

PHOTOS: ASHISH CHAKROBORTY



Freeze frame: Gopal Krishna Gandhi admires the photographs on Tuesday evening

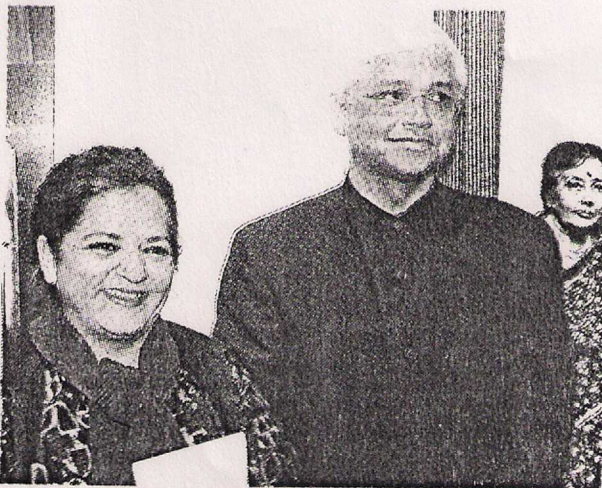
Images and memories

HT City Correspondent

Some were searching for people they knew, others were trying to find themselves in the frames and a few were just absorbing the images for what they were — photographs that encapsulated mostly women in myriad moods. Dayanita Singh couldn't have hoped for a better response on the first day of her expansive solo exhibition, *Ladies of Calcutta*, that was inaugurated at Bose Pacia Gallery on Park Street on January 8.

If author Amitav Ghosh had been invited formally to launch the pocket-sized journals, *Sent A Letter* (Steidl, Rs 2,000), other luminaries, including Governor Gopal Krishna Gandhi, were there to admire the show of a 108 portraits, which Singh has taken on her various visits to the city over a decade.

The most interesting moments were, of course, when the subjects of the photographs glanced at themselves in a frozen mirror. For many, it was a dive into an archive of memories. Old ladies peered closely into frames trying to recall the moments when the pictures were clicked, often exclaiming how different they looked, and young women looked at images from schooldays and tittered embarrassedly. It was as much a social gathering, with wine, canapés and plenty of chatter.



Dayanita Singh with author Amitav Ghosh at Bose Pacia



(Clockwise from above left) Actor Sonali Gupta with director Rituparno Ghosh; visitors at the exhibition

Singh's subjects are often friends and many were there to meet her and renew their acquaintance with the photographer who

excels in making ordinary people feel comfortable on the other side of the lens.

The show is on till February 9, 11 am to 7 pm.