camera gear. In the subject case, he pre-visualised the colourful dupattas carried by the street vendor, which caught his attention. He imagined transforming that regular street scene into an abstract play of colours and movement using intentional camera movement (ICM) to go beyond documenting the scene, but to capture the rhythm of the street, allowing the colours and patterns to take centre stage while the surroundings blended into movement. He visualised the effect before pressing the shutter, and the candid result made it "The Walking Wardrobe".

He positioned himself in the most appropriate spot to get his camera angle and perspective of the scene. He used a Canon EOS 80D, lens EF-S 15-85mm, f/3.5-5.6 IS USM, 16 mm focal length, 1/10 Sec slow shutter speed, ISO 100 and auto white balance. The shot was taken handheld, with intentional camera movement from top to bottom in a diagonal direction to get a proper dynamic result. He used back-button pre-focus to lock the focus before shooting. He then tilted the camera towards the

upper part of the scene and moved it diagonally from top to bottom slowly with 1/10 of a second to achieve the desired effect with blur, textured and striking colours.

Though the technical highlights of the picture are covered in his words by the author as above, I wish to appreciate the qualities of the picture as:

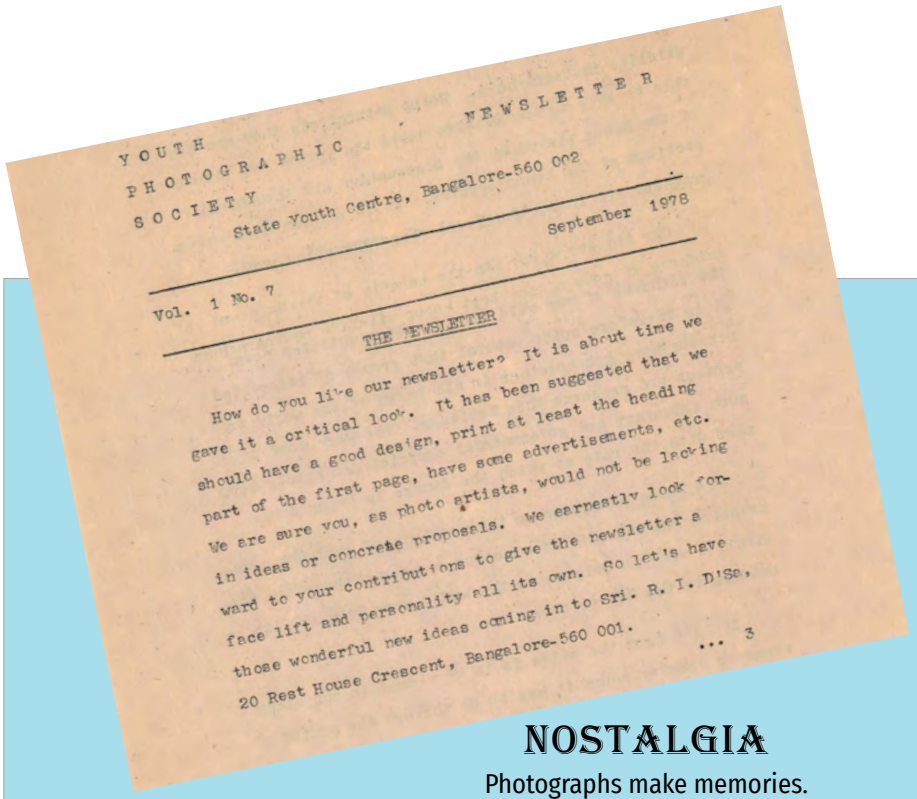
- Most of the visible elements in a photograph are normally captured in good focus of the main subject and with less focus of supporting items by aperture control, known as depth of field. In the subject picture, there is a deliberate shake in the street vendor's colourful clothes area and bent lines with blur on other items in the frame. A wider aperture automatically reduces the focus/sharpness of people walking and background buildings, etc. As the handheld camera was intentionally moved at an angle with predetermined curvature, reasonably lengthy shake and blur are registered in the background items. As the clothes' area was mainly pre-focused, though the camera lens had moved purposely, the colourful texture as well as pattern were registered by the camera's sensor boldly as the shutter was open for 1/10th of a second!
- Aesthetically, this can be classified as a 'Creative Candid' category. Such opportunities will be largely available on busy streets, bazaars, festival times, cultural gatherings and open-area sports, etc. Normally, photographers have the liberty to shoot pictures freely without seeking permission from people around them. Still, one should be careful when shooting ladies and kids closely without obtaining their prior consent.
- Though 'Entry point' to this picture has deviated from traditional 'Rule of Thirds', by presenting a main colourful striking subject in the middle of the frame, other criteria like impact, infinity, balance, integration and the Unity among all elements support the compelling picture story. Also, the vitality factor, with a creative candid approach, enhances the liveness value.

Thus, the author of 'The Walking Wardrobe' picture, Digwas Bellemane, deserves all appreciation for presenting an interesting and creative picture for this column.

· Rajaram K S, AFIAP, Hon FIP, Hon YPS



Rajaram, a life member of YPS has served in different capacities in its executive committee including that of president during 1989 - 92 He is an author, teacher, and mentor in the field of photography.



YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

State Youth Centre, Bangalore-560 002

Vol. 1 No. 7 September 1978

THE NEWSLETTER

How do you like our newsletter? It is about time we gave it a critical look. It has been suggested that we should have a good design, print at least the heading part of the first page, have some advertisements, etc. We are sure you, as photo artists, would not be lacking in ideas or concrete proposals. We earnestly look forward to your contributions to give the newsletter a face lift and personality all its own. So let's have those wonderful new ideas coming in to Sri. R. I. D'Sa, 20 Rest House Crescent, Bangalore-560 001.

... 3

NOSTALGIA

Photographs make memories.

Newsletters and Journals record happenings creating memories.

Youth Photographic Society, going strong at 54 years

has gathered many memories!

Nostalgia brings you these interesting titbits from the YPS Newsletters

of yore or from fond memories stored with its many Members.

← Back

Beyond What the Eye Can See: Photographing the Invisible in Faith



Pushpabhishek - Shower of Flowers © Thejas K R

A woman closes her eyes as rose petals rain upon her. A child gazes in wonder at a world she is only beginning to understand. Hundreds of voices rise together in an ancient chant, dissolving the distance between a temple in Houston, Texas, and the sacred land of Vrindavan, thousands of miles away. At ISKCON Houston, faith unfolds in extraordinary displays of color, sound and emotion, but the most profound moments of devotion may be the very ones a camera cannot capture. Photography begins with an act of looking. So does darshan. The resemblance, however, is deceptive.

To photograph is usually to stand apart. The photographer observes, frames and selects. A fraction of a second is separated from everything occurring before and after it, transformed into an object that can be preserved, reproduced and viewed somewhere else.

Darshan asks for something different. Within Hindu devotional practice, seeing the deity is not simply visual observation. The devotee approaches to see and, importantly, to be seen. Looking becomes reciprocal. The encounter is not merely optical but devotional. This creates an unusual problem for a photographer working inside a temple. How do you photograph something whose meaning exceeds what can be seen? That question has followed me through the celebrations I have photographed at ISKCON Houston. The camera readily records the things religion makes visible: flowers, lamps, garments, crowds, raised hands, ritual vessels, architecture. It records the extraordinary abundance with which devotion expresses itself. But belief itself remains stubbornly outside the frame.



Govardhan Puja © Thejas K R

A shower of flowers

The photograph from pushpa abhishek initially seems to offer everything photography wants. Two women sing into a microphone as rose petals fall around them. Red, yellow and white flowers hover momentarily in the air. Some are sharp; others have become streaks of color. Petals cover their hair, shoulders and the floor around them. Visually, it borders on excess and yet the photograph is most interesting not because of the flowers but because the women appear almost unaware of them.

Their eyes are closed. Their mouths are open in song. The visual spectacle surrounding them is precisely what they are not looking at. That inversion matters. As photographers, we are naturally drawn towards the petals because they make the moment photographically exceptional. But perhaps the actual event is occurring somewhere else, inside the singing, inside repetition, inside a state of attention inaccessible to the camera. The photograph records the evidence of immersion without being able to photograph immersion itself. Perhaps this is one of photography's fundamental limitations when confronting religious experience: it can photograph the body of devotion, but not necessarily its interior life.



Diwali © Thejas K R

The substance of ritual

A second image brings the camera much closer. During Govardhan Puja, hands enter the frame from several directions as substances are poured over a sacred form. Two large conch shells tilt inward. Brass vessels appear behind them. The composition is crowded with arms, fingers, vessels, liquid and ritual action. There is almost no conventional portraiture here. Instead, belief is encountered through gesture.

The hands matter precisely because they are doing something. They pour, support, offer and receive. The photograph becomes less about individual identity than collective participation. This is important photographically. Religious festivals are easily reduced to visual exoticism, the colorful clothes, ornate temples and unfamiliar ceremonies that announce themselves immediately to an outsider's camera. The more difficult task is to photograph ritual without turning ritual into spectacle. Here, proximity helps. At this distance, ceremony becomes tactile.

One can almost imagine the weight of the conch shells, the temperature of the liquid, the concentration required to pour it carefully. Photography cannot explain why the ritual matters, but it


Devotees Observing Festivities © Thejas K R



Devotees Particpating in Festivities © Thejas K R

can move us closer to the physical vocabulary through which belief is expressed.

Light as both subject and metaphor

In the photograph from Diwali, the temple has become an architecture of light. Rows of lamps extend towards Sri Sri Radha Nilamadhava. A saffron-clad devotee stands on the left of the frame, almost swallowed by the scale and luminosity surrounding him. It would be easy to photograph such a scene simply because it is beautiful. That is also the danger.

Religious spaces invite aestheticization. candles become bokeh. Worshippers become silhouettes. Incense becomes an atmosphere. Devotion becomes visual material. The photographer must therefore confront an uncomfortable question: At what point does photographing the sacred turn it into scenery? The solitary figure prevents this image from becoming merely decorative. He provides scale, certainly, but also purpose. The lamps do not exist for the photograph. Neither does the elaborate altar. The visual magnificence has a function independent of its photographic beauty. Photography arrives afterwards.

The distinction may appear small, but it changes the photographer's relationship with the subject. The temple is not a set waiting to be photographed. The ritual would continue whether a camera were present or not. That recognition demands a certain humility.

The direction of looking

The widest photograph in the series shows a congregation seated before the altar. At first it appears less dramatic than the close photographs. There are no petals frozen in mid-air, no ecstatic expressions, no elaborate action. But conceptually, it may be one of the most important images. Almost everyone is facing away from the camera. Their attention converges elsewhere.



Seeking Blessings © Thejas K R

Photography normally privileges what faces us. Portraiture, journalism and even family photography repeatedly ask people to acknowledge the lens. Here, the opposite happens. The people are interesting precisely because they are not interested in the photographer. Their collective gaze directs us towards something beyond them. The photograph therefore contains a paradox. The subject of the image may not actually be the hundreds of people visible within it. The true subject may be the invisible line running from each person towards the altar. What we see is attention. What we cannot see is what that attention means.

Learning how to look

A very different photograph shows a young child in an elaborate floral dress being held by her mother. The child points upward. Her expression contains the particular astonishment with which children encounter ritual before they possess the vocabulary to explain it. The mother's face introduces another form of looking. She is not looking towards the altar. She is looking at the child.

Suddenly the photograph contains several layers of attention: the child towards something outside the frame, the mother towards the child, and the photographer towards both.

Religious tradition is often discussed through scriptures, theology and institutions. But much of its continuity happens this way—through observation. Children watch adults bow. They hear songs repeated. They see lamps being offered. They learn when to fold their hands long before understanding why. A photograph cannot tell us whether a child will inherit belief. But it can record the earliest stages through which belonging is made visible.

Blessing and proximity

In another image, a priest places a silver ceremonial object upon the head of a young woman. The gesture occupies only a few seconds. Photographically, however, it contains an entire structure of relationships: priest and devotee, object and body, altar and congregation, individual experience and communal tradition.

The young woman smiles slightly. Again, the camera encounters its boundary.



Kirtan © Thejas K R

It can describe the geometry perfectly. The extended arm, bowed head, shining silver against dark hair, brilliant altar behind them. But whether the woman experiences the moment as blessing, obligation, joy, memory or something more complicated remains inaccessible. Photography gives us astonishing access to appearances. It is considerably less reliable at explaining them. That gap between what something looks like and what something means may be especially important when photographing faith.

When looking becomes participation

The photograph of the kirtan pushes this question further. Here there is very little separation between participants. A singer holds a microphone. Another man plays a drum. Hands rise into the air. Children, adults and musicians collapse into a dense field of faces and bodies. Unlike the congregation sitting quietly before the altar, this is devotion made kinetic. The body becomes an instrument. Hands clap. Feet move. Voices repeat the mantra. Photography freezes all of this. And freezing it produces another contradiction.

Kirtan depends upon duration. Its effect comes through repetition: the mantra circling again and again, the rhythm intensifying, a room of individuals gradually finding a collective pulse. A still photograph extracts perhaps 1/250th of a second from an experience that derives much of its meaning from continuing through time. The resulting picture may look energetic. But energy is not the same as experience. The camera has captured the gesture while losing the repetition that produced it.

A deity crossing water

The final photograph takes us outdoors. At the Boat Festival, flower petals cover the surface of a pool while an elaborate white swan-shaped boat carries the deities across the water. Hands reach in from the edge of the frame. Behind them stand the temple, trees and spectators. Of all eight photographs, this one most clearly places devotional tradition within contemporary Houston. The sacred does not occupy some distant landscape. There are railings, ladders, buildings, concrete and an ordinary Texas sky. This matters because diaspora religion often exists photographically between two temptations. One is nostalgia: presenting immigrant religious life as the preservation of something transported intact from elsewhere. The other is exoticism: treating it as something culturally foreign occurring unexpectedly in America.

Neither quite describes what is happening. Tradition here has not simply been transported. It is being lived. Children grow up around these festivals. Volunteers construct decorations. Families return annually. Ritual occupies Houston not as a temporary performance of somewhere else, but as part of the cultural geography of the city itself.



Boat Festival © Thejas K R

The photograph and the experience

After photographing celebrations such as these for years, I have begun to wonder whether the most important photographic decision occasionally involves not making a photograph at all. The instinct of the photographer is anticipatory. Where will the flowers fall? When will the hands rise? Which lens should I use? Where should I stand before the crowd arrives? That attention is necessary to produce photographs. But it can also create distance.

There are moments during kirtan when everyone around me raises their hands and I raise mine too, except mine are holding a camera. I see the celebration exceptionally well. Sometimes I wonder whether I experience it equally well. This is not a problem unique to religious photography. Every photographer negotiating family, war, protest, grief or celebration eventually encounters some version of the same question: does photographing an experience deepen our attention to it, or protect us from fully entering it?

Inside a temple, the question becomes unusually explicit. The camera encourages looking. Devotion asks for participation. For most of the evening, I try to inhabit both positions. Perhaps these photographs are ultimately records of that negotiation. They show falling flowers, pouring vessels, flickering lamps, crowded rooms, children's faces and bodies moving to music. They reveal the extraordinary visual language through which a community expresses its faith.

But they also remind me of what remains unavailable. The photograph cannot tell us what the woman beneath the falling petals felt as she sang. It cannot tell us what a devotee prayed before receiving a blessing. It cannot photograph the memory forming in a child's mind. It cannot capture what hundreds of people believe they encounter when the altar doors open. Photography can bring us extraordinarily close. But proximity is not the same as knowledge. And perhaps that is not a failure of the medium.

Perhaps the photographs become more interesting once we stop asking them to explain everything. Sometimes the most important thing in a photograph is precisely the thing we cannot see.

• Thejas K R, AFIAP, EFIP



Thejas K R, a Life Member of YPS, has been a passionate art photographer for over two decades. He was on the boards of Houston Photographic Society, and Houston Camera Club.

← Back

ಹಂಪಿ
ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಮಲಗಿರುವ ಅವನತ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ



ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷ ದೇವಾಲಯ © ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್

ಕೆಲವು ಪ್ರವಾಸಗಳು ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಒಂದು ಸ್ಥಳಕ್ಕೆ ಕರೆದೊಯ್ಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಅದರೆ ಆ ಸ್ಥಳ ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಬೇರೆಯದೇ ಒಂದು ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಕರೆದೊಯ್ಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಂಪಿಯ ಪ್ರವಾಸವೂ ಅಂಥದ್ದೇ. ತುಂಗಭದ್ರೆಯ ತಟದಲ್ಲಿ, ಬೃಹತ್ ಬಂಡೆಗಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ, ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ಪುಟಗಳಿಂದ ಎದ್ದು ಬಂದಂತೆ ಕಾಣುವ ಹಂಪಿಯ ಅವಶೇಷಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ ಸಾಗಿದಾಗ, ಮನಸ್ಸು ವರ್ತಮಾನದಿಂದ ನಿಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಹಿಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಸರಿಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಕಣ್ಣೆದುರು ಕೇವಲ ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು ಕಾಣಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ; ಅವುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಒಂದು ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಜೃಂಭಿಸಿದ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ, ಅದರ ಅರಸರು, ಸೈನಿಕರು, ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಿಗಳು, ಕಲಾವಿದರು, ಭಕ್ತರು ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಜನರ ಬದುಕು ಚಿತ್ರಪಟದಂತೆ ತೆರೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ವಿಜಯನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಹಂಪಿ, ವಿಜಯನಗರ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯದ ರಾಜಧಾನಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದ ಐತಿಹಾಸಿಕ ನಗರ. ಹದಿನಾಲ್ಕರಿಂದ ಹದಿನಾರನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನಗಳ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದ ರಾಜಕೀಯ, ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ, ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಕೇಂದ್ರವಾಗಿದ್ದ ಈ ನಗರ, ತನ್ನ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪಾರ ಸಂಪತ್ತು ಮತ್ತು ವೈಭವಕ್ಕೆ ಹೆಸರಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಕ್ರಿ.ಶ. 1336ರಲ್ಲಿ ಹರಿಹರ ಮತ್ತು ಬುಕ್ಕರು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿದ ವಿಜಯನಗರ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯವು ಕೃಷ್ಣದೇವರಾಯನ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಉತ್ತುಂಗಕ್ಕೇರಿತ್ತು. ಸಂಗಮ, ಸಾಲುವ, ತುಳುವ ಮತ್ತು ಅರವೀಡು ವಂಶಗಳ ಅರಸರು ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ಸಿಂಹಾಸನವನ್ನು ಅಲಂಕರಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಆದರೆ 1565ರ ತಾಳಿಕೋಟೆ ಯುದ್ಧದ ಬಳಿಕ ರಾಜಧಾನಿ ಭಾರೀ ವಿನಾಶಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಗಾಯಿತು. ಒಮ್ಮೆ ಜನ-ಜೀವನದಿಂದ ತುಂಬಿ ತುಳುಕುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ನಗರ, ಕ್ರಮೇಣ ಅವಶೇಷಗಳ ನಾಡಾಯಿತು.

ಇಂದು ಹಂಪಿ **ಯುನೆಸ್ಕೋದ ವಿಶ್ವ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ತಾಣ**. ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಕಲ್ಲು, ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಕಂಬ, ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಕೆತ್ತನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಬೀದಿಯೂ ಒಂದೊಂದು ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಂಪಿಯ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಅದರ ಸ್ಮಾರಕಗಳನ್ನು ಮೂರು ವಿಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದು. **ಮೊದಲನೆಯದು ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು, ಎರಡನೆಯದು ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕವಲ್ಲದ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಮೂರನೆಯದು ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳು.** ಈ ಮೂರೂ ವಿಭಾಗಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ಜನಜೀವನ, ಕಲಾಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆ, ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ನಂಬಿಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ವಾಸ್ತುಶಿಲ್ಪದ ಶ್ರೀಮಂತಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಅರಿಯಬಹುದು.

1. ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು: ಭಕ್ತಿಯೂ ಕಲೆಯೂ ಸಂಗಮಿಸಿದ ನೆಲ

ಹಂಪಿಯತ್ತ ಸಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆ ದೂರದಿಂದಲೇ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುವುದು **ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷ ದೇವಾಲಯ**ದ ಗಗನಚುಂಬಿ ಗೋಪುರ. ತುಂಗಭದ್ರೆಯ ದಡದ ಸಮೀಪ, ಹೇಮಕೂಟ ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ಪಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಈ ದೇವಾಲಯವು ಶಿವನಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಪಿತವಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿಜಯನಗರ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ ಉದಯಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೂ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಪೂಜಾ ಪರಂಪರೆ ನಡೆದುಬಂದಿದ್ದು, ನಂತರದ ಅರಸರು ದೇವಾಲಯವನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದರು. ಹಂಪಿಯ ಇತರ ಅನೇಕ ಸ್ಮಾರಕಗಳು ಅವಶೇಷಗಳಾಗಿ ಉಳಿದಿದ್ದರೂ, ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷ ದೇವಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಪೂಜೆ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ವಿಶೇಷ. ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಗೋಪುರದತ್ತ ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಹರಿಸಿದಾಗ ಅದರ ಎತ್ತರ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ಅದರ ಹಿಂದೆ ಅಡಗಿರುವ ಶಿಲ್ಪಿಗಳ ಪರಿಶ್ರಮವೂ ಮನಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ವಿಶಾಲವಾದ ಪ್ರಾಂಗಣ, ಕಂಬಗಳ ಮಂಟಪಗಳು, ಒಳಾಂಗಣದ ಕಲಾತ್ಮಕ ಕೆತ್ತನೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರಣಗಳು ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ಕಲಾಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಗೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿವೆ. ಗರ್ಭಗುಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ವಿರೂಪಾಕ್ಷನ ದರ್ಶನದೊಂದಿಗೆ, ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಮತ್ತು ವರ್ತಮಾನದ ನಡುವೆ ಒಂದು ನಿರಂತರ ಸಂಬಂಧವಿರುವ ಅನುಭವವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಅಲ್ಲಿಂದ ಮುಂದೆ ಸಾಗಿದಾಗ ಎದುರಾಗುವುದು **ವಿಜಯ ವಿಠ್ಠಲ ದೇವಾಲಯ.** ಹಂಪಿಯ ವಾಸ್ತುಶಿಲ್ಪದ ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ಸಾಧನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲ್ಪಡುವ ಈ ದೇವಾಲಯವು ತನ್ನ ಭವ್ಯ ಪ್ರಾಂಗಣ, ಅಲಂಕೃತ ಕಂಬಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಕಲ್ಲಿನ



ಹನುಮಾನ್ ಗುಡಿ © ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್

ರಥದಿಂದ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ. **ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ರಥ**ವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದಾಗ, ಗಟ್ಟಿಯಾದ ಶಿಲೆಯಲ್ಲೂ ಚಲನೆಯ ಭಾವವನ್ನು ಮೂಡಿಸಬಲ್ಲ ಶಿಲ್ಪಿಗಳ ಕಲ್ಪನಾಶಕ್ತಿಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಬೆರಗಾಗದೆ ಇರಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಂಗೀತ ಕಂಬಗಳ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸವೂ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಶಿಲ್ಪಕಲೆಯ ವೈಜ್ಞಾನಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ಕಲಾತ್ಮಕ ಅರಿವಿನತ್ತ ನಮ್ಮ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ಹಜಾರ ರಾಮ ದೇವಾಲಯ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಮಹತ್ವದ ಸ್ಮಾರಕ. ರಾಜಮನೆತನದ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಧಿವಿಧಾನದ ಬಳಕೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ್ದ ಈ ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಗೋಡೆಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ರಾಮಾಯಣದ ಅನೇಕ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಉಬ್ಬುಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ರಾಮನ ಕಥೆ ಕೇವಲ ಗ್ರಂಥದ ಪುಟಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿಯದೆ, ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ಗೋಡೆಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ದೃಶ್ಯಕಾವ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಮೂಡಿಬಂದಿರುವುದನ್ನು ನೋಡಬಹುದು. ಆನೆಗಳು, ಕುದುರೆಗಳು, ಸೈನಿಕರು ಮತ್ತು ಮೆರವಣಿಗೆಗಳ ಕೆತ್ತನೆಗಳು ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ಅರಮನೆ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಚಿತ್ರಣವನ್ನೂ ನೀಡುತ್ತವೆ.

ಕೃಷ್ಣ ದೇವಾಲಯವೂ ತನ್ನದೇ ಆದ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದೆ. ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಪಿತವಾದ ಈ ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಪ್ರಾಂಗಣ ಮತ್ತು ಅದರ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಪ್ರದೇಶವು ದೇವಾಲಯ ಹಾಗೂ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಗಳ ನಡುವಿನ ಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ಪರಿಚಯಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳೆಂದರೆ ಕೇವಲ ಪೂಜಾಸ್ಥಳಗಳಲ್ಲ; ಅವು ಸಮಾಜದ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳೂ ಆಗಿದ್ದವು ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಹಂಪಿ ನಮಗೆ ನೆನಪಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಹೇಮಕೂಟದ ದೇವಾಲಯ ಸಮೂಹಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಇತರ ಸಣ್ಣಪುಟ್ಟ ಗುಡಿಗಳು, **ಅಚ್ಯುತರಾಯ ದೇವಾಲಯ** ಹಂಪಿಯ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ದೇವಾಲಯವೂ ತನ್ನದೇ ಆದ ವಾಸ್ತುಶೈಲಿ, ಶಿಲ್ಪಸಂಪತ್ತು ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊತ್ತು ನಿಂತಿದೆ. ಪುರಾಣದ ನೆನಪುಗಳೂ ಈ ಬೆಟ್ಟದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಬೆಸೆದುಕೊಂಡಿವೆ. ಹಂಪಿ ಪ್ರದೇಶವನ್ನು ಪಂಪಾಕ್ಷೇತ್ರವೆಂದು ಕರೆಯುವ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಇದೆ. ಪಾರ್ವತಿ ದೇವಿಯು ಪಂಪೆಯ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಶಿವನನ್ನು ಆರಾಧಿಸಿದ ಸ್ಥಳವೆಂಬ ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ನೆಲದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಬೆಸೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದೆ. **ಪುರಾಣ, ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಇತಿಹಾಸ—ಮೂರು ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟಗಳು ಹೇಮಕೂಟದ ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಒಂದಾಗಿ ನಿಂತಂತೆ ಭಾಸವಾಯಿತು.** ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಣ್ಣ ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳ ಸರಳತೆ ಮನಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ರೀತಿಯ ನೆಮ್ಮದಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಿತು. ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ಭವ್ಯ ಗೋಪುರಗಳಿಗಿಂತ ಭಿನ್ನವಾದರೂ, ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲದ ಆಳವಾದ ಗುರುತು ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ಮೇಲೆ ನಿಂತು ಉದಯಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಸೂರ್ಯನ ಬೆಳಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹಂಪಿಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದಾಗ, ಕೆಳಗೆ ಹರಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ಅವಶೇಷಗಳು ನಿದ್ರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಮಹಾನಗರದಂತೆ ಕಂಡವು.

ಮಾಲ್ಯವಂತ ಬೆಟ್ಟ: ಹಂಪಿಯ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಬೆಟ್ಟ ಮಾಲ್ಯವಂತ ಬೆಟ್ಟ. **ಮಾಲ್ಯವಂತ ಬೆಟ್ಟ**ದತ್ತ ಸಾಗುವಾಗ ಹಂಪಿಯ ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ಭೂದೃಶ್ಯ ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಆಳವಾದ ಅನುಭವವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿನ **ಮಾಲ್ಯವಂತ ರಘುನಾಥ ದೇವಾಲಯ** ರಾಮಾಯಣದ ನೆನಪುಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಬೆಸೆದುಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಸ್ಥಳ. ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಪ್ರಕಾರ, ರಾಮ ಮತ್ತು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣರು ಸೀತೆಯನ್ನು ಹುಡುಕುತ್ತಾ ಈ ಪ್ರದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಾಗ ಮಾಲ್ಯವಂತ ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ಸುತ್ತಮುತ್ತ ಕಾಲ ಕಳೆದರೆಂಬ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯಿದೆ. ಮಳೆಗಾಲವನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಕಳೆದರೆಂಬ ರಾಮಾಯಣದ ಪರಂಪರೆಯೂ ಈ ಸ್ಥಳಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದೆ. ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ಹಂಪಿಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಪುರಾಣದ ಹಂಪಿಯೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಂದೆಡೆ ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ರಾಜರು ಕಟ್ಟಿಸಿದ ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳು. ಮತ್ತೊಂದೆಡೆ ರಾಮಾಯಣದ ನೆನಪು ಹೊತ್ತ ಬೆಟ್ಟಗಳು.ಈ ಎರಡೂ ಸೇರಿ ಹಂಪಿಗೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ಕಾಲಾತೀತ ಸ್ವರೂಪವನ್ನು ನೀಡಿವೆ. ಮಾಲ್ಯವಂತ ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ಮೇಲಿನಿಂದ ಸುತ್ತಲೂ ನೋಡಿದಾಗ ಬಂಡೆಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಹರಡಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಹಂಪಿಯ ವಿಶಾಲ ಭೂದೃಶ್ಯ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಸೆಳೆಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಂಜೆಯ ಹೊತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂಡೆಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಬೀಳುವ ಸೂರ್ಯನ ಕೊನೆಯ ಕಿರಣಗಳು ಈ ಪ್ರದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಒಂದು ಅಲೌಕಿಕ ರೂಪ ನೀಡುತ್ತವೆ

2. ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕವಲ್ಲದ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳು: ಅರಮನೆಯ ವೈಭವ ಮತ್ತು ಬದುಕಿನ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸ

ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳ ದರ್ಶನದಿಂದ ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ಲೋಕವನ್ನು ಕಂಡ ಬಳಿಕ, ಹಂಪಿಯ ಅರಮನೆ ಪ್ರದೇಶದತ್ತ ಸಾಗಿದಾಗ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಜಗತ್ತು ತೆರೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಅರಸರ ಆಡಳಿತ, ರಾಜಮನೆತನದ ಜೀವನ, ಮನರಂಜನೆ, ಜಲವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸೈನಿಕ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ಅವಶೇಷಗಳಿವೆ.

ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುವ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದರೆ **ಕಮಲ ಮಹಲ್ ಅಥವಾ ಲೋಟಸ್ ಮಹಲ್.** ಕಮಲದ ಮೊಗ್ಗು ಅರಳಿದಂತೆ ಕಾಣುವ ಇದರ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸ, ಕಮಾನುಗಳು, ಮೇಲಂತಸ್ತು ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಮಿತಿಯ ರಚನೆ ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಹಬ್ಬವನ್ನುಂಟುಮಾಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಹಿಂದೂ ಮತ್ತು



ಹೇಮಕೂಟ © ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್



ಪ್ರವೇಶ ದ್ವಾರ , ಹೇಮಕೂಟ © ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್

ಇಂಡೋ-ಇಸ್ಲಾಮಿಕ್ ವಾಸ್ತುಶೈಲಿಯ ಲಕ್ಷಣಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಂದರವಾಗಿ ಬೆರೆತಿವೆ. ಅರಮನೆಯ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರ ವಿಶ್ರಾಂತಿ ಅಥವಾ ಮನರಂಜನೆಗೆ ಬಳಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಗುರುತಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದರ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದಾಗ, ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ವಾಸ್ತುಶಿಲ್ಪಿಗಳು ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಉಪಯುಕ್ತತೆಯನ್ನು ಒಂದೇ ಕಟ್ಟಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಗೆ ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸಿದ್ದರು ಎಂಬುದು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ರಾಣಿಯರ ಸ್ನಾನಗೃಹವೆಂದು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿರುವ **ಕ್ವೀನ್ಸ್ ಬಾತ್** ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ವಿಶೇಷ ಸ್ಮಾರಕ. ಹೊರಗಿನಿಂದ ಸರಳವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುವ ಈ ಕಟ್ಟಡದ ಒಳಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಚೌಕಾಕಾರದ ಜಲಕುಂಡ, ಅದರ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಕಮಾನುಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಬಾಲ್ಕನಿಗಳು ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುತ್ತವೆ. ನೀರಿನ ಬಳಕೆ, ಖಾಸಗಿತನ ಮತ್ತು ಸೌಂದರ್ಯಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯನ್ನು ಒಟ್ಟುಗೂಡಿಸಿದ ಈ ರಚನೆ, ರಾಜಮನೆತನದ ಜೀವನಶೈಲಿಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಕುತೂಹಲ ಮೂಡಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಆನೆ ಲಾಯ ಅಥವಾ ಎಲಿಫೆಂಟ್ ಸ್ಟೇಬಲ್ಸ್
ಹಂಪಿಯ ರಾಜವೈಭವವನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಚಯಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಾಲಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲಾದ ಹನ್ನೊಂದು ಕೊಠಡಿಗಳು, ಎತ್ತರದ ಕಮಾನುಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ವಿವಿಧ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸದ ಗುಮ್ಮಟಗಳು ಈ ಕಟ್ಟಡದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಆಕರ್ಷಣೆಗಳು. ರಾಜಮನೆತನದ ಆನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಇರಿಸಲು ಬಳಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಈ ರಚನೆ, ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದ ಸಂಘಟಿತ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಕೊಠಡಿಯ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸುತ್ತಾ ನಿಂತಾಗ, ಹಿಂದೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಲಾಗಿ ನಿಂತಿದ್ದ ಬೃಹತ್ ಆನೆಗಳ ದೃಶ್ಯವನ್ನು ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

ರಾಜಮನೆತನದ ಆವರಣದಲ್ಲಿರುವ **ಮಹಾನವಮಿ ದಿಬ್ಬವೂ** ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ಆಡಳಿತ ಮತ್ತು ಉತ್ಸವ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಸಂಕೇತವಾಗಿದೆ. ಉತ್ಸವಗಳು, ಮೆರವಣಿಗೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ರಾಜಸಭೆಯ ವೈಭವಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಈ ವೇದಿಕೆಯ ಮೇಲಿನ ಉಬ್ಬುಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೈನಿಕರು, ಕುದುರೆಗಳು, ಆನೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ವಿವಿಧ ಜನಜೀವನದ ದೃಶ್ಯಗಳು ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಅವು ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಆ ಕಾಲದ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಬದುಕಿನ ದೃಶ್ಯಸಾಕ್ಷಿಗಳೂ ಹೌದು.

ಹಂಪಿಯ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಅದ್ಭುತವೆಂದರೆ ಅದರ **ಪುಷ್ಕರಣಿಗಳು.** ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳಿಂದ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲಾದ ಮೆಟ್ಟಿಲುಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೆಳಗಿಳಿಯುವ ಆಯತಾಕಾರದ ಜಲಕುಂಡಗಳು, ನೀರನ್ನು ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸುವುದರ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ವಾಸ್ತುಶಿಲ್ಪದ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯವನ್ನೂ ಪ್ರತಿಬಿಂಬಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಅರಮನೆ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ಮೆಟ್ಟಿಲುಗಳ ಪುಷ್ಕರಣಿಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದಾಗ, ನೀರಿನ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಹಂತವನ್ನೂ ಎಷ್ಟು ನಿಖರವಾಗಿ ರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಗಮನಕ್ಕೆ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂದಿನ ಆಧುನಿಕ ನಗರಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ನೀರಿನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹ ಮತ್ತು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಸವಾಲಾಗಿರುವಾಗ, ಶತಮಾನಗಳ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಈ ಜಲವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಚಿಂತನೆಗೆ ಹಚ್ಚುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಬಜಾರ್: ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ಬೀದಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರದ ನೆನಪು:

ಹಂಪಿಯ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಎದುರಿನ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಬಜಾರ್ ಪ್ರದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಾಗ, ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ಉದ್ದನೆಯ ಬೀದಿ ಮತ್ತು ಎರಡೂ ಬದಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ಮಂಟಪಗಳು ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಹಿಂದಿನ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಕರೆದೊಯ್ಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಇಂದು ಮೌನವಾಗಿ ನಿಂತಿರುವ ಈ ಮಂಟಪಗಳು ಒಂದು ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಿಗಳ ಓಡಾಟ, ಸರಕುಗಳ ವಹಿವಾಟು ಮತ್ತು ಜನರ ಗದ್ದಲದಿಂದ ತುಂಬಿ ತುಳುಕುತ್ತಿದ್ದಿರಬಹುದು . ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಗಳು ವಿಜಯನಗರದ ನಗರ ಜೀವನದ ಅವಿಭಾಜ್ಯ ಅಂಗವಾಗಿದ್ದವು. ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆ, ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಗಳು ಒಂದೇ ಪ್ರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಸೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದವು. ಈ ಬೀದಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಮೂಲ್ಯ ವಸ್ತುಗಳು, ಆಭರಣಗಳು, ಬಟ್ಟೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಇತರ ಸರಕುಗಳ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ ನಡೆದಿರಬಹುದಾದ ವೈಭವವನ್ನು ನೆನಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಾಗ, ಹಂಪಿ ಕೇವಲ ರಾಜಧಾನಿಯಾಗಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ; ಅದು ಚೈತನ್ಯಭರಿತ ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ನಗರವೂ ಆಗಿತ್ತು ಎಂಬುದು ಮನದಟ್ಟಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.
ಇಂದು ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಿಗಳ ಧ್ವನಿಗಳಿಲ್ಲ, ಜನಸಂದಣಿಯಿಲ್ಲ. ಉಳಿದಿರುವುದು ಕಲ್ಲಿನ ಮಂಟಪಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಗತಕಾಲದ ಮೌನ. ಆದರೂ



ವಿಜಯ ವಿಠ್ಠಲ ದೇವಾಲಯ © ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್

ಆ ಮೌನದೊಳಗೆ ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ಸದ್ದು ಕೇಳಿಸುವಂತೆ ಭಾಸವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

3. ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳು: ಒಂದೇ ಕಲ್ಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅರಳಿದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆ

ಹಂಪಿಯ ಶಿಲ್ಪಕಲೆಯ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅರಿಯಲು ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಲೇಬೇಕು. ಬೃಹತ್ ಬಂಡೆಯೊಂದನ್ನೇ ಕಲಾವಿದನ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಗೆ ಒಪ್ಪಿಸಿ, ಅದರಿಂದ ಜೀವಂತ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಹೊರತರುವುದು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಸಾಧನೆಯಲ್ಲ. ಹಂಪಿಯ ಶಿಲ್ಪಿಗಳು ಇದನ್ನು ಅಸಾಧಾರಣ ಕೌಶಲದಿಂದ ಸಾಧಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಹಂಪಿಯ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳಲ್ಲಿ **ಉಗ್ರ ನರಸಿಂಹನ** ಮೂರ್ತಿ ಪ್ರಮುಖವಾದುದು. ಸುಮಾರು 6.7 ಮೀಟರ್ ಎತ್ತರದ ಈ ಬೃಹತ್ ಮೂರ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನರಸಿಂಹನ ಗಂಭೀರ ಮುಖಭಾವ, ವಿಶಾಲವಾದ ಕಣ್ಣುಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಭವ್ಯವಾದ ದೇಹರಚನೆ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಮೂಲತಃ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀ ನರಸಿಂಹನ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಈ ಶಿಲ್ಪದಲ್ಲಿ ದೇವಿಯ ಮೂರ್ತಿಗೆ ಹಾನಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇಂದು ನರಸಿಂಹನ ರೂಪವೇ ಪ್ರಮುಖವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದರ ಮುಂದೆ ನಿಂತಾಗ, ಒಂದೇ ಬಂಡೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಷ್ಟೊಂದು ಬೃಹತ್ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಮೂಡಿಸಿದ ಶಿಲ್ಪಿಯ ಕೈಚಳಕದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಬೆರಗು ಮೂಡುತ್ತದೆ.

ಇದರ ಸಮೀಪದಲ್ಲಿರುವ **ಬಡವಿ ಲಿಂಗ**ವೂ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಶಿಲ್ಪ. ಒಂದೇ ಕಲ್ಲಿನಿಂದ ರೂಪಿಸಲಾದ ಸುಮಾರು ಮೂರು ಮೀಟರ್ ಎತ್ತರದ ಶಿವಲಿಂಗವು ಸದಾ ನೀರು ತುಂಬಿರುವ ಗರ್ಭಗುಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಸರಳತೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಗಾಂಭೀರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಈ ಲಿಂಗದ ದರ್ಶನ ಮನಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ಶಾಂತಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತದೆ. ನರಸಿಂಹನ ಬೃಹತ್ ರೂಪದ ಉಗ್ರತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಬಡವಿ ಲಿಂಗದ ಶಾಂತ ಸ್ವರೂಪ — ಎರಡೂ ಒಂದೇ ಪ್ರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ಆಯಾಮಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಚಯಿಸುತ್ತವೆ.

ಹೇಮಕೂಟ ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ಬಳಿ ಇರುವ **ಸಾಸಿವೆಕಾಳು ಗಣಪತಿ** ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಆಕರ್ಷಕ ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಶಿಲ್ಪ. ಸುಮಾರು 2.4 ಮೀಟರ್ ಎತ್ತರದ ಈ ಗಣಪತಿಯ ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯ ಆಕಾರ ಸಾಸಿವೆಕಾಳನ್ನು ನೆನಪಿಸುವುದರಿಂದ ಈ ಹೆಸರು ಬಂದಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ತೆರೆದ ಕಂಬಗಳ ಮಂಟಪದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಗೊಂಡಿರುವ ಗಣಪತಿಯ ಮೂರ್ತಿಯ ಮುಂದೆ ನಿಂತಾಗ, ಅದರ ಸರಳತೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ಇದಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ದೊಡ್ಡದಾದ **ಕಡಲೆಕಾಳು ಗಣಪತಿ** ಸುಮಾರು 4.5 ಮೀಟರ್ ಎತ್ತರದ ಏಕಶಿಲಾ ಮೂರ್ತಿ. ಕಡಲೆಕಾಳನ್ನು ಹೋಲುವ ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸದಿಂದ ಈ ಹೆಸರು ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಬೃಹತ್ ಮೂರ್ತಿಯ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಕಂಬಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಮಂಟಪವು ಶಿಲ್ಪಕ್ಕೆ ಇನ್ನಷ್ಟು ಭವ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಈ ಎರಡು ಗಣಪತಿ ಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳು ಗಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ಶಿಲ್ಪಿಗಳ ಕಲ್ಪನಾಶಕ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ವಿಶೇಷ ಸ್ಥಾನ ಪಡೆದಿವೆ.

ಈ ಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ ಸಾಗಿದಾಗ, ಶಿಲ್ಪಕಲೆ ಎಂದರೆ ಕಲ್ಲನ್ನು ಕೆತ್ತುವುದಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಅದರೊಳಗೆ ಅಡಗಿರುವ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಕಲಾವಿದನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರತರುವ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಅರಿವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳಲ್ಲೇ ಉಳಿದಿರುವ ಕಾಲದ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಗಳು

ಹಂಪಿಯ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ಅದರ ಸ್ಮಾರಕಗಳಲ್ಲಷ್ಟೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ತುಂಗಭದ್ರೆಯ ನದಿ, ಆಕಾಶದೆತ್ತರಕ್ಕೆ ಚಾಚಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಬಂಡೆಗಲ್ಲುಗಳು, ಬೆಟ್ಟಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಹಾದುಹೋಗುವ ದಾರಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಜೆಯ ಸೂರ್ಯನ ಬೆಳಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂಗಾರದ ಬಣ್ಣ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಶಿಲೆಗಳು — ಇವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಸೇರಿ ಹಂಪಿಗೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ನೈಸರ್ಗಿಕ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತವೆ.

ಕೆಲವು ಕ್ಷಣ ಮೌನವಾಗಿ ನಿಂತು ಸುತ್ತಲೂ ನೋಡಿದಾಗ, ಈ ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಒಮ್ಮೆ ಅರಳಿದ್ದ ಮಹಾನಗರದ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ಮನಸ್ಸು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ದೇವಾಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಭಕ್ತರು, ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಬಜಾರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಜನರು, ರಾಜಮನೆತನದ ಮೆರವಣಿಗೆಗಳು, ಆನೆಗಳ ಗಂಭೀರ ನಡಿಗೆ, ಉತ್ಸವಗಳ ಸಂಭ್ರಮ — ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಕಣ್ಣೆದುರು ಮೂಡಿದಂತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಆದರೆ ಕಾಲ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನೂ ಒಂದೇ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಧಿಕಾರ, ಸಂಪತ್ತು ಮತ್ತು ವೈಭವ ಕ್ಷಣಿಕ. ಅವುಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆ ಉಳಿಯುವುದು ಸಾಧನೆಗಳ ನೆನಪು ಮತ್ತು ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಸಾಕ್ಷೀಕರಿಸುವ ಸ್ಮಾರಕಗಳು. ಹಂಪಿಯ ಅವಶೇಷಗಳು ನಮಗೆ ಹೇಳುವ ಪಾಠವೂ ಇದೇ. ಒಂದು ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ ನಾಶವಾಗಬಹುದು; ಆದರೆ ಅದರ ಕಲೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸೃಜನಶೀಲತೆ ಕಾಲದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗಳನ್ನೂ ಮೀರಿ ಉಳಿಯಬಲ್ಲವು.
ಹಂಪಿಯ ಪ್ರವಾಸ ಮುಗಿಸಿ ಹಿಂದಿರುಗುವಾಗ ನನ್ನ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿದದ್ದು ಕೇವಲ ಕೆಲವು ಸುಂದರ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲ, ಕೆಲವು ಐತಿಹಾಸಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ನೆನಪೂ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಮಲಗಿರುವ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಕನಸು, ಶಿಲ್ಪಿಗಳ ಕೈಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡ ಕಲೆಯ ವೈಭವ ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಲದ ಎದುರು ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ಸಾಧನೆಗಳ ಅಶಾಶ್ವತತೆಯ ಕುರಿತು ಮೂಡಿದ ಅಲೋಚನೆಗಳು.

ಹಂಪಿ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರವಾಸಿ ತಾಣ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ. ಅದು ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ತೆರೆದ ಪುಸ್ತಕ, ವಾಸ್ತುಶಿಲ್ಪದ ಪಾಠಶಾಲೆ, ಶಿಲ್ಪಕಲೆಯ ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಸಂಗ್ರಹ ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಲದ ಮೌನ ಭಾಷೆಯನ್ನು ಆಲಿಸಲು ಕಲಿಸುವ ಅನುಭವ. ಅದರ ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ನಡೆಯುವಾಗ, ನಾವು ಕೇವಲ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಕಾಲವನ್ನು ನೋಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ; ನಮ್ಮ ನಾಗರಿಕತೆಯ ಬೇರುಗಳನ್ನೂ ಅರಿಯಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ.

ಬಹುಶಃ ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿಯೇ ಹಂಪಿಯಿಂದ ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿದ ಮೇಲೂ ಹಂಪಿ ನಮ್ಮೊಳಗೆ ಉಳಿಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಕಲ್ಲುಗಳು ಮೌನವಾಗಿದ್ದರೂ, ಅವುಗಳ ಕಥೆಗಳು ಎಂದಿಗೂ ಮುಗಿಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

• **ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್,** ಇಎಫ್‌ಐಪಿ, ಇಎಫ್‌ಐಎಪಿ, ಸಿಎಂಒಎಲ್, ಪಿಪಿಎಸ್‌ಎ



ಗಜಾನನ ಆರ್. ಪಂಡಿತ್ (ಐಎಂ-೦೪೫೪), ಸಾಗರದ ನಿವೃತ್ತ ಅಂಚೆಪಾಲಕ. YPS ಸದಸ್ಯರು ಹಾಗೂ ಸಾಗರ ಫೋಟೋಗ್ರಾಫಿಕ್ ಸೊಸೈಟಿಯ ಸಹ-ಸಂಯೋಜಕರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ, ಪಕ್ಷಿಗಳು, ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಇವರ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳು.

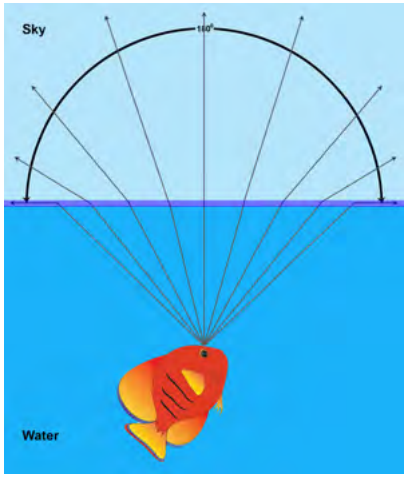
← Back

Fisheye Lenses

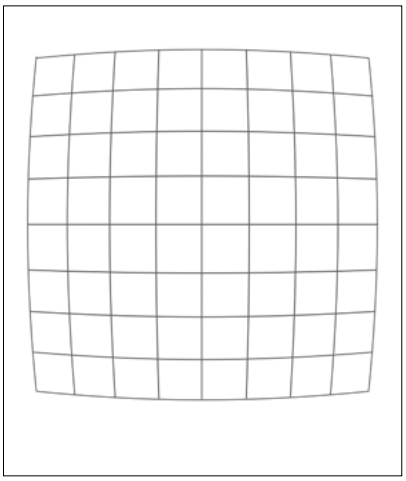
Let us start by seeing how this unusual name has come about. As per Wikipedia, the term fisheye was coined as early as 1906 based on how (we thought that) a fish would see an ultra-wide hemispherical view from beneath the water (Picture 1). Their first practical use was in the 1920s to study cloud formations. Apart from the normal photographic uses, these lenses have other scientific applications like recording meteors, illumination patterns, solar radiation, etc. Another popular application is for examining confined places like pipes and tunnels.

A fisheye lens is an ultra-wide angle lens that has an angle of view (AOV) that usually exceeds any conventional ultra-wide lens. The AOV of these lenses is usually around 180° independent of focal length, which is usually quite short (around 14 to 17 mm for 24 X 36 mm full frame, and 10 mm for 17 X 24 mm APS-C cameras). Compared to this, the AOV of a normal wide-angle (also called a rectilinear or an orthoscopic) lens with the same focal length of 17 mm (on the same camera) will only be 104°! The main characteristic of these lenses is that they have severe barrel distortion (Picture 2) purposely built in. The lines especially at the edges are severely bowed out.

Types of Fisheye lenses: There are two types of fisheye lenses – circular and full-frame. The former projects a circular image (Picture 3) on the sensor with dark corners in the frame. The idea is that when pointed directly upwards the lens covers the complete upper hemisphere. The first commercially available circular fisheye lens was produced by Nikon in 1962. The other type, the 'full-frame' fisheye lenses which are more popular these days, typically have a 180° diagonal AOV (Picture 4). These were also introduced by Nikon in 1972.

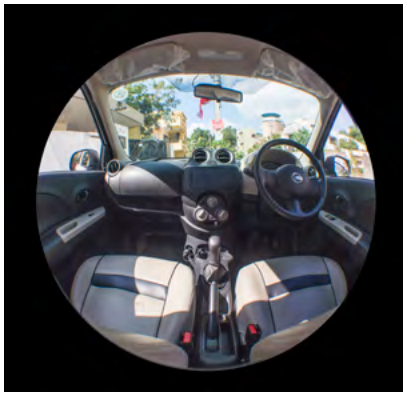


Picture 1: What a fish sees!


Picture 2: Barrel distortion

Note that the words 'full frame' here do not refer to the sensor size but to the fact that the image covers the frame fully (without any dark corners) though it will be distorted severely at the edges. To clarify further, fisheye lenses are available for full-frame as well as for the smaller APS -C formats. They will cover 180° diagonally on their respective formats. For the rest of this article, we will be concentrating on the full-frame fisheye type.

Due to the extremely wide AOV, you will not be able to use any filters, but some fisheye lenses have built-in filters or have a slot at the rear to mount a filter.


Picture 3: Image from a circular fisheye lens


Picture 4: A Pentax full-frame fisheye lens with a focal length of 17 mm. This lens covers an AOV of 180° diagonally and fully covers a full-frame sensor. It has built-in filters that can be selected by rotating the top ring. In this photo, you can see that an L39 UV filter has been selected.

You have seen the various types of fisheye lenses. There are many ways you can use them, but here are two interesting ways.

Use them as is: Picture 5 shows how you can use a fisheye lens as it is with all its distortion. The result is an unusual (maybe even wacky) image that has its own characteristic and dramatic appearance.

How will the same scene look if photographed with a normal rectilinear ultra-wide lens? That is shown in Picture 6. This was taken with the same Nikon Z6 but with a Nikon ultra-wide 14-30 mm lens at 14 mm. Compare Pictures 5 and 6. What do you observe?

If you notice carefully, you will see that, though the fisheye lens has a longer focal length of 17 mm vs 14 mm it has covered a larger area but with distortion. However, there is an interesting twist to this. Look at the structure in the center. It is practically distortion-free! So, while there is severe distortion, it is confined to the edges. Thus, if you can compose carefully, then you can use a fisheye lens even to capture architectural images by keeping buildings away from the edges and nearer to the center! You can then crop the edges away if needed, to get an ultra-wide-angle image! Some additional distortion corrections are also possible with post-processing software like Lightroom and Photoshop.

Use it for 360° panoramas: You can use a fisheye lens to create 360° spherical panoramas and virtual tours. This is one of the most common uses. However, you need a spherical panorama rig (Picture



Picture 5: Image from a full-frame fisheye lens. This was taken with a Nikon Z6 using the lens shown in Picture 4. Note the curvature of the foreground structure.



Picture 6: Same scene shot with a Nikon Z6 and a Nikon ultra-wide lens 14-30 mm at 14 mm (AOV is 114°).

7) and you must align the nodal point of the lens correctly. Without proper alignment, you will get a parallax error which is guaranteed to cause trouble when stitching.

This is how you go about it. A typical full-frame fisheye lens has an AOV of around 130° horizontally and 90° vertically. The camera is normally mounted in the portrait orientation (Picture 7) for panorama captures. Hence, these numbers will get interchanged and you will get 130° vertical and 90° horizontal coverage. With this, practically everything is covered height-wise. Since you need an overlap of 30° for stitching, you will be left with a 60° horizontal coverage. Starting from an initial position (as in Picture 7) all you need to do is to take six images panning 60° apart to cover the entire circle. Now, you need to take one image with the camera pointed directly upwards (Picture 8) and one pointed directly below (Picture 9). The former is called the zenith and the latter is nadir. So, this way you have the entire 360° sphere covered with just eight captures!

Even though fisheye lenses have distortion, several software packages can rectify and then make a full 360° panorama. Examples are PT GUI, RealViz's Stitcher, and Hugin. The result is shown in Picture 10. This is a photograph of an art gallery covering all four sides of the walls as well as the ceiling and floor. It may look odd but with a proper 360° viewer software you can go around the room on a computer by moving a mouse, and hence it is called a virtual tour. Some of these stitchers and viewers are freeware and most offer demo packages that you can use for trial and then purchase if you are satisfied.

Tips and techniques for using fisheye lenses

1. First and foremost, remember that a fisheye lens is an ultra-wide lens. So, all the dramatic perspective views you get by going close to the subject are possible with these lenses too. Once again let me repeat; distortion is different from perspective. You can get an exaggerated perspective when you go close to the subject, independent of whether the lens has distortion or not.
2. Again, as you would do with any ultra-wide-angle lens, keep the camera level.
3. Hold the camera a little away from your body especially when you keep the camera in portrait orientation. If not, you will find two objects at the



Picture 7: A Rokinon/Samyang fisheye lens on a panoramic head that was made by the author.



Picture 8: Zenith capture.



Picture 9: Nadir capture.



Picture 10: A 360° panorama created using a full-frame fisheye lens using a panoramic head (shown in Picture 7).

bottom middle of the frame. In case you are wondering what these are – they are your feet!

4. Make sure that those elements which exhibit easily discernible distortion are toward the middle. These include buildings, some types of trees that have straight trunks, towers, humans, animals, etc. This will reduce the apparent distortion.
5. Following the above, you can easily photograph a group of people in a cramped place, say a restaurant, that would be impossible otherwise. Also, consider using fisheye lenses for wedding group photos where a very large number of people will be present.
6. Exploit the huge depth of field (DOF). Fisheye lenses in most cases do not need focusing. For example, assuming that you are using a 17 mm fisheye lens set at f/8 and focused at 2 m on a full-frame DSLR camera, the DOF extends from 0.75 m to infinity!

Conclusion: When the fisheye lenses were first introduced in the 1960s, they were considered highly specialized lenses and were extremely expensive. However, after the introduction of full-frame fisheye lenses, they are now affordable and a lot more practical than most assume. All you need to do is to accept the challenge while composing (as described above, Point 4) and you will be amazed by the coverage you get. You can also use post-processing software packages to correct distortion easily. All these factors have contributed to the increasing popularity of fisheye lenses. So, try one and convince yourself of the many uses. And more importantly, have some fun!

• Ashok Kandimalla, Hon FIP, Hon YPS



Mr Ashok Kandimalla has been authoring articles since 2009, titled 'Basics of Photography' in Smart Photography magazine He has conducted more than 100 workshops and photography courses for Honeywell, Bank of America, Infosys, UNESCO and Mindscreen Film Institute Chennai. He has been contributing technical articles on photography for Drsti, since 2021



← Back

YPS Saturday Meet Sessions

MONOCHROME
Vision without Colour



A programme of slideshow was organized at the YPS hall on 5th September 2026 at 6.30 pm. And the subject too was very educational and informative for photographers. The topic was **'MONOCHROME:** Vision without colour'. The presentation was by none other than Mr Satish H, an accomplished and well known photographer. With over 45 years of experience in black and white photography apart from various genres he was the right person to impart knowledge on different aspects such as tonal gradation, subject choice for monochrome, reading the histogram, and discipline in post-processing. The hall was full of photographers keen to learn these aspects and enhance their photographic abilities.

At the outset, Satish explained what constitutes a monochrome photograph and the subtle differences between monochrome, black and white, and grayscale images. Monochrome suggests one colour such as black and white with various tones of grey, or one particular colour like sepia. In salons, any of them can be submitted for the monochrome section. But monochrome images can not be submitted in the Colour section. Colour images are no doubt attractive, but the colours can also distract attention, and the onlooker may not be able to comprehend the actual tonal gradation, contrast, and composition that the photographer tries to bring out. Black and white photography can be achieved in any genre such as landscape, wildlife, portraits, and street photography. However, all subjects may not be suitable for monochrome. If a photograph depicts very colourful elements, like an image of the Theyyam festival, it may not be good in monochrome. So the photographer has to judge the subject before clicking and imagine how the subject would look in monochrome. Whether the elements, like contrast, light and shadows, and the overall visual impact without the distraction of colours would enhance the mood of the image is the deciding factor. Also, it is important to understand which



© Satish H



Lady cleaning monument © Satish H

colour in an image takes which tone in monochrome. This pre-

visualisation helps in choosing the right image for monochrome. The photographer's interest in doing black and white photography is also very important.

Satish then enlightened on the understanding of high-key and low-key images and the types of images suitable. Another important aspect of black and white photography was post-processing, he said. By looking at the subject, the photographer should be able to recognize the hidden shades and tones. It was well demonstrated with a colour image of Pangong lake in Ladakh, which looked not too impressive. By understanding which tone each colour would take and recognizing the hidden tones that can be extracted in processing the image could be made totally outstanding. Also, shooting in RAW ensures the image has more data and details. As such processing also plays a vital role in enhancing the visual appeal. In conclusion, Sathish said pre-visualisation and the ability to extract hidden tones in processing are the two essential prerequisites for making the best monochrome images. All along he displayed nearly 150 wonderful slides to explain each aspect.

After a session of questions and answers, the programme concluded.



Prakash B V
Prakash is an avid mountaineer, photographer and travel writer He is a life member of YPS and member of Dṛṣṭi editorial team

YPS Wildlife Week Presentations

The Vanishing Stripes



As part of its Wildlife Week programme, YPS hosted "The Vanishing Stripes," an online presentation by Praveen Kumar H V on 3 October 2026 via Google Meet. Drawing on approximately 35 years of wildlife photography experience, he offered an insightful account of the tiger's life in the wild.

A former YPS president who served for nearly 11 years, Praveen Kumar has received numerous national and international recognitions. His Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society for his panel, Life of the Tiger, reflects his sustained engagement with the subject. His photographs have also appeared in calendars and books by the late Valmik Thapar.

The presentation combined photographs with accounts of individual tigers and their families. References to well-known tigers, including Charger and Machli, brought a personal dimension to the discussion. Stories of their lives and relationships made the presentation particularly engaging, revealing the depth of his field experience and familiarity with tiger behaviour.

Praveen Kumar discussed the decline in tiger populations and the factors threatening their survival. His observations emphasised the importance of healthy habitats and responsible human conduct. He also described aspects of tiger behaviour, including their swimming ability, helping participants appreciate the animal beyond its familiar image as a powerful predator.

Addressing the challenges of wildlife photography, he shared experiences of using different camera bodies and lenses. He advised amateur photographers to maintain an appropriate distance and avoid disturbing animals in pursuit of a photograph. Patience, observation, and respect for wildlife emerged as central principles of his practice.

The presentation featured 144 photographs depicting 95 different tigers, reflecting the breadth of Praveen Kumar's field experience. Stories of individual tigers and their families brought these



Bamera, the dominant Tiger of Bandavgarh © Praveen Kumar H V



Two sisters at Telia lake, Tadoba © Praveen Kumar H V

images to life, revealing his extensive knowledge of their behaviour.

The session's strength lay in the connection between photographic experience, knowledge of animal behaviour, and storytelling. Through memorable encounters and practical guidance, Praveen Kumar encouraged participants to approach wildlife photography with greater understanding, restraint, and responsibility in the field.

Earth Through My Lens



As part of its Wildlife Week programme, YPS hosted an online presentation, "Earth Through My Lens," by wildlife and nature photographer Mohan Thomas on 4 October 2026 via Google Meet.

A Bengaluru-based engineer working in the construction industry, Mohan has pursued photography as a lifelong passion. His interest was rekindled during a visit to B.R. Hills, subsequently taking him to wildlife destinations across India and abroad. His achievements include the Muthukulam Raghavan Pillai Award for wildlife photography in 2015 and recognition as a Nikon influencer.

The presentation brought together photographs from forests, diverse habitats, and landscapes encountered during his travels. These images offered an insight into the breadth of his photographic practice and his attentive observation of the natural world.

A notable quality of the photographs was their integration of animals with their habitats. Carefully considered compositions conveyed the relationship between wildlife and its surroundings, while light, colour, and texture contributed to their aesthetic appeal. Unusual framing and well-timed moments revealed distinctive gestures, movement, and behaviour.

The action photographs demonstrated Mohan's ability to capture fleeting encounters with clarity and visual impact. Equally compelling were quieter images in which the setting became an integral part of the photograph. Together, these approaches offered varied perspectives on wildlife, balancing dramatic moments with a sensitive understanding of place.



© Mohan Thomas



© Mohan Thomas

During the presentation, Mohan identified elephants as his favourite animals to photograph, followed by leopards. He also mentioned Rajaji as his preferred location for photographing leopards, adding a personal perspective to the experiences he shared.

"Earth Through My Lens" offered an engaging encounter with wildlife photography through images distinguished by thoughtful composition and an appreciation of natural habitats. The presentation demonstrated how observation, timing, and sensitivity to light can bring both aesthetic strength and expressive depth to wildlife imagery.

Heart of Indian wilderness – Untamed, Unscripted, Unforgettable



YPS hosted an online Wildlife Week Meet on October 8, 2026, featuring a presentation by senior photographer and mentor Satish H. Drawing on over 45 years of photographic experience, he took participants through India's national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and birding destinations, sharing practical insights into photographing wildlife.

Satish began by reflecting on his grounding in pictorial photography and how its principles continue to shape his wildlife images. He explained how thoughtful composition and an understanding of light can strengthen a photograph beyond its value as a record of a species. Emphasising the importance of including the surroundings, he encouraged photographers to consider the relationship between an animal and its habitat. His discussion of camouflage highlighted how closely observing the environment can reveal subjects that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

The presentation introduced participants to the distinction between national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. Satish shared information on locations, suitable visiting periods, and the animals and birds photographers might encounter. Destinations discussed included Dandeli and Sirsi in Karnataka, Malabar Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala, Bhitar Kanika National Park in Odisha, and Gajoldoba near Siliguri. He also explored opportunities to photograph Himalayan birds at Sattal and birdlife at Bharatpur.



Viper © Satish H



© Satish H

Other destinations included Corbett, Bijrani, Kaziranga, Bandipur, Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Ranthambore, and Tadoba. Through these examples, he conveyed the diversity of India's habitats and the different photographic opportunities they offer.

Animal behaviour formed another important aspect of the talk, reinforcing the need for patience, attentiveness, and an understanding of the subject. Throughout the presentation, his observations connected practical travel planning with the visual decisions photographers make in the field.

The session offered participants a useful foundation for planning wildlife photography trips while encouraging them to look beyond isolated animal portraits and appreciate the wider setting in which wildlife lives, moves, and becomes visible to an observant photographer.

Shooting After Dark



YPS organised a teaching session on Nightscape Photography by Saurabh Chatterjee on 17 October 2026, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at YPS Hall. The programme attracted a large attendance and provided an informative exploration of photography after dark.

An accomplished travel photographer and mentor, Saurabh has contributed over 500 photographs to national and international publications, including The Times, UK, and National Geographic Traveller India. He has authored more than 100 travel articles and holds the Honorary Fellowship (HON FICS) awarded by the Image Colleague Society International, USA.

Through a selection of his night photographs and astrophotography, Saurabh explained the technical considerations involved in working under low-light conditions. He discussed ISO, shutter speed, and tripod stability, illustrating how these factors affect exposure and image quality. He also addressed practical difficulties and precautions associated with photographing in darkness.

Milky Way photography formed a substantial part of the presentation. Drawing on years of practice, Saurabh discussed the considerable challenges of photographing the Milky Way on sub-zero nights, when extreme cold makes prolonged outdoor shoots particularly demanding. He also explained the importance of composition, demonstrating how foreground elements and framing establish a visual relationship between the night sky and the surrounding landscape.

The discussion on equipment considered the visual possibilities offered by different focal lengths. Saurabh encouraged participants to understand and work creatively with their existing cameras and lenses, rather than regard a particular equipment combination as essential for photographing the Milky Way.

An active question-and-answer exchange accompanied the presentation, with participants seeking clarification on camera settings, choice of lenses, and shooting conditions. His responses connected technical principles with practical examples, making the session accessible and relevant.

The programme offered a considered balance of instruction, photographic examples, and discussion. It strengthened participants' understanding of nightscape photography while encouraging a more deliberate approach to exposure, composition, and the creative use of available equipment in their photographic practice.



Dr Minnu Kejriwal PhD
Dr Kejriwal, blends academic inquiry with creative expression. She is passionate about architecture, landscapes, travel, and cultural photography.



PangongTsoLadakh_096 © Saurabh Chatterjee



TsoMorriri_043 © Saurabh Chatterjee

← Back

YPS Wildlife Week Macro Photo Walk – A Morning of Discoveries

As part of the World Wildlife Week celebrations, the Youth Photographic Society (YPS), Bengaluru, organised an engaging Macro Photo Walk on 2nd October 2026 in the beautiful surroundings of The Valley School, Bengaluru. The walk took place between 8:00 am and 11:00 am, covering the forested areas and open grasslands around the campus.

The session was headed by Mr Ganesh Prasad U P and Mr Satish H, whose experience and enthusiasm made the morning truly rewarding for everyone who participated. Macro photography has a unique way of opening our eyes to a world that often goes unnoticed. A simple walk through the grass can reveal an incredible variety of insects, spiders and other tiny creatures, each with its own fascinating story.

A special word of thanks to Satish, who went beyond simply guiding the walk. His keen eye and knowledge helped us spot and identify subjects, understand the behaviour and characteristics of different insects, and patiently guide us on how to approach and photograph them without disturbing their natural activity. His tips on positioning, composition, focus and timing helped many of us capture images that we might otherwise have missed.

The three-hour walk was not merely about taking photographs; it was an opportunity to observe, learn and appreciate the intricate world of macro wildlife. Every leaf, blade of grass and small patch of vegetation seemed to hold a new subject waiting to be discovered.

A big thanks to YPS for organising and guiding such a wonderful learning experience. The morning reminded us that wildlife photography is not always about large animals and spectacular landscapes—sometimes, the most fascinating wildlife is right under our feet, waiting to be noticed.

• Keshava Murty Y



Keshava Murthy, (IM-1092), has a special passion for wildlife, nature and macro photography. Photography has not only helped him see the natural world differently, but has also strengthened his interest in nature conservation.



Under The Canopy Of Nature © Sai Prakash



Behavior Of Honey Bee © Sai Prakash



Velvet Ants © Sharath Pandith



Eggs © Sharath Pandith



Elegance in Bloom © Keshava Murthy



Delicately patterned © Keshava Murthy

← Back

From Pixels to Presence: The Art of Making a Photograph - Create. Shoot. Print.

On 11 September 2026, a little over twenty members of Youth Photographic Society, Bengaluru, gathered at the Epson India Head Office and Experience Centre in Hebbal for Create. Shoot. Print, a workshop that brought together three simple but essential stages of photography: imagining an image, making it, and finally giving it a physical form.

The day began with Nidhi Arun Tirodkar from Epson, who introduced the group to Epson and its imaging ecosystem. From there, Hardik P Shah (LM-299), who mentored the workshop, gently shifted the focus from equipment to observation.

The subjects were deliberately ordinary- pencils, figurines, miniature vehicles, coloured objects, reflective surfaces, and other simple props. Yet that was precisely the point. A change of angle, a little play of light, a reflection, or an unexpected arrangement could turn something familiar into something visually interesting.

It was a reminder that photography does not always begin with an extraordinary subject. Sometimes it begins with curiosity.

As participants experimented with compositions, Hardik and the team also guided them through exposure, focus, depth of field, and camera settings. The technical learning happened naturally, in response to the images being created, making the session practical and engaging rather than purely instructional.

The final part of the workshop completed the journey: printing.

Participants saw their photographs move from the camera and screen onto paper using different Epson printers and media. It was perhaps the most satisfying part of the day. A photograph on a screen can be viewed endlessly, but a print asks us to stop and look at it differently. Colour, detail, shadow, texture, and paper suddenly become part of the image itself.

Hardik captured this beautifully when he said,

"Printing gives a photograph a physical presence and brings a digital image to life."



Polo Truck © Kartik Raman


Candy Cloud Monk © Priyank Jaiswal


Oh © Subramanyam K S

That thought stayed with me.

Today, we shoot thousands of photographs. Many remain on phones, hard drives, or social-media feeds, seen briefly, and then forgotten. Printing changes that relationship. It makes us choose an image, finish it carefully, and give it permanence.

Create. Shoot. Print was therefore more than a workshop on photography or printing. It was a gentle reminder of the complete photographic process — to see with curiosity, shoot with intent, and occasionally allow an image to leave the screen and become something we can actually hold.

• Goutham Ramesh



Goutham Ramesh is a visual storyteller specializing in heritage, wildlife, birds, macro, and landscape photography, capturing nature's untamed beauty, architectural legacies, and overlooked details through an artistic and timeless perspective.

← Back

HIRIYARA JAATRE - A Celebration of Life

As photographers, we often look for moments that tell a story—a fleeting expression, a spontaneous gesture, a burst of laughter or a quiet moment of emotion. This event offered all of these in abundance. Invited by the organizers to cover the programme as volunteer photographers, YPS was represented at an extraordinary celebration of life, joy and the indomitable spirit of senior citizens.

The day began with the arrival of buses carrying senior citizens from old-age homes across Bengaluru. As many as 45 buses brought nearly 800 participants to the venue. The welcome itself provided countless photographic opportunities: garlands being placed around necks, flowers being tucked into women's hair, warm handshakes, dancing and broad smiles. For a photographer, these were not merely ceremonial moments; they were visual expressions of warmth, dignity and belonging.

The participants were then guided to photo booths for group photographs before proceeding for breakfast. The playground had been transformed into a vibrant activity arena with shamianas and a variety of games. Musical chairs, cricket, golf, basketball, ring games and several other activities brought out an unexpected competitive spirit. Seniors cheered for one another, celebrated victories and laughed at their own playful attempts. The challenge for the photographers was to move beyond simply recording the games and capture the expressions, anticipation, camaraderie and spontaneous interactions that made each frame tell a story.

Meanwhile, the cultural programme added another dimension to the visual narrative. Participants took to the stage individually and in groups, performing songs in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, English and Malayalam. Some sang their favourite songs while others danced with remarkable enthusiasm. Even those who were not on stage could not always resist the music—several joined in from the floor, creating some of the most spontaneous and joyful moments of the day.

From a photography perspective, the event was particularly rich because it offered an extraordinary range of emotions. There were portraits filled with anticipation before a performance, concentration



Dancing to retro tunes © Arun Kumar Madhan



Showing their Energy and joy through dance © Arun Kumar Madhan


Merry Merry Dance © Shivashankar Hebbale

during a game, laughter among friends, pride after receiving applause, and moments of encouragement between volunteers and participants. The photographers also had to remain sensitive to the dignity of the elderly while working unobtrusively, especially while documenting moments involving mobility assistance, medical support and personal care.

The presence of volunteers almost equal to the number of participants was itself a remarkable sight. They assisted with mobility, refreshments, makeup, medical requirements and countless small needs throughout the day. For photographers, these interactions provided another important layer to the story—the relationship between care and celebration.

As the performances continued, lunch was served, followed by the presentation of prizes based on the performances. Eventually, the buses began their return journeys, bringing the day's celebration to a close. The final images were therefore not simply photographs of an event; together, they formed a visual narrative of participation, companionship, dignity and the joy of being celebrated.

About the Organisers

The organisers, V The Volunteers, deserve special appreciation for creating Hiriyara Jaatre, a annual platform for senior citizens from old-age homes. Bringing nearly 800 elderly participants together, arranging transportation, food, games, cultural performances, medical support, makeup assistance and volunteers requires considerable planning and commitment. More importantly, the event went beyond providing a day's entertainment—it created an environment where senior citizens could participate, perform, compete, make friends and simply enjoy themselves. For a photographer, it was a privilege to witness and document such a celebration of life.

• Arun Kumar Madhan



Arun Kumar Madhan, IM-0786 is a landscape photographer whose passion and hobby motivate him to travel to interesting places he might not have considered otherwise. For the last two years, he has been professionally shooting real estate, architecture and executing personal branding photo assignments



Happy moments © Col Nair K V



No licence required © Shivashankar Hebbale



Perfect Game © Col Nair K V

← Back

New Member Corner

Mem No	Full Name
IM-1155	Mr Basavaraju Muniyappa
IM-1156	Mr Gaurav Nakra
IM-1157	Mr Suhas Kumaraswamy
IM-1158	Mr Aditya Mithun Prabhu
IM-1159	Mr Mruthyunjaya Lankalapalli
IM-1160	Dr Girish N
IM-1161	Mr Regimon Sebastian
IM-1162	Mr Karthik Mohan Iyer
JA-0058	Mr Pranav Dharani
JA-0059	Mr Sparsh G


IM-1155


IM-1156


IM-1157


IM-1158


IM-1159


IM-1160

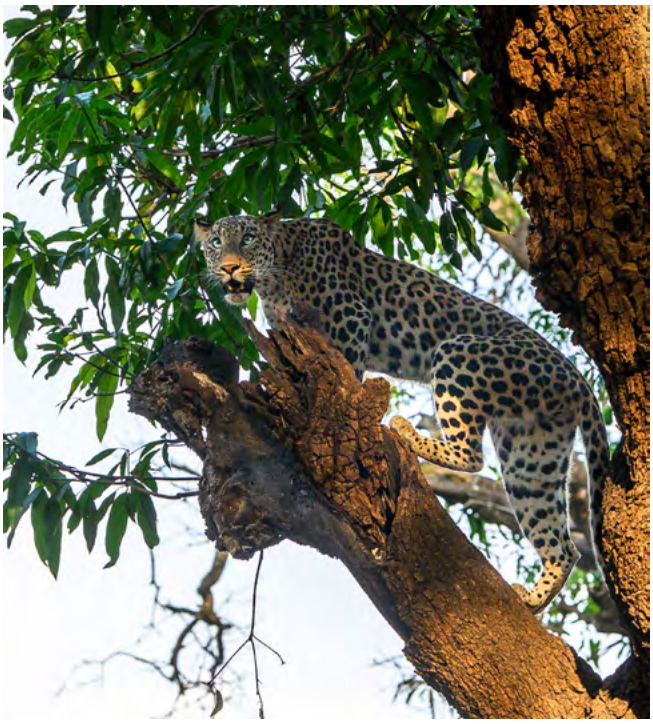

IM-1161


IM-1162


JA-0058


JA-0059


Playful Moment © Gaurav Nakra


Up in the Air © Gaurav Nakra


© Mruthyunjaya Lankalapalli


Royal Walk © Gaurav Nakra

← Back

The Youth Photographic Society (YPS), as a Corporate Club Member (CM-203) of the Federation of Indian Photography (FIP), enjoys indirect affiliation with the Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique, enabling members to earn distinctions without direct membership. FIP also offers individual and lifetime memberships with exclusive benefits to support photographers' growth.

Benefits of direct individual membership with FIP include:

- Access to a range of photography contests at discounted fee.
- Viewfinder - a monthly FIP Journal Publication.
- Members only National and International Photo Tours.
- A national community for like-minded individuals.

Log in to https://www.fip.org.in/fipweb/public/cm-member-select to learn more or to become a member

Youth Photographic Society is proud to be associated with Photographic Society of America as its member. We encourage you to consider becoming an individual member of PSA

Benefits of PSA Individual Membership include:

- Access to a full range of photography programs and services.
- A world-class, monthly PSA Journal publication.
- Members Only discounts on photography-related products, excursions and services.
- Customized photography education, mentoring and critiquing service.
- A worldwide community for like-minded individuals.

Log on to https://psaphotoworldwide.org to learn more or to become a member.

Appeal from the Drṣṭi Editorial Team

Please mail your valuable feedback on articles published in each issue so that it can be passed on to the authors or included in forthcoming issues.

E-mail to: **ypsbengaluru@gmail.com** & **drsti@ypsbengaluru.com**

← Back

Date of publishing: October 31, 2026

Dṛṣṭi
September - October, Pages: 36+4



Sakunthala At Streem © Katukuri Surya Prakasa Rao

Youth Photographic Society

wwwypsbengaluru.com

Contact: +91-9513-977-257 (+91 9513-YPS-BLR) | Email: contactus@ypsbengaluru.com

Edited and Published by Manju Vikas Sastry V, Youth Photographic Society
3rd Floor, State Youth Centre, Nrupathunga Road, Bengaluru - 560 001.

← Back