



राष्ट्रीय आधुनिक कला संग्रहालय, मुंबई
संस्कृति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

एवं

स्वराज आर्ट आर्काइव

सुनिल जनाह

विंटेज फोटोग्राफ, 1940–1960

क्यूरेटर, राम रहमान

द्वारा संग्रहित प्रदर्शनी

के उद्घाटन अवसर पर आपको 1 अक्टूबर, 2015
सायं 6.00 बजे

राष्ट्रीय आधुनिक कला संग्रहालय

संस्कृति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

सर कायसजी जहांगीर पब्लिक हॉल,
महात्मा गांधी रोड, फोर्ट, मुंबई में सादर आमंत्रित करते हैं।

डॉ. फिरोजा जे. गोदरेज

अध्यक्ष, सलाहकार समिती, एनजीएमए, मुंबई

प्रदर्शनी का उद्घाटन करेंगी।

क्यूरेटर के साथ—सायं. 6.30 बजे से

प्रदर्शनी:

प्रतिदिन प्रातः 11.00 बजे से सायं 6.00 बजे तक दिनांक 2 अक्टूबर से 8 नवम्बर, 2015 तक खुली रहेगी
(सोमवार एवं राष्ट्रीय अस्काश के दिन बंद रहेगा।)

National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai

Ministry of Culture, Government of India

and

Swaraj Art Archive

cordially invite you to the inauguration of the
exhibition

VINTAGE PHOTOGRAPHS, 1940 - 1960 of

SUNIL JANAH

Curated by Ram Rahman

Dr. Pheroza J. Godrej

Chairperson, Advisory Committee, NGMA, Mumbai

will inaugurate the exhibition

on 1st October 2015 at 6.00 pm

at the

National Gallery of Modern Art

Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India

Sir Cowasji Jehangir Public Hall

Mahatma Gandhi Road, Fort, Mumbai - 400 032

Curator walk - 6.30 pm onwards

Exhibition:

On view daily from 2nd October to 8th November, 2015
from 11.00 am to 6.00 pm (Closed on Mondays & National Holidays)



Sunil Janah's vintage photographic prints in the Swaraj Art Archive

This set of photographs by Sunil Janah is important for many reasons. The collection - purchased as a 'lot' - are vintage prints made by Janah very soon after he took the photographs. Janah never made a large number of prints of his images mainly because he couldn't afford to. There are only a handful of vintage prints by Janah in private hands as he almost never sold any prints. His vast output remained with him till he died in Berkeley in 2013. The images in this collection are of varying quality and importance. Many have not been 'finished' - they were not spotted and retouched. Others were quite finished. Some bore the mark of the very heavy surface retouching which used to be done by Sunil's wife, Sobha (his own eyesight was always bad and he had to hold prints very close to his face to see the details). Many of these images are not in Janah's own archives any longer.

One image of the Malabar peasant woman was published in 1943 on the front page of the Communist Party newspaper *People's War*. Many others are images from his first book of photographs *The Second Creature* which had been published in Calcutta in 1948 and was designed by Satyajit Ray, long before Ray became a film-director. It is quite possible that the set in this collection were used to make the blocks for that book as the cropping is identical. I have hung these images and others from the same locations together in the right hand gallery.

This set of photographs are primarily of the peasants and tribal communities. There are a few photographs of dancers from the late 1940s - early 1950s, and a set of his industrial photographs from the 1950s. While the collection does not have his political photos from his Communist Party days, or his portraits of the figures of politics and culture from the 40s and 50s, it is representative of three bodies of his oeuvre. Many of the smaller prints were made for publication and made on different printing papers - warm toned Agfa Portriga and many others. A careful printer, Janah also used different toners while finishing prints. These prints had many different colour tonalities, tones and textures. One of the many unfortunate problems with all of Janah's work which survives in printed reproduction is that the reproductions never captured those colours, tones and patina of the originals. This exhibition in Delhi is important because Janah's vintage prints have not been seen here since his exhibition in 1965.

Partly because he became a recluse and was very protective of his work, Sunil Janah's work had vanished from public view and was not accessible in books. The recent posthumous publication by Oxford University Press also does not do justice to the richness of the original vintage prints. The importance of vintage photographic prints has not been fully understood in our photo culture. These have not been retouched or restored in any manner and have been reproduced in the book with care to match the tones and colours of the originals - for the first time in Sunil Janah's career. This trove of prints is therefore a revelation and will give viewers a unique chance to see the work of a major photographer in the way he intended it to be seen. The book is also available there.

Ram Rahman



NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART

Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India
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Exhibition: Every Day 11.00am to 6.00pm from 2nd Oct. to 8th Nov. 2015
(Closed on Mondays & National Holidays)

INVITATION

SUNIL JANAH

VINTAGE PHOTOGRAPHS, 1940 -1960

CURATED BY RAM RAHMAN



SWARAJ
ART ARCHIVE