

## PRESS RELEASE

### Home and the World

**Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Sanjeet Chowdhury, Prabuddha Dasgupta, Jatinder Marwaha, Huma Mulji, Sarah Singh, Manish Swarup and Darshana Vora**

28 January – 27 February

Private View: Thursday 28 January, 6pm – 8pm

Rabindranath Tagore's novel 'The Home and the World' (Ghare Baire) was first published in 1916. Set in early 20th century India, it is an account of a love-triangle set against the rhetoric and reality of anti-colonial politics. The three main characters are Nikhil, an English-educated, liberal Bengali, his wife Bimala, and his friend, the politician Sandip, who is a leading figure in the growing nationalist movement. The novel is structured around Bimala, who at the outset is depicted as a wife who is content with a world delimited by her home. This viewpoint is initially challenged on a rhetorical level by Nikhil who believes that their love for each other cannot be true unless Bimala has more worldly knowledge - and this is provided by the arrival of Sandip. Bimala is entranced by his aggressive, anti-British political sentiments. The novel explores what is at stake when we turn away from the domestic cocoon and face the world. Shot in a stately fashion, Satyajit Ray's film version conveys the claustrophobia of the domestic - for instance the viewer never sees the outside of Nikhil and Bimala's palatial residence.

This exhibition 'The Home and the World' takes the novel and film as its starting point and examines the ways in which artists in India have used photography to capture the state of affairs unfurling in concentric circles from within their most immediate space and moving outward to shared environments of the nation and the region. They examine what is at stake in trying to document a country which has quickly moved from independence to being a nascent superpower, where different groups clamor for their own self-determination and the forces of globalization bring change both welcome and unwelcome. In contrast to the deliberately restricted scenes in Ray's film (for example the surrounding countryside only appears fleetingly), many of these artists have deliberately set out into the country that surrounds them, unearthing the ways in which it wants to be seen and uncovering some of the ways it does not. This is an exhibition about worldliness - about exploring what lies beyond the domestic walls, which now boast security gates and CCTV. But it also about articulating a certain visual self-determination - this is not an exhibition about how the West sees South Asians - it is a show about how South Asians see themselves.

Sanjay Bhattacharyya has exhibited his work in several group and solo shows in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and other Indian cities. He has also been part of exhibitions in art galleries abroad including the Bose Pacia Modern, USA. Notable among his exhibitions is the exhibition of portraits on Rajiv Gandhi, Landscape of a Man, which was held at the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi in 1994.

Sanjeet Chowdhury started taking photographs during his college days in Kolkata in the late 1980s. A filmmaker by profession, he shoots on black & white film. Sanjeet's involvement with photography, however, goes beyond taking pictures. He is a collector of albumen and silver gelatin prints, glass negatives and Daguerrotype plates.

Prabuddha Dasgupta is a self-taught photographer who grew up in the cultural chaos of post-colonial India. In 1996, Prabuddha Dasgupta broke a taboo by publishing 'Women' (Viking Books), a controversial collection of portraits and nudes of urban Indian women. With that gesture, he reinstated the nude to its rightful place in the Indian cultural discourse; after 200 years of Victorian morality imposed by the British colonialists had almost erased sexuality from artistic expression... in the very home of the Kamasutra.

Jatinder Marwaha trained as an architect and then followed his passion for light into photography, focusing on editorial and architectural work. He attended graduate school in the USA and has worked in New York and in London. He recently photographed India for a 6-volume book series for children published by Macmillan. Jatinder has been a consultant on a number of film, video and interactive media projects and is also active in education.

Huma Mulji's work has moved more and more towards looking at the absurdities of a post-colonial society in transition, taking on board the visual and cultural overlaps of language, image and taste, that create the most fantastic collisions. She describes the time we live in as moving at a remarkable speed and in regard to Pakistan Mulji refers to the experience of 'living 200 years in the past and 30 years in the future all at once'. She is interested in looking at this phenomenon with humor, to recognize the irony of it, formally and conceptually.

Sarah Singh is an artist and filmmaker and descendant from one of India's royal families. She was born in Patiala, Punjab, India and has lived in the United States since 1974. Much of her fine art from the last 15 years is included in private collections. Sarah has worked in the film and television industry in New York for over 5 years. Her work as a cinematographer, editor, director, and writer has been featured on MTV, Showtime, History Channel, and many independent films.

Manish Swarup is an accredited photo-journalist, working with the Associated Press, New Delhi. He has covered war-torn Iraq and traveled to post-war Kosovo in Yugoslavia and Kabul, Afghanistan. Swarup has extensively covered conflict zones in South Asia, and he covered the 2004 tsunami devastation from Port Blair, India. Some of his other work within India includes coverage of militancy in Kashmir, the earthquake in Gujarat, floods in Orissa, the Kumbh Mela and Indian politics.

Darshana Vora's work addresses the dynamics of site and space in relation to physical and emotional states of self. Working across a range of media, her objects and installations create situations that engage one in a playful but contemplative way. Darshana Vora studied at Sir JJ College of Architecture, Mumbai and the University of Hertfordshire, UK. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in India, Australia, UK, Germany and Holland.