

# 'As a photographer, I want to grasp the details'

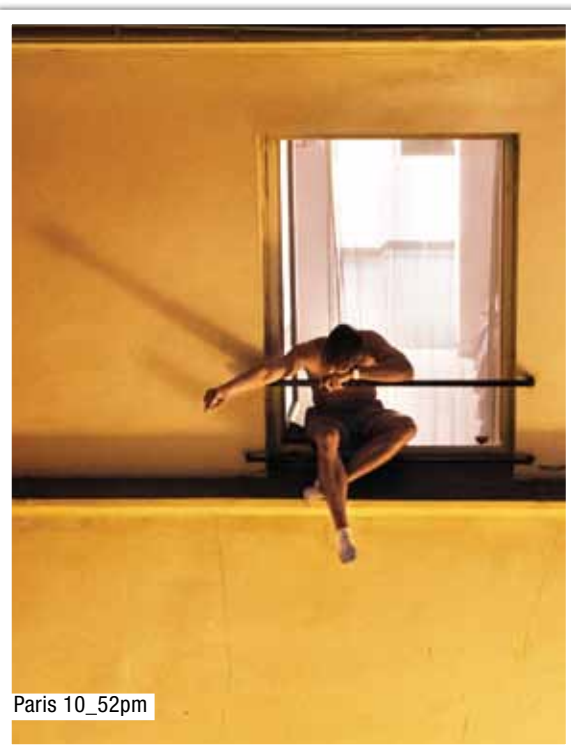
ITALIAN PHOTOGRAPHER LEONARDO PUCCI ON HIS DEBUT EXHIBITION THAT IS ON DISPLAY IN GOA AND WILL SOON MAKE ITS WAY TO MUMBAI

Deepali Singh

For photographer Leonardo Pucci, photographs are like theatrical settings where the real protagonist is the observer's intimacy. In his debut photography show, *Episodes (without a real order)*, the self-taught Italian photographer has tried to capture stolen moments of intimacy of individuals or couples. "But the strength of these photos lie not in the delicate sensuality of the subjects or in a voyeuristic attitude, but rather in a vague tension that I want to induce in the spectator," he says. The fashion photographer, who divides his time between Paris and Rome is showing his works at Robin Rice Gallery, New York, and Goa's Sunaparanta Arts Centre. The exhibition will later be brought to Mumbai where it will be shown at Project 88 Gallery.

● **You credit your father for your interest in photography. Do tell us a bit about how that happened and your earliest memories of picking up the camera?**  
In the '70s during the many trips I took with my family, my father would record everything with a Yashica Mat 124G 6x6 meticulously studying the exposure and shot angles. As a child, that black contraption with its two glass eyes seemed magical to me — my father would look into that little window on the top and the box would capture things! Only a few years later, my father gave me one of his cameras. I still remember it was a Minolta SRT101. Very happy, I used it without any photographic notion during a trip to Berlin. The photos I took were a disaster!  
● **What is the meeting**

Leonardo Pucci



Paris 10\_52pm



Hong Kong 00\_32am

**ground of the works?**

I love theatre and years ago, I was struck by a performance given by the Italian theatre company Motus. The show underlined the role of a hotel room, which, though lived in for a brief moment, ends up becoming the fragment of an open story. Since then, the broader idea of an intimate and apparently protected place becoming a possible episode for an emotional narration fascinated me. Gradually, I developed the desire to create a vast and complete photographic project around this concept.

That's how *Episodes (without a real order)* was born, capturing fragments of real life that provokes a strong story narration, drawing directly from the mind of the observer. That's why my images induce



Rio de Janeiro 5\_10pm

a vague tension in the viewer. On one side there is curiosity, an intimate attraction to the delicate sensuality of a stolen moment, while on the other, there is a feeling of discomfort: he is looking at something he shouldn't be seeing.

How does the observer overcome this emotional strain? Through his own personal narration. He recognises those episodes as part of an indefinite familiar plot and immediately starts to develop this scenario adding his own meanings, tales and emotions which go beyond the subject itself.

● **Where were these pictures shot and which camera did you use?**

I work in fashion and this leads me to travel a lot. I always have a camera with me, day or night, or at least a smartphone to take a picture. I try to always be ready to capture an image that suddenly appears 'terse

and perfect' even for a fleeting moment. Technically speaking, the images of *Episodes* were taken with a Leica M9, a Leica D-LUX or a Leica C.

● **The exhibition is also being held in Goa and Mumbai. Have you been to India before? If yes, what are your impressions of the place?**

I do not think it's a coincidence that *Episodes (without a real order)* opens almost simultaneously in New York and Goa. The United States and India, though so different, are for me two places extremely connected to my personal change. Every time I feel an intense desire of India, a sudden urge to come back to this country, has always coincided with an event that has an impact on my life. Something I had to solve as a rebus and fix it.

I still remember the words of the Italian author, poet and filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini in his book *The Smell of India* that accompanied me during my first trip to Varanasi — "You can get lost (...) as in a rebus, but with patience you can get to the solution: what's difficult it's to grasp the details."

And, of course, as a photographer, I want to grasp the details.

● **Are there any other themes or ideas you have in mind for your next show?**

Since my dear friend, the brilliant Indian author Siddharth Shangkhi, offered to curate the exhibition for the Sunaparanta foundation, I began to reflect that India — so sensual and suggestive, yet contradictory and clashing — might be a perfect setting for a new series of *Episodes*.

*Episodes (without a real order)* is on at Sunaparanta, Goa Centre for the Arts till May 24, 2018 and will be shown at Project 88 from June 21-July 5, 2018.

# ALADDIN'S TALE ON STAGE

Disney's timeless story will premiere in Mumbai and head to Delhi and Hyderabad later



Aladdin's lamp

Deepali Singh

Those who were fortunate enough to watch a show of the Broadway style musical *Beauty and the Beast*, in either Delhi or Mumbai, have not been able to stop talking about the wonderful production, even after three years. So when it was announced that next up was Disney's *Aladdin*, it was heartening news for theatre fans, who were eagerly awaiting to see the adventures of Aladdin, his love for Jasmine and his friendship with Genie on stage. After Mumbai, the show will also make its way to Delhi and Hyderabad later.

**TREAT FOR THE INDIAN AUDIENCE**

Shruti Sharma, the show's director, tells us, "*Aladdin* is being reimaged and developed by BookMyShow with the best of Indian cast and talent to make it locally relevant, without losing the essence of the original Broadway show. The classic fantasy production has already enchanted audiences in US, UK, Japan and Australia, so we are pretty excited to reimagine the globally acclaimed Broadway-style musical for India. It is packed with tremendous high-energy dance, drama, magic to appeal to audiences of age-groups. We have brought together a host of elements — from extravagant sets, lavish costumes, beautifully choreographed sequences, mesmerising special effects, which will instantly transport the audiences into the magical world of Agrabah."

More than a challenge, Shruti believes it's a responsibility to reimagine this world-class musical for the Indian stage. "As far as the treatment is concerned, we have tried to keep it true to the original story and have also experimented a bit, which will take the audience by surprise," she says. Abhishek Maheshwari, Country Head - Disney India, adds, "Stories like *Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast* are universal and can engage fans everywhere. In India, we are committed to developing world-class entertainment that families can re-

late to and become a part of their everyday lives."

**CAST AWAY**

Shruti further reveals that they have put together an incredibly talented cast to translate the fable's magic on stage. The actors who will bring to life this iconic tale on stage include Siddharth Menon (Aladdin), Taaruk Raina (Aladdin), Kira Narayanan (Jasmine), Mantra (Genie), Roshan Abbas (Jafar) and Vikrant Chaturvedi (Jafar). "Behind the scenes, we have unbelievable creative talent — Gaviin Miguel for costumes, Varsha Jain for set designing, Suzanne D'Mello for vocal training, Dhruv Ghanekar for music direction and Shampa Gopikrishna and Bertwin D'Souza for choreography."

Roshan Abbas, who returns to the world of acting after 20 years as Jafar, the Sultan's right-hand man, tells us that his wife and kids have watched the original show in New York. "But now I get to be in it!" he

laughs. Roshan believes that Broadway-style musicals are the way to go in India. "This is the dawn of 'a whole new world', if I can borrow the phrase. I had a friend call me who wanted to book 22 tickets at a go! In fact, people from other cities have also reached out to plan summer visits around the musical. Twenty years ago, we did plays out of pure passion but I can gladly say this is a viable profession now. During this time, the audience's preferences have also changed and they now crave for live experiences of this scale and grandeur," he adds.

Disney's Aladdin will premiere on April 20 at NCPA, Mumbai.



Kira Narayanan and Siddharth Menon



## A visual delight for art lovers

Gallery 7 is currently holding its annual exhibition titled, *The New Year Sale*, where they have sourced 100 works by India's leading modern artists from important collections across the country. The works are discounted at

25 per cent to 75 per cent under the market value, enabling art collectors to expand their collections and for first-time collectors, an introduction to the beautiful world of Indian art. The exhibition features 50 leading Indian Modern artists in

various styles, mediums and ideology such as MF Husain, FN Souza, Manu Parekh, Hema Upadhyay, Ram Kumar, SH Raza, Sakti Burman, Laxma Goud, Lalu Prasad Shaw and many others. The exhibition is on till April 20.

## Eclectic and electrifying



Second Sight

Harkat MusicAlley is a backyard-jam-session-like gig that will bring indie and experimental sounds from different genres. The performance by Mumbai-based band Second Sight will have jazz, pop, and rap with a cellist. The evening will also have dance, spoken word, and a cappella.

Second Sight is an eclectic project with Anusha Ramasubramoney's background in soul, jazz, a cappella and choral music, and Indian classical while Pushkar Srivatsal derives his inspiration from electronica, blues, and progressive rock. The versatile setup

has performed as a duo, a trio (with a percussionist) and as a band with pianist Vatan Dhuriya, bassist Ralph Menezes and drummer Shivang Kapadia. They play original compositions (*La Hermosa Tristeza*, *Poison* and more) and covers of artists such as Hiatus Kaiyote, Jordan Rakei and Djavan. The sound of the band ranges from singer-songwriter to soul/R&B and Latin music.

**When: April 1, 9 pm**  
**Where: Harkat Studios, Versova**

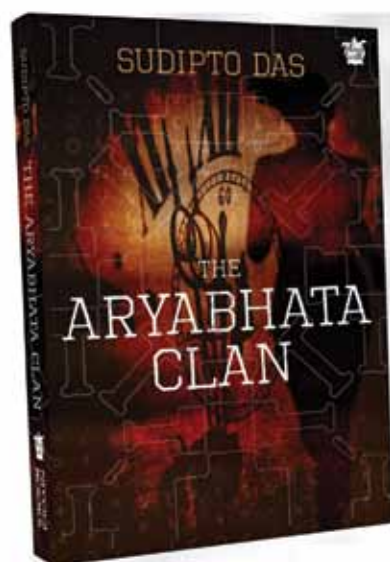
### NEW RELEASES

## Aryabhata Clan

**AUTHOR: SUDIPTO DAS**

After his first book *The Ekkos Clan* that released in 2013, author Sudipto Das has released its sequel *Aryabhata Clan*, which is set against the backdrop of how the Islamic State is infiltrating every sphere in India. This is a tale of a master plan to destabilise India by a Bangladeshi physicist Shamsur Ali and how the spirited 20-year old Kubha will save India from the impending apocalypse. Alongside all the thrills, Afsar Fareedi, the protagonist from the first book, will also make an appearance. Apart from a carpet that has secrets hidden in its mysterious motifs, there is also a verse composed by the legendary mathematician, Aryabhata, approximately 1,500 years ago.

**PRICE & PUBLISHER: ₹327, NIYOGI BOOKS**



## The Tandoor Murder

**AUTHOR: MAXWELL PEREIRA**

Naina Sahni's murder and the discovery of her body being burnt in a tandoor in a restaurant in the heart of Delhi shook the country's conscience and galvanised the criminal and justice system. What exactly happened on the night of the murder? How did the accused, Sushil Sharma, Naina's partner and Youth Congress leader, manage to stave off conviction for more than a decade? What were the twists and turns in the case and how did the investigation manage to stay the course? ACP Maxwell Pereira, who was in charge of the case, gives us an insider's account of events as they unfolded, based on his notes and investigation reports as well as the many stories that appeared in the media.

**PRICE & PUBLISHER: ₹599, CONTEXT**



## Churchill's Secret War

**AUTHOR: MADHUSREE MUKERJEE**

Winston Churchill has been venerated as a resolute statesman and one of the great political minds of the last century. But, as Madhusree Mukerjee reveals in this groundbreaking historical investigation, his deep-seated bias against Indians precipitated one of the world's greatest man-made disasters — the Bengal Famine of 1943 — resulting in the deaths of over four million Indians. Combining meticulous research with a vivid narrative, *Churchill's Secret War* places this overlooked tragedy into the larger context of World War II, India's freedom struggle and Churchill's legacy.

**PRICE & PUBLISHER: ₹399, PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE INDIA**

