

JPC MAGAZINE

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Spotlight
Mehul Jain

Photographer's
Profile *Rohit Sarkar*

Chitra Tahal
Matti ke Rang

Apni Tok Paathshala

THE
STRANGER
IN YOUR
FRAME

JPC 13th
Annual Photo Exhibition

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Editor's Note



Dear Readers,

Photography takes an instant out of time, altering life by holding it still." *Dorothea Lange*. Each photograph preserves a fragment of life, transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. This philosophy continues to guide JPC Magazine, inspiring every contributor and reader to pause, observe, and celebrate the beauty of fleeting moments through the power of visual storytelling.

As the festive season unfolds, the air is filled with colour, devotion, and togetherness. From the triumph of Dussehra to the radiant lights of Deepawali, this season reminds us of renewal and creativity. Every celebration holds a story, every frame a reflection of joy. The entire JPC family extends warm wishes for a very Happy and Prosperous Deepawali to all our readers and members.

We are pleased to announce that submissions are now open for the **JPC 13th Annual Photo Exhibition**. Visit www.jpcexhibitions.com to share your entries. This eagerly anticipated exhibition will showcase **large prints** and frames up to 30 inches, adhere to **international layout standards**, be professionally curated, and present a chance to win awards worth **₹35,000**, including the esteemed **Maya Khubani Awards**. Join us in celebrating creativity, craftsmanship, and community where every frame is worth sharing.

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ANIL KHUBANI
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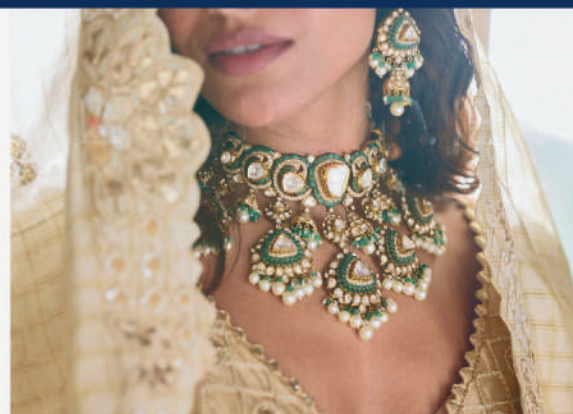
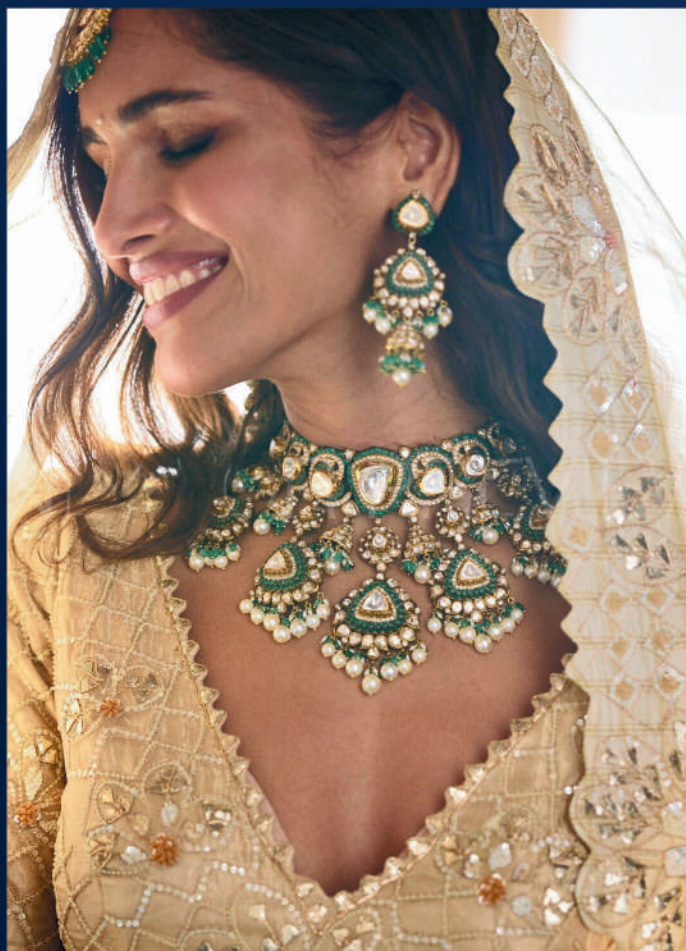
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—JEWELLERS—

Spot Light



Mehul Jain is a Jaipur based photographer whose work reflects a fine balance of creativity, precision, and storytelling. With a deep passion for capturing emotions through his lens, he transforms everyday moments into compelling visual narratives. His versatile portfolio spans across genres from the innocence of baby photography and the grace of fashion shoots to the detail oriented finesse of e-commerce imagery.

Guided by a clear creative vision, Mehul strives to produce images that go beyond aesthetics, visuals that connect, engage, and leave a lasting impression. His work stands as a reflection to the idea that photography is not just about what meets the eye, but what lingers in the mind.





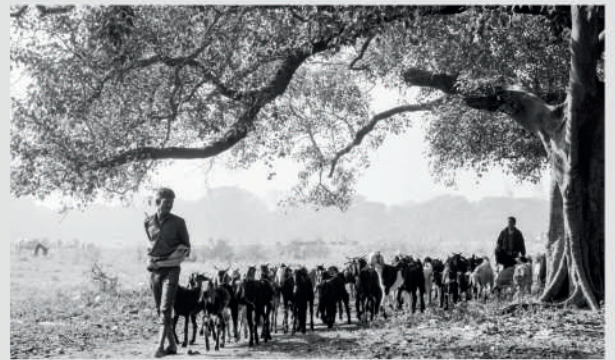
PHOTOGRAPHER'S PROFILE



Rohit Sarkar is a passionate street photographer from Kolkata, whose work beautifully captures the rhythm and essence of everyday life. With a discerning eye for candid and unscripted moments, he transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary, telling visual stories that resonate with authenticity and emotion.

Guided by his simple yet profound philosophy "Everything is a frame; you just have to capture it" Rohit finds beauty in the spontaneous flow of life. From the hustle and bustle of Kolkata's streets to quiet reflections and fleeting human connections, his images mirror the complexity and charm of the world around us.

Having nurtured his love for photography from a young age, Rohit pursued a Master's degree in Audio-Visual Communications, where he explored various creative genres before fully embracing photography as both a passion and a profession. Through his lens, he continues to celebrate the timeless art of observation, anticipation, and storytelling.





APNI TOH PAATHSHALA

THE STRANGER IN YOUR FRAME

Permission, Power & the Ethics of Street Photography

You are walking through Chandni Chowk on a sweltering afternoon. An elderly man sleeps on the pavement, his weathered face telling stories of a thousand struggles. Your photographer's eye sees it immediately, the light is perfect, the composition divine, the human element raw and real. Your finger hovers over the shutter.

Do you shoot? This single moment contains everything that makes street photography both profoundly beautiful and ethically treacherous. Because unlike landscape or product photography, street photography involves the most complex subject of all: other human beings who did not ask to be in your frame.

The Uncomfortable Truth We Do Not Discuss

Social media has made street photography explode in popularity. Instagram is flooded with candid moments, the cigarette seller, the praying devotee, the child playing in rain puddles. We celebrate these images. We collect likes on them. But we rarely ask the question that should haunt every street photographer:

What right do we have to take these photographs?

The camera is not a neutral tool. It never has been. From colonial photography that "exoticized" Indian subjects for European audiences, to photojournalism that has both exposed injustice and exploited suffering, the camera carries inherent power. And with that power comes responsibility that most photography courses simply do not teach.



The Power Imbalance Nobody Talks About

When you photograph a stranger, you hold disproportionate power:

You control the narrative. Through angle, lighting, cropping, and context, you decide if this person looks dignified or desperate, heroic or helpless, beautiful or broken. The subject has no say in how they are portrayed.

You own the image. That photograph can be published, sold, shared globally, used in ways the subject will never know. Their face becomes your intellectual property.

You choose the moment. You capture them at their most vulnerable, their most unguarded, their most private and make it public.

You remain invisible. While their identity is exposed, yours often remains hidden behind the camera, the screen, the gallery wall.

This is not about legal rights, in most public spaces, photography is technically legal. This is about something deeper: **moral rights, human dignity, and the responsibility that comes with the power to represent another human being.**



The Great Street Photography Debate

There is a fierce divide in the photography community:

School 1: Always seek permission

These photographers believe that respect requires consent. They argue that candid photography without permission is a form of theft, stealing someone's image without their knowledge.

School 2: Never seek permission

These photographers argue that asking destroys authenticity. The moment people know they are being photographed, they perform for the camera. The decisive moment, the unguarded truth, it all vanishes.

The uncomfortable reality? Both are right. And both are wrong.

What Seeking Permission Really Does

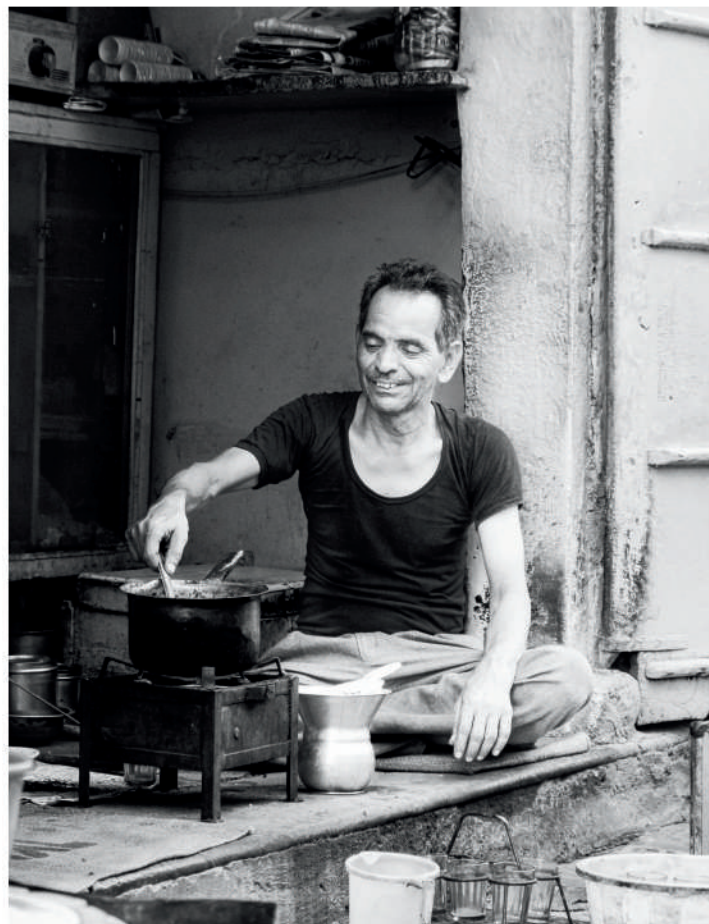
When you ask, several things happen:

The moment changes. The sleeping *chai wallah* opens his eyes. The crying child stops crying. The authentic gesture becomes performance.

You show respect. You acknowledge their humanity, their agency, their right to say no.

You create collaboration. Some of the most powerful portraits come from this brief human connection.

You lose spontaneity. The raw, unfiltered reality that makes street photography powerful can disappear.



What NOT Seeking Does

When you do not ask:

You preserve authenticity. You capture life as it actually unfolds, unperformed and unfiltered.

You risk violating dignity. You make someone an object in your art without their knowledge or consent.

You avoid confrontation. Let us be honest sometimes we do not ask because we are afraid they will say no.

You maintain editorial freedom. You can photograph difficult subjects who might refuse if asked.



The Third Way: Situational Ethics

Perhaps the answer is not binary. Perhaps it is about developing a personal code that responds to context, vulnerability, and power dynamics.

Ask yourself:

Is this person in a position to say no? A businessman in a public square? Probably fine to shoot candidly. A homeless person, a sex worker, a beggar? The power imbalance is too great. They cannot meaningfully consent or refuse.

Would this photograph increase or decrease their dignity? Are you capturing their humanity or their humiliation? Your intention matters less than the impact.

Am I photographing this person or this person's suffering? There's a difference between *portrait of a man* and *portrait of poverty*. One sees the human. The other sees only the condition.

What would I feel if I were the subject? This simple question cuts through all the artistic justification. How would you feel seeing this image of yourself online?



The Real Scenarios, Real Choices

Let us get specific. Here are the situations that test every street photographer's ethics:

Scenario 1: The Sleeping Homeless Person

The Image: A homeless man sleeps on the pavement, his belongings in a torn plastic bag, morning light streaming across his face.

The Photographer's Justification: "I am documenting reality. Homelessness is a social issue. This image could raise awareness."

The Ethical Problem:

This person is at their most vulnerable unconscious, unable to consent, unable to protect their dignity. You have total power. They have none.

Questions to Ask:

Am I documenting homelessness to create change, or am I aestheticising suffering?

Will this image be used to advocate for this person, or to build my portfolio?

Would I show this person the photograph? Would I share any proceeds if it is published?

Am I reducing a human being to a symbol of poverty?

A Possible Approach:

If you believe this photograph serves a purpose beyond your own artistic ego, take it but commit to using it responsibly. Share it with organisations working on homelessness. Do not just post it for Instagram likes. And consider: could you tell this story by photographing the SYSTEM (empty benches with anti-homeless architecture, closed shelter doors) rather than the vulnerable person?

Scenario 2: Children in the Streets

The Image: Children playing cricket in a narrow gali, their joy infectious, the light golden, the moment pure.

The Photographer's Justification: "It is a public space. Children are naturally photogenic. This captures the spirit of Indian street life."



The Ethical Problem:

Children cannot give informed consent. Their parents are not present. Once online, this image is permanent and could be misused. Child safety laws in many contexts prohibit this.

Questions to Ask:

Where will this image end up? Instagram is one thing; a stock photo site where anyone can buy it is another.

Could this image put the child at risk? (Location identifiable, routine visible, etc.)

Am I exoticizing "cute poor kids" for Western audiences?

Would the parents consent if they knew?

A Possible Approach:

If the children are old enough to understand (roughly 10+), ask them directly with a smile. Show them the photo on your screen. Make it playful. For younger children, seek out a parent or guardian first. If neither is possible and it is a true decisive moment, ask yourself: is my artistic expression worth the potential risk to this child?

The best answer is
with YOU

Scenario 3: Religious Ceremonies and Sacred Moments

The Image: An elderly woman prays at a temple, tears streaming down her face, hands folded, completely absorbed in devotion.

The Photographer's Justification: "This is powerful. It shows faith, emotion, the human connection to the divine."

The Ethical Problem:

This is a private moment in a public space. Prayer is intimate. Photographing someone's spiritual vulnerability without permission feels like eavesdropping on a conversation with God.

Questions to Ask:

Am I respecting this person's faith or commodifying it?

Would interrupting to ask permission violate the sanctity of the moment more than photographing it silently?

Is this person from my own faith/culture, or am I an outsider looking in?

What does this faith tradition say about photography in sacred contexts?

A Possible Approach:

Research the religious context first. Some traditions welcome documentation; others consider it sacrilegious. If you're an outsider (different faith, different culture, tourist), the bar for ethical photography is MUCH higher. When in doubt, observe with your eyes, not your lens. Some moments are too sacred to capture.



The camera is powerful. Use that power wisely.

What the Masters Do (And Do Not Do)

Raghu Rai often spends time with subjects, building relationships before shooting. His famous image of a girl affected by the Bhopal gas tragedy was not a stolen moment; it was taken with awareness and used to advocate for justice.

Dayanita Singh often asks permission and collaborates with subjects, even in street scenarios. Her work is about partnership, not extraction.

Sebastião Salgado has been both celebrated and criticised, praised for bringing attention to suffering, criticised for aestheticising it. The debate around his work proves there are no easy answers.

The Final Word

Street photography is a beautiful, vital art form. It documents our times, captures fleeting humanity, preserves moments that would otherwise vanish. We need street photographers.

But we need street photographers with conscience.

The camera is powerful. Use that power wisely. Every time you press the shutter on another human being, you are making a choice about how you see people as subjects of your art, or as collaborators in telling the story of our shared humanity.

Choose carefully.

Your photographs will outlast you. Make sure they reflect not just what you saw, but who you were.

"Taking pictures is savoring life intensely, every hundredth of a second." **Marc Riboud**

But remember: their life, not just your portfolio.

Reader Reflection Exercise:

Pull out your phone. Look at the last 10 street photographs you took or saved.

For each one, answer honestly:

Did the person know they were being photographed? If not, why did not you ask? Would you show this photo to the person in it? Does this image increase or decrease their dignity?

Write your answers. Be honest with yourself.

That honesty is where ethical photography begins.



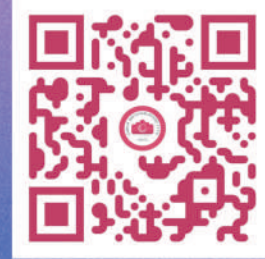
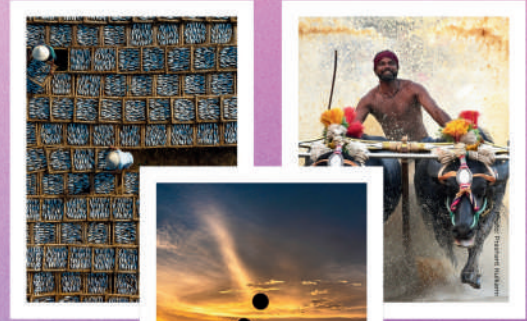
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POSTCARD *From* PUDUCHERRY





Puducherry is a paradise for photographers seeking stories in colours and calm. The interplay of heritage and modernity unfolds through its bustling markets, serene seafronts, and colonial facades. Early mornings bring soft golden light to its vibrant streets, making every corner a perfect frame for travel and street photography.



Photo: Akshitha Veeramalla | The performance of sound

PHOTO FEATURE

A Window into Creative Vision

At its core, photography is an expression an art form that turns fleeting moments into timeless stories. The Photo Feature section is our dedicated space to honour this artistry, showcasing the unique voices and visions of photographers from across the globe.

Each image here goes beyond technical mastery; it embodies imagination, perspective, and passion. Through this collection, we hope to take readers on a visual journey while inspiring them to explore their own creative paths.

This platform welcomes photographers eager to share their work with a wider audience. If you would like to be part of our upcoming features, submit your photographs scan the QR and submit.



Scan QR to Submit



Photo: Soumavo Kumar | Love-s Reflection- A Rainy Day in Kolkata



Photo: Yash Dave | Seeing the life in silhouette form



Its all about the direction



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