



Pondy Photo 2014: A vision of Life and Colour

Description

Though we see colours in our day to day life, we don't feel them. Dinesh Khanna's photographs come out with such burst of colours which makes one wonder and actually see the colours in our life. Vibrant and alive are what comes to the mind when you catch a glimpse of his photos.



Dinesh Khanna at the event at Atithi hotel for Pondy Photo 2014

On Friday, 21 March there was a multimedia presentation and discussion by three eminent photographers [Stephen Amirtharaj](#), Dinesh Khanna and [Pablo Bartholomew](#) organised as part of Pondy Photo 2014. This interactive event where they shared their ideas and opinions was organized at Hotel Atithi at Pondicherry.

Dinesh Khanna plays many roles in his life being involved in five different areas of photography. He is a commercial photographer, has a personal photography site, he is a professor of photography, works with the NASA foundation and is the co-founder of the Delhi Photo Festival.

Photography is his life and he loves doing what he does. Though he learnt the basics of photography from his father (who was a professional photographer) he did not get into the field since he refused to follow the caste system in India where, they follow the same line of job in the family.

Dinesh Khanna says he drifted off in his own way and spent 12 years in advertising. Somewhere though he got burnt out and came to a point where he could not figure out what he was doing with his life. He says, "I was 32 years old, at the crossroads of life and I realized that photography was still my main point of interest and then the answer became simple. I started doing photography and after a year of it I knew that there was more to

photography than making a living out of it”.

According to Dinesh Khanna photography was a way of means to explore himself and the world around him. He started travelling and says, “The basic idea was to learn photography for myself, see the world and country which belonged to me but I didn’t belong to”. These years of extensive exploration led to a very large collection of images with which he was clueless as to what to do with them.

After his first exhibition in Delhi he got the offer to do a photo book from Penguin so he started editing his own work, looking for themes or threads which could be contributed to the book. In this Dinesh says,” I found two strong constituents of work, one was dealing with traditional markets of India, the Bazaars and the other was the way Indians live with their faith”.

He presented his past, present and ideas for future projects. While showing his photos from his books Bazaar and Living faith Dinesh Khanna commented that, “Faith is something very personal and individual to him and is linked with something larger than itself”. Looking at a photo of Lord Ganesha he remarks that for a believer it’s a god whereas it’s not the same case for a non believer.

The audience were treated to many photo essays and projects like Mothers and Daughters, Incredible India, Urban Trivia, Earning Dignity, Double Take, *Kissa Kursi Ka* among others. Towards the end of the presentation, he also showed a video featuring the Qawals of Nizamuddin in Delhi.

He sent a message to the students present in the presentation saying that they should be more sensitive to what pulls their heart strings and what touches them. Dinesh Khanna quipped, “Don’t look at Stephen, Pablo and me and think this is what you need to do. Photography is not to be done for the sake of photography. You need to find out what you need to do.” He also adds that,” Make your heroes but don’t be like your heroes”.

An excerpt from his presentation

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