

WALLMAG

PHOTOGRAPHY · MUSIC · WILDLIFE · MOBILE

Vol 7
AUG 2026

Signals & Stillness

— **What Does Baahaara Mean?** — Shubh Shah
— **A Lifetime of Lessons** — Digambar Sitaram Tayade
— **Raised Among Snakes** — Rashmi Dsouza
— **Intensity and Space** — Chazz Eternity

COVER PHOTOGRAPH / SHUBH SHAH

$9

EDITORIAL SUMMARY · IN THIS ISSUE

Signals & Stillness

Every creator in this volume describes the same small event in different words: the moment the world got quiet enough to notice something. A wasp on a window ledge. Ants carrying a grain of sugar. A drum kit in an empty school hall. What follows is never sudden — it is fifteen years of walking with a camera, a phone used because there was no camera, tabs copied from a video game, a hide at dawn where nothing happens for hours. Seventy-two creators sat down with us this month and, between them, made a quiet argument: attention is the craft. Everything else is equipment.

72	241	476	70	975
CREATORS	PAGES	PHOTOGRAPHS	SCANNABLE CLIPS	AWARD FINALISTS

TWELVE TO BEGIN WITH

01 An Army of Ants — SuryaMitra Chaganti
An army of ants sharing one grain of sugar started it all — and a Realme C2 was the only camera on hand.

02 Himalaya to Handloom — Subhabrata Biswas
Fifteen years, an engineer's day job, and a long walk from the Leh highlands to India's fading craft workshops.

03 Raised Among Snakes — Rashmi Dsouza
A Kodak at twelve, a childhood home shared with snakes, and a morning at Parambikulam that settled everything.

04 Music as Meditation — Jyotiraditya Bhujang
Tabla classes as a child, a drum kit at school, and a studio where the loudest thing is the thinking.

05 Intensity and Space — Chazz Eternity
Eighteen years from a Hobner acoustic to the place where metal's intensity meets ambient's open space.

06 The Yellow Wasp — Solanki Dhaval Rajeshkumar
A yellow wasp on a window ledge, photographed on a whim, reopened a childhood spent watching Nat Geo.

07 Beyond the Obvious — Monmita Mukhopadhyay
Trained to read the Earth through remote sensing, she now reads shape, texture and light for their own sake.

08 Frets on Fire — Khuraijam Sanjeet
A video game called Frets on Fire, a Steve Vai clip at fourteen, and Metallica tabs before he owned a guitar.

09 Detour Through Weddings — Dev Raj
A 2018 camera bought for personal snapshots took a long detour through weddings before finding the road.

10 Only Ever a Phone — Urvi Surajit Dutta
She has never owned a professional camera; every sunset, street and stray moment arrived through a phone.

11 A Surgeon at Tadoba — Vimal Hemani
A surgeon's hands, a Tadoba hide, and the patience that both jobs turn out to require.

12 A Voice They Loved — Roma Mitra
A voice people loved before she trusted it herself — and what it took to start singing in public.

CONTENTS

The Features

01 **A Lifetime of Lessons** — Digambar Sitaram Tayade — 4

02 **Raised Among Snakes** — Rashmi Dsouza — 8

03 **Intensity and Space** — Chazz Eternity — 12

04 **Mono on a OnePlus** — Mital Shah — 16

05 **From Voice to Bamboo** — Ananta Adhikary — 20

06 **Songs in His Head** — KZee — 24

07 **The Spine and the Shutter** — Sriram Mallik Mocherla — 28

08 **The Forest Chose Me** — Chinmaya Senapati — 32

09 **A Seed, Quietly Sleeping** — Mohua Mukherjee — 36

10 **Born Into the Wild** — Pradeep Elango — 40

11 **Sunrise at the Lake** — Ravi Shekhar — 44

12 **The Long Wait** — Aritra Kumar Saha — 48

13 **Watching How They Move** — Sk Siddique Ali — 52

14 **Silence Before Sunrise** — Yagya Raghav — 56

15 **A Surgeon at Tadoba** — Vimal Hemani — 60

16 **The Bird in the Firebush** — Rajasekaran Rajakumar — 64

17 **Facing the Canyon** — 68

19 **Sunsets, For Fun** — Charu Rathi — 74

20 **Ground, Then Air** — Shounak Pal — 77

21 **What Does Baahaara Mean?** — Shubh Shah — 80

22 **Pocket Money Rolls** — John Vijay Raj — 83

23 **Detour Through Weddings** — Dev Raj — 87

24 **Minimalism and Miles** — Palak Kumar Sahu — 91

25 **The Designated Photographer** — Parth Yadav — 95

26 **One Frame at a Time** — Arjun Basu — 99

27 **A Travel Companion** — Anupam Sen Choudhury — 103

28 **An Army of Ants** — SuryaMitra Chaganti — 107

29 **Learning from McCurry** — Girithar Karthik — 111

30 **No Expensive Camera** — Shri Varsha Jayachandran — 115

31 **His Mother's Redmi** — Rajnewton Sonowal — 119

32 **Beyond the Obvious** — Monmita Mukhopadhyay — 123

33 **The Street as Canvas** — Rishik Bhardwaj — 127

34 **Ghazals and Everyday Light** — Midhushi Shukla — 131

35 **A Lifetime in a Frame** — 135

37 **See It Through** — Apurba Guchhait — 143

38 **Every Shutter a Decision** — Indrajeet Chatterjee — 147

39 **Seeing Saturn** — Rudransh Santini — 151

40 **The Architect's Eye** — Nupur Shah — 155

41 **SLR and Six Strings** — Antarpreet Singh — 159

42 **People, Not Places** — Arnav Sahu — 163

43 **Recorded in a Closet** — Navyaa Asthana — 167

44 **Emotions on Campus** — Karthik Mitnala — 171

45 **Frets on Fire** — Khuraijam Sanjeet — 175

46 **A Voice They Loved** — Roma Mitra — 179

47 **The Freedom of Indie** — Aven — 183

48 **Behind the Beat** — Vardan Pandey — 187

49 **What I Couldn't Say** — H R Khai — 191

50 **Films With My Father** — Sovion — 195

51 **Following Daboo Ratnani** — Tuhin Bhattacharjee — 198

52 **First Milky Way** — Dhairya Desai — 201

53 **Thoughts Made Visible** — Nithya Sai Sri Yerra — 204

54 **Full Circle From Goa** — AKU-KO — 207

55 **Speech Faster Than Thought** — Gabriel Charles Gonepogu — 210

56 **Less Gear, More Eye** — Nikhil — 213

57 **One Image, Lasting** — Shree Madhukar Jamdar — 217

58 **A Film Called 2.0** — Ashik Sha Musthuff — 220

59 **Landscapes Along the Way** — Amit Majumder — 224

60 **Documentaries to Birdsong** — Seema Das — 228

61 **Music as Meditation** — Jyotiraditya Bhujang — 232

62 **The PowerShot Years** — Amaan Shaikh — 236

63 **The Sky and the Grid** — Nikita Yazhini — 240

64 **A Droplet in the Valley** — Ajitesh Ragavendra — 244

65 **Only Ever a Phone** — Urvi Surajit Dutta — 247

66 **Sunday Suspense** — Neha Sharma — 250

67 **Himalaya to Handloom** — Subhabrata Biswas — 254

68 **Journals Became Frames** — Vedika Goyal — 258

69 **Atmosphere Over Accuracy** — Anuktsaroop Singh — 261

70 **The Yellow Wasp** — Solanki Dhaval Rajeshkumar — 265

71 **Lockdown Dream** — Jenifer V — 269

72 **Branches, Then Forests** — Prabhudutta Behera — 273

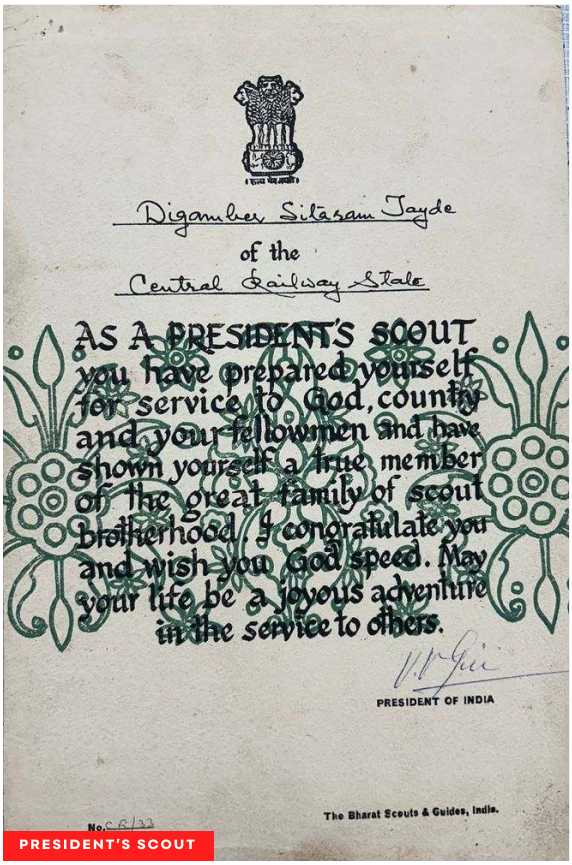
IN CONVERSATION · A LIFE OF SERVICE

BHARAT VIBHUSHAN SAMMAN '26

A Lifetime of Lessons

DR DIGAMBAR SITARAM TAYADE · NATION-BUILDING · MUMBAI

From books read under streetlights to the making of a Mumbai landmark — the President's Scout who became, in his own words, a servant of the nation, and the lessons a lifetime of service leaves behind.



PRESIDENT'S SCOUT

THE FIRST LESSON **How did your journey begin, and what motivated a lifetime of achievement?**

My journey unfolded gradually, shaped by the challenges that came my way as I grew older. Throughout my life, I followed the teachings of my well-wishers, which guided me through every step. Their wisdom became the foundation of my path, and I embraced each lesson with dedication.

A LIFE IN SERVICE · ROLL OF HONOUR

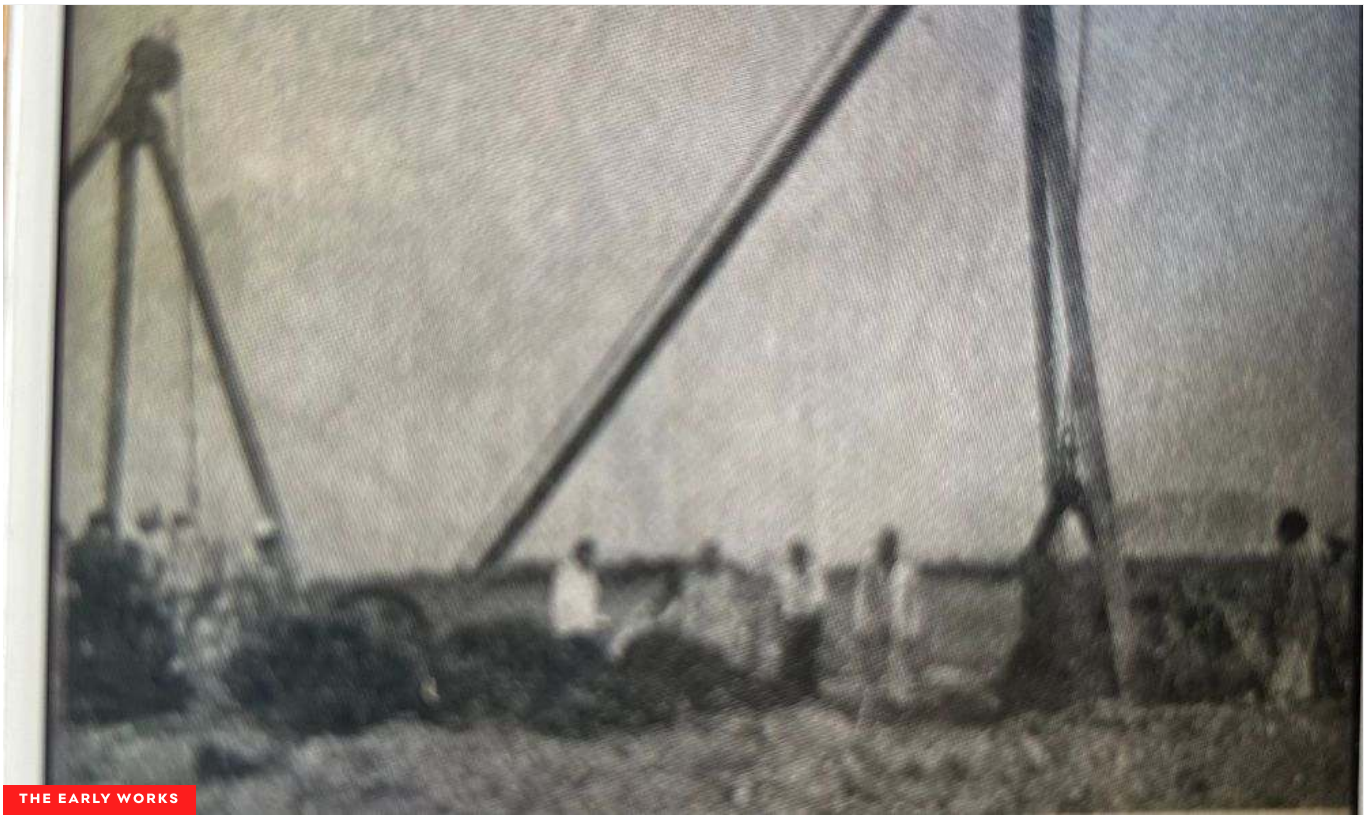
LIFE'S WORK	Bandra Kurla commercial hub, Mumbai — 36 years
SCOUTING	President's Scout — prepared for service to God & country
HONOURED	Bharat Vibhushan Samman — Punjab Vidhan Sabha, Chandigarh
PADMA	Nominated for the Padma Award, 2026
ALSO	Singing, NCC, sport, painting & social work

THE SONG HE SANG IN THE SCOUTS, AT FIVE

"Hamara dharm ho seva, hamara karm ho seva… hame sevak bana dena; kisi ke vaste jina, kisi ke vaste marna — ye karm ho mera."

IT COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED MY LIFESTYLE — AND LED TO MY FIRST AWARD.

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS



THE EARLY WORKS

WHERE IT BEGAN Construction and dam labour on open ground — among the many trades of his early life.

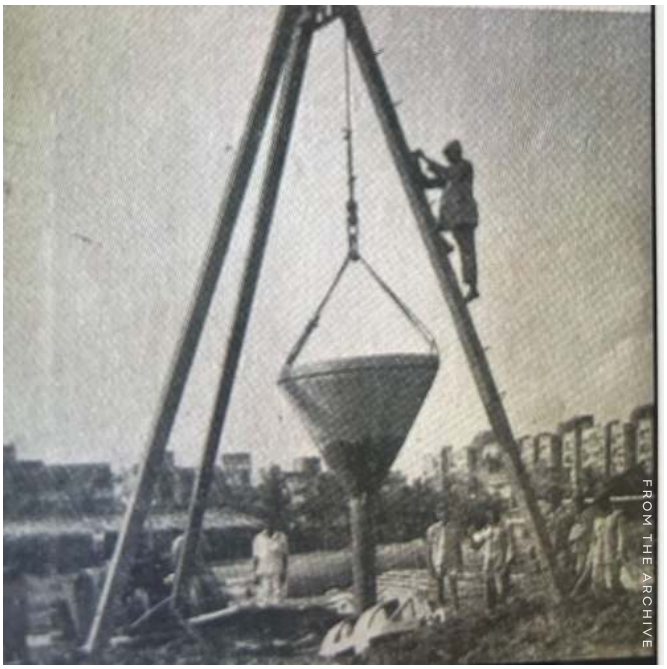
II UNDER THE STREETLIGHT **What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?**

Without hurdles, you cannot achieve anything. To overcome them, hard work is essential. I came from a very poor family — no light at home, no proper clothes, no daily food. I studied under streetlights, worked to get my books, and supported my family. But self-confidence helped me overcome all hurdles and gave me lifelong work satisfaction.

THE EARLY TRADES · IN HIS WORDS

Helper · Jamal · Wood cutter · Cycle repair · Flower & fruit seller · Healer for the needy · Dam construction

> *"I studied under streetlights, worked to get my books, and supported my family.*



FROM THE ARCHIVE

ON THE RIGS Scaffold and pour — the building work of the years before the hub.

THE LIFE'S WORK

III SERVANT OF THE NATION — What work best represents your lifetime achievement?

I achieved success in many fields — singing, NCC, Scouts, sports, paintings, and social work. But my most significant contribution has been the development of the Bandra Kurla commercial hub in Mumbai, from its inception, to ease congestion and create jobs while improving the marshy creek environment. This work, spanning over 36 years, was challenging but gave me the name of a servant of the nation. For this lifetime achievement, I was nominated for the Padma Award and received the Bharat Vibhushan award from the Government of Punjab at the Punjab Vidhan Sabha in Chandigarh.



PUNJAB VIDHAN SABHA

THE HONOUR Recognised for excellence in sustainable urban development, Chandigarh.

36 **years** shaping the Bandra Kurla commercial hub — from marshy creek to a landmark of Mumbai.

> *"This work… gave me the name of a servant of the nation.*



THE MARSHY CREEK

THE LAND REMADE Reclaiming the creek land that would become a Mumbai commercial hub.

IV THE LAND REMADE — How did this work change your perspective or direction?

Completing the designed work gave me the confidence to achieve the final result: developing marshy creek land, with proper study and knowledge, into a commercial hub in Mumbai. That generated a huge amount after selling the land — now used for the development of Mumbai city, with transport, the mono and metro rail, and helping municipal corporations build road networks, water supply, and the other essentials of a growing city.



FELICITATED

A LIFE RECOGNISED Honoured on stage for a lifetime given to nation-building and service.

REFLECTIONS

V PATIENCE & PERSEVERANCE How has your process evolved over the years?

I believe that every challenge is an opportunity to learn and grow. Over the years, I've learned to approach problems with patience and perseverance, always seeking knowledge and perfection in whatever I do. This mindset has helped me evolve continuously.

VI KNOWLEDGE & PERFECTION What personal philosophy drives you to keep achieving?

Doing any type of work — whether it's study, play, helping others, or professional tasks — with true knowledge, hard work, and perfection always keeps you motivated and ahead of others. That philosophy has been my driving force.

VII THE BLESSINGS BEHIND Describe the people who helped you achieve your best work.

The confidence to do work successfully was taught to me by my parents, gurus, and well-wishers. Without their help and teachings, I would not be where I am today. My faith in God and the blessings of my parents, teachers, friends, relatives, brothers, and sisters motivated me for my lifetime achievements.

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch a moment from Dr Tayade's story.



BHARAT VIBHUSHAN Punjab Vidhan Sabha, Chandigarh



CERTIFICATE OF HONOUR
Sustainable urban development



PADMA NOMINATION Rashtriya Puraskar, 2026



DADASAHEB PHALKE Indian Television Award

> *"I still want to do more for the nation — that gives me satisfaction and motivation till the end of my life."*
>
> DR DIGAMBAR SITARAM TAYADE

CONNECT WITH DR DIGAMBAR SITARAM TAYADE

FACEBOOK Dr Digambar Tayade **YOUTUBE** @digambartayade2144

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Raised Among Snakes

RASHMI DSOUZA · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

She grew up sharing her home with snakes — and learned to see the wild as a presence, never a threat. A conversation about patience, respect, and the moments that are gifted, not taken.

Q Every wildlife photographer has an origin story. What's yours — how did this quiet obsession with the wild first take hold of you?

My journey with photography began with a simple Kodak camera when I was just twelve years old. Growing up, I shared my home with snakes that coexisted peacefully with our family, and I was raised surrounded by love and respect for all living things. That upbringing naturally extended to everything around me, and I believe my love for the wild comes from that deep-rooted sense of connection and compassion.

Q What were you up against that day, and how did the shot still happen?

Fifteen jeeps stood between me and a moment I had waited for. Ours was the last one in the line, the 15th jeep, with countless eyes watching and cameras ready. The tigress never paused, never gave us a second chance. Between moving vehicles, dust, and the smallest opening ahead, there was just one narrow gap… and one click. Sometimes wildlife photography is not about having the perfect position — it is about patience, instinct, and being ready when the wild gives you a fleeting window.



1ST PLACE · THE TIGRESS

AT A GLANCE

BEGAN	Age twelve, a simple Kodak camera
RAISED	Among snakes — in reverence for all living things
TOP HONOUR	1st place, WallMag Wildlife Photography Awards 2026
IN THE BAG	Nikon Z8 · 180–600mm · Samsung S24 Ultra
FIELD GROUNDS	Parambikulam · Gir, Gujarat



THE PHOTOGRAPHER Rashmi Dsouza — raised among snakes, now at home in the wild, waiting for the story rather than chasing the photograph.

MEETING THE GAZE



EYE TO EYE The calm, composed posture and the low perspective — you meet its gaze rather than fear it, never chasing, only waiting for the story.

Q When you learned you'd taken the #1 spot — what did that moment feel like?

It was a moment of gratitude, joy, and disbelief all rolled into one. This photograph, born from patience, passion, and hours spent in the wild, has been honoured with the 1st place award. Beyond the recognition, it was a dedication to the Tigress for her resilience — a reminder that respect towards everything in nature is worth it.

> *"Some moments in the wild are not captured… they are gifted.*

Q Was there one moment out in the field — a held breath, a single click — where you knew this was your life's work?

It was a quiet morning at Parambikulam Tiger Reserve, and the forest was still waking up as I stepped onto the trail. Every step felt like a conversation with nature. As I walked deeper into the woods, a movement caught my eye, and I stopped, holding my breath. There he was — a magnificent peacock, standing proudly on an old fallen tree, wrapped in the golden glow of the morning light. The mist around him turned the moment into something unreal, like a painting that had come alive just for a few seconds. I stood there silently, not wanting to disturb the beauty unfolding before me. No perfect plan, no expectation — just a morning walk rewarded with a memory that will stay forever.

IN THE FIELD



MALABAR WHISTLING THRUSH Three days, ten hours a day — for a bird that shows only at dawn and dusk.

Q How long did you wait for that Thrush, and where did your mind wander while you waited?

I waited for three whole days, spending ten hours each day in the field. During that time, I clicked other species of birds to pass the time, but I was desperate for this particular one — the Malabar whistling Thrush, which only appears in the morning and evening.

Q What was it about this particular animal that made you stay and keep shooting?

Captured in the wilderness of Gir Lion Sanctuary, Gujarat, this moment was a glimpse into the making of a future ruler. That morning, we heard of a kill by the pride and rushed towards the sighting. Amidst the powerful presence of eight lionesses, this little cub sat beside its mother — quietly observing, learning, and taking its first lessons from the wild. Those innocent eyes, shining with curiosity, held the promise of the majestic lion it would one day become.



GIR LION SANCTUARY A cub beside its mother — innocent eyes, taking its first lessons from the wild.

SIGNATURE · PRESENCE, NOT THREAT



KING COBRA · MET, NOT FEARED

THE SIGNATURE FRAME Hood poised, the eye sharp — the snake as a presence, never a threat.

Q What is it in this image that makes it unmistakably a Rashmi Dsouza photograph?

What makes this feel like a Rashmi Dsouza photograph is not just the subject — it is the way the moment has been seen. It carries a signature of respectful wilderness storytelling. The snake is not portrayed as a threat; it is portrayed as a presence. The calm, composed posture of the King cobra and the low perspective make the viewer meet its gaze rather than fear it. Capturing that stillness, with the hood poised and the eye sharp, reflects someone who waits for the story rather than chasing just a photograph. The most "Rashmi" element, though, is the balance — wild, raw, and powerful, yet peaceful and respectful.



SERENDIPITY

LAST LIGHT Dust and setting sun — and, only later, the shape of India.

Q What went sideways in that sunset moment, and how did it somehow come good?

The dust rising from the jeeps, catching the last golden rays of the setting sun, became the soul of this frame. I waited, composed, and clicked at that perfect moment when light, dust, and wilderness came together. It was only later, while processing the image, that I noticed something magical — the dust trail had formed the shape of India. A fleeting moment in the wild, never planned, never repeated... just nature creating its own masterpiece.

Q For someone lifting a camera toward the wild for the very first time — the one thing you'd want them to know?

Don't chase the perfect photograph, chase the moment. Wildlife photography is not just about the camera, the lens, or the settings. The best images often come when you stop trying to control the moment and allow nature to reveal itself. Respect the wild first, photograph it second. If your image can make someone feel the beauty of that creature and inspire them to protect it, then you have captured something far greater than just a picture.

CONNECT WITH RASHMI DSOUZA

INSTAGRAM @rashmidsouzanair **FACEBOOK** Rashmi Dsouza

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

Intensity and Space

CHAZZ ETERNITY · GUITARIST, COMPOSER & PRODUCER

Eighteen years, 350 stages and one concept album to Lord Shiva — the guitarist building a sound where the fury of metal meets the stillness of ambient, post-rock and the raga.

Q Tell us about how your journey in music began.

My journey in music began more than 18 years ago with a guitar and an endless curiosity to understand what was possible with it. What started as a fascination gradually became a lifelong pursuit of sound, expression and experimentation. As I explored the instrument, I found myself drawn to the intensity of metal, while also becoming fascinated by the space and emotion of ambient music and post-rock. Rather than confining myself to one style, I wanted to understand what could happen when different musical worlds came together. That approach eventually shaped my identity as Chazz Eternity not simply as a guitarist, but as a composer, producer, performer and mentor. My musical journey is also reflected in my instrumental concept album, Rhythms of Ruins, which draws inspiration from Lord Shiva and brings together elements of Indian classical and Carnatic music with Western classical influences and the sonic intensity of metal. For me, the goal has always been to create music that carries both technical depth and emotional meaning. After more than 18 years, that curiosity is still the driving force behind my music. I believe the most exciting part of the journey is knowing that there is still so much left to explore.

18+	350+	1000s
YEARS WITH THE GUITAR	LIVE SHOWS PERFORMED	STUDENTS MENTORED

THE CONCEPT ALBUM

Rhythms of Ruins

An instrumental work drawn from Lord Shiva — Indian classical and Carnatic fused with Western classical and the intensity of metal.



CHAZZ ETERNITY

THE ARSENAL



THE SETUP The Ibanez seven-string and the Boss GT-100 — the core of a rig built as a laboratory for ideas.

THE RIG

FIRST	Hobner acoustic
ELECTRIC	Cort Zenox 42 (6-string)
EXTENDED	ESP LTD 8-string
SEMI-AC.	Grail 310CE
CURRENT	Ibanez RG7421 (7-string)
AMPS / FX	Boss GT-100 · Orange Crush CR12
STUDIO	PreSonus AudioBox USB 96 · Eris 3.5

Q What's the story behind your guitar setup or recording space?

My guitar setup has evolved alongside my musical journey. I have always treated my gear as a creative extension of the instrument rather than simply a collection of equipment. Every piece has come into my setup because it helped me explore a particular sound or solve a particular creative need. At the centre of my current setup is my Ibanez RG7421 seven-string guitar, which gives me the extended range I need for the lower tunings and heavier textures that are an important part of my music. I use it across ambient metal, death metal, groove metal and other heavy styles, while also exploring more melodic and atmospheric ideas. For live and tone shaping, my Boss GT-100 has been an important part of my setup. It allows me to move between different tonal landscapes from clean and ambient sounds to heavier, more aggressive tones without losing the flexibility I need during a performance. My recording and production space has developed around the same philosophy: keeping the setup practical while leaving enough room for experimentation. What matters most to me, though, isn't how expensive or complicated the setup is. It is what I can create with it. My recording space is essentially a laboratory for ideas. A riff can start on the guitar, evolve into an arrangement, and eventually become part of a much larger musical concept. That freedom to experiment is what makes the setup special to me.

> *"My recording space is essentially a laboratory for ideas.*

THE RANGE

6 · 7 · 8 Strings

From a first Hobner acoustic to extended-range guitars — each instrument a different chapter of the journey.

Q What does a live performance that represents your cinematic style look like?

The live performance I uploaded is from Khasdar Mahotsav 2025 in Nagpur, performed on November 16, 2025, where I had the honor of performing as the opening act for Shreya Ghoshal in front of an audience of approximately 1.5 lakh people. It was one of the most significant moments of my musical journey. Standing on a stage of that scale and presenting my guitar-driven music to such a massive audience was both exciting and deeply humbling. What made the performance special was the contrast between my sound and the scale of the event. I was bringing my own style built around guitar, atmosphere, melody and the intensity of metal to an audience that had come together for a major live musical celebration. There is a completely different feeling when you perform for a crowd of that size. The energy from the audience becomes almost physical, and every note feels amplified by the atmosphere around you. It reminded me that music can connect people regardless of genre or musical background. For me, that performance represents much more than a large show. It is a milestone in my journey from years of practicing, experimenting and developing my own sound to finally standing on a major stage and sharing my music with around 1.5 lakh people.

1.5 Lakh

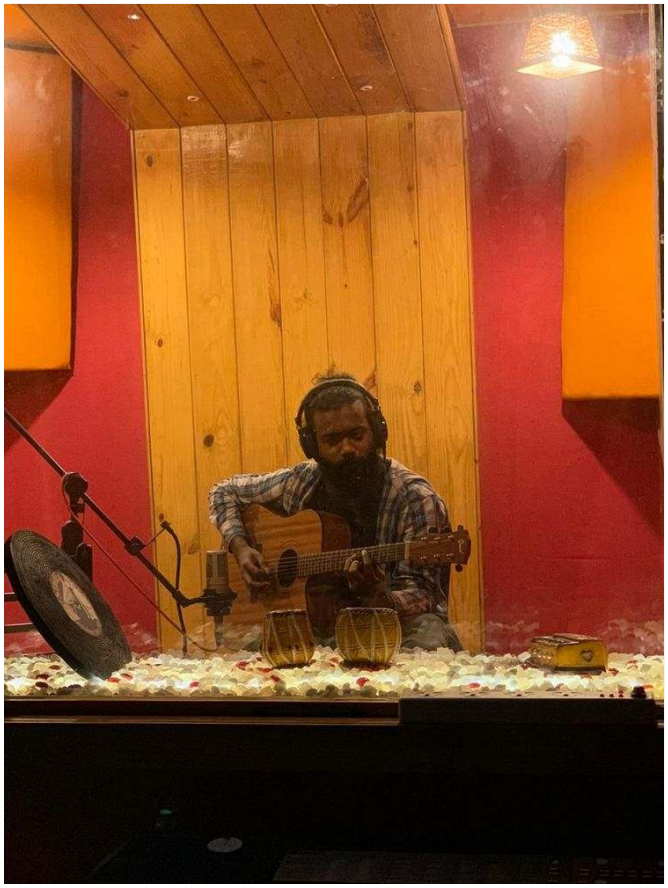
The crowd at Khasdar Mahotsav 2025, Nagpur, where Chazz opened for Shreya Ghoshal on 16 November.

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch the Khasdar Mahotsav 2025 performance.

Q Walk us through the creative process you showed in the upload.

The creative process I showed in the upload is essentially where many of my musical ideas begin with a guitar, a tone and the freedom to experiment. I usually start by picking up the guitar and exploring different melodies, riffs, chord movements or textures without necessarily having a complete composition in mind. My Boss GT-100 becomes an important part of this stage because I can quickly experiment with different tones and effects and see how a particular musical idea feels sonically. Once the core idea feels right, I start thinking about how it could develop into a complete composition—where the dynamics should change, where heavier sections could enter, where an atmospheric passage might work, and how the different parts can connect. The setup in the photograph represents that very raw and personal stage of my creative process. It is simply me, the guitar and the sound, trying to capture an idea before it disappears.



THE RAW STAGE Just me, the guitar and the sound — trying to capture an idea before it disappears.



ONSTAGE Blue light, stage smoke and Lord Shiva in the background — the mood Chazz translates into sound.

Q How do you translate the mood in that photo into your guitar playing?

The mood in this photograph reflects a side of my music that is deeply connected to atmosphere, spirituality and intensity. The combination of the blue lighting, stage smoke, the presence of Lord Shiva in the background and the overall darkness creates a feeling that is both powerful and meditative. When I translate that kind of mood into guitar playing, I focus less on simply playing notes and more on creating an atmosphere. I use sustained notes, space, dynamics, bends, vibrato and carefully chosen melodies to allow the sound to breathe. I may begin with something slow and spacious and gradually build it into a heavier, more intense section. My approach to guitar is often about creating a contrast between silence and sound, softness and aggression, atmosphere and heaviness. That is where my interest in ambient metal and post-rock comes into play, while the heavier sections draw from death metal and groove metal. The spiritual element is also important to me. Lord Shiva has been a major source of inspiration for my music, particularly in Rhythms of Ruins. I don't necessarily try to translate spirituality literally into music; instead, I try to capture the emotions it evokes—stillness, power, destruction, transformation and transcendence. So when I look at this photograph, I don't hear a specific riff. I hear a soundscape something that begins almost like a meditation, gradually builds in intensity and eventually becomes powerful and overwhelming.

> *"It has been a continuous process of discovering, unlearning, experimenting and finding my own voice."*
>
> CHAZZ ETERNITY

CONNECT WITH CHAZZ ETERNITY

INSTAGRAM @chazz_eternity_official

IN CONVERSATION · BLACK & WHITE MONO ON A ONEPLUS

"I still don't own a camera and shoot all my photographs using only my mobile device."

MITAL SHAH · BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHER

Q How did your journey into black and white photography begin?

My journey into black and white photography didn't begin with a physical camera but with a mobile device—the OnePlus 7. I still don't own a camera and shoot all my photographs using only my mobile device. Though colorful photos look awesome with captivating nature colors like blue skies, green fields, and golden sunrises and sunsets, the beauty of black and white photography is very different. When I used to see black and white photos taken by professional photographers, I would see the emotions, expressions, and storytelling behind them. To me, monochrome images seem to carry emotion in a deeper, richer way. I would say partially, the lockdown in 2021 was a blessing in disguise for me as I could find some time, and that's how I started my black and white photography journey.

THE GEAR

OnePlus 7

No camera, ever — every frame in this feature was shot on a phone.



Mital Shah — the pharmacist who found black and white during the 2021 lockdown, and never looked back.



SHOT ON A PHONE

THE MAKER No camera in hand — only the OnePlus.

THE FRAME



TWO HANDS

FIRST FRAME The photograph he was first proud of.

Q What was the first black and white photo you took that made you feel proud?

My first black and white photo was a close-up, black-and-white photograph focusing on two weathered hands of a granny next door clasped together against a dark, featureless background. The deep-set wrinkles and prominent veins are not presented as imperfections but as a detailed map of a long life. The skin resembles a weathered landscape or the bark of an ancient tree, suggesting a connection between the human body and the enduring elements of nature. The reason I felt proud is that this picture brought a smile to her face when she was going through some illness due to age.

Q What draws you to black and white over color photography?

The beauty of black and white photography lies in its ability to strip away color distractions and distill an image to its core. By focusing solely on light, shadow, texture, and form, it transforms everyday scenes into timeless, emotional, and highly expressive works of art.

Q Which black and white photo best represents your style, and what does it mean to you?

These photos represent different aspects of my style. The first is an adult fist gently bumping a tiny newborn infant's hand—a photograph that represents protection, strength, and the bond between parent and child. The second shows two weathered hands, where deep-set wrinkles and prominent veins are not imperfections but a detailed map of a long life. The third is a traditional domed gazebo at Nehru Garden, Udaipur, where high-contrast black and white emphasizes the textures of the stone and silhouettes of palm trees. The fourth captures water droplets on a feather, highlighting how bird feathers naturally repel water. The fifth shows a trio of majestic elephants wandering through a sun-dappled woodland, evoking a profound sense of peace.



THE HERD



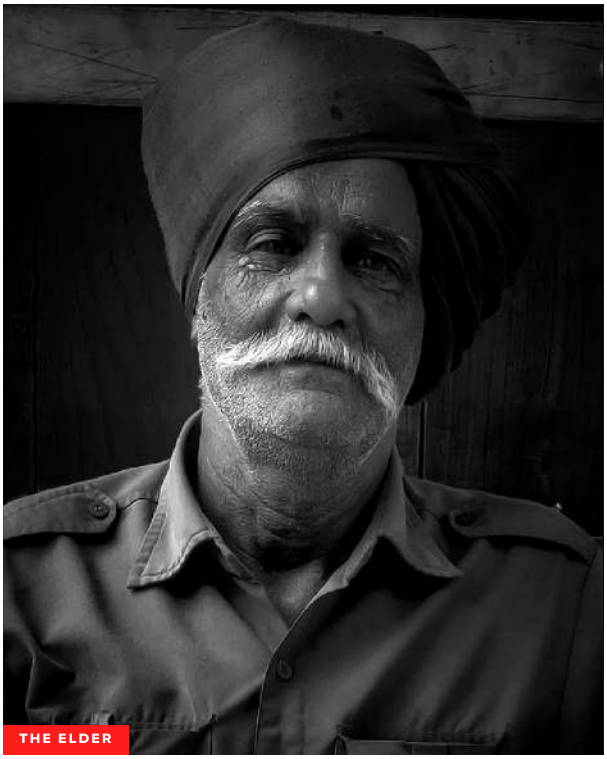


REPRESENTATIVE FRAMES Elephants at peace, the domed gazebo at Nehru Garden, and a fist meeting a newborn's hand.

THE VISION

Q How has your experience and style in black and white photography evolved over the years?

My black and white photography style has evolved from capturing everything to focusing purely on essential stories. In the early days, I relied heavily on high contrast and dramatic light to make simple scenes look impactful. Over the years, I learned that less is more. Today, my style is softer, prioritizing natural light, subtle gray tones, and genuine emotion over flashy editing. Earlier, I used to chase intense, high-contrast black and whites, but now I seek balance. I focus on smooth gradients and texture, allowing the subject's quiet details to guide the story. Also, I used to spend a lot of time heavily editing images in digital software to achieve a specific mood, but now I try to get the lighting and composition right in the camera, capturing the raw, honest truth of the moment.



THE ELDER

HERITAGE A turban wrapped with meticulous care.



THE BOATMAN

STILLNESS A poetic journey between shores.

Q Can you share a black and white portrait that captures a strong emotion, and tell us the story behind it?

This striking monochrome portrait captures a man whose face is a roadmap of a life deeply lived. Weathered by time and experience, every wrinkle and line tells a silent story of resilience and character. His eyes, framed by the textured landscape of his skin, hold a gaze that is both weary and profoundly wise. A prominent, snow-white mustache provides a bold contrast against his dark skin, lending him an air of distinguished authority. He wears a traditional turban, its fabric wrapped with meticulous care, symbolizing heritage and quiet dignity.

Q What makes the composition of your landscape or street shot stand out to you?

At the heart of the frame sits an elderly boatman, his face etched with the wisdom of many seasons, steering his wooden vessel through a mirror-still river. The play of light and shadow turns the simple act of rowing into a poetic journey between the shores of the known and the mysteries of the forest beyond. It is a portrait of endurance and peace, where every ripple tells a story of time moving slowly.

THE SERIES



MACRO Focus, wind, and a fleeting subject.

Q What was the biggest challenge in capturing a technically or creatively challenging black and white photo?

The primary challenge in capturing a macro photograph like this is managing an extremely shallow depth of field while ensuring precise focus. I had to recheck focus repeatedly after placing droplets. External elements like wind are major enemies, as even a faint breeze can cause the subject to shift enough to ruin the shot. The fleeting and dynamic nature of water drops makes them difficult to capture before they fall or evaporate.

Q Walk us through your setup or process for a black and white shoot.

I use only my OnePlus 7 mobile device, as I don't own an actual camera. The key is to get the lighting and composition right in the camera itself, capturing the raw, honest truth of the moment.

Q Tell us about a series of black and white photos that tell a story or show a theme.

This series explores themes of fragility, majesty, precision, and resilience. The first image shows water drops on a web, highlighting nature's patient and meticulous artistry. The second captures the monochromatic symphony of the Himalayas, evoking sublime isolation. The third is a study in precision and texture, with a slender silver needle poised in a moment of intent. The fourth is a portrait of a woman whose smile feels both generous and timeless, a tribute to the quiet strength and enduring light of the human spirit.







THE SERIES The monochromatic symphony of the Himalayas, a needle poised in intent, and a smile both generous and timeless.

CONNECT WITH MITAL SHAH

INSTAGRAM @camerawali_pharmacist

IN CONVERSATION · BANSURI

COVER ARTIST AWARD '26

"I found my true voice in the bansuri."

ANANTA ADHIKARY · BANSURI · RARH BHUMI, WEST BENGAL

"□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□" *The line in his bio — no knowledge is higher than music.*



ANANTA ADHIKARY

PHOTOGRAPH · SUBHADIP

Breath, bamboo, and the soul of Rarh Bhumi — a flutist who began in song, found his voice by a village river, and now bends Baul folk and Bollywood alike to a single column of bamboo.

Q Your bio carries the line "□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□" — no knowledge is higher than music. When did that stop being a beautiful idea and become the thing you actually built your life around?

My musical journey actually began with singing. I built my foundation by studying Rabindra Sangeet and Hindustani classical vocals under the esteemed guidance of Shri Dhiraj Bannerjee. That early immersion gave me a very strong melodic sense, but I eventually found my true voice in the bansuri. I initially explored the flute through local folk traditions, which sparked a deep fascination for the instrument. However, the real turning point in my career was becoming a disciple of my Guru, Shri Swarajit Gopal Guha. His mentorship guided me into Hindustani classical flute, shaping not just my technique, but my profound respect for the depth and majesty of the Indian classical music through my instrument.

ANANTA · AT A GLANCE

HOME	Rarh Bhumi, West Bengal — beside the Damodar
FOUNDATION	Rabindra Sangeet & Hindustani classical vocals
GHARANA	Rampur Senia — under Guru Swarajit Gopal Guha
ALSO PLAYS	Guitar, melodica & violin

THE CRAFT



TWO WORLDS Baul and Jhumoor folk of the Rarh Bhumi on one side; Salil Chowdhury, Hemanta Mukherjee and Bollywood on the other — both bent to the bansuri.

THE LINEAGE

Rampur Senia Gharana

Disciple of Guru Shri Swarajit Gopal Guha — the grace behind his breath, posture and style.

Q Take us back to the very beginning of your training. What's your earliest memory of the bansuri — the first time breath became a note, and you knew this instrument was yours?

My musical journey actually began with vocal training in my childhood, but my relationship with the bansuri started somewhat unexpectedly at the Poush Mela in Shantiniketan. I was just wandering through the fair when a flute caught my eye, and my father bought it for me. In the beginning, I learned the basics and folk melodies from Naba Kumar Das Baul, who lived in a neighboring village. That early exposure laid the foundation. A couple of years later, everything came together when I met my Guru, Swarajit Gopal Guha. I started my formal taalim in Indian classical music under the Rampur Senia gharana with him, and that is when I truly knew the bansuri was my instrument.

Q You move between two worlds — Bengali and Baul folk, the khamak and the Pather Panchali theme on one side, and Bollywood covers like KK, Anuv Jain and Vishal Mishra on the other. What does each world give you that the other cannot?

Growing up in rural West Bengal beside the Damodar River, the Baul and Jhumoor folk traditions of the Rarh Bhumi became an integral part of my identity. This folk world gives me my roots—providing a raw, earthy grounding and a deep spiritual connection to my soil that naturally reflects in my flute playing. Conversely, alongside my formal Indian classical training, I was profoundly shaped by the music of legends like Salil Chowdhury and Hemanta Mukherjee, as well as Bollywood icons like KK, Sonu Nigam, and Arijit Singh. While my folk heritage grounds me in cultural authenticity, the Bollywood world provides a vast, universal canvas for emotional expression. These contrasting melodies have been deeply embedded in my heart since childhood, inspiring me to bridge these two distinct musical landscapes and express them seamlessly through my instrument.

THE COVERS



MORE THAN BAMBOO Every flute a lifelong vessel for melody — each length of bamboo tuned to a different voice.

Q Some songs seem to have been waiting all along to be played on a bansuri. When you hear a track for the first time, what tells you this one belongs on the flute?

To me, the bansuri is more than just an instrument; it is a unique voice that translates a melody into a completely different emotional language. When I first hear a track, I listen closely to its melodic structure to determine if it has the inherent space and soul for the flute. If the melody speaks to the instrument, I decide to move forward, which often involves reimagining and rearranging the piece entirely. However, bringing this vision to life is never a solo endeavor. I rely heavily on a team of exceptionally talented friends who handle the musical arrangements, mixing, mastering, and the entire video production process. Without their expertise and collaboration, creating these covers simply wouldn't be possible.

Q Your WallMag Cover Artist Award-winning flute cover of "Tere Naina" is a beautiful piece. What did you have to change so the flute could say what a singer's voice once carried?

The creation of this cover was a very organic process. I was traveling to Medinipur for some studio work during the winter. While relaxing on the sofa after a session, the inspiration to cover "Tere Naina" came to me, and I ended up recording the flute piece in just one take. The warmth of the track was brought to life by Avijit Samanta, who expertly handled the recording, mixing, and mastering. I wanted the visuals to match that acoustic, wintery feel. Once I returned home, my close friend Abhi and I took a trip down to the Damodar river and filmed the video right there in a blooming mustard field. The environment naturally reflected the exact emotion the song required.

SCAN TO WATCH · TERE NAINA

The WallMag Cover Artist Award-winning flute cover, recorded in a single take and filmed in a blooming mustard field by the Damodar river.

REFLECTIONS



THE COLLECTION

GUITAR, MELODICA, VIOLIN Beyond the bamboo, a lifelong student always chasing a fresh voice.

Q Beyond the flute, you're drawn to explore other instruments and new sonic landscapes. What pulls you toward them, and what has picking up the violin this past year taught you about your own voice as a musician?

As a lifelong student of music, I am constantly driven to explore new sonic landscapes and mediums of expression. I find immense joy in discovering how different instruments—whether it be the guitar, the melodica, or the violin—shape a melody in their own unique way. I acquired a violin about a year ago to challenge myself and find a fresh voice for my musical ideas. Since then, I've been exploring its tonal qualities on my own terms, and it has been incredibly rewarding to see my progression over the past year.

Q Share one more of your flute covers — one that's especially close to your heart. What makes that particular cover so special to you?

This cover of 'Ghar Aao Na'—originally sung by the brilliant Sunidhi Chauhan for Salim-Sulaiman's 'Bhoomi' project—holds a very special place in my heart. The inherent beauty of the melody and the depth of the lyrics resonated with me instantly. As a musician, I felt a strong pull to take that emotional foundation and translate it through the voice of my flute, adding my own melodic interpretation to an already masterful composition.

SCAN TO WATCH · GHAR AAO NA

Watch this cover from Ananta's story.

Q When your flute reaches someone who has never heard you before, what's the single feeling you most want to leave inside them?

I have always believed that there is no wisdom or truth higher than music itself. When the sound of my flute reaches someone for the very first time, the single feeling I want to awaken in them is a profound, grounding stillness. I hope they feel as though they have just experienced something timeless and pure—a fleeting moment of absolute peace, where the breath becomes emotion and speaks directly to the soul without a single word.

"□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□"

Where the breath becomes emotion and speaks to the soul without a word.

CONNECT WITH ANANTA ADHIKARY

INSTAGRAM @wind_man_ananta

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC THE TRACKLIST

BORN KSHITIJ

KZEE

Songs in His Head

KZEE · MELODIC HIP-HOP ARTIST



KZEE

PHOTOGRAPH · KZEE

He was making melodies, rhythms and whole songs in his head before he knew that was what it was called. On trusting the melody first, building the whole thing alone, and the song he was almost too honest to release.

01 Before "KZee" existed, who was the kid making sounds in his head?

Before KZee, there was just Kshitij — a kid who would make sounds, melodies, rhythms and entire songs in his head without even realizing that he was creating music. Music wasn't just something I listened to; it slowly became something I needed to express. I didn't start making music because I wanted to become KZee. KZee was born because that kid inside me needed a voice.

02 When did you realize your melodic, sung-and-rapped version of rap was your strength and not a compromise?

I realized it when I stopped trying to fit into what I thought rap was supposed to sound like. I've always connected more with melodies, emotions and storytelling, so naturally my music became a blend of singing and rap. At first, I wondered if that made me less of a rapper, but eventually I understood that it was actually what made me different. The melodic, emotional side isn't a compromise for me; it's my identity.

SIDE A · WHERE THE MELODY COMES FROM

03 When a new idea lands, does it arrive as a melody first or as words first — and how do you know which one to trust?

Most of the time, it starts with a melody. I'll have a tune or a certain feeling in my head first, and then I start finding words that fit that emotion. Sometimes a line or a thought comes first, but I usually trust the melody because it tells me what the song wants to feel like. I don't really force myself to decide whether something should be rap or singing — I follow whatever feels natural, and that usually tells me which direction to take.

04 Whose voice first made you feel that music is allowed to be this vulnerable?

I think Michael Jackson was one of the first artists who made me understand that vulnerability could be powerful. The emotion in his voice, the way he could tell a story through melodies, and how he wasn't afraid to be sensitive really stayed with me. Later, R&B artists helped me understand that same vulnerability in a more modern way. That's something I want to bring into my own music too — being honest about emotions instead of always trying to sound tough.



THE QUIET SPACE Headphones, a room to get lost in his own head, and an idea he has to record before it goes.

05 What does the setup where you actually make your music look like, and what's the one thing you can't make a song without?

Honestly, I can make a song without a lot of things, but I can't make one without my headphones and that quiet space where I can get lost in my own head. My setup is important, but the most important thing is the feeling and the idea. If I have a melody or emotion stuck in my head, I need to record it immediately — because sometimes the smallest idea can turn into the whole song.

06 What does an emotion have to feel like before it's ready to become a KZee song?

For me, an emotion has to feel real before it becomes a KZee song. I don't want to write just because something happened — I want to understand what it made me feel and what I'm trying to say through it. Sometimes I write immediately because the emotion is raw and that honesty is what the song needs. But there are also things I need to sit with before I can turn them into music. So I don't really wait for the pain to disappear — I wait until I understand what it means.

SIDE B · BUILDING IT ALONE

> *I don’t want to sound like what rap ‘should’ sound like — I want to sound like KZee.*
>
> KZEE · TRACK 02

07 Walk us through one track that almost didn’t survive — what nearly made you scrap it, and what saved it?

There have definitely been songs where I felt like something was missing and almost gave up on them. One track in particular went through multiple versions — I kept changing the vocals, melody and production because I wasn’t sure if the emotion was coming through the way I imagined it. What saved it was going back to the original idea instead of trying to make it sound perfect. I realized the raw emotion that made me start the song in the first place was the part I was slowly removing. Once I brought that feeling back, the song finally started sounding like me. Sometimes a song doesn’t need to be completely rebuilt — it just needs you to remember why you started it.

08 You’re building this yourself, no label machine behind you. What’s the freedom in that — and the part nobody warns you about?

The biggest freedom is that every decision is mine. I can make the music I believe in, choose how I want to present it, and move at my own pace without anyone telling me what KZee should sound like. But the part nobody really warns you about is that you’re also responsible for everything — the music, the money, the promotion, the mistakes, the late nights and the doubts. There’s no one else to blame when something doesn’t work. But honestly, I think that’s also what makes the journey meaningful. I’m building KZee from the ground up, and every small win feels like it belongs completely to me.

09 What are you chasing on your next releases that your older songs didn’t quite get to?

With my next releases, I’m chasing a version of myself that feels more complete. My older songs were about finding my sound and figuring out what KZee could be. Now I want to go deeper — stronger melodies, better storytelling, more emotion, and production that feels bigger without losing the rawness. I’m also trying to experiment more and take risks instead of repeating what already worked. I want each new release to feel like a step forward, not just another song.

SCAN TO WATCH

A clip from KZee’s story.

OUTRO · MERI JAAN

10 What does making melodic hip-hop from India let you say or feel that you couldn't if you were making it anywhere else?

Making melodic hip-hop from India gives me a connection to my own experiences, culture and the way I grew up that I don't think I could recreate anywhere else. India has so many different sounds, languages, emotions and stories, and I can bring all of that into music while still making it feel modern and personal. I'm not trying to copy what hip-hop sounds like somewhere else — I want to show what it feels like when someone from here expresses those emotions in their own way. For me, that's what makes KZee different.

11 Is there a lyric you've written that you're almost nervous for people to hear because it's that honest?

"Meri Jaan" is probably the song that makes me the most nervous because it came from a real place. Some of the lyrics are about feelings and moments I actually experienced, so when people hear them, they're not just hearing a story I created — they're hearing a part of my life. That's what makes it uncomfortable, but also why the song means so much to me. I remember writing those lines and thinking, 'Am I really going to let people hear this?' But I realized that if I'm going to make emotional music, I have to be willing to be honest too. "Meri Jaan" is one of those songs where I didn't hide behind the character of KZee — I let people hear Kshitij.

SCAN TO WATCH

"Meri Jaan" — from KZee's story.

12 What is the dream collaboration you haven't manifested yet?

There are a few artists I'd love to collaborate with, but the dream would be someone whose music I've genuinely looked up to and who can bring something completely different to my sound. That kind of collaboration would make me sit back and think, 'Okay, we really made it.' But honestly, the biggest part of that dream isn't just getting the feature — it's reaching a point where that artist hears KZee and genuinely wants to be part of the song. That would mean more to me than just having a big name on the record.

13 Finish this: "If people remember one thing about KZee, I hope it is _____."

If people remember one thing about KZee, I hope it is that he was always real. I want people to feel that the music came from a genuine place — the emotions, the stories, the melodies, even the imperfections. More than the numbers or the fame, I want my music to make someone feel understood. If someone can hear a KZee song years later and say, 'I've felt this too,' then I've already achieved what I wanted.

CONNECT WITH KZEE

INSTAGRAM @_kshiteez_wasnik SPOTIFY open.spotify.com/track

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

The Spine and the Shutter

SRIRAM MALLIK MOCHERLA · DOCUMENTARY & STREET PHOTOGRAPHER

Three years of bed rest with an injured spine taught him to see long before he could hold a camera. Today his lens seeks out the overlooked — brick kilns, back-streets and the quiet dignity of everyday labour.

Q How did your journey as a photographer begin?

I began exploring photography around 2018–19. What started as a casual hobby has become a way of seeing the world and connecting with it. With every press of the shutter, I feel more oriented in a city, the place I travel to, its rhythm and stories. It became a way to observe, connect, and express myself without words. My journey dates back to a point where I spent three years on bed rest with an injured spine. Instead of cursing my fate for putting me in such a traumatic situation, I let that tragic incident open doors to explore a new hobby without an actual camera in hand. Many hours of reading books written by experts and endless hours spent on YouTube made me feel the gravitational pull to step into the field and explore more when time permitted. I strive to become a better photographer than I am right now, because learning is always endless in photography.

AT A GLANCE

BEGAN	Photography, 2018–19
TURNING POINT	Three years of bed rest, an injured spine
SELF-TAUGHT	Books & YouTube, before owning a camera
SUBJECTS	Overlooked neighbourhoods, brick kilns, street life
ON THE ROAD	First solo trip — the ghats of Varanasi
EDITING	Lightroom, HSL panel, kept minimal
RECENT WORK	The ghats of Varanasi & brick-kiln labour



SRIRAM MALLIK MOCHERLA

PHOTOGRAPH · SRIRAM MALLIK MOCHERLA

THE KILN

Q What draws you to overlooked neighbourhoods?

What draws me to storytelling through photos of overlooked neighborhoods is the honesty and emotion these places naturally carry. There's something powerful about documenting everyday life in spaces that people often ignore or misunderstand. Behind every street, small shop, or quiet corner, there are real stories of resilience, community, culture, struggle, and joy. I'm drawn to the rawness and authenticity of these environments because they reflect life in its most genuine form, without filters or perfection. Photography for me is not just about creating visually pleasing images; it's about helping people slow down and notice what they usually overlook. I enjoy capturing small human moments while staying candid without drawing much attention to myself; these include children playing in narrow streets, conversations between neighbors, fading walls filled with history, or the warmth that exists even in difficult conditions. These neighborhoods have character, emotion, and identity, and I feel inspired to document them with care and respect.

> *Behind every street, small shop or quiet corner, there are real stories of resilience, community, culture, struggle and joy.*

Q A photograph that best represents your storytelling style?

Workers in a brick kiln: This image portrays the scale of human labor involved in brick production. The workers moving across towering stacks of bricks appear almost architectural themselves, becoming part of the structure they have built. I wanted to show the rhythm of teamwork, balance, and endurance required in this environment. The use of color in this photograph highlights the earthy textures of the bricks and the vibrant clothing of the workers, bringing life and individuality to the scene. About the picture of a woman who smiles while at work: This image tells the story of resilience and dignity in labor. The woman, balancing heavy bricks on her head while smiling through the hardship, reflects the strength of workers whose efforts often go unnoticed. I was drawn to the contrast between the physical burden she carries and the calm confidence in her expression. The photograph aims to humanize labor and highlight the perseverance behind everyday survival.



THE RHYTHM Workers move across towering stacks of fired brick — almost architectural themselves.



DIGNITY Balancing her load and smiling through the hardship.

BEYOND THE CITY

Q A photo that looks like a painting come to life?

I aimed to create a painterly atmosphere through layered compositions, muted earth tones, and dramatic natural light. The shifting clouds and soft contrasts simplify the landscape into shapes and textures that feel more like brushstrokes than literal documentation. By keeping human elements minimal and emphasizing scale, mood, and atmosphere, the images evoke the emotional quality of classical landscape paintings.



BRUSHSTROKES Scale, mood and atmosphere over literal documentation — the high country reduced to shape and light.

Q A photo that captures a moment of everyday beauty?

I'm drawn to everyday moments because they often tell the most genuine stories. The first image captures a quiet act of devotion at a small shrine, reflecting faith as a natural part of daily life. The second captures the energy and emotion of a religious procession, preserving a cultural tradition that many people witness but rarely pause to appreciate. Through these photographs, I wanted to show that everyday scenes can carry deep emotion, culture, and beauty when viewed with attention and curiosity.



DEVOTION A quiet act of faith at a small shrine.



THE PROCESSION A cultural tradition many witness but rarely pause to appreciate.

THE GHATS · AFTER DARK

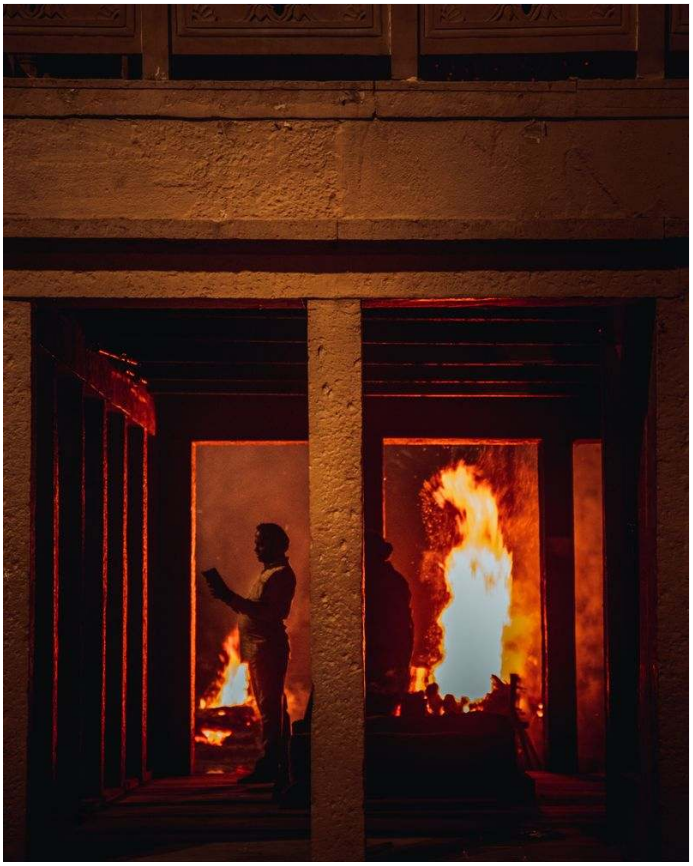
His first solo trip took him to the ghats of Varanasi — dimly lit after sunset, and a lesson in trusting whatever light he was given.

Q A photo taken in challenging lighting conditions?

These photographs were taken during my first solo trip to Varanasi, where many of the ghats are dimly lit, especially after sunset. In such conditions, I never hesitate to increase my ISO if it means capturing a sharp image. I would much rather work with a slightly noisy photograph than end up with a blurry one, as motion blur often results in a loss of detail that cannot be recovered. With modern editing tools like Lightroom's AI De-Noise feature, noise can be significantly reduced while preserving image quality. This gives me the confidence to prioritize capturing the moment over worrying about grain. For me, preserving the story and emotion of the scene is always more important than achieving a perfectly clean image straight out of the camera. Understanding the exposure triangle is essential for every photographer. Once you're comfortable balancing shutter speed, aperture, and ISO, you'll be confident enough to use higher ISO settings whenever necessary, ensuring you never miss the right moment because of technical limitations.



FIRELIGHT Preserving the story and emotion of the scene over a perfectly clean frame.



BY FLAME A ghat held together by firelight, captured at high ISO after sunset.

CONNECT WITH SRIRAM MALLIK MOCHERLA

INSTAGRAM @srirammallik.m

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

CHINMAYA SENAPATI · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

"The forest chose me."

Wild souls and urban frames. An MBA graduate and IT professional who grew up in the woodlands of Dhenkanal, Chinmaya Senapati lives a second life between the deep forest and the adapted creatures of the city — listening, always, for the wildness most of us walk straight past.

Q How did your journey into wildlife photography begin?

Growing up amidst the lush woodlands of Dhenkanal, I developed a lifelong fascination with the natural world and its creatures. That early connection to the forests and rivers near my home became the foundation for everything I do today. It's not something I chose consciously—it's more like the forest chose me, and photography became my way of giving back to that world.

Q Who or what most influenced your decision to pursue photography alongside your MBA and IT career?

The most significant influence isn't necessarily a single person, but the environment itself. The constant interplay between the structured corporate world and the raw, unpredictable wild has shaped my perspective. While my MBA taught me discipline and strategy, and my IT career honed my technical skills, it was the silence of the forest that taught me patience and observation. I realized that photography isn't just a hobby—it's a parallel language that allows me to bridge two very different parts of my life.



CHINMAYA SENAPATI

PHOTOGRAPH · CHINMAYA SENAPATI

WILD SOULS

Q What is the most memorable moment you've experienced while photographing wildlife?

I vividly recall a visit to a nearby mountain in Dhenkanal. I was walking on a long, dirt jungle road when, all of a sudden, a huge elephant appeared, walking right down the middle of the path—and walking directly toward us. It was massive and looked incredibly calm yet powerful, taking up almost the whole width of the road. For a few seconds, time seemed to freeze. The sheer presence of that creature reminded me how small we are in the grand scheme of things. It was both humbling and electrifying.

Q Can you tell us about a photo that best represents your portrait-centric wildlife photography style?

One of my favorites is a portrait of a vulture. Catching its beak slightly open adds a sense of action and 'personality,' making the bird feel like a character with a story. Another is a shot of a white tiger in a low, prowling crouch—the direct eye contact and its tensed posture create an intense, silent power. And I'm especially proud of a Little Cormorant image where the lighting beautifully highlights the 'armor-like' quality of its feathers. Each of these portraits aims to give the subject a moment of dignity and presence.



A MOMENT OF DIGNITY



PORTRAIT-CENTRIC Each subject is framed like a character with a story — the vulture, the crouching tiger, the cormorant's armour-like feathers.

THE CRAFT · CLOSE & FAR

Q Walk us through your approach to micro photography—what do these tiny subjects reveal?

Micro photography has opened up a hidden world where high-stakes survival and the continuation of life play out on the surface of a single leaf. When I zoom in, I see dramas that rival any epic—tiny predators hunting, insects tending to their young, and delicate patterns that mimic abstract art. These images reveal that nature's complexity isn't limited to grand landscapes; it's right under our feet, in the small lives that often go unnoticed.



CHINMAYA SENAPATI

Q What atmospheric effect did you achieve through dramatic lighting in one of your recent images?

I've been exploring how light can transform a scene from ordinary to extraordinary. In a recent image, I used high-contrast lighting to create a sense of mystery and tension—the subject emerges from deep shadows, almost like a ghost. In another, I bathed the frame in a soft, ethereal glow, making the animal look almost celestial. This contrast between drama and serenity allows me to tell different emotional stories within the same session. Lighting, for me, is the unsung hero that sets the mood.



CHINMAYA SENAPATI



CHINMAYA SENAPATI

DRAMA & SERENITY

URBAN FRAMES

Q How has your perspective on wildlife and urban spaces evolved since you started?

My perspective has shifted dramatically—from seeing cities as the "absence" of nature to recognizing them as shared ecosystems. Initially, I was completely focused on remote wilderness areas and overlooked the urban environment entirely. But observing how life adapts to these spaces reveals a much deeper connection. While habitat loss is a harsh reality, I no longer just walk through the city; I now consciously check the canopy of street trees and listen for beautiful bird calls. It's a reminder that wildness persists even in our most built-up environments.

Q What story does your urban wildlife encounter tell about modern coexistence?

A Rhesus macaque I photographed demonstrates how wildlife has learned to exploit human environments. Instead of foraging for fruit or leaves, it has mastered the 'urban hunt.' The way it handles a plastic snack bag shows learned behavior —it knows these containers hold high-calorie rewards. This image captures a poignant moment: adaptation in the Anthropocene. It's a bittersweet reminder that while nature is resilient, our actions are shaping its evolution in ways we don't always see.

Q Why did you choose to highlight an underappreciated creature like the Black-hooded Oriole?

The Black-hooded Oriole is a masterclass in color theory. The deep velvet black against that 'turmeric' yellow provides a naturally cinematic palette. By highlighting this bird, I can play with the viewer's gaze and explore how urban camouflage works in unexpected ways. Often, these birds go unnoticed because they blend into the foliage. But their quiet beauty is a reminder that every creature, no matter how small or common, has a unique elegance worth celebrating.



THE URBAN HUNT





CONNECT WITH CHINMAYA SENAPATI

INSTAGRAM @cswildsoul **YOUTUBE** @Chinmaya_Photography

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

A Seed, Quietly Sleeping

MOHUA MUKHERJEE · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

From a Kodak Hotshot gifted in class 8 to the damp, dark jungles of the Mishmi Hills — a self-taught Kolkata photographer on patience, master skulkers, and the vanishing gems of the wild.







MOHUA MUKHERJEE IN THE FIELD — FROM KOLKATA TO THE HILLS OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

Based in Kolkata, India, I took up photography quite early, and it all started when I was in class 8. I got a Kodak Hotshot camera as my birthday gift. During that time, I was not aware of the little seed of creativity that slept quietly inside me. However, this camera intrigued me to venture out and try to create something. I started shooting landscapes, flowers, people, and whatever came across. Frequent travelling and vacations also helped me gain a lot of experience and perspective in photography. Being a self-taught photographer, I always wanted to capture nature in its true form. Down the years, I kept clicking mostly while travelling, trying to learn from my mistakes. However, as I grew up, studies took up all my time and photography took a back seat. This gap continued for quite a few years till I bought a DSLR camera. It was a basic model with 2 kit lenses (18-55mm and 70-300mm). Nevertheless, a whole world opened up in front of me, and I started experimenting. My journey in wildlife started when an old friend took me to the nearby park and told me to take pictures of the birds around. With the 70-300mm, I started clicking, and it was just crazily satisfying, something that cannot be described in words. From then on, there was no looking back. I became keen on understanding the genre of photography I wanted to work on. That is how my journey started. I practiced, developed my technical skills, attended workshops and seminars on photography, learnt to use various editing tools, and it paved the way I would happily walk on. Now, it is not just a good frame that I am looking for; it is my connection with nature that keeps me focused. The best part of my journey has taught me some of the best things in life, like patience, observation, readiness, keeping your focus, adapting to the most difficult places, and many more. It has also taught me the importance of wildlife habitat and its conservation. Wildlife photography has not only helped me grow as a photographer but as a human being as well.

THE AWAKENING

Q What is the most important lesson wildlife photography has taught you?

Well, there are many, but the most important is to love and respect Mother Nature and her creations.

Q What was the story behind that challenging wildlife shot?

I shot this one in the deep, dark jungle of the Mishmi Hills. The Mishmi Hill in Arunachal Pradesh is one of the rarest and most uninhabitable places I have ever been to. So much so that you will not find a single village in that entire area. It was damp, dark, and raining now and then. November was very cold and damp. With a raincoat on, I set off to find this near-threatened species. Cachar Wedge Billed Babbler is a master skulker and stays deep inside the bushes only to peek out for a second or two before disappearing again. I can't explain the condition I shot in and the patience I gathered. Finally, I got just one single shot of this bird. I will always remember this moment.

> *"It is not just a good frame that I am looking for; it is my connection with nature that keeps me focused.*



THE MASTER SKULKER

MISHMI HILLS Cachar Wedge-Billed Babbler, a near-threatened species — one single frame. Mohua Mukherjee



THE ROYAL · CORBETT TIGER RESERVE

MOHUA MUKHERJEE

Q What makes this tiger photo your best wildlife work?

With more and more people being enthusiastic about safari trips, there is no shortage of good Tiger photos, especially on the internet. However, what makes a photo great is the moment that it captures. Something unique and something that you do not get to see often. This picture was shot at Corbett Tiger Reserve. The clear blue water on a bright sunny day made my moment of capturing the Royal in its best possible style. A smooth yet dramatic contrast of the tiger against the blue water is something I have not seen much. The splashing water added an extra element to this photograph.



THE EDIT A soft, blurred background — a portrait shaped in Photoshop and Lightroom. Mohua Mukherjee

Q What editing techniques did you apply to enhance this wildlife photo?

I always use Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom for editing my wildlife photographs. I usually fix the colour levels, exposure, highlights etc. and for some portraits I use Gaussian Blur Tool to blur the background for better effect. I do not do heavy edits. I used the blur effect and colour adjustments in this photograph.

Q How has your experience and perspective as a photographer grown over the years?

Wildlife photography has shown me nature in its truest form. The practical part has taught me to be more observant about various malpractices all for "a unique frame". The do's and don'ts of wildlife photography have become clearer, and how important conservation is, for our future and this earth. The spiritual part has taught me patience, keen observation, connect with myself and surround myself with nothing but positivity.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the tiger walk-out from Mohua Mukherjee's story.

Q What was happening in that memorable tiger encounter you filmed?

This happens to be my first-ever head-on encounter with a tiger in the wild. She was so bold that she did not care about the people and gypsies around. She suddenly came out of nowhere and started walking confidently without a care in the world. She walked for long and came so close to my gypsy that I lost focus and was quite scared at one point!

Q Describe your process and preparation for a typical wildlife shoot.

I do a little research about the species, environment, and conditions I am targeting for my shoot. This helps me set my camera to get the best output. Since I shoot birds so often, I always keep my essentials ready. For birds, I have to set out very early in the morning. I keep my camera bag ready beforehand to ensure a successful shoot day. If I am travelling to a different state or place, then the preparation starts from arranging my travel and stay.

Q How does your favorite camera setup or location help you in the field?

As a wildlife photographer, my go-to lens is a heavy super-telephoto lens of 200-500mm. Carrying such a heavy thing for hours takes a toll on my shoulders and, thus, I always prefer using a Monopod or a tripod, depending on the location, terrain, species I am shooting, etc., while I handhold my camera when I want to capture a bird in flight, but I am more comfortable with a camera support when I am shooting for long hours.

THE VANISHING

Q Why were these captures of threatened species so meaningful to you?

I have been photographing wildlife for quite a few years now, and a very important thing that I have learnt about is the process of extinction that many species of birds have gone through. It kind of saddened me about the fact that humans have been the most important factor. I have also seen many organizations making an effort to revive many species in India. So whenever I just get extremely lucky to come across a bird that is threatened or on the IUCN list, I feel happy to know that these gems of nature are coming back slowly. The two photographs I have shared are threatened species that I luckily spotted while travelling.

AT A GLANCE

BASED IN	Kolkata, India
GENRE	Wildlife photography, self-taught
GO-TO LENS	200–500mm super-telephoto
EDITED IN	Adobe Photoshop & Lightroom
IN THE FIELD	Corbett; Mishmi Hills, Arunachal



ON THE IUCN LIST A threatened raptor, spotted while travelling. Mohua Mukherjee



GEMS OF NATURE A pair of Cheer Pheasant, on the IUCN list — coming back, slowly. Mohua Mukherjee

CONNECT WITH MOHUA MUKHERJEE

INSTAGRAM @nature_untamed_

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Born Into the Wild

PRADEEP ELANGO · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

Raised on his parents' forest trips and awakened by a grassland alive with a hundred deer, a photographer who waits, watches, and lets the tiger keep its quiet dignity.



PHOTOGRAPH · PRADEEP ELANGO

IN THE FIELD

Q How did your journey in wildlife photography begin?

My love for nature and wildlife was sown very early, and I owe it entirely to my parents. They were both deeply passionate about the natural world, and they would take me on wildlife trips when I was just a baby. Those early experiences, observing and learning from my father, sparked an enthusiasm that never left me. As I grew older and my own interest blossomed, they were my biggest cheerleaders, encouraging me to follow this passion—a support they still offer today. To put it simply, the initial spark came from my parents, and later, various nature shows and documentaries fanned that flame into a full-blown drive for wildlife photography.

AT A GLANCE

MEDIUM
Wildlife photography

THE SPARK
His parents

FIRST FRAME
Masinagudi, Mudumalai

HOME GROUND
Bandipur Tiger Reserve

KINDRED SUBJECT
The tiger

THE SPARK



ON THE PROWL "She walked just in front of us, kicking up dust behind her, cutting through the stifling heat."

Q What was the first wildlife moment that made you fall in love with photography?

While I had visited many parks and nature retreats before, my true eye-opener for photography happened during a visit to Masinagudi in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve. Two of my friends, Mr. John and Mr. Roshan, owned a place there, and I had just arrived. As I stood on their porch, I looked out over a vast grassland interspersed with trees. In that very moment, over a hundred cheetal, or spotted deer, entered the frame. The sight was so breathtaking, so perfectly composed, that it was permanently etched on my mind. That was the precise moment I decided I had to capture such moments forever.

Q Tell us about a photo that represents your best wildlife photography work.

It was a scorching hot summer afternoon during a game drive in Bandipur Tiger Reserve. We had just entered the forest, sweating and eagerly scanning every direction. The silence was absolute. The forest looked devoid of life; even the leaves stood still as there was no breeze. Yet, in all its might, the queen of the jungle was afoot and on the prowl. She walked just in front of us, kicking up dust behind her, cutting through the stifling heat. We had a brief but magnificent opportunity to observe her before she vanished into the thickets. That image perfectly captures that moment of silent, raw power.

Q How has your experience in wildlife photography grown over the years?

Absolutely, the growth has been immense. Each trip into the field teaches me something new, whether it's about animal behavior, light, or patience. I've learned that every outing is a masterclass in observation. What started as simply wanting to capture a beautiful animal has evolved into a deep desire to tell a story about the habitat, the mood, and the delicate balance of the ecosystem. The technical skills have sharpened, but more importantly, my understanding of wildlife and my respect for their space has deepened profoundly.



IN THE FIELD Each encounter, he says, reinforces the same quiet respect for the animal's space.

Q What wildlife species do you feel most connected to, and why?

Without a doubt, it's the tiger. I have an immense respect for this species, and every encounter I've had has reinforced that feeling. Each time I've seen one, it has effortlessly portrayed the truth behind Jim Corbett's famous quote: 'The Tiger is a gentleman.' There is a quiet dignity, a regal calmness, and a raw power in them that just resonates with me.

Q Walk us through the editing choices you made in the unedited version of your shot.

My main goal was to emphasize the details on the subject, which were particularly noticeable in that raw image. In my mind, it was the only thing I was focused on: how was I going to show the audience the finer textures of the animal's fur and the intensity in its eye while still preserving the integrity of its habitat? I didn't want to over-process and create an artificial look. It was a careful balance of pulling out the details without compromising the natural atmosphere of the scene.



AT WORK Studying the subject, waiting for the best frame that tells a story about the habitat.

> *"They are not just predators; they are the soul of the forest.*

IN THE FIELD



THE PURSUIT "It's a combination of patience, study, and being in the right place at the right time."

Q What makes your current camera gear essential for your work?

I am happy to share that this particular system offers an incredible combination of advancement, versatility, and maneuverability without compromising on quality. In wildlife photography, you often need to react in a split second, and the gear's reliability is paramount. This setup gives me the confidence to chase the perfect shot, whether I am tracking a fast-moving bird or capturing a low-light predator at dusk.

Q What was a particularly challenging session like?

Each trip is a challenge, to be honest. The same location can offer wildly different challenges depending on the season, the weather, and even the time of day. In every session, I am simply looking for the best pose the subject can offer, the best frame that tells a story about the habitat, the best light I could possibly get, and the colours that will make the image sing.

Q How did you achieve the unique perspective in your Malabar giant squirrel shot?

To capture this image of a Malabar giant squirrel mid-jump, I had to do more than just point and shoot. I spent time observing the species, studying its behavior patterns, and understanding its movements. The key was to anticipate its actions. By knowing where it was likely to leap next, I could pre-focus and be ready to freeze the action at the precise moment it launched itself. It's a combination of patience, study, and being in the right place at the right time.

CONNECT WITH PRADEEP ELANGO

INSTAGRAM @dr_pradeep_elango

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Sunrise at the Lake

RAVI SHEKHAR · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

My journey began with simple walks to a nearby lake, where I spent countless hours observing beautiful birds from sunrise to sunset.

Q How did your journey in wildlife photography begin?

My journey began with simple walks to a nearby lake, where I spent countless hours observing beautiful birds from sunrise to sunset. Fascinated by their colors, movements, and behavior, I started capturing these precious moments on my mobile phone. What began as a hobby soon turned into a passion. With every photograph, my appreciation for nature and wildlife grew stronger. As my interest deepened, I invested in a camera to explore photography more seriously and capture the beauty of birds and nature with greater detail and creativity. Today, photography is more than just taking pictures—it's a way of telling stories, preserving moments, and sharing the incredible beauty of the natural world. Every click of the shutter reflects my love for wildlife, nature, and the endless adventures that await in the outdoors.

AT A GLANCE

FIELD	Wildlife & birds
FIRST FRAME	Birds by a local lake, shot on a phone
KIT	70–300mm & 200–500mm; crop + full-frame
GROUND	Forests, wetlands & Bandipur
SIGNATURE	“The Silent Hunter”



RAVI SHEKHAR

THE LAKESIDE BEGINNING



THE WILD A spotted deer pauses in the open grass.

Q When was the first time you had a memorable encounter with a wild animal?

One of my most unforgettable wildlife moments happened while riding from Mysore to Ooty through the beautiful Bandipur forest. As I cruised along the forest road, a young fawn suddenly emerged from the greenery and gracefully jumped in front of my bike. For a few magical moments, it stayed nearby, playfully hopping and leaping around as if curious about its unexpected visitor. Surrounded by the serene wilderness, the encounter felt almost unreal—a rare and heartwarming connection with nature in its purest form. Watching the innocent fawn move freely through its natural habitat remains one of my most cherished wildlife memories and a reminder of the unexpected wonders that await in the wild.



ON THE MOVE A pack crosses a forest track.

Q What drives you to continue capturing wildlife moments?

What keeps me passionate about wildlife photography is the thrill of witnessing moments that are unique, unpredictable, and impossible to recreate. Every time I step into nature, there is a sense of anticipation—never knowing what I might encounter next. From the birds I first photographed near a local lake to unforgettable experiences like a playful fawn crossing my path in Bandipur Forest, each encounter has deepened my connection with the natural world. Wildlife photography allows me to tell stories that many people may never get the chance to witness firsthand. Through my images, I hope to share the beauty, behavior, and emotions of wildlife, inspiring others to appreciate and protect these incredible creatures and their habitats. It is also a continuous learning journey. Every outing teaches me something new about animal behavior, patience, light, composition, and the delicate balance of nature. The challenge of capturing a fleeting moment and preserving it forever is what keeps me coming back. For me, wildlife photography is more than a hobby—it is a way of connecting with nature, creating lasting memories, and sharing the wonder of the wild with others.



THE SILENT HUNTER A tiger dissolves into the golden grass—only its face, ears and markings give it away.

Q What does your best wildlife photography work look like?

The Silent Hunter. This captivating wildlife photograph captures a tiger moving stealthily through a sea of golden grass, perfectly demonstrating the art of camouflage in the wild. Only part of the tiger's face, ears, and distinctive orange-and-black markings are visible, while the rest of its body blends seamlessly into the surrounding vegetation. The tall, sunlit grass dominates the frame, creating a sense of mystery and anticipation. The tiger appears focused and alert, perhaps stalking prey or carefully surveying its surroundings. What makes this photograph particularly powerful is that the tiger is not fully revealed. Instead, the viewer is invited to search through the grass and discover the animal, recreating the experience of spotting a tiger in its natural habitat. The image tells a story of patience, stealth, and the untamed beauty of the wild.

> *“Patience has become my most valuable tool.*

Q What makes that moment special to you?

The tiger was approaching the water reservoir and suddenly turned and walked towards us, which made us all furious wondering what happened suddenly. Generally, tigers sip the water and move ahead, but it was unusual behavior.



AT THE RESERVOIR A tiger turns at the water's edge.

IN THE FIELD

Q How has your experience and approach to wildlife photography grown over the years?

My wildlife photography journey began with simple walks to a nearby lake, where I spent hours observing and photographing birds with my mobile phone. What started as casual captures soon turned into a deep passion for wildlife and nature. As my interest grew, I invested in a camera and began exploring forests, wetlands, and natural habitats to document wildlife more seriously. Over the years, my approach has changed significantly. In the beginning, I was focused mainly on getting a photograph. Today, I focus on understanding animal behavior, respecting their space, and telling a story through each image. Patience has become my most valuable tool. Instead of chasing a shot, I spend time observing and waiting for the right moment when nature reveals something unique. Every photograph now represents not just a subject, but a story, an emotion, and a connection with the natural world.

Q Describe your typical gear preparation for a wildlife shoot.

I carry my telephoto lenses 70-300mm and 200-500mm along with crop sensor and full frame cameras to capture the shortest and longest distance of the subject, depending upon the subject's movements.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this from Ravi Shekhar's story.



FULL DISPLAY A peacock perched on a bare branch, tail cascading below.

Q What was the most challenging aspect of capturing that photo?

Birds have always been sensitive to movements. Capturing the peacock in the wild along with 10 people was a tough task. A small whisper from people would have made the peacock fly away, so my mind was already made up with basic settings and I kept the camera in burst mode to capture the peacock.

Q What editing techniques did you apply to that photo?

Since it was shot in daylight, I lowered the contrast and exposure to match the natural color of the peacock feathers and background, and matched the saturation of the subject and background.

CONNECT WITH RAVI SHEKHAR

INSTAGRAM @3artzcreative

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

WINGS OF PATIENCE

"Sometimes stillness steals the show"

ARITRA KUMAR SAHA · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

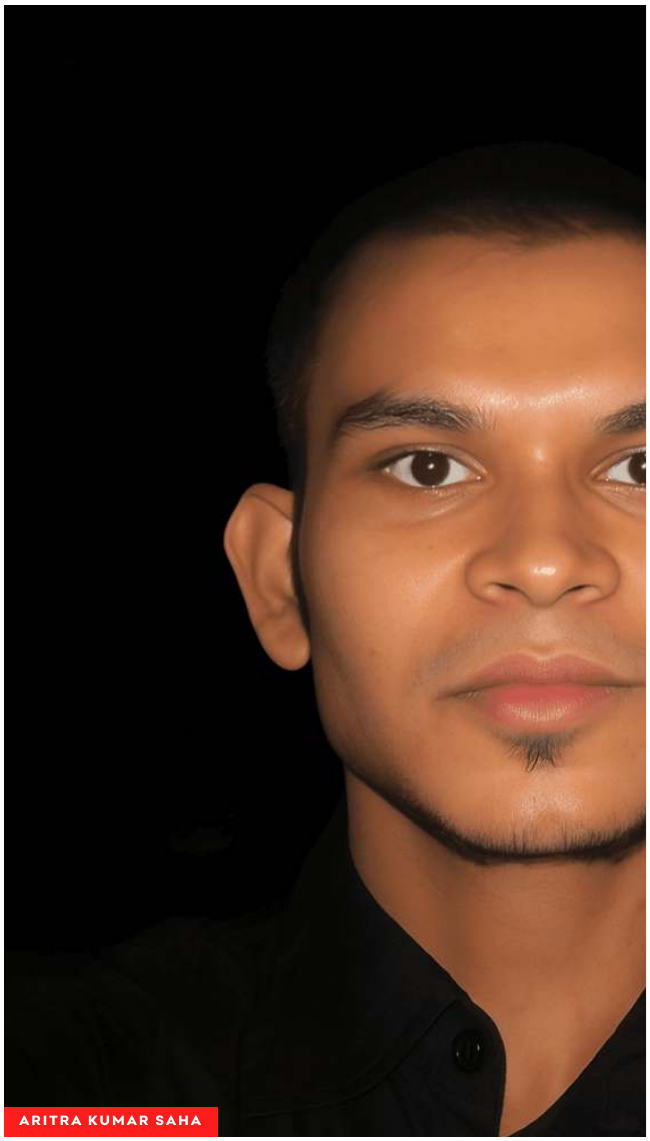
An emerging wildlife photographer on patience, the pull of raptors, and the split-second frames that reward the long wait.

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

My journey in photography began long before I picked up a camera. Ever since childhood, I have been fascinated by the natural world, spending countless hours watching Discovery Channel, National Geographic, and Animal Planet. Those documentaries sparked a deep curiosity about wildlife and gave me a profound appreciation for the beauty and complexity of nature. Over time, that fascination evolved into wildlife photography, especially bird photography. What started as a desire to witness these incredible moments firsthand became a gradual obsession to capture these stories through my lens.

Q How has your approach to wildlife photography evolved over the years?

It's been a very short time since I started my journey into the wild. The importance of patience, perseverance, and respect for the wild are some of the qualities that I have tried to inculcate into my approach as a wildlife photographer. These principles have become the foundation of how I work in the field, reminding me that the best shots come to those who wait and observe without disturbing the natural balance.



ARITRA KUMAR SAHA

THE CRAFT

Q What is your favorite wildlife subject to photograph and why?

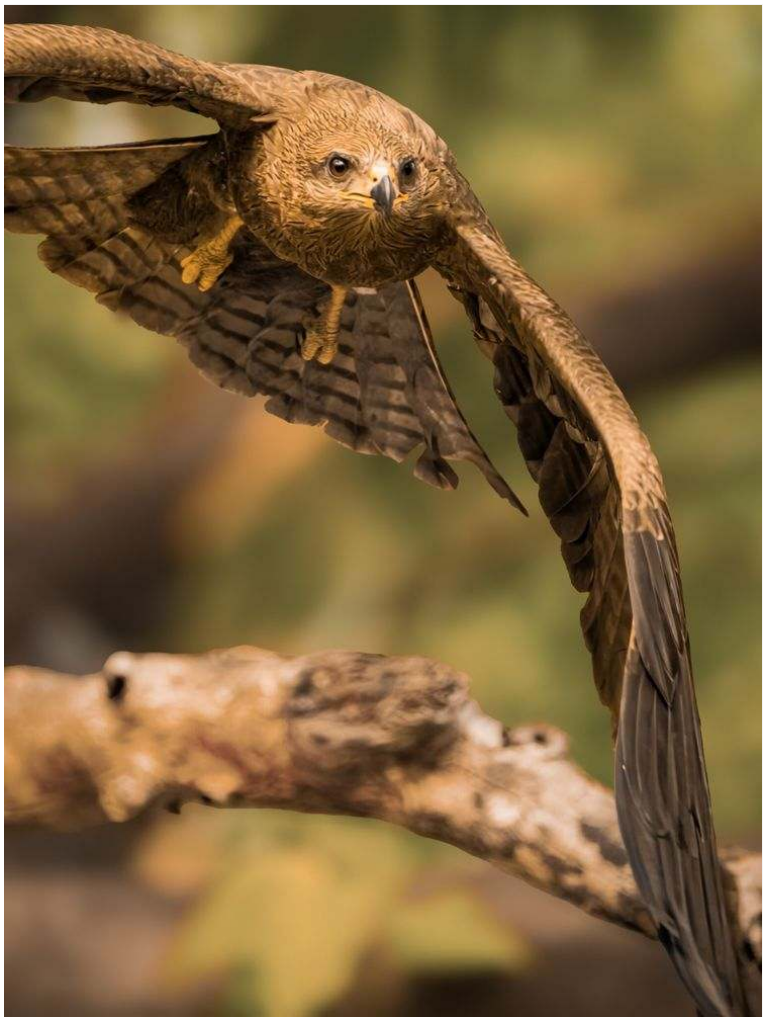
My favorite wildlife subject to photograph are raptors. I think raptors are absolutely majestic and are in a completely different league of their own. Their piercing stare and fearless nature gives me a kind of thrill that's extremely difficult to put into words. They are truly the apex predators of the avian world, and capturing their essence through my lens is both a challenge and a privilege.



MONSOON Pheasant-tailed Jacana, stretched in flight · Aritra Kumar Saha

Q What's the story behind that rare moment you captured?

This is a photograph of a Pheasant Tailed Jacana fully stretched out in flight during the monsoons. This also happens to be the time when Jacana dads are seen with their young ones after their chicks hatch. What makes this photograph special is not the subject itself but the moment and the frame. It's a fleeting instance that encapsulates the essence of the season and the bird's grace.



LIFT-OFF A Black Kite, moments after take-off · Aritra Kumar Saha

Q Tell us about a photograph that represents your best wildlife work.

This is a Black Kite that has just taken off after being perched on a branch of a tree for quite some time. This majestic creature flew right past me as I managed to get a really close up shot on an overcast April afternoon when I was birding at a nearby nature park in my locality. The timing and the proximity made this moment truly special.

THE VISION



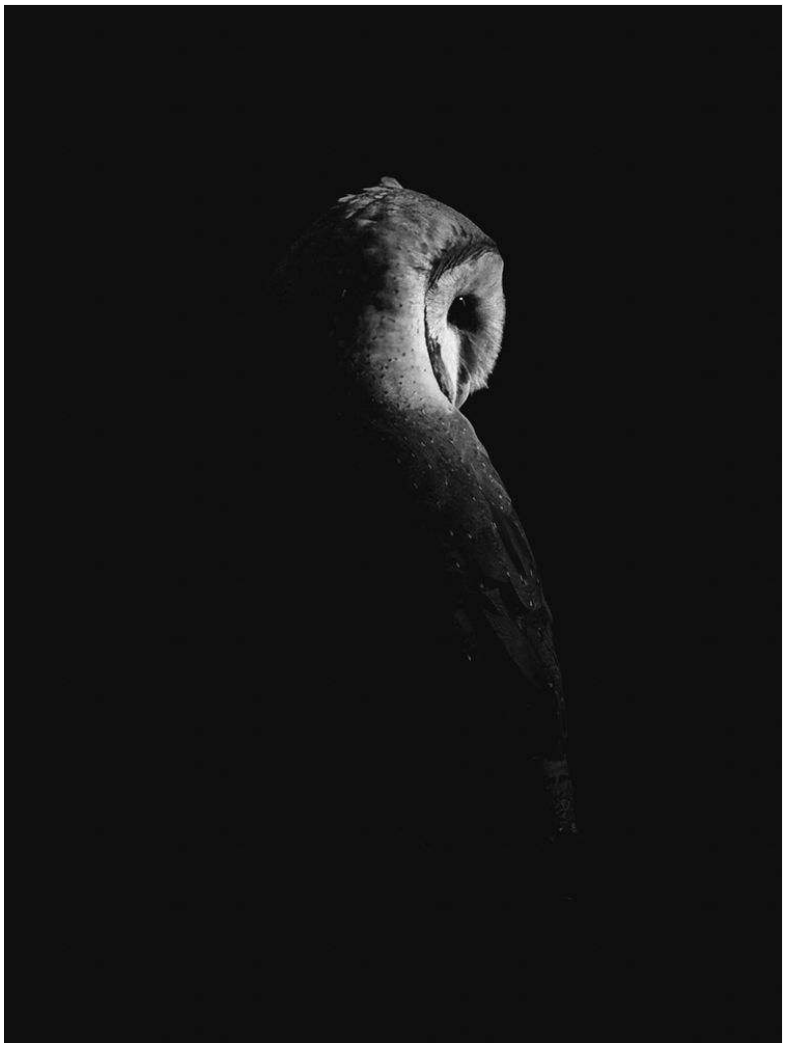
THE PORTRAIT Black Kite, perched · Aritra Kumar Saha

Q How does the editing process change the impact of the wildlife photo you shared?

The Black Kite is such a magnificent subject and especially in this posture, it makes for an ideal wildlife portrait. Hence, to bring out the elegance and its splendid feather detail, I have edited the photograph trying to keep the background similar in colour with the subject, yet well separated from it. This gives the subject a royal look and enhances the overall impact of the image.

Q Walk us through your wildlife photography setup in the field.

I am a loyal Sony user. My setup includes the Sony a7IV and the Sony 200-600 G OSS lens with Nisi UV Filters and Peak Design camera straps. I almost always shoot handheld, so I don't have a tripod as of now. This lightweight and flexible setup allows me to move quickly and capture spontaneous moments in the wild.



NIGHT Barn Owl, in black & white · Aritra Kumar Saha

Q What inspired you to present this particular wildlife photo in black and white?

I took this photograph absolutely unexpectedly. It was 1 o'clock on a rainy and windy July night when I spotted this Barn Owl from my balcony sitting right opposite my place on a garden gate. It was absolutely dark and I had no hope of capturing anything. I sat there admiring the little creature and wishing it had come at a better time and day to visit me. But it was perched for so long I decided to take out my camera and give it a try. I managed to get this shot when it turned its head for a split second and faced the light coming from the street lamp. I had to show this photograph in black and white since it captures an excellent role play between light and shadow.

IN THE FIELD

Q How did you handle the lighting in this particular photo?

This photo was taken in Rishap, West Bengal in the month of April but it was highly overcast and it was difficult to get a good shot of the tiny Fire Tailed Sunbird. I had to make sure I was as close to the subject as possible without bothering it to avoid any atmospheric haze or mist. Also, I had to shoot up the ISO quite a bit. Lucky to have captured this moment.



OVERCAST Fire-tailed Sunbird, Rishap · Aritra Kumar Saha

THE FIELD KIT

CAMERA	Sony a7IV
LENS	Sony 200-600mm G OSS
FILTERS	Nisi UV
STRAPS	Peak Design
METHOD	Always handheld, no tripod



STILLNESS Eye contact, perch, feather detail · Aritra Kumar Saha

Q What makes this photo a true reflection of your style?

This photograph is a true reflection of my style of photography because it captures everything that I look for when I click bird photos. Eye contact, perch, beak, feather detail, and mostly stillness. Because motion is beautiful but sometimes stillness steals the show.

CONNECT WITH ARITRA KUMAR SAHA

INSTAGRAM @wildscapeworks

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Watching How They Move

SK SIDDIQUE ALI · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

A year and a half into bird photography, guided by his mentor Jayanta Guha, Sk Siddique Ali has come to believe the finest wildlife images are less about the shutter than the wait.

Q How did your journey into wildlife and bird photography begin?

My journey into wildlife photography began with my deep love for animals and nature. Since childhood, I have always been fascinated by wildlife and enjoyed observing and capturing their behavior. Photography became a part of my life through my father, who is also a photographer, and I was fortunate to learn from experienced senior photographers along the way. My interest in wildlife photography started with bird photography. About one and a half years ago, I was inspired by the incredible bird photographs of my mentor, Jayanta Guha. His work sparked my curiosity and motivated me to explore bird photography myself. Under his guidance, I learned not only the technical aspects of photography but also how to observe, understand, and respect wildlife in its natural habitat. Without my mentor, Jayanta Guha, I would not have learned so much about wildlife and bird photography. What began as an interest in photographing birds gradually grew into a passion for wildlife photography. Today, wildlife photography is more than just a hobby for me—it is a way to connect with nature, document the beauty of wildlife, and share those moments with others.



SK SIDDIQUE ALI

THE HERD · KENYA



KENYA A herd moves through the tall grass as storm light gathers over the savannah.

Q What photo best represents your wildlife photography style and skill?

This photograph was captured during my wildlife photography journey in Kenya, a place I had dreamed of visiting for years. As the evening light began to fade and dark storm clouds gathered over the savannah, I noticed a herd of elephants moving through the tall grass. The atmosphere was dramatic, with the approaching rain creating a perfect backdrop for a powerful wildlife image. What caught my attention was the way the family stayed close together. The adults surrounded the younger elephants, creating a sense of protection and unity that elephants are known for. One large tusker stood slightly apart from the group, raising its trunk as if keeping watch over the herd. In that moment, I wasn't just looking at elephants—I was witnessing a story of family, trust, and survival. For me, this photograph represents more than a wildlife sighting. It is a reminder of the strong family bonds that exist in nature and the resilience of wildlife in the face of challenges. Moments like these are why I fell in love with wildlife photography—the opportunity to tell stories that words alone often cannot.

BACKLIGHT · THE SAVANNAH



BACKLIGHT The sun behind the mane, the track a leading line straight to his eyes.

Q How did you achieve this lighting and composition? Share your technical setup.

I captured this image during the golden hours of the African savannah as a magnificent male lion walked confidently toward me along a dusty track. I noticed the sun was positioned behind him, so I used the natural backlighting to create a beautiful rim of light around his mane, helping him stand out from the surroundings. To make the image more immersive, I photographed him at eye level, allowing the viewer to connect directly with his powerful gaze. I chose a wide aperture and a telephoto lens to isolate the lion from the background, creating a soft, dreamy blur while keeping the focus locked on his eyes. The track naturally acted as a leading line, guiding attention straight to the subject. I waited patiently for the perfect moment when his stride, posture, and expression came together, resulting in a frame that showcases both the strength and elegance of one of Africa's most iconic predators.

THE HUNT · A SPLIT SECOND



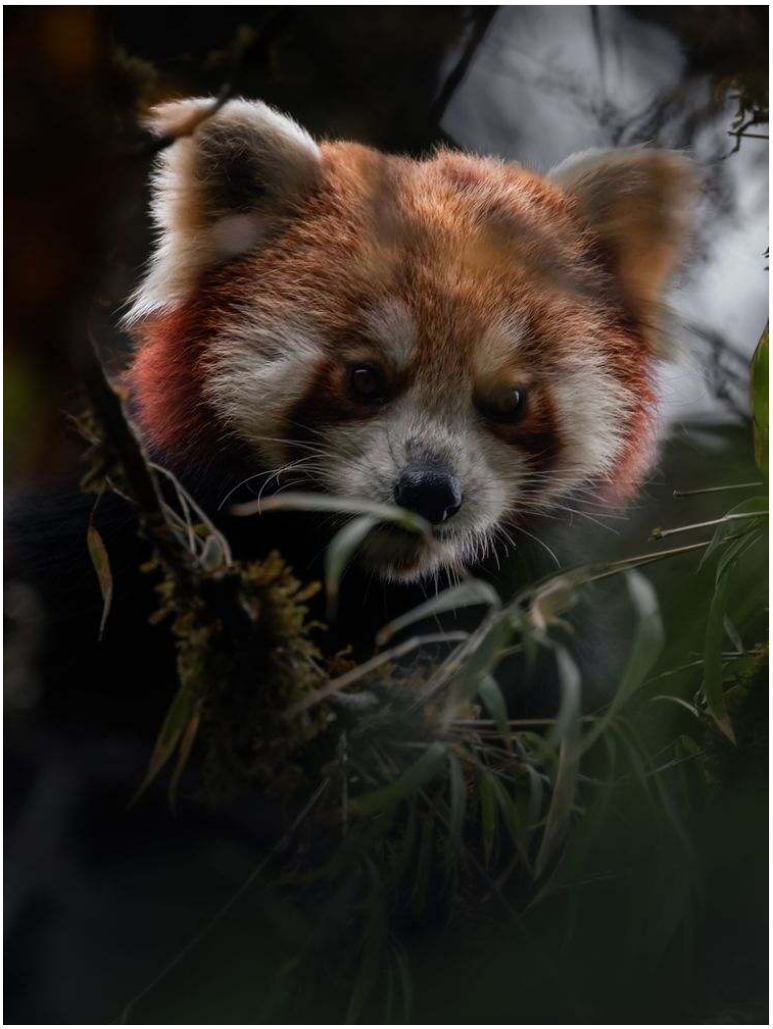
WETLAND A Purple Heron launches from the marsh, a snake coiling into a loop mid-air.

Q What makes this action moment special to you? Describe the scene and your approach.

The Scene: This image captures a dramatic predator-versus-prey moment, frozen in a fraction of a second. A Purple Heron bursts out of the wetland with powerful wingbeats, clutching a snake firmly in its bill. Water droplets trail behind its feet, revealing that the bird has just launched from the marsh after a successful hunt. What makes the scene extraordinary is the shape of the snake. As it twists and coils in the air, it forms an almost perfect loop, creating a striking visual element that immediately draws the viewer's eye. The heron's intense gaze, fully spread wings, and forward momentum tell a story of determination and survival. The soft, blurred wetland background isolates the subject beautifully, allowing the viewer to focus entirely on this fleeting interaction between hunter and prey. It is a reminder that every day in nature is a struggle for survival, where success often lasts only a split second. My Approach: As a wildlife photographer, I knew that moments like this cannot be created—they can only be anticipated. Bird photography has taught me that patience and observation are everything. I spent time watching the heron's behavior, studying its hunting pattern, and waiting for the decisive moment. Rather than focusing solely on the bird, I paid attention to its body language. The slight crouch, the focused stare into the water, and the sudden burst of movement were all signs that something was about to happen. The lessons I learned from my father and later from my mentor, Jayanta Guha, have always emphasized reading animal behavior before pressing the shutter. When the heron caught the snake and took off, I immediately tracked it through the viewfinder, using a fast shutter speed to freeze the action while maintaining enough depth of field to keep both the bird and its prey sharp. The challenge was not just capturing the bird in flight, but capturing the story—the water splash, the coiled snake, and the powerful takeoff all in a single frame.

> *“A great photograph often comes from spending hours in the field, carefully watching a subject and anticipating its next move.*

THE ELUSIVE ONE · HIMALAYAS



RED PANDA Framed through branches, a direct gaze before it slips back into the canopy.

Q What made this encounter memorable? Describe the patience and field craft involved.

This encounter feels memorable because it wasn't just a sighting—it was a moment of connection. The Red Panda is framed naturally through layers of branches and foliage, giving the impression that you're peeking into its secret world rather than simply photographing an animal. Its direct gaze creates an intimate feel, as if for a brief second it acknowledged your presence before disappearing back into the forest. Those moments are incredibly rare with such an elusive species, which is what makes them special. From a field craft perspective, this image speaks of patience more than luck. Red Pandas spend much of their time high in dense forest canopies, often hidden behind bamboo and moss-covered branches. Capturing a clean view of the face while retaining the surrounding habitat likely required spending long periods scanning the canopy and reading subtle movements, positioning yourself carefully to use natural vegetation as a frame rather than an obstruction, remaining quiet and still so the animal continued its natural behaviour, and waiting for the brief moment when the panda looked through the gap in the foliage. What I love most about this photograph is that it doesn't show the entire animal. The partially concealed face tells the story of how Red Pandas live—secretive, cautious, and hidden among the forests of the Himalayas. The foreground blur and dark surroundings create a sense of mystery, drawing the viewer's eye straight to those expressive eyes.

AT A GLANCE

MENTOR	Jayanta Guha (Jayanta Da)
FIRST TEACHER	His father, also a photographer
STARTED	Bird photography, about 18 months ago
FIELD CREDO	Patience & observation
IN THE FRAME	Elephants (Kenya) · Purple Heron · Red Panda (Himalayas)

CONNECT WITH SK SIDDIQUE ALI

INSTAGRAM @siddique4800

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

SILENCE BEFORE SUNRISE

"I walk around, I notice, I wait, and I capture."

YAGYA RAGHAV · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

A young macro shooter who found his calm in the smallest of creatures — butterflies, spiders, geckos — the ones most of us walk straight past.

Q How did your journey in wildlife photography begin?

It began with curiosity more than a camera. I was always drawn to nature; the silence before sunrise, the unpredictability of animals, and the feeling that every moment outdoors could turn into a story worth capturing. What started as casually taking photos slowly turned into spending more time observing, learning patience, understanding behavior, and chasing moments most people never get to witness. Over time, wildlife photography wasn't just photography anymore; it became a way to connect with nature, in a very healing way.

AT A GLANCE

SHOOTS ON	iPhone 11 & Canon EOS R100
LENS	RF-S 18–45mm f/4.5–6.3
SUBJECTS	Macro — insects, spiders, small critters
YEARS	Four years of quiet clicking



THE KIT A phone in one hand, a Canon EOS R100 in the other — often zooming for the shot.



YAGYA RAGHAV

THE SMALL THINGS

Q What was the first wild animal you photographed, and how did you feel?

My first actual photograph was not an animal in the traditional sense; it was a macro shot of a Plain Tiger Butterfly. The experience sparked my relationship with patience and stillness. It took me almost an hour just to get one clear shot, and what really stood out wasn't the boredom of waiting, but the curiosity that came with it. After taking the shot on my iPhone 6s, I went home and started reading about Monarch Butterflies, having confused the butterfly for a Monarch. The Plain Tiger butterfly is a fascinating species because its behavior is heavily tied to survival through mimicry and adaptability. They mimic Monarchs because predators actively avoid Monarch butterflies since they're toxic. Pretty cool if you ask me.

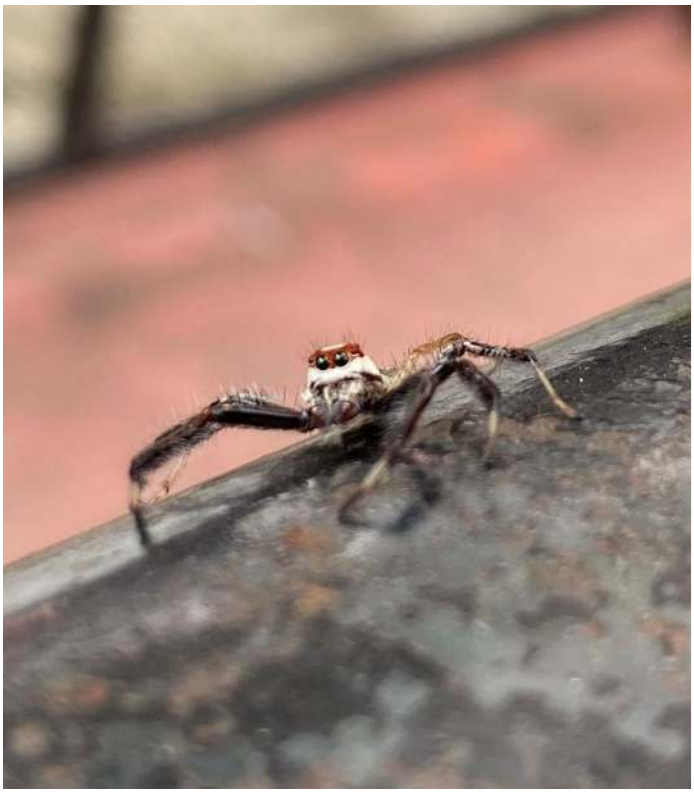
Q How has your experience and technique grown over the years?

Over the years, I've developed a love for observing small things, which led me to becoming proficient in taking macro shots. I'm weirdly interested in insects of sorts, having kept a Praying Mantis and a few Jumping Spiders as pets. These small critters are so much more than meets the eye. I started out with an iPhone 6s, and moved on to an iPhone 11 and iPhone 16, and then to a Canon EOS R100, often having to rely on the phone's optical and digital zoom to get macro shots. Wildlife photography has also changed my perspective about life in general; it has shown me the beauty that every little thing holds. I walk around, I notice, I wait, and I capture.

Q Can you show us an edited versus unedited version of a wildlife shot?

I usually don't have the luxury to edit my shots because the phone that I use does not have ProRAW or Apple Log. However, this was shot on an iPhone 15 and could be edited. The editing process is nothing really special; it just includes de-noising the photo, cropping it down, and fiddling with Highlights, Exposure, Vibrancy, and Shadows until it looks just right.

SAME FRAME, TWO PASSES · JUMPING SPIDER



UNEDITED Straight off the iPhone 15.



EDITED De-noised, cropped, tuned.

IN THE FIELD

Q What photo best represents your best wildlife photography work?

This photo depicts a common Mynah attacking an Indian Palm Squirrel. What truly makes this photo special to me is that this is one of the first wildlife pictures that I took with my Canon EOS R100.

Q Tell us about your favorite wildlife encounter.

Shot on an iPhone X, this is a Common Gecko. This little critter just showed up outside the gym's window while I was working out and just stared at me for five minutes straight.

Q What behavior did you capture in the video you uploaded?

Pardon the quality. This video captures a Black Kite trying to grab a roadkill Palm Squirrel on a highway.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the Black Kite from Yagya's story.



CANON EOS R100 A Common Mynah attacking an Indian Palm Squirrel.



COMMON GECKO · IPHONE X Showed up outside the gym window and stared at me for five minutes straight.



WEB OF LIFE · IPHONE A spider rebuilding its web after the rain — spotted mid-marathon.

Q How does the habitat contribute to the story of the photo you uploaded?

The story behind this photo is what makes it truly special for me. I happened to click this during a marathon that I took part in. My legs were sore, and I stopped for a break when I spotted this spider. The weather was rainy, and the spider was fixing up its web, implying that some of it was ruined due to the rain. It reminded me of how these creatures keep on moving despite hardships.

Q What was the challenge in taking this photo, and how did you overcome it?

Palm Squirrels are very shy creatures, and especially small. It was challenging to approach one close enough to get a clear shot, especially when it was having food, as visible in the picture. The key to overcoming this challenge was absolute patience and stillness. I gotta admit, one must have solid joints and stamina to capture wildlife, be it a squirrel in a park, a kingfisher in the forest, or a snow leopard in Ladakh.



INDIAN PALM SQUIRREL Caught mid-meal — close, and perfectly still.

CONNECT WITH YAGYA RAGHAV

INSTAGRAM @m1dnightaperture

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

A Surgeon at Tadoba

VIMAL HEMANI · ENT SURGEON & WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

An ENT surgeon who found the deep focus and stillness of the operating theatre waiting for him in the wild — the same steady hand, a different frame.

Q How did your journey in wildlife photography and cinematography begin?

My journey of wildlife began in 2014 during a visit to Tadoba National Park. At the time, it was meant to be nothing more than a temporary escape—a much-needed break from the intense, demanding routine of my surgical practice. I went seeking quiet and relaxation, but the moment I witnessed the raw, untamed beauty of the wilderness, something shifted inside me. Watching an apex predator navigate its natural habitat with absolute grace and power completely captivated me. I realized that the deep focus and stillness I relied on every day in the operating theater found a beautiful, parallel home in the wild. What started as a simple retreat quickly evolved into a profound, lifelong passion. Tadoba was the spark, and ever since, my camera has been an extension of my sight, allowing me to preserve the magnificent stories of our planet's wildlife.

AT A GLANCE

DISCIPLINE	ENT Surgeon
CAMERA SINCE	2013 · Rajkot
WILD SINCE	2014 · Tadoba
TERRAIN	India & East Africa
SUBJECTS	Wildlife · Candid Portraits



VIMAL HEMANI

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Q What makes this candid human portrait special to you?

What makes the portrait incredibly special to me is the sheer patience, human connection, and persistence it took to capture a single, fleeting expression. I clicked this picture early in the morning during the vibrant Pushkar Camel Fair. My fellow photographers and I were heading out to the fairgrounds, anticipating that the dawn light would bring something extraordinary. On the way, I spotted a this father walking down the road, carrying his young son on his shoulder. While the father kept his focus forward, the child was peering back, intensely curious about our presence and photography gear. Realizing the magic of the child's unfiltered curiosity, I ended up walking almost half a kilometer behind them. I didn't want to startle them or disrupt the natural rhythm of their morning; I simply wanted to wait for the exact moment the child would truly lock eyes with my camera. Finally, it happened. The resulting frame represents everything I love about street and travel portraiture. The vivid, striking red of the father's traditional turban anchors the composition, but it is the child's intense, innocent, and soulful gaze peering over his father's shoulder that steals the show. It captures a pure, unscripted moment of childhood wonder framed against the soft, morning light of the hills. For me, walking that half a kilometer was a small price to pay for a portrait that speaks volumes about innocence, trust, and curiosity.



PUSHKAR A child's gaze over his father's shoulder at dawn, Camel Fair — the red turban anchors the frame.

Q Tell us about a photo that best represents your wildlife photography work.

Capturing this picture was an exercise in intense patience and anticipation, highlighting a spectacular moment of symmetry in the wild. We spotted these two majestic Asiatic lion brothers moving parallel to the forest track in Sasan Gir. Instead of rushing to snap a standard walking shot, we anticipated their path. Seeing a small, natural pool of water accumulated across the dirt road ahead, I instructed the safari vehicle to stop at a respectful distance, hoping they would pause for a drink. What happened next was absolute magic. The brothers didn't just stop; they approached the water source from opposite sides of the road, moving in near-perfect synchronization. They lowered their massive frames simultaneously, creating a stunning, balanced composition. As an ENT surgeon, I am trained to look for symmetry, balance, and structure, and seeing it play out so naturally in the wilderness was breathtaking. The frame perfectly captures the contrast between their rugged, battle-tested strength and the absolute stillness of the water reflecting their forms. The lush, green post-monsoon foliage framing the top of the road provided the perfect depth of color to elevate the scene. Moments like this one are incredibly rare—it requires the perfect alignment of animal behavior, light, and a photographer's readiness to capture a split-second act of natural poetry.



SASAN GIR Two Asiatic lion brothers pause at a monsoon pool, mirrored in near-perfect symmetry.

THE CUTTING ROOM

Q Walk us through the editing choices you made for that wildlife shot.

To illustrate how post-processing can completely redefine the emotional impact of a wildlife photograph, I've shared the unedited file alongside its finalized counterpart. When capturing a massive herd emerging through the dust and haze, the camera sensor often records a flat, low-contrast image. The unedited frame accurately captured the atmospheric dust, but the pale colours and muted values diluted the sheer power of the wildebeests advancing toward the lens. Ultimately, my goal with the edited image was to transform a flat documentary record into a dramatic, timeless narrative. By stripping away colour, the image stops being just a photo of animals in a field and becomes an art piece about survival, momentum, and the raw power of the wild.



UNEDITED The frame as the sensor recorded it — flat, low-contrast, muted.



FINAL Colour stripped away: survival, momentum, the raw power of the wild.

Q Describe the setting and what you aimed to capture in that video clip.

This clip was filmed deep within the dense, deciduous forests of Sasan Gir during the ethereal early morning hours. The setting is defined by a heavy, misty atmosphere where the rising sun struggles to pierce through the thick canopy, creating a beautifully soft, backlit layer of dust and fog in the background. The immediate foreground is intentionally framed by the dark, silhouetted trunks of large trees, creating a natural window or a 'peep-hole' effect that makes the viewer feel like a silent, undiscovered observer in a private sanctuary. What I aimed to capture in this video was the raw, unscripted innocence of youth in the wild—a stark contrast to the fierce, apex predator image usually associated with Asiatic lions. The clip features young lion cubs left safely in the thicket, engaging in playful behaviour. My objective was twofold: first, to capture their curiosity and interaction with their environment, which peaks beautifully when one of the cubs stands on its hind legs to playfully bat at a low-hanging green leaf. Second, I wanted to experiment with cinematic depth of field and framing. By keeping the foreground trees heavily shadowed and out of focus, the viewer's eye is pushed directly into the misty, golden-lit clearing where the cubs are playing. It tells a story of vulnerability, protection, and the lighter side of life in the Gir forest.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this from Vimal Hemani's story.

THE FIELD



BEHIND THE SCENES Tracking and waiting — hours behind a heavy setup for a single split-second window.

Q **Briefly describe the challenges faced during that shoot.**

The behind-the-scenes frame shows me out in the field, tracking and waiting—a side of wildlife photography that viewers rarely see. While the final images look pristine, the process of acquiring them in a habitat like Sasan Gir involves overcoming distinct, demanding challenges. As you can see from the highlights on my shirt and gear, the morning sun in Gir cuts through very quickly. Managing the sudden, harsh contrast between blinding bright patches and deep, dark forest shadows requires constant, split-second adjustments to exposure settings to avoid blowing out highlights or losing shadow detail. Handholding a heavy setup for hours while waiting for a split-second window of movement is physically exhausting. In that moment, your muscles are burning, but you cannot put the camera down or make a sudden, jerky movement that might startle the wildlife or ruin the framing. Unlike open African savannas, Gir is dominated by dry deciduous forests, dense teak trees, and thick thorny scrub. Animals, even massive male lions, can completely vanish just five feet into the brush. Getting a clean shot without random twigs, branches, or leaves cutting across the animal's face requires immense patience, continuous tracking, and precise manual positioning. Gir is notoriously dusty, especially during the dry tracking seasons. The fine, swirling forest dust is a constant threat to high-end camera sensors and lens electronics. It requires meticulous gear maintenance in the field, as you are constantly shielding your equipment from the elements while navigating bumpy, unpaved safari tracks.

CONNECT WITH VIMAL HEMANI

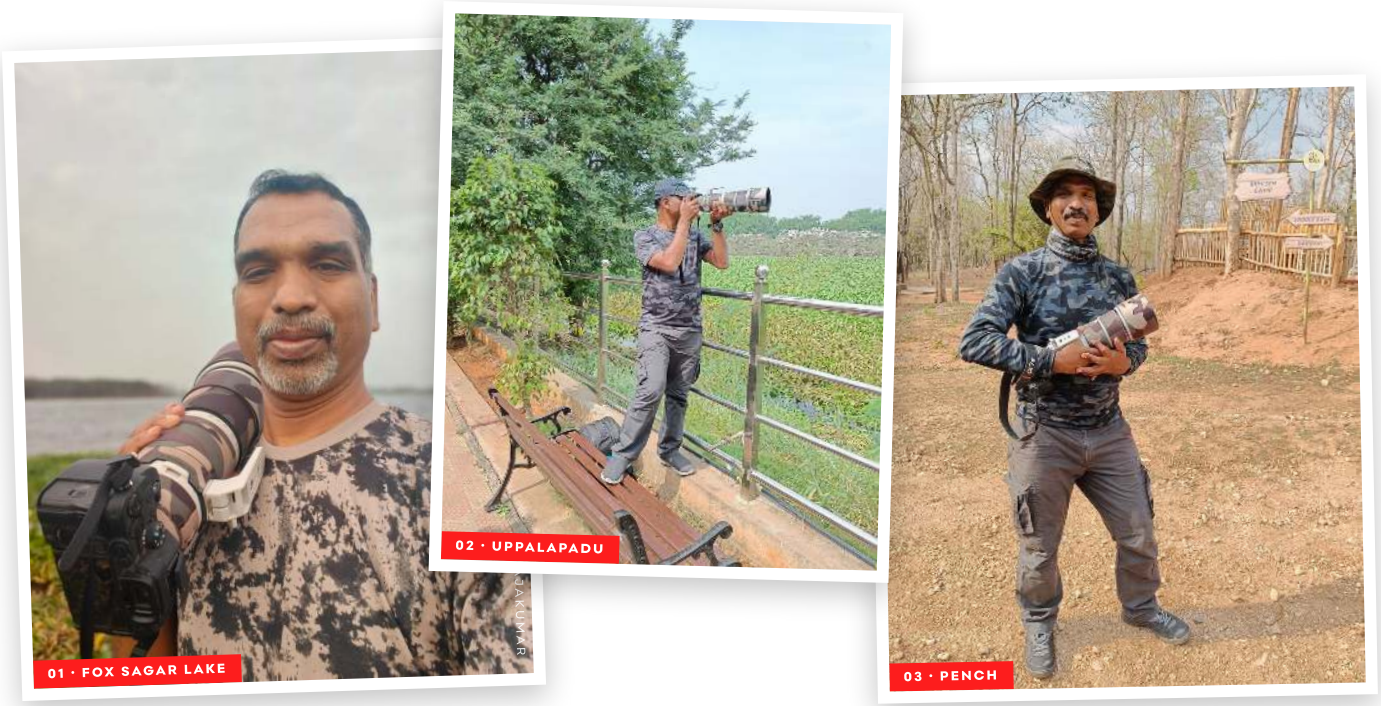
INSTAGRAM @drhemani **WEBSITE** vimalhemani.com

FIELD LOG · WILDLIFE

The Bird in the Firebush

RAJASEKARAN RAJAKUMAR · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

Twelve years ago a blurry frame of a sunbird in a Kerala firebush set a Hyderabad hobbyist travelling to tiger reserves across India — camera raised not for the trophy shot, but for the story.



01 THE FIREBUSH · KERALA

the wait — twelve years, and one blurry frame

Q. How did your journey in wildlife photography begin?

It all started 12 years ago with a simple point-and-shoot camera. I originally bought it just to take photos of flowers, landscapes and family portraits while travelling. Everything changed one quiet morning during a Dussehra vacation in Kerala. I was relaxing on the terrace of my wife's family home when I noticed a tiny bird chirping away in a nearby firebush tree. For some reason, I just couldn't take my eyes off it. I felt a sudden, strong urge to take its picture, so I grabbed my little camera and took a shot. The photo was very blurry. When we returned the next year, I tried with better efforts, but the pictures still didn't look good. I realized I needed better gear if I wanted to do this right. So, I bought a basic DSLR camera and started learning simple techniques from YouTube. It took a lot of trial and error. At first, I could only photograph birds while they were sitting still on branches. But soon, I challenged myself to capture them mid-flight. Looking back, that one blurry little bird on a quiet morning was the exact moment my wildlife photography journey truly began.

Q. What was the first wildlife subject that truly captivated you?

The tiny creature that pushed me to buy my very first DSLR was a purple sunbird. It was my very first subject, and even today, it is the one bird that fascinates me the most. I absolutely love framing them against beautiful, colorful backgrounds. Every time I look at them through my lens, I am reminded of a simple truth: life's real beauty is usually hiding right in front of us in the smallest and simplest things.

02 FOX SAGAR → KABINI · HYDERABAD

the wait — until a daughter said travel

Q. How has your approach evolved over the years?

I began photographing birds around my home in Hyderabad, then discovered Fox Sagar, a large lake nearby, where I spent all my free time watching cormorants, ducks, herons, and storks. What started as a casual hobby quickly became a passion. Then came the turning point that changed my life. One day, while looking at photos by famous wildlife photographers, I sighed and told my daughter, "I don't know if I will ever be able to take pictures as good as these." My daughter, who is also my photography buddy, looked at me and said, "If you want the best, you need to step out of your comfort zone. You need to travel." That was the spark. In October 2021, she and I went on my very first wildlife safari to Kabini. From that moment on, there was no looking back. I started traveling to sanctuaries across India. The more I travelled, the less I cared about just taking a "wow" picture. I started noticing the deeper stories: how animals survive, how habitats are being lost, and the painful conflicts between humans and wildlife. This way, my passion found a purpose. Now, I use my photography to give back. Every year, I create a wildlife calendar focused on conservation, with one simple request: show these to your children. If children learn to love and respect nature today, they will grow up to protect it tomorrow. When saving nature becomes a habit passed down through generations, it stops being an effort—it becomes our culture.

Q. How did you handle the lighting challenge in that shot?

I captured this territorial fight between two little egrets on a freezing, dim winter morning. Watching them from a distance, I could read their movements and knew a clash was imminent. I swiftly changed my exposure compensation, set a fast shutter speed to freeze the motion, and placed my camera onto the car bonnet for instant stability. Conquering extreme low light isn't just about high-end gear — it comes down to reading animal behaviour, mastering your camera settings, and using your surroundings to your advantage. The Rhesus macaque mid-yawn in Narsapur forest highlights the same lesson in the low light of early morning.

Q. What moment do these videos capture?

During my recent safari in Kabini, the jungle gifted me an incredible display of raw animal behaviour: Magge and her two cubs enjoying a spotted deer kill. What fascinated me most wasn't the kill, but the family dynamics — one cub had already established absolute authority, claiming the major share and leaving the others to wait their turn. Moments like these remind me that the wild is beautiful, but it is always ruled by strength.

SCAN TO WATCH

Magge and her two cubs on a spotted deer kill — Kabini.



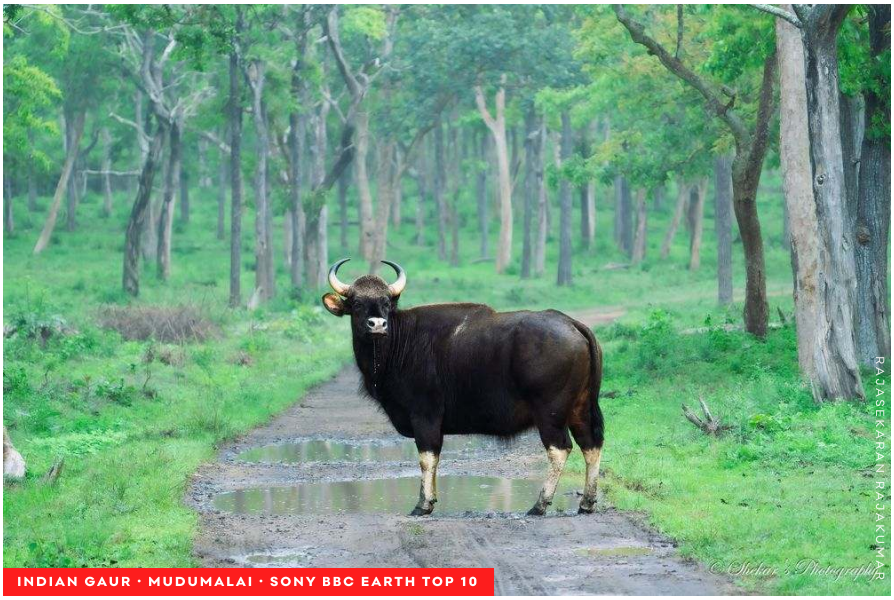
LOW LIGHT A freezing winter morning, the camera braced on the car bonnet, the clash read before it happened.



SAME LESSON A Rhesus macaque mid-yawn, early morning.

03 MUDUMALAI · PENCH · BHIGWAN · BANDIPUR

the wait — for the rain to change a forest



INDIAN GAUR · MUDUMALAI · SONY BBC EARTH TOP 10



F2 CUBS



FLAMINGOS · BHIGWAN

THE ANCHOR FRAME A gaur standing in the middle of a Mudumalai road after unexpected May rain — the frame that placed in the Top 10 of the Sony BBC Earth competition. Right: a mock fight that is really a survival rehearsal, and Bhigwan's flamingos turned deliberately monochrome.

Q. Which photograph best represents your work, and what makes it special?

Every photograph I take is a silent plea for the wild. The mock fight of F2 tigress cubs looks like a simple sibling game, but is actually a vital rehearsal for survival, a beautiful lesson in strength passed down by a devoted mother. Yet the greatest threat these future apex predators face is not the harshness of nature, but the shrinking boundaries of their homes caused by human feet. It is exactly why I took the vibrant, colorful flamingos of Bhigwan and intentionally turned them into a quiet, monochrome picture. It is about capturing a desperate emotion, an urgent reminder that we must protect their habitats before the wild fades away forever. We had just wrapped up our drive in Bandipur when this mother elephant and her calf appeared by the roadside, and we couldn't resist unpacking everything to capture the moment. It is a perfect example of human-animal coexistence, proving that when we choose to behave responsibly, we can share boundaries safely. Capturing a head-on shot of Bajirao, a dominant male tiger in Rukhad, Pench, was unforgettable. Too often, tourists disregard safari etiquette by making loud noises or wearing bright colours. Remember that you are stepping into their home — witness the wild, but leave it undisturbed. I travelled to Mudumalai in May expecting typical summer sightings, but unexpected rains had transformed the forest into a silent, lush green paradise. I suddenly came across this majestic Indian gaur, standing right in the middle of the long road, locking eyes with me. This exact frame went on to place in the Top 10 of the Sony BBC Earth photography competition. In the wild everything is beautiful.



BAJIRAO · RUKHAD



BANDIPUR

> *"Every photograph I take is a silent plea for the wild.*

04 KEOLADEO · JHALANA · UPPALAPADU

the wait — three hours, then five more minutes

Q. What do these images say about your dedication?

Photographing a cormorant with its catch in the emerald waters of Keoladeo National Park had long been a bucket-list dream. My first year was washed out by continuous rain. With only three hours remaining on my final morning before heading to the airport, I returned to the pond with a lot of hope. The moment I set up my gear, a cormorant cut through a velvet carpet of algae, emerald light glinting off its fresh catch. It was a stark reminder that in wildlife photography, patience and perseverance are always rewarded. During a morning safari at Jhalana, a bold male leopard named Rana was fast asleep deep inside a bush. A crowd of 10 to 12 safari vehicles gathered, but eventually everyone lost patience and drove away. I convinced my driver to hold out for just five more minutes. Right on cue, Rana woke up, stepped onto the roadside, and gave us this fleeting glimpse before disappearing back into the bush. The best wildlife moments belong to those who wait. While tracking this spot-billed pelican, I anticipated its take-off, kept my gear locked and ready, and captured this incredible frame. Understanding animal behaviour is the absolute key to successful wildlife photography.

Q. Describe your typical field setup and why it works.

I prefer a simple setup with minimal equipment, and always carry extra batteries and memory cards so I never miss a moment. Shooting handheld is my choice because it keeps me fast, agile, and free to move instantly. Even though it means a sore back and shoulders after a long day, the freedom it provides is entirely worth it. I never use tripods; instead, I turn my jacket, scarf or camera bag into a handy beanbag whenever I need a steady shot.

Q. What advice would you give to aspiring wildlife photographers?

Whether you shoot for passion or profession, master your craft and study animal behaviour. Most importantly, remember you are a guest in their home, always shoot without disturbing them. A sharp portrait is great, but a story is unforgettable. Look for the deeper narrative: the struggle for survival, the changing habitats, and the quiet rhythm of nature. Let your curiosity about the ecosystem outshine your desire for social media likes.



CORMORANT WITH ITS CATCH · KEOLADEO

THREE HOURS LEFT The last morning before the airport, after a first year washed out by rain.



RANA · JHALANA



PELICAN · TAKE-OFF

ANTICIPATION Gear locked and ready for a take-off he knew was coming.

CONNECT WITH RAJASEKARAN RAJAKUMAR

INSTAGRAM @rajasekaranrajakumar **FACEBOOK** rajasekaran rajakumar

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

WILDLIFE & LANDSCAPE

Facing the Canyon

SHRADHA PRAKASH WARE · WILDLIFE & LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER

From the sculpted canyons of Arizona to the tiger turf of Tadoba, a self-taught photographer chases the light — and the untamed lives that belong to no cage.

Q What was the first moment you knew you wanted to pursue wildlife and landscape photography?

My journey began in the United States, when I stood before the vast expanse of the Grand Canyon National Park and felt the challenge of capturing its immensity — a moment that sparked my pursuit of landscape photography. Wildlife photography, however, began on a more somber note, when I saw the sadness in the eyes of animals trapped in cages at a zoo. That experience inspired me to seek out and capture wildlife in its true, untamed form, where they belong.

Q How has your photography style evolved over the years?

I still consider myself an amateur photographer, with much to learn and explore. In the beginning, I focused simply on capturing what was in front of me, without paying attention to elements such as depth, background, or composition. Over time, I began to study the fundamentals of photography — learning from friends and colleagues, and drawing inspiration from renowned photographers through their work and writings. This journey has helped me gradually refine my skills and develop a deeper understanding of how to tell stories through images.

AT A GLANCE

BASED	United States & India
GENRE	Wildlife & landscape photography
GEAR	Canon EOS Rebel SL1 · 18–250mm, 150–600mm & macro
SIGNATURE	"Jr. Mowgli," Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve



SHRADHA PRAKASH WARE

PHOTOGRAPH: SHRADHA WARE

IN THE FIELD · THE CANYONS

Q What inspires you to capture wildlife and landscapes?

Nature offers endless wonders, yet much of it is vanishing at an alarming pace. Its beauty can never be fully captured, but it inspires me to preserve glimpses of its vastness and magnificence through photography. Wildlife, a precious gift, is essential to maintaining the balance of our planet. Through my lens, I strive to showcase these creatures in their rightful habitats — reminding us that they are entitled to the homes that keep them safe, happy, and free.



PHOTOGRAPH · SHRADHA WARE

LOWER ANTELOPE CANYON

Q What landscape photograph are you most proud of, and what makes it special?

This photograph was taken at Lower Antelope Canyon, Arizona — a natural wonder sculpted over hundreds of years by floodwaters rushing through rock and sand. When the sun reaches just the right angle, light and shadow dance across the sandstone walls, creating breathtaking colors and patterns. These formations remind us of nature's artistry, a timeless spectacle that inspires awe and reverence.

Q What gear do you typically use for wildlife and landscape photography?

I own a Canon EOS Rebel SL1 DSLR camera with 18mm to 250mm and 150mm to 600mm lens. For close up and detailed pictures, I attach a macro lens. This setup allows me to capture both sweeping landscapes and intimate wildlife moments.

Q What locations or subjects are on your photography bucket list?

I dream of photographing the aurora borealis in Norway, the vast savannahs of Africa, and the remote islands of Antarctica. Each of these places offers unique light and wildlife that I long to capture.

INTO THE WILD



"JR. MOWGLI" · TADOBA

Q Tell us about a wildlife photograph that holds special meaning for you.

This is Jr. Mowgli, a sub-adult tiger from Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve. Though not yet fully grown, he has reached the stage where he has begun marking his territory. During our safari, we observed him roaming confidently, sniffing for signs of other tigers and claiming the space as his own. Even while walking through another tiger's turf, his boldness and composure reflected the transformation underway — a young tiger steadily growing into the king of his domain.

Q What editing tools do you use, and how did you approach editing one of your favorite images?

I usually go for Photoshop if major editing is needed. If very basic things are needed like brightening, exposure or saturation I use basic photo editing. For this picture of the tiger, I used a combination of Photoshop and a photo editor. Photoshop to add a watermark and the photo editor to add a little saturation of colors. The rest the camera had already taken care of.



LADAKH

Q Walk us through a behind-the-scenes moment from a recent shoot.

This is from a recent Ladakh trip I took. I was trying to capture the far away snow peaked mountain ranges. The crisp air and vast horizons made it a memorable experience.

Q What is a photography goal or project you are currently working towards?

My goal is to learn more about wildlife and try to capture these beautiful creatures thriving in their respective homes. I want to document their natural behaviors and habitats to raise awareness about conservation.

> *"I strive to showcase these creatures in their rightful habitats — reminding us that they are entitled to the homes that keep them safe, happy, and free.*

CONNECT WITH SHRADHA PRAKASH WARE

INSTAGRAM @shradhawareclicks

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

A Quiet Curiosity

BHAWNA GOEL · LANDSCAPE & CULTURAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Self-taught and quietly persistent, she moves between the serene stillness of a mountain dawn and the vibrant energy of an Indian festival — chasing moments that last only a few minutes.

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

Photography began as a quiet curiosity. I was always drawn to photographs, and one day I picked up a camera to capture the places, people, and moments that moved me. That curiosity gradually became a passion that has only grown stronger over time.

Q What was the first moment you realized you had a passion for photography?

I realized photography was more than a hobby when I shared a photograph I had taken on my mobile phone on Facebook. The appreciation was encouraging, but what truly stayed with me was a photographer friend's simple remark: "You can do this." That moment gave me the confidence to pursue photography seriously, and I've never looked back since.

AT A GLANCE

GENRES	Landscape · Cultural storytelling
CAMERA	Canon R5
LENSES	RF 15–35mm f/2.8 · RF 24–70mm f/2.8
ON LOCATION	Theyyam · Jaisalmer · Kashmir



BHAWNA GOEL

STILLNESS

Q How has your experience in photography grown over the years?

It has been challenging, adventurous, and deeply fulfilling. Every journey, every mistake, and every photograph has helped me grow as both a photographer and a person.



LANDSCAPE A river as a leading line to a snow-clad peak, dusk. Photograph by Bhawna Goel

Q Tell us about a photo that represents your current skill level.

Captured at dusk, this long-exposure landscape uses the river as a natural leading line to a snow-clad peak illuminated by the day's final light. This image is special to me because it reflects what I seek through landscape photography: a connection with nature, a sense of stillness, and the privilege of witnessing a beautiful moment that existed for only a few minutes. I think I managed to capture the essence through my camera.

Q What type of photography do you enjoy most and why?

Landscape photography is closest to my heart because it brings me peace and a deeper connection with nature. I am equally drawn to India's vibrant festivals, where every celebration tells a story through colour, tradition, and human emotion. Both genres allow me to capture the essence of a moment in time.

> *"I've learned to embrace the unexpected and find beauty in imperfection.*



KASHMIR Fog and mist in winter. Photograph by Bhawna Goel

SPECTACLE



THEYYAM



JAISALMER



HERITAGE

IN THE FIELD The Theyyam ritual amid fire, a caravan in the last light of the desert at Jaisalmer, and a heritage monument after dark. Photographs by Bhawna Goel

Q Walk us through a photo you took in challenging conditions.

Each photograph came with its own challenges. The Theyyam festival demanded quick reflexes in low light, dense crowds, and close proximity to fire. The Jaisalmer image required careful composition and exposure in rapidly fading light, while the landscape photograph tested my endurance in extreme cold and changing weather. Together, these experiences taught me patience, adaptability, and the importance of being ready for fleeting moments.

Q What editing techniques do you apply?

I use Adobe Camera Raw, Lightroom, and Photoshop for subtle adjustments to light, colour, contrast, and composition. I prefer a restrained editing style that enhances the image without compromising its authenticity. The goal is always to bring out the natural beauty of the scene.

Q How would you describe your photography style in a few words?

Atmospheric landscapes and soulful cultural storytelling. I strive to capture the mood and emotion of a place or event, whether it's the serene stillness of a mountain dawn or the vibrant energy of a festival.

CONNECT WITH BHAWNA GOEL

INSTAGRAM @bhawna.baran

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Sunsets, For Fun

CHARU RATHI · MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER · AGE 18

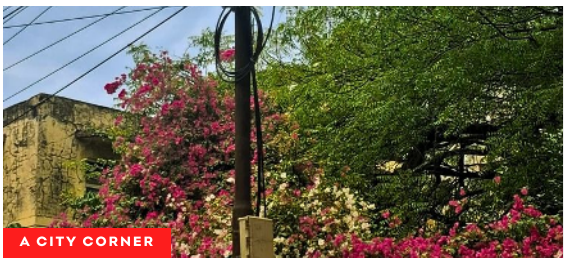
Self-taught on a phone, an eighteen-year-old turns sunsets, street corners and everyday light into a growing camera roll of quiet stories.



CHARU RATHI



THE PORTRAIT SITTING



A CITY CORNER

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

My journey began a few years ago when I started taking pictures with my phone just for fun. I enjoyed capturing sunsets, nature, and everyday moments. As I experimented with different styles, photography grew from a hobby into a passion.

Q What techniques did you use in your portrait shoot?

I took this portrait while on a city walk with the college's photography club. For this shot, I rotated the camera to vertical and clicked from a distance while zooming in. For further perfection, I edited it a little to enhance the mood.

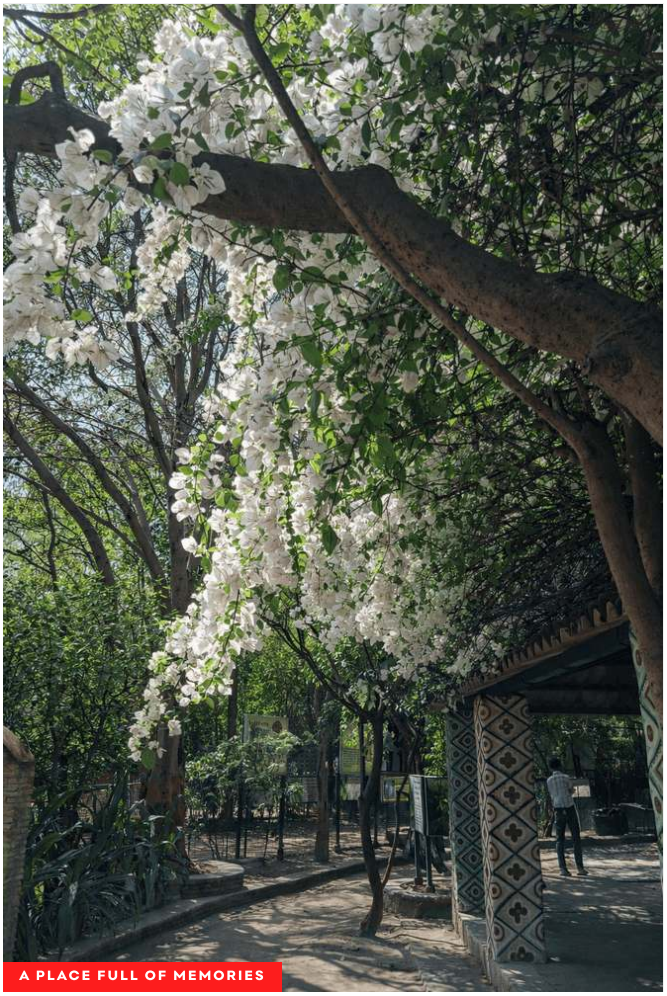
Q The photo that best represents your street work?

This photo feels like a story of nature quietly taking over a busy city corner. Amid the tangled wires, old buildings, and streetlights, a wall of vibrant pink and white flowers blooms freely. I took this randomly on a weekend walk with a friend.

THE CRAFT

Q How has your photography style evolved over the years?

It evolved a lot, to be honest. At first, I was just clicking pictures randomly, but now it's about setting the frame, getting the composition right, and then definitely editing a little bit—adjusting clarity, brightness, and all that. I've become more intentional with every shot.



A PLACE FULL OF MEMORIES

Q The most memorable moment behind your travel photo?

This photo was clicked while I was on a family trip. This place holds the core memories of my life. My last school trip was at this place, and revisiting those memories on a family trip made the old sweet moments rush through my mind like the wind.



SHOT ON NIGHT MODE

Q What settings or apps did you use for your mobile photo?

I used the normal mobile camera on a Samsung A16. I used the night mode to capture this shot, which helped bring out the details in low light.

Q Which genre resonates most with you, and why?

Mobile photography resonates most with me because, as an 18-year-old, I never got the chance to use a professional camera before college. So it all started with clicking pictures on my phone, and I've learned to make the most of it.

AT A GLANCE

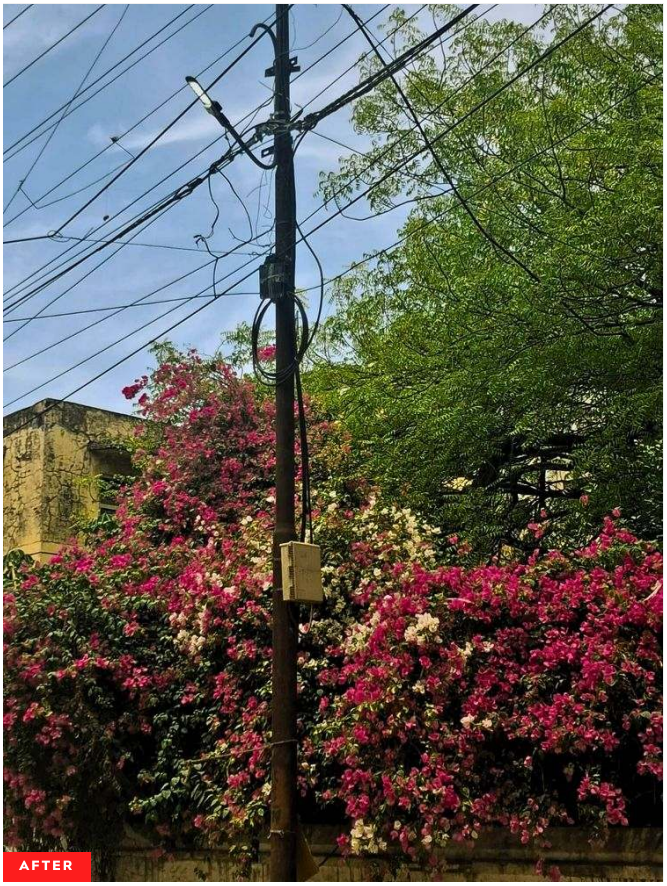
AGE	18
CAMERA	Samsung A16 — shot entirely on mobile
EDITS IN	Canva
CREW	College photography club

THE EDIT

Q What was the first photo that made you feel like a photographer?

A beautiful sunset sky with dark clouds, soft light near the horizon, and the city skyline in the background. That moment made me realize I could create something meaningful with just a camera.





Q Walk us through your editing process for a before-and-after shot.

I used the app Canva for this editing. I cropped it a little, focusing on the streetlight surrounded by pink flowers. Then I adjusted basic factors like brightness, contrast, saturation, and clarity to make the image pop.

> *"Now, I love using photography to tell stories and preserve memories through my own perspective."*
>
> CHARU RATHI

CONNECT WITH CHARU RATHI

INSTAGRAM @Charu_rathi11

IN CONVERSATION · TRAVEL & AERIAL

Ground, Then Air

SHOUNAK PAL · TRAVEL & AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHER

From the streets and festivals of Kolkata to a drone's-eye view of chilli fields and fishing nets, Shounak Pal frames everyday life from two vantage points — the ground, and the air.



SHOUNAK PAL — TRAVELS, SEEN FROM ABOVE

Q How did your journey as a travel and aerial photographer begin?

My journey as a photographer began in 2015. Before that, I had been taking photos occasionally, but from 2015, I took it up as a serious hobby and bought my first camera. I never limited myself to a specific genre, but most of my photos revolve around travel, people, and festivals. I started as an aerial photographer and videographer in 2022, capturing people, landscapes, and festivals from a unique perspective.

Q What was the moment you realized you wanted to pursue photography professionally?

I decided to pursue photography professionally in 2020, mainly after the Covid-19 pandemic. That period gave me time to reflect and commit to my passion.

Q How has your experience and style evolved over the years?

I have grown immensely, thanks to my team, Friends Photo Society (FPS), and fellow photographers. I would especially like to mention Shibasish Saha, a great photographer who has inspired and helped me develop over the years.

Q What is your favorite travel destination for photography, and why?

I am from Kolkata, West Bengal, India. This city has given me so much and played a significant role in my growth, so it will always be my top destination.

FROM ABOVE



THE AERIAL EYE

BEST AERIAL SHOT Working women dry and sort red chillies under the scorching sun — a group at work, seen from directly overhead.

> *I started as an aerial photographer and videographer in 2022, capturing people, landscapes, and festivals from a unique perspective.*

Q Upload your best aerial shot taken from a drone or aircraft.

This aerial shot represents a group of working women drying and sorting red chillies under the scorching sun.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the aerial in motion, from Shounak Pal's story.

Q Share a video clip of a time-lapse or drone footage from your travels.

This drone footage was taken during my trip to Kerala using my DJI Air 3S. It was shot during extreme monsoon season.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the drone footage, from Shounak Pal's story.

ON THE GROUND



TRAVEL STYLE A fisherman going about his daily activities in a moss-filled river — a connection between nature and human life.

Q Upload a photo that best represents your travel photography style.

The attached photo represents a connection between nature and daily human life. We can see a fisherman going about his daily activities in a moss-filled river.

Q Share the behind-the-scenes of a travel shoot.

In the BTS video, you can see me getting ready with my drone and then flying it from the car while shooting in Kerala. It was an amazing experience during this travel shoot, as it was thrilling and adventurous to fly my drone during the monsoon.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the behind-the-scenes, from Shounak Pal's story.



THE PEOPLE WE MEET A group of local footballers who practice every evening — met on a FIFA shoot for the 2026 World Cup.

Q Upload a portrait or candid shot of a local person you met during your travels.

The people in the attached photo are a group of local football players who practice every evening. Me and my team were shooting for a FIFA video related to football during the World Cup 2026, and we met them then. We included these people in our football video as well.

Q Upload an edited version of a photo along with the original unedited file.

My editing process involves adjusting the frame, adjusting colors, and masking the subject.

CONNECT WITH SHOUNAK PAL

INSTAGRAM @the_nomadic_boy

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

What Does Baahaara Mean?

SHUBH SHAH · MUSIC ARTIST

A Mumbai singer-songwriter who turns the feelings he has lived through into melody — and flips the songs you already love into something you have never quite heard.



SHUBH SHAH

SHUBH SHAH

AT A GLANCE

BASED	Mumbai, India
WORKS AS	Singer-songwriter · Producer
FIRST SONG	Jashn-e-Baahaara (Jodhaa Akbar)
EARLY IDOL	Shawn Mendes
SIGNATURE	Genre-flips & mashups
INSTRUMENTS	Guitar · Piano
AWARD	Haule Haule (Funk Version)

THE FIRST NOTE

Q Every singer has a 'first' — the first time your own voice surprised you. Where were you, what were you singing, and did anyone else hear it?

I think I was around seven or eight when I used to sing Jashn-e-Baahaara from the movie Jodha Akbar a lot. I'd sing the song, not even knowing what the words meant, and I'd go to my mom asking, "What does baahaara mean? What does jashn mean?" I didn't realise it at the time, but that's probably when my mom first thought I had something in music.

Q Mumbai is loud with music dreams. What made a kid from that city decide, 'I'm actually going to do this'?

Honestly, it started in a pretty cheesy way. I was a massive Shawn Mendes fan, and as a teenager, I wanted to be just like him. I'd listen to his songs and think, "I want to do this too." Eventually, as I grew up, it slowly became less about wanting to be like someone and more about what music actually meant to me. It became an outlet for me. It gave me a sense of peace and calm, and something I genuinely enjoyed doing without ever getting tired of it.

THE ORIGIN

Q Your bio says 'turning the emotions you feel into melodies.' Which emotion is the hardest for you to turn into music — and which one comes out almost on its own?

I think as an artist, I write about feelings I've actually experienced or lived through. So whether it's love, heartbreak, happiness or loneliness, I find all of them equally difficult to write about. No matter how many words you put into it, you always feel like it's not enough. You're never completely satisfied because the song can describe the emotion, but it can never fully embody what you actually felt when you lived through it.

Q Was there a moment you almost gave up on music? What kept your hand from closing the laptop?

There have been quite a few times when I've thought, "Is this really going to work out?" I'd be posting content, writing songs, making music, networking, trying to figure things out, but there was always that worry at the back of my mind about whether I was actually going to reach the level that I wanted to. Sometimes that doubt would get so strong that I'd think maybe I should just stop. But then I'd realise I didn't actually want to stop making music. I was just scared it wouldn't work out. And ironically, that thought became motivation to keep going.

Q Walk us inside that flip: how did a smooth romantic classic become funk + hip-hop in your head?

There wasn't really a big thought process behind it. I was listening to Haule Haule on Spotify one day, and I suddenly thought it would actually sound really good as a funk song. The lyrics have such a lighthearted, playful feeling to them, and I felt like that energy could work really well with a funk groove. So I just started experimenting with it, and that's how the whole idea came about.

Q Share one from your 'this mashup should be lowkey illegal' series — your pick for the most gloriously chaotic one.

SCAN TO LISTEN

Hear this from Shubh Shah's story.

> *"I didn't want to just become another person singing the same songs in the same way.*

Q How does a mashup like that start — two songs stuck in your head at 2 AM, or a deliberate 'these should NEVER go together... but what if'?

There's honestly no particular process. It's usually very random. I could be cooking, working, or lying in bed at midnight and suddenly think, "Wait, these two songs might actually work together." Then I'll start experimenting with the tempos and see if they fit. I also think about whether their moods make sense together. You can't just put any two songs together. The emotions have to make sense too, otherwise you end up ruining both songs.

Q You don't just cover songs — you flip them. When did you realise a faithful cover wasn't enough for you, and you had to reinvent instead?

I realised there were already so many people doing covers, and I didn't want to just become another person singing the same songs in the same way. There's nothing wrong with that, but I wanted to give people something a little different. I liked the idea of keeping the familiarity of a popular song people already love, while changing the music enough that they'd hear it in a completely new way. That balance between nostalgia and a surprise element really drew me to doing genre flips.

Q Share your 'Haule Haule – Funk Version' — the one that won you the award.

SCAN TO LISTEN

Hear this from Shubh Shah's story.

THE CRAFT

Q What's an experiment you've tried that completely flopped — and what did that flop teach you?

I honestly don't remember one specific experiment that completely flopped. There have definitely been ideas and songs I've worked on that never made it to Instagram because they just didn't turn out the way I had imagined. Sometimes it's the song, sometimes the production, or sometimes I just realise my voice doesn't really suit it. I think that's also part of experimenting. Not everything you make has to see the light of day.

Q You've done one-take covers like Jugraafiya and said it's way harder than it looks. What does it feel like in your body during a take you know you can't mess up?

It's honestly harder than it looks. Before a one take cover, I usually practice it quite a bit because there are so many small things to keep in mind, like the lyrics, breathing spaces, pitch, dynamics etc. Once I start recording, I just try to stay focused and get through the whole thing without letting one small mistake throw me off.

Q Guitar or piano — which one do you reach for when you're writing for yourself, not for the algorithm? Why that one?

I think it really depends on the song. I naturally reach for the guitar more because that's what I started learning first, and it's still one of my favourite instruments. But there are certain songs where the piano just makes more sense and helps me think differently. So I don't really have a fixed process. I usually just pick up whatever instrument I have around and start playing.

Q Share something you produced for someone else that you're proud of.

SCAN TO LISTEN

Hear this from Shubh Shah's story.

Q You've literally rewritten songs — flipping the Metro track from sad to happy, rewriting another from 'someone who chooses to stay.' What gives you the nerve to rewrite a songwriter's emotion, and where do you draw the line?

For me, it's more about challenging myself creatively than changing what the original songwriter meant. I find it really interesting to take a song and look at it from a completely different perspective. If I only change a few words while keeping the same story, there isn't much room for me to explore creatively. But if I change the emotion or the perspective completely, it pushes me to think differently, while still keeping that familiarity and nostalgia of the original song.

Q You've posted raw takes — just your voice and a monsoon drizzle, no mic, no instruments. Which version of you feels more true: the studio producer, or the guy singing to the rain?

I think both sides feel true to me, just in different ways. Singing something raw takes a lot more attention because there's nowhere to hide. The pitch, lyrics, emotion, dynamics, everything has to come together in that moment. In a studio, you can redo things and shape the song. But when it's just me singing and the listener, there's a different kind of connection. It's less about perfection and more about relatability.

Q You don't just sing — you mix and master, even for other artists. What's a production detail you obsess over that a normal listener will never consciously hear, but would feel if it were missing?

I think it starts even before you actually start producing. Having a clear idea of what the song needs, what it should feel like, and choosing the right sounds and arrangement can make a huge difference. I've realised that a song doesn't need 100 tracks to sound big. Sometimes a really simple production can have much more impact if every sound has a purpose and you know what the song actually needs.

Q What's different about serving someone else's voice versus your own?

With my own music, I already know my voice, my strengths, my weaknesses, and what I like, so the process is usually much faster. But when I'm working with someone else, I have to understand them first. Their voice, range, strengths, weaknesses, their taste, and most importantly, what they actually want the song to sound like. It's not about making it sound like me. It's about figuring out how I can bring that out in the best way possible.

CONNECT WITH SHUBH SHAH

WEBSITE linktr.ee/shubhshahmusic

IN CONVERSATION · WEDDING

Pocket Money Rolls

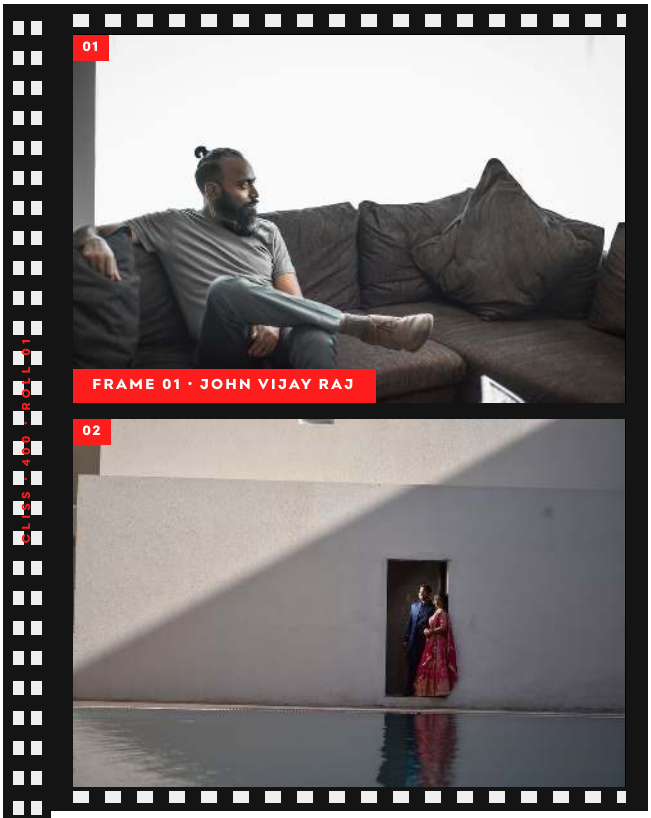
JOHN VIJAY RAJ · WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER

He spent his childhood pocket money on rolls of film, waiting days to see each frame. Two decades on, the founder of Cliss Photography still treats every wedding as a blank canvas — painting, as he puts it, with light.

Q How did your journey as a photographer begin?

My journey with photography began when I was around seven years old. My uncle, who lived in the UK, gifted me my very first point-and-shoot film camera along with a few rolls of film. I was instantly fascinated. There was something magical about being able to freeze a moment in time. From then on, I spent almost all of my pocket money buying film rolls and paying to have them developed. Every roll felt like an adventure, because you had to wait to see the results. That process taught me to be intentional with every frame and to appreciate the value of each photograph. What started as childhood curiosity slowly grew into a lifelong passion, and today that same curiosity continues to drive everything I create at Cliss Photography.

> *Every wedding is a blank canvas.*



ROLL 01 The photographer at rest, and a couple held in a shaft of light — two decades of painting with light in a single strip.

AT A GLANCE

FIRST CAMERA	Point-and-shoot film, gifted by his uncle in the UK
STUDIO	Cliss Photography
EARLY WINS	Several painting competitions, as a child
METHOD	Painting with light, solved in-camera
FILM SCHOOL	Pocket-money rolls, developed and studied one frame at a time
FRAMES	Weddings & celebration
INFLUENCES	Ansel Adams, Joe McNally, Olga Karlovac

PAINTING WITH LIGHT FRAME 02



THE CANVAS Natural light, in-camera technique and thoughtful composition — each frame made to feel timeless. CLISS · 36 EXP

Q When did you realise photography could be art?

As a child, I loved drawing and painting. I spent countless hours sketching and experimenting with colours, and I was fortunate to win several painting competitions. Art was always a part of who I was. As I grew older, I found myself drawn away from ordinary photographs. I wanted every image to have intention, emotion, light and composition — just like a painting. That's when I realised the camera had become my canvas. Instead of using brushes and paint, I was using light, perspective and human connection to create something that felt timeless. Today, I don't approach photography as simply capturing what is in front of me. I approach it as painting with light, creating images that evoke emotion long after the moment has passed.

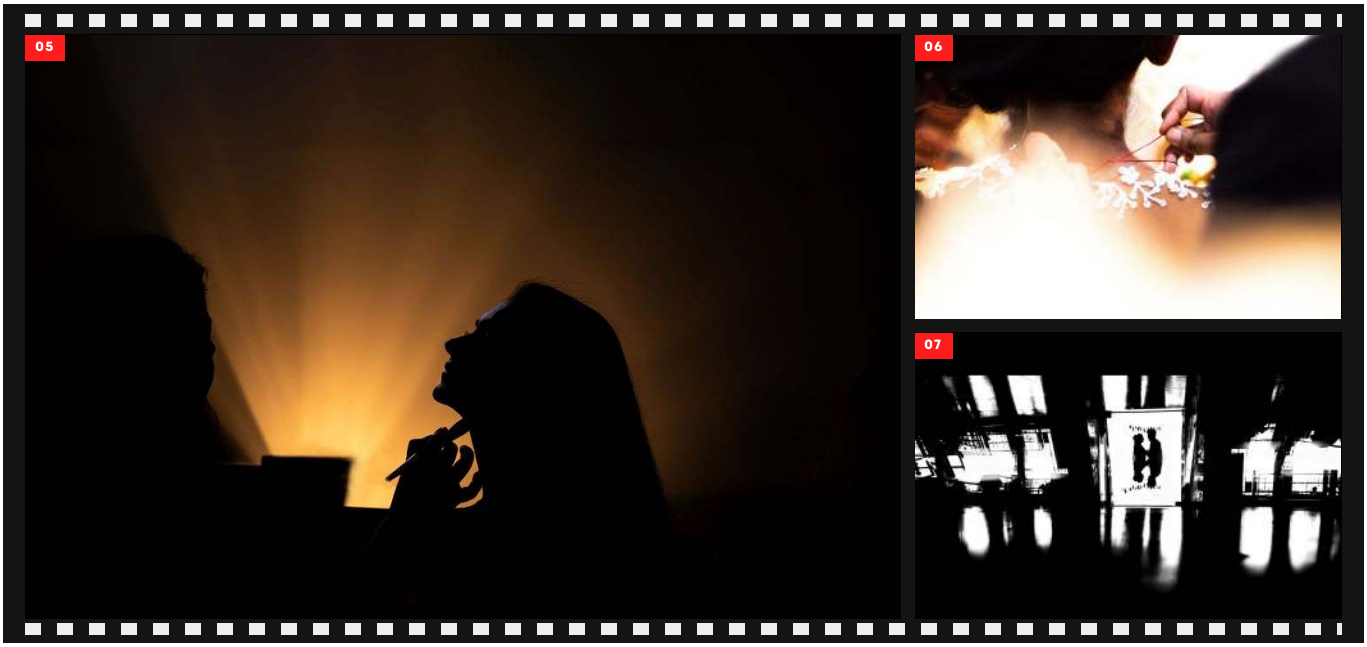
Q How has your artistic style evolved over the years?

When I look back at my earliest work, I smile, because it reminds me how far I've come. At the time, I thought I was creating good photographs, but today I see someone who was still searching for his voice. The biggest change wasn't my camera or my equipment — it was my mindset. I became obsessed with understanding light, composition, storytelling and emotion. I spent years studying the work of artists who inspired me, such as Ansel Adams, Joe McNally and Olga Karlovac. I didn't just admire their images; I tried to understand how they saw the world. Over time, I stopped chasing trends and started developing a style that felt true to me. Today, I don't see myself as just a photographer — I see myself as an artist and a creative director. Every wedding is a blank canvas, and my goal is to create something that has never existed before.

THE CONTACT SHEET FRAMES 05–07

Q What story do these three photographs convey?

These three photographs tell the story of a wedding day from beginning to end — from the quiet anticipation as the bride and groom prepare, to the moment they finally tie the knot. Rather than simply documenting the sequence of events, I wanted each image to evoke the emotion and atmosphere of that moment. Every frame was created with careful attention to light, composition and perspective, allowing the story to unfold in a way that feels cinematic and timeless.



BEGINNING TO END Anticipation, vow and celebration — one wedding day read left to right, like a strip of exposed film. ROLL 02 · 05–07

> *"That's when I realised the camera had become my canvas.*

7

THE AGE IT BEGAN

He was around seven when his uncle's gift — a point-and-shoot and a few rolls of film — first put a camera in his hands.

Q What drives you to create art through photography?

Photography is the one thing I know was God's calling over my life. I've tried to imagine myself doing something else, and I honestly can't. When you believe you've been entrusted with a gift, you also feel a responsibility to steward it well. That's why I never stop learning — even after all these years, I still approach photography with the curiosity of a child, constantly studying, experimenting and pushing myself to create something better than I did yesterday. Creating beautiful images gives me immense joy, but what truly fulfils me is seeing my clients experience their photographs and films for the first time. Watching them laugh, cry and relive moments they thought had passed forever is incredibly rewarding. It's never just about taking photographs; it's about creating a legacy that will outlive us all.

INTO THE LIGHT FRAMES 08–09



THE REFLECTION Rendered in black and white to hold the eye on light, shadow and form.



THE FLOODLIGHTS The couple lost in their own world, wrapped in the flare of a crowded dance floor.

Q What technique gave that image its perspective?

The first thing that caught my attention was the reflection on the floor. I immediately saw the potential to use it as a compositional element rather than just part of the environment. That reflection became the foundation of the image, creating balance, depth and a slightly unexpected perspective. The original scene had a lot of visual distractions, so I chose to present the photograph in black and white. Removing colour allowed the viewer's attention to shift to the interplay of light, shadow, reflection and emotion instead of the surrounding details. For me, creating art is about seeing possibilities that others might overlook. It's not always about dramatic locations or elaborate setups — sometimes it's about recognising a simple element, like a reflection, and using it thoughtfully to transform an ordinary moment into something visually meaningful.

Q What tool matters most to your work, and why?

For me, the most important tool isn't the camera — it's light. Light is what gives a photograph its mood, depth and emotion. In this image, I used the existing floodlights on the dance floor as a creative element rather than simply a source of illumination. Instead of trying to overpower them with artificial lighting, I worked with them to create layers, flare and atmosphere. The effect gives the image a dreamlike quality, almost as if the couple is lost in their own world despite the crowd around them. I've learned that every lighting situation, no matter how challenging, holds creative possibilities. That's a philosophy I carry into every wedding I photograph.

> *"It's not about having perfect light; it's about seeing what that light can become."*
>
> JOHN VIJAY RAJ · CLISS PHOTOGRAPHY

CONNECT WITH JOHN VIJAY RAJ

INSTAGRAM @clissphotography **YOUTUBE** @clissphotography

IN CONVERSATION · TRAVEL

Detour Through Weddings

DEV RAJ · TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHER

He never planned to be a travel photographer. A hobby became weddings, weddings taught him to read a face, and a single Instagram post about Masan Holi pulled Dev Raj toward Varanasi — the place where the frame finally became the story.

Q How did your journey as a travel creator begin?

I didn't start photography with the intention of becoming a travel creator. My journey began much earlier, in 2018, when I bought my first camera mainly to click personal photos. But slowly, as I started spending more time with the camera, I developed a deeper interest in photography and began wanting to learn and explore more. Eventually, I started doing wedding photography as a way to earn through my skills. While working, I realised that what I enjoyed most wasn't just taking photographs —it was connecting with people, understanding their stories, and capturing genuine emotions. In 2023, I bought my second camera, a Sony A7 IV, which gave me the confidence and freedom to explore photography more seriously. Around the same time, I randomly came across a post about Masan Holi while scrolling through Instagram. I had never seen a festival like that before, and it immediately caught my attention. In 2024, I photographed Masan Holi for the first time, and I returned again in 2025 to document it. That experience made me realise that travel photography was becoming much more than just exploring new places for me. So, in a way, I didn't really choose travel photography—it naturally became a part of my journey.

> *"I didn't start photography with the intention of becoming a travel creator.*



DEV RAJ

PHOTOGRAPH · DEV RAJ

THE ROUTE

FIRST CAMERA	2018 — bought to click personal photos
EARNED WITH	Wedding photography
UPGRADE	Sony A7 IV, 2023
THE SPARK	A Masan Holi post on Instagram
DOCUMENTED	Masan Holi — 2024 & 2025

VARANASI · MASAN HOLI



MASAN HOLI Chaos, spirituality and human emotion, caught inside a single frame — shot as the moments naturally unfolded.

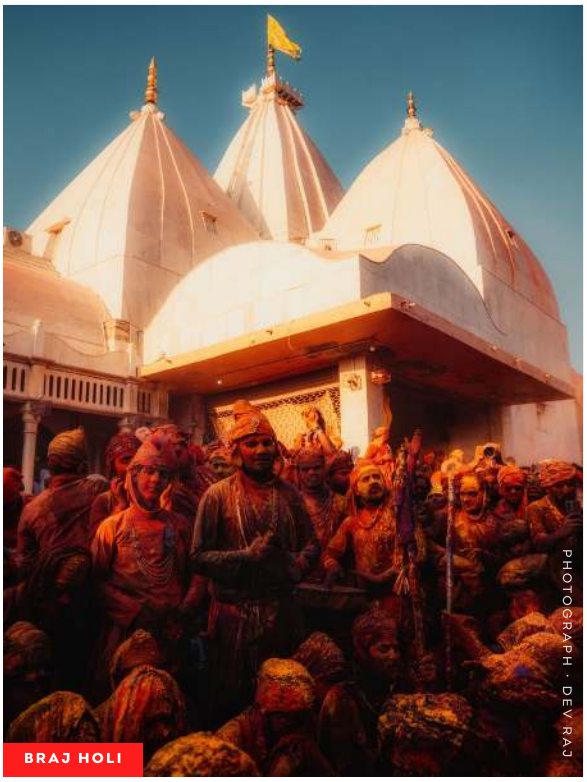
Q What makes your most memorable travel experience so special?

These photographs capture the raw and intense atmosphere of Masan Holi in Varanasi. As a photographer, I was drawn to the striking faces, colours, movement, and the unpredictable energy of the celebration. I wanted to capture the moments as they naturally unfolded rather than looking for perfectly arranged frames. Photographing in such a chaotic environment required me to slow down, observe carefully, and wait for the right moment. I was especially interested in the human side of the festival—the expressions, gestures, and emotions that could tell a story within a single frame. What makes these photographs special to me is the combination of chaos, spirituality, and human emotion within the same frame. I wanted the viewer to feel like they were standing there with me, experiencing the moment rather than simply looking at a photograph of it.

THE HUMAN SIDE

Q How does this cultural photo reflect the local way of life?

These photographs reflect the local way of life by showing how deeply Holi is connected to the people, traditions, spirituality, and everyday culture of Braj. Here, Holi feels much more than just a festival where people play with colours. It becomes a shared experience where people come together, participate in traditional rituals, sing, play music, dress in traditional attire, and celebrate their connection with the culture of the region. What I found most interesting was seeing how naturally this celebration becomes a part of people's lives. People of different ages come together, and the celebration feels deeply rooted in a sense of community and belonging. For me, these moments represent a culture that is not simply preserved as a tradition, but is actively lived, shared, and passed on from one generation to another.



BRAJ Ritual, colour and devotion in traditional attire.



WINTER MORNING A vendor already at work — the honest, unposed side of a place.

Q What was happening in that candid moment, and why did you capture it?

The moment I captured was a quiet winter morning during one of my travels. The surroundings were still calm and slightly hazy with the cold. I came across a street vendor standing behind his small food cart, already busy with his daily work. He was not posing for the camera or trying to get anyone's attention; he was simply doing what he does every morning. What caught my attention was the contrast between the quiet, cold morning and the sense of routine in the scene. The cart, the food, the utensils, the trees, and the soft winter atmosphere together created a very honest picture of everyday life. I decided to capture it because these are the kind of moments I naturally look for while travelling. This photograph is a reminder that a place is not defined only by its monuments or landscapes, but also by the people who wake up early and quietly keep everyday life moving.

THE CRAFT

Q How does your gear contribute to your travel photography?

My gear plays an important role in the way I experience and document a place. My Sony Alpha camera gives me the flexibility and reliability I need while travelling, especially when moments happen unexpectedly and I have only a few seconds to capture them. The Sigma 24-70mm f/2.8 is the most versatile part of my setup—I can use it to photograph wide landscapes, streets, people, architecture, festivals, and everyday moments without constantly changing lenses. The 50mm lens gives me a more natural and intimate perspective; I often use it for portraits, details, and everyday moments where I want the frame to feel personal and connected to the subject. For me, though, gear is ultimately a tool, not the story itself. It is the people, places, light, emotions, and unexpected moments that make a photograph meaningful. My setup simply helps me stay ready when those moments appear.



THE KIT

THE SETUP A Sony Alpha body with the Sigma 24-70mm f/2.8 and a 50mm — simple, flexible, ready.

THE RIVER · ON VIDEO

Q What story were you telling in the video you shared?

Through these short clips, I wanted to capture two sides of Varanasi—the energy of celebration during Dev Deepawali and the spiritual atmosphere of the Ganga Aarti. Together, these moments reflect how I experience Varanasi: incredibly vibrant, yet deeply spiritual at the same time.

Q What does this adventure represent to you?

This adventure represents the joy of exploring the unknown and experiencing a place beyond what you see on the surface. Being on the Ganges in Varanasi, surrounded by boats, the river, and the city slowly coming alive, felt like being part of something timeless.

SCAN TO WATCH

Dev Deepawali & the Ganga Aarti.

SCAN TO WATCH

On the Ganges at dawn.

CONNECT WITH DEV RAJ

INSTAGRAM @dev7.x

IN CONVERSATION · STREET

Minimalism and Miles

PALAK KUMAR SAHU · STREET PHOTOGRAPHER

On the art of seeing — where light, shadow and negative space are asked to carry the story, and the frame is left deliberately, generously empty.

THE ART OF SEEING 01

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

My journey into photography began with a simple desire to tell stories, not just capture moments. What started as documenting my travels, cycling expeditions, and endurance runs gradually became a passion for observing people, emotions, and everyday life. Over time, I found myself drawn to street photography, where ordinary scenes often reveal extraordinary stories. Today, I love creating minimalist, emotion-driven images that use light, shadows, and negative space to make people pause, reflect, and feel something beyond what's visible in the frame.

Q What was the first moment you realized you were drawn to street photography?

Street photography taught me that life doesn't wait for the perfect composition. It unfolds in fractions of a second.

AT A GLANCE

FOCUS	Minimalist, emotion-driven street photography
SIGNATURE	Light, shadow & negative space
ROOTS	Travel, cycling & endurance runs
PROJECT	Raghurajpur — a Living Heritage series
HANDLE	@grainandgeometry



ON THE ROAD The miles behind the minimalism — the photographer on an endurance run.

02 NEGATIVE SPACE



THE RIVER Small figures adrift in an endless expanse.

Q Which photo best represents your street photography style, and what's the story behind it?

We have become a generation obsessed with filling every frame, every moment, every silence. I chose to leave space. The vast emptiness of the river is not absence; it is time itself. The child, the grandmother, the family—small figures drifting through an endless expanse—remind us that life was once lived in moments, not measured in notifications. This series is an attempt to break the convention of "subject-centric" photography. It asks a simple question: Why do we always focus on what is missing, instead of what is present?

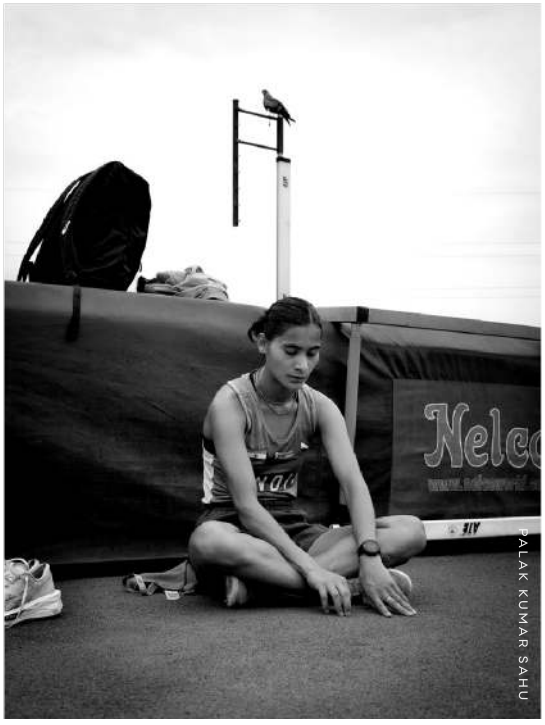
> *The negative space is the story.*
>
> PALAK KUMAR SAHU

Q What does monochrome photography allow you to express that colour cannot?

Colour tells you what you're looking at. Monochrome invites you to feel why you're looking at it. It simplifies the frame and amplifies emotion.

Q Tell us about a monochrome image that captures a powerful moment for you.

The sprinter represents effort, discipline, and the struggle on the ground. The eagle symbolizes vision, freedom, resilience, and the ability to rise above challenges.



THE SPRINTER & THE EAGLE Effort on the ground, freedom overhead.

03 DECISIVE MOMENTS



THE LEAP An ordinary jump, framed by trees and air.

Q What drew you to capture that particular candid street scene?

Framed by the trees and surrounded by vast negative space, the image transforms an ordinary leap into something timeless.



SITAL SHASTI · SHIVJI BARAAT Backlight through smoke.

Q Walk us through how you used light and shadow in this street photograph.

I used the strong backlight filtering through the smoke to create a dramatic interplay of light and shadow. Rather than illuminating the entire scene, the light highlights the devotees and performers, while the shadows preserve the mystery and spiritual intensity of the procession.



RAGHURAJPUR Every home a studio, every artisan a storyteller.

Q What's the theme of the series you're currently working on?

Raghurajpur: this project explores the idea of Living Heritage—where every home is a studio, every artisan is a storyteller, and tradition is not preserved in museums but lived every day.

> *"It unfolds in fractions of a second, and the photographer's job is simply to notice what everyone else walks past."*



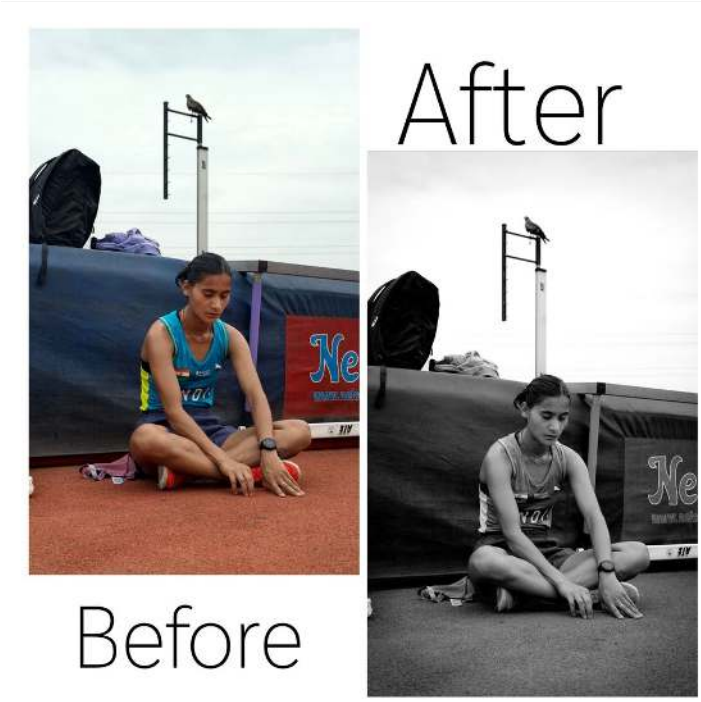
ABOVE THE EXPANSE An eagle, and the emptiness it crosses.



HIS BEST FRAME Letting the scene speak for itself.

Q What technical skills did you apply to create the image you consider your best?

I like to play with natural light and shadow. It's about finding the right balance and letting the scene speak for itself without overcomplicating the technical aspects.



BEFORE / AFTER Colour capture to minimal monochrome.

Q What editing choices did you make for this before-and-after edit, and why?

My editing style is minimal and intentional. I focus on enhancing the emotion, light, and composition of an image rather than over-processing it. Every adjustment—from contrast and tones to monochrome conversion—is made to simplify the frame, remove distractions, and strengthen the story while preserving the authenticity of the moment.

> *"Earlier, I was trying to create impressive photographs. Today, I'm trying to create honest ones."*
>
> PALAK KUMAR SAHU

CONNECT WITH PALAK KUMAR SAHU

INSTAGRAM @grainandgeometry

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

FRAMES FROM A DREAM

The Designated Photographer

PARTH YADAV · CONCERT & TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHER

“I like to think of my edits as frames pulled straight out of a dream.”

Q How did you first get into photography?

It all started back in school with my phone. I was always fascinated by nature and the way moments could be captured in a frame. That curiosity stayed with me through childhood, and eventually, I picked up my first DSLR—a Nikon D3500 with two kit lenses—as a birthday gift in 2016. From there, I became the designated photographer on family trips, and my passion only grew.

Q What was the first concert you photographed?

The first live show I ever shot was a band called The Local Train back in 2019. But I had been clicking pictures on a DSLR since 2016, so I was already used to capturing moments on family trips. That concert experience, though, was a turning point—it showed me the energy and chaos of live music, and I knew I wanted to do more of it.

AT A GLANCE

FIRST CAMERA	Nikon D3500, a 2016 birthday gift
FIRST LIVE SHOW	The Local Train, 2019
TOURS WITH	Talwiinder — the 404 world
IN THE BAG	Sony A7III & a Fujifilm XM5

THE 404 ETHOS · @404_PIXELS

404

“To be an error within the so overly curated system of NPCs.” The glitch is the point — the frame you weren’t supposed to find.



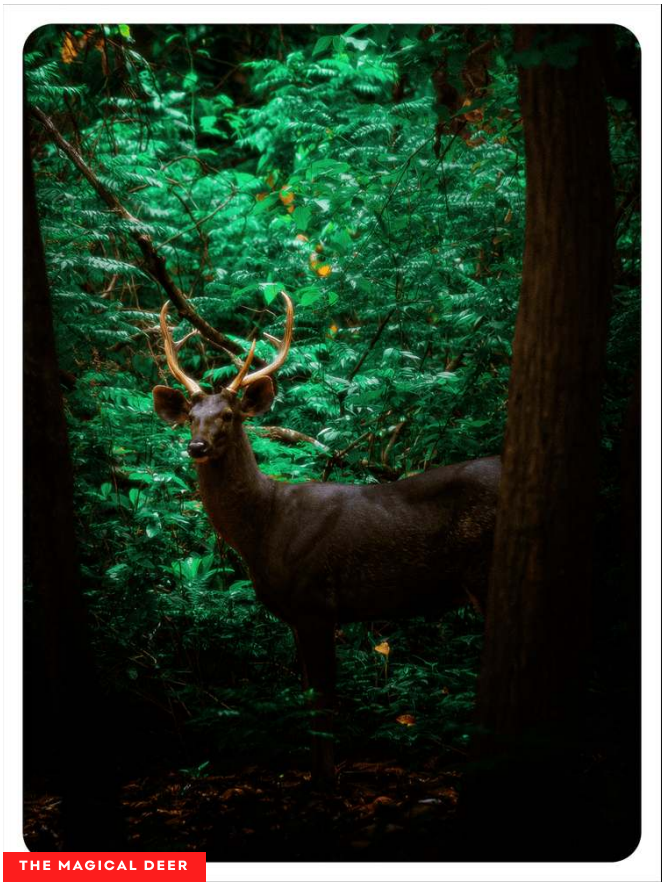
PARTH YADAV

PHOTOGRAPH · PARTH YADAV

FRAMES FROM A DREAM

Q How has your photography style evolved over time?

Earlier, my edits were all about heavy processing—over-saturated and overdone. Now, my work is more inspired by dreams. I like to think of my edits as frames pulled straight out of a dream. It's my imagination that guides the process, rather than sticking to a set tone or mood board. I capture real moments and then transform them into something surreal, almost magical.



FRAME One of my first wildlife shots — I wanted it to feel as magical as the moment did. Parth Yadav

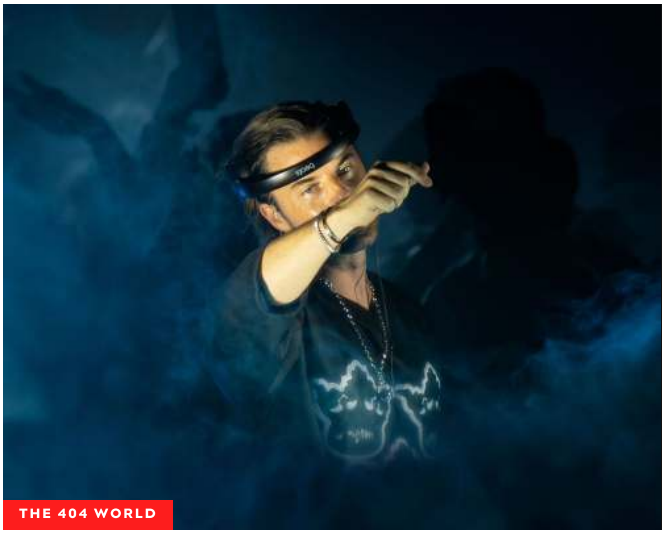
> *"I imagine the deer appearing in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban."*

Q What makes your travel photo special to you?

This is one of the first wildlife photographs I ever clicked, and I wanted to make it as magical as that moment felt to me. When I look at it, I imagine the deer appearing in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban—it's that kind of dreamy, cinematic quality I was going for.

Q Which concert photo are you most proud of?

I cover various artists, but I'm primarily a touring photographer with an artist named Talwiinder. My goal is to encapsulate his identity and the eerie, mysterious world, bringing it to life through thoughtfully curated custom visuals. Each photo is a piece of that puzzle — building together an IP with an artist whose vision and synergies align with the core values of 404: to be an error within the so overly curated system of NPCs.



FRAME Touring Talwiinder's eerie, mysterious world — building the 404 identity. Parth Yadav

Q What equipment do you usually carry for a shoot?

When I started full-blown concert photography, I used a Sony A7III with a 50mm lens. Over time, I added a 24-70mm F2.8 Samyang, a 10-18mm Sigma, and a GMII 70-200mm F2.8 to my arsenal. Recently, I got a Fujifilm XM5 with a 15-45mm kit lens, and I'm loving the straight-out-of-camera classic Fuji colors. I'm now integrating that film-camera style look into my work.

DREAMLAND



FRAME Covering Axwell — the dream of a kid who always wanted to see Swedish House Mafia live. Parth Yadav

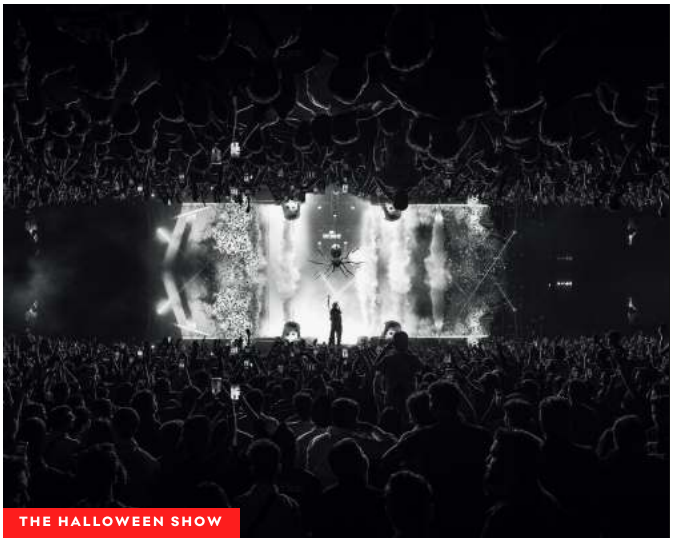
Q Can you walk us through your editing process for a specific image?

This is one of those edits where I could almost see the final result the moment I clicked the shutter. It needed to feel like a dream—specifically, the dream of that kid (me) who always wanted to see Swedish House Mafia perform live. Getting to cover Axwell was a realization of that dream, at least in part, and I'm going to take it because I got to cover the artist!

> *"It needed to feel like a dream — the dream of that kid who always wanted to see Swedish House Mafia live."*

Q How did you approach capturing your favorite subject or composition challenge?

For both shots, the intention was simple: capture the essence of the performance and the identity of the artist. The black-and-white one was for a Halloween show, so I went for a washed-out, eerie vibe—like people hanging from the gates of hell. The second one is of the band Glass Animals; they have a song called "Dreamland," and I wanted to encapsulate that feeling—the dreamland they take the audience to.



FRAME Washed-out and eerie — like people at the gates of hell. Parth Yadav



FRAME Glass Animals — encapsulating the feeling of 'Dreamland.' Parth Yadav

ORGANISED CHAOS



FRAME So many moving parts — and somehow it all comes together as one performance. Parth Yadav

Q What do you enjoy most about working in live event environments?

The best part is the organized chaos. There are so many moving parts—technicians installing lights, vendors, brands, organizers, sponsors—and somehow, at the end of the show, it all comes together as a perfectly orchestrated performance. It's chaos, but it's organized, and it works out in the end.

> *"It's chaos, but it's organized — and it works out in the end."*



FRAME Face paint and blue haze — a curated custom visual. Parth Yadav

Q What's the story behind your behind-the-scenes photos?

I really don't have that many behind-the-scenes photos, but I document a lot on video. Along with Team Talwiinder I have a YouTube series called Bharcha: Bhailog ke saath charcha — all behind-the-scenes exclusive footage of how the team is on tour. The common thread is that we love what we do: there are times we're at each other's necks to get things moving, but mostly we have fun doing what we love together — bringing the showcase to life.

> *"The crowd never sees all the effort behind the scenes, but that's what makes it magical."*
>
> PARTH YADAV

CONNECT WITH PARTH YADAV

INSTAGRAM @404_pixels **WEBSITE** 404pixels.com

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

One Frame at a Time

ARJUN BASU · PHOTOGRAPHER

A young photographer who sees the world a little differently — chasing not perfection but the poetry of an imperfect world, and giving every frame he keeps a name.



ARJUN BASU

Q When did you first realize photography was your passion?

I started realizing my passion for photography at a very young age. I always felt that the way I see the world is different — perhaps even unique in its own way. Through every frame, I try to capture emotions, stories, and moments as I experience them. So, here's the world from my perspective — one frame at a time.

Q How has your artistic vision evolved since you started?

My artistic vision has never been about perfection. Instead, it's always been about discovering and highlighting the beauty of this imperfect world that we call home. Over time, I've learned to embrace flaws and find poetry in the ordinary, which has deeply shaped my approach to photography.

THE NAMED FRAMES

ON IDENTITY	**"Three Paper Boats"**
ON THE BUBBLE	**"Bubble Man"**
ON DUTY	**"W.G.W." — Why God Why**
THE FIRST FRAME	**"The Weight of Time"**
THE SERIES	**"The Inanimate Expression"**

> *"The world not just as it is, but as it feels.*

BETWEEN TRUTH & IMAGINATION

Q What is the most challenging part of art photography?

The most challenging part of art photography, in my experience, is finding the perfect balance between reality and fiction — creating images that feel honest yet surreal, familiar yet dreamlike. It's about capturing the world not just as it is, but as it feels, transforming ordinary moments into visual stories that exist somewhere between truth and imagination.

Q What are some of your favorite works that represent your signature style?

These are not just images; they hold a deeper meaning. First, "Three Paper Boats": this image was taken at a time when I was developing my own identity, in the middle of becoming an individual rather than an extension of my family. Second, "Bubble Man": this is my observation about the world we live in. Everyone has a bubble they live in and refuse to acknowledge the outside world. Third, "W.G.W." (Why God Why): There comes a time when you are doing something you don't like at all, but you know you have to because you don't have a choice. You end up doing it with extreme disdain... That is the expression I captured. And the fourth is what started my journey in photography: a quick click that snowballed into a success story in the making — "The Weight of Time."



"BUBBLE MAN"

BUBBLE MAN An observation on the bubbles we live in, refusing the world outside.



"THREE PAPER BOATS" · ON BECOMING AN INDIVIDUAL

THE WEIGHT OF TIME

Q Can you recall a moment where a photo you took exceeded your expectations?

Well yes — one of the most memorable experiences from my early days in photography happened at Yamuna Ghat in Delhi. What started as a normal outing quickly turned chaotic when the weather suddenly took a turn for the worse. A classic Delhi dust storm mixed with heavy rain left us completely stranded. To be honest, photography was the last thing on my mind at that moment. Out of nowhere, an old godman — a wise baba — came to our rescue. He offered us a place to sit, rest, and wait out the storm. While we were stuck there, somewhere between anxiety and boredom, I instinctively picked up my camera and took a street-style portrait of him. Ironically, that unplanned photograph went on to become the most talked-about image I've ever taken. I call it "The weight of time."

Q Tell us about a photo that showcases a unique perspective or technique you used.

The technique I used here was to change my perspective of the subject. Instead of shooting from eye level, I got low and used a wide angle to emphasize the subject's environment, creating a sense of scale and intimacy.

> *"I always felt that the way I see the world is different — perhaps even unique.*



TIME, HELD STILL

ON TIME A station clock, caught between one moment and the next.



A SENSE OF SCALE AND INTIMACY

FACE TO FACE



FACE TO FACE WITH A WILD TIGER

IN THE WILD Being this close required patience, stillness, and respect for the animal's space.

Q What made capturing that challenging image so difficult?

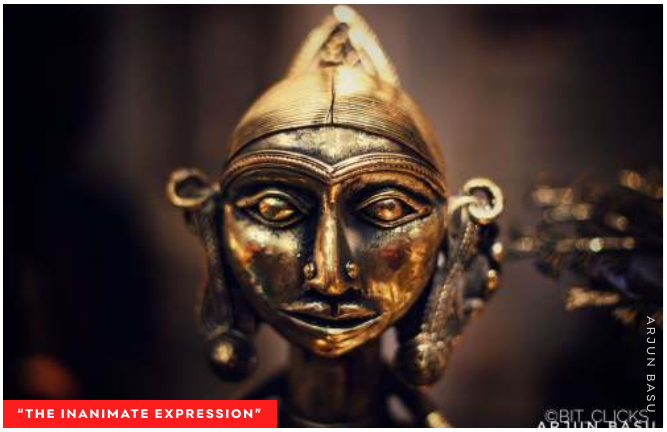
This shot brought me face to face with wildlife. I had to risk my safety in order to capture the shot. Being so close to a wild tiger required patience, stillness, and a deep respect for the animal's space.

Q Why do you think that photo resonated with your audience?

My photography comes from a place deep within my heart. I don't just capture what I see—I capture what I feel. Perhaps that's why my images resonate with people and evoke emotions beyond the frame. This particular photo, with its raw emotion and unique perspective, struck a chord with many viewers.

Q What story does your series "The Inanimate Expression" convey?

This series is called "The Inanimate Expression." It shows the expressive side of these bronze sculptures, capturing the emotions and stories embedded in their silent forms.



"THE INANIMATE EXPRESSION"

> *"So, here's the world from my perspective — one frame at a time."*
>
> ARJUN BASU

CONNECT WITH ARJUN BASU

INSTAGRAM @bit_clicks

IN CONVERSATION · STREET

DOCTOR & STREET PHOTOGRAPHER

A Travel Companion

DR. ANUPAM SEN CHOUDHURY · STREET PHOTOGRAPHER

By profession a doctor; on the pavement, a diagnostician of light. Sixteen years of pausing before the shutter to ask a single question—why this exact moment?

Q How did your journey in street photography begin?

Sixteen years ago, I started with a modest point-and-shoot digital camera that was meant to be nothing more than a travel companion. However, as I began capturing the world around me, I discovered a natural intuition for light and composition that turned a simple hobby into a lifelong passion.

Q What was the first moment you knew you wanted to pursue photography seriously?

The turning point came when my work was first published in The Asian Photography and Imaging magazine. Seeing my name in print for the very first time brought a deep sense of validation and satisfaction—and from that moment on, I began treating photography not just as a passion, but as a serious art to express my thoughts, emotions, and perspectives.

AT A GLANCE

SINCE	Sixteen years on the street
FIRST GEAR	A point-and-shoot travel camera
BREAKTHROUGH	Published in The Asian Photography & Imaging
GENRE	Street — the decisive moment
OFF DUTY	A practising doctor

THE METHOD

The Decisive Moment

Pausing before the shutter to ask one question — why this exact moment?



DR. ANUPAM SEN CHOUDHURY

THE PHOTOGRAPHER A doctor who reads the street the way he reads a patient.

THE DIAGNOSTIC EYE

Q How has your style and perspective evolved over the years?

Like most beginners, I started by photographing everything in sight. Over time, however, my focus shifted from simply taking pictures to actively hunting for stories within the frame. I began pausing before pushing the shutter, asking myself, 'Why am I capturing this exact moment?' Photography was no longer just about snapping a scene; it had to convey a story or embody a meaningful composition. This realization naturally drew me to street photography, a genre where every passing second holds an untold narrative waiting to unfold.

> *I began pausing before pushing the shutter, asking myself: why am I capturing this exact moment?*



THE ROADSIDE EATERY

A CANDID FRAME A quiet meal watched over by a hungry figure on the wall — a poignant, unspoken satire.

Q Share a candid, unscripted moment and the story behind it.

A man sits at a roadside eatery, enjoying a quiet meal. Behind him, a piece of graffiti depicts a figure with a sad, hungry expression, positioned so precisely that it appears to watch the diner. The scene carries a subtle, poignant satire—a visual irony reflecting the millions around the world who quietly endure hunger, unable to afford the simple dignity of a warm meal.

Q What drives you to continue capturing street moments?

What drives me back to the streets time and again is the thrill of starting with a blank canvas. Street photography thrives on pure unpredictability—the spontaneous burst of candid emotion, the clever juxtapositions hiding in plain sight, and the interplay of structural patterns of the city and its heritage. Every time I step outside, I'm met with a fresh challenge: to find and frame a completely new story out of the chaos.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Q Can you share a photo that defines your street photography style?

The photographs presented here are a collection of observations from the streets. Some were taken to highlight quiet, unfolding stories—fleeting everyday narratives that surround us, yet so often go unnoticed or overlooked. Others were captured to seize 'The Decisive Moment': split-second events that appear and dissolve in the blink of an eye, where the true challenge lies in pressing the shutter at precisely the right instant. Finally, a few frames celebrate the unique design, capturing the timeless heritage, striking geometry, and subtle patterns that form the backdrop of urban life.



BACKLIT Detail stripped away to shape, contrast and atmosphere.

Q A photo where lighting or shadows play a key role—how did you use them?

For this frame, I utilized strong backlighting to transform my subjects into striking silhouettes. Stripping away fine detail allowed the composition to focus purely on shape, contrast, and atmosphere.

> *Split-second events that appear and dissolve in the blink of an eye.*

Q A location you return to often—why do you keep going back?

This location gives different moods and vibes in different seasons and at different times of the day. There is so much going on here at any given moment.



MANY MOODS A place that shifts with the seasons and the hours — always something unfolding.

THE LASTING FRAME



THE LETTERS IN THE CLAY A fierce hunger for knowledge, etched into a mud home.

Q A photo of a person or scene that tells a strong story.

Etched directly into the clay of her family's mud home, a little girl carefully practices her Bengali letters. This raw, unfiltered moment captures far more than basic handwriting; it embodies a fierce hunger for knowledge and serves as a poignant reminder of why educating and empowering young girls matters so deeply.

Q A black-and-white frame—what does monochrome add?

The choice of monochrome lends this frame an enduring, nostalgic quality. By converting the scene to black and white, the architectural history and heritage of the place take center stage, given a weight and prominence that color may fail to convey.



IN MONOCHROME Architectural heritage, given weight by grey.

"A few frames celebrate the timeless heritage, striking geometry, and subtle patterns that form the backdrop of urban life."

DR. ANUPAM SEN CHOUDHURY

CONNECT WITH DR. ANUPAM SEN CHOUDHURY

INSTAGRAM @anupam_sen_choudhury FACEBOOK Anupam Sen Choudhury

IN CONVERSATION · MOBILE AN ARMY OF ANTS

SURYAMITRA CHAGANTI — *mobile photographer, on beginning with a used Realme C2*

"I treated the limitations of my phone as a challenge rather than an obstacle."

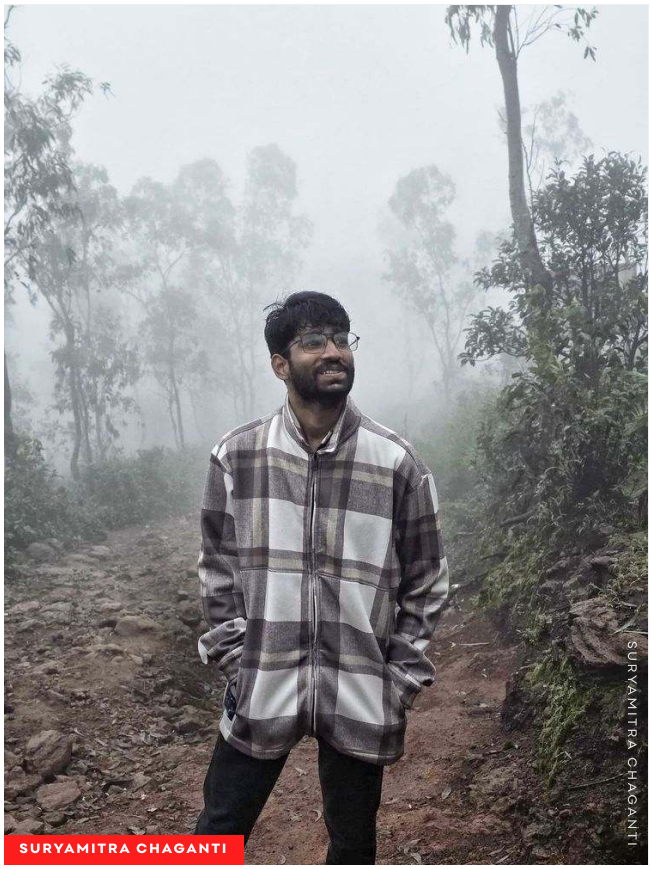
A self-taught photographer who shoots nature, wildlife and cinematic product frames on a used entry-level phone — and who began, like the ants he watched, by carrying one small grain at a time.

Q What first pulled you toward photography, and how did that turn into shooting seriously with your phone?

Observing nature was what first pulled me toward photography. I am a curious person, and I have always wanted to understand the little things happening around me—how birds build their nests, the patterns in leaves, and the way animals interact with each other. One day, I noticed an army of ants carrying a grain of sugar. What caught my attention was that they were helping each other, passing the grain from one ant to another. That small moment made me want to explore nature more deeply—animals, birds, and eventually even people. I didn't have an expensive camera, and many people told me that I needed one to take photography seriously. I couldn't afford it, so I started with what I had: my Realme C2 phone. When something is truly your passion, you don't always need expensive gear to begin. You need curiosity, patience, and the willingness to keep looking.

THE KIT

PHONE	Realme C2 — a used, entry-level phone
LENSES	None
LIGHTING	Natural sunlight only — no artificial lights
MODIFIERS	White cloth as a diffuser, curtains, household props
SUBJECTS	Nature, wildlife, product, street, documentary
STARTED	After his diploma, on that used phone



THE PHOTOGRAPHER Self-taught, shooting nature, wildlife and product frames on a phone he bought used.

SUNLIGHT, A WINDOW, A WHITE CLOTH 02 / 04



YARDLEY LONDON

COMMISSION Advertising-clean, styled after studying the product's colour, shape and material first.

Q Walk us through one of your Vivo, Yardley, MacBook or Floral Muse campaign shots—how did you light and style it, and why this product?

Before shooting a product, I first study it carefully—its colour, shape, material, and what kind of visual style would suit it. After that, I decide what I want the image to communicate and start choosing the background, fabrics, and props. I usually aim for an advertising or cinematic look that feels clean, professional, and visually appealing. One thing that is different about my process is that I don't use artificial lighting for my product photography. I work entirely with natural sunlight. Before shooting, I observe the quality and intensity of the light—whether it is harsh, soft, diffused, or causing overexposure—and then I find ways to control it. For my MacBook and Vivo photographs, I used natural sunlight and simple household materials to modify it, such as a white cloth as a diffuser. When shooting near a window or doorway, I also use curtains and change my position to soften the light. I enjoy this because it challenges me to create a professional looking product photograph with very minimal equipment.



VIVO On blue velvet, lit by the window alone — no artificial light on any of these frames.



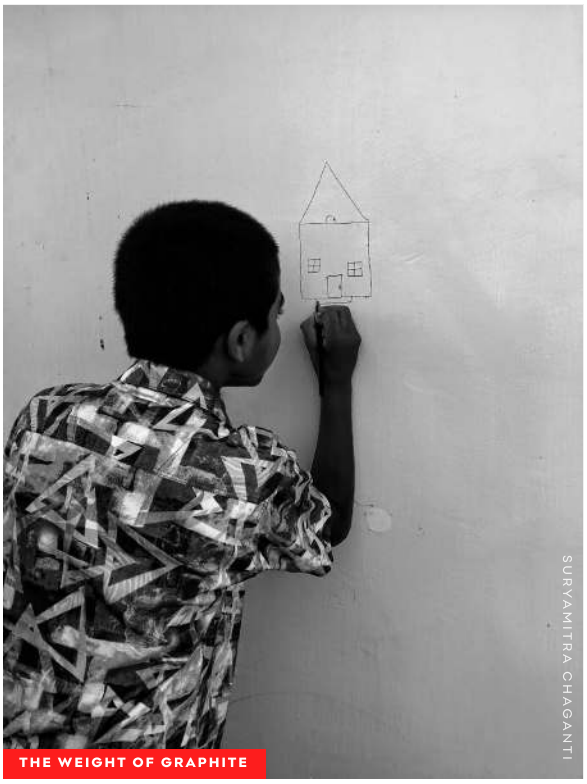
MACBOOK Sunlight, softened by a white cloth.



FLORAL MUSE

PROPS Fabrics and props, chosen first.

THE WEIGHT OF GRAPHITE 03 / 04



THE WEIGHT OF GRAPHITE

Q What drew you to tell a story about an artist's self-doubt in 'The Weight of Graphite', and why shoot it in monochrome?

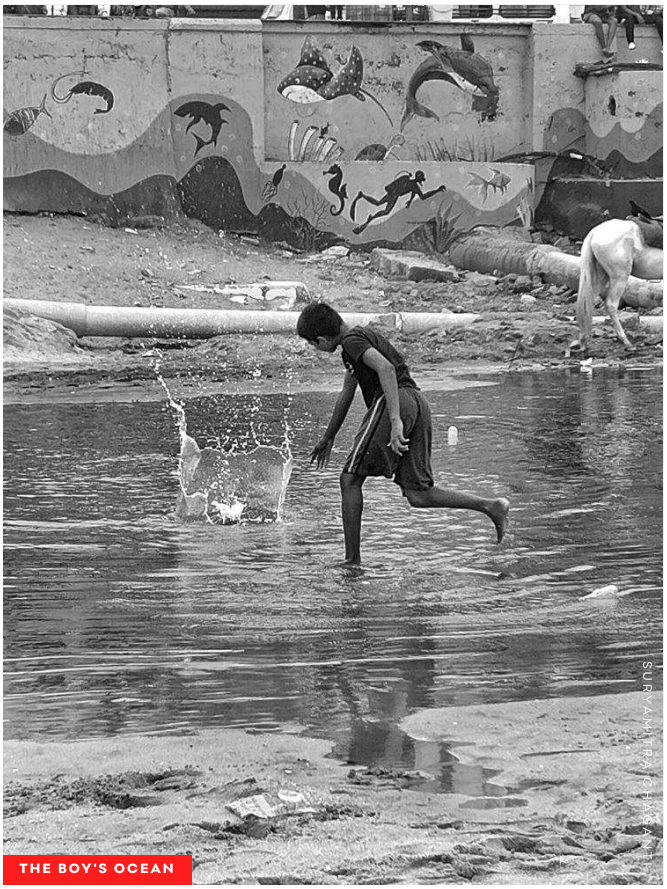
I love art because every artist has a unique way of expressing themselves. I have seen many artists on Instagram whose work is incredibly talented, but they receive very little attention or reach. That made me think about the struggle behind every creation. There is often much more behind an artwork than what we see—self-doubt, effort, patience, and the desire to be understood. That is what drew me to tell a story about an artist's struggle and self-doubt. I chose monochrome because I believe every photograph tells a story, and I wanted the viewer to connect with the emotion before anything else. In a colour photograph, colour can immediately attract attention and sometimes dominate the first impression. By removing colour, I felt the focus could stay on the artist's expression, body language, and the emotion behind the image.





FROM THE SERIES Expression, body language, and the emotion behind the image.





THE BOY'S OCEAN

Q What happened in that child-in-the-muddy-water scene, and what made you raise your phone in that instant?

I love beaches, and one day I visited one to simply capture some moments. I believe the world is full of untold stories, and the only way to discover them is to be present and truly live in the moment. While I was there, I noticed a young boy playing in the muddy water with a small pebble. For a second, it reminded me of my own childhood. I stopped and observed him rather than taking the photograph immediately. Then I noticed something. The painted wall behind him showed a sea diver and the world beneath the sea; in front of it was the muddy water and the boy playing in it. Everyone is curious about what the world looks like beneath the ocean, but this boy seemed to have created his own little ocean through his imagination. What stayed with me was how happy he was. That thought made me stop and take the photograph.



FIVE HOURS · ONE FRAME



WILD Birds at the mango tree near his home.

Q What makes this photo—the one you're especially proud of—special to you?

Photographing a fly with professional gear is one thing; photographing it without any gear is completely different. I got my first phone after completing my diploma. It wasn't new or expensive—it was a used Realme C2. That was the phone I started my journey with. One day, I decided I wanted to photograph a fly. It sounds simple, but it was incredibly difficult. The fly would move constantly, and with my phone's limitations, getting the exact moment I wanted required a lot of patience. I literally spent around five hours trying to get that one perfect shot. When I finally got it, I felt genuinely proud—not because it was technically perfect, but because of what went into making it. I captured it without expensive gear and with a used entry-level phone. For me, that photograph represents something important.

CONNECT WITH SURYAMITRA CHAGANTI

INSTAGRAM @lens_of_lites

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

How the Light Falls

GIRITHAR KARTHIK · PHOTOGRAPHER · VISUAL STORYTELLER

Chasing light since the age of eight — from a boatman beneath the Navi Mumbai Sea Link to a security guard at first light — on why a photograph is nothing without the way light falls on its subject.

Q How did you first get into photography, and what inspired you to focus on visual storytelling?

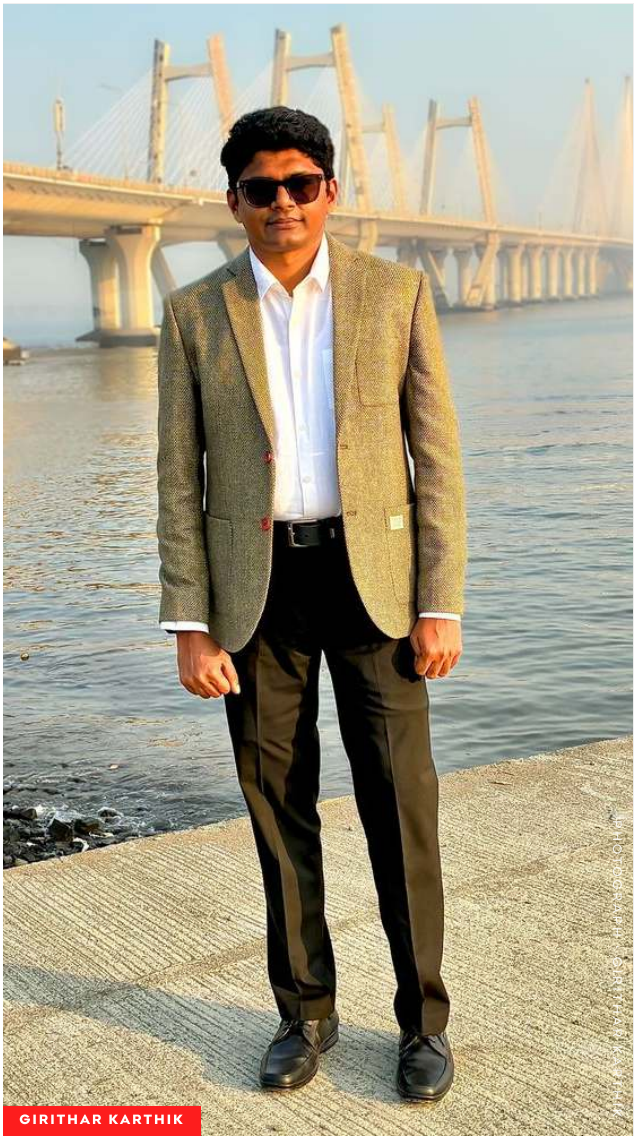
I was inspired by Steve McCurry from a very young age—I actually started my journey when I was just eight years old. Photography and visual storytelling have always been my passions, and I love capturing moments that tell a story without words.

Q What moment made you realise you had found your voice as a storyteller?

In 2013, I began digital photography with a Nikon D90. During my travels, I took a lot of pictures and started to understand the stories behind each frame. That's when I realized I had found my voice—I was able to convey narratives through my images.

AT A GLANCE

FIRST SPARK	Steve McCurry, from the age of eight
WENT DIGITAL	2013, on a Nikon D90
YEARS SHOOTING	Ten and counting
THE SUBJECT	Everyday people, and the light on them



GIRITHAR KARTHIK

FIRST FRAMES



PHOTOGRAPH · GIRITHAR KARTHIK

EVERYDAY LIVES

THE STORIES THAT RUN How the world moves, one frame at a time — travel, work, and the ties between people and the places they pass through.

Q Which early photo significantly shaped your approach to visual storytelling?

One early photo that shaped my approach was of a man in a boat with the Navi Mumbai Sea Link bridge in the background. That picture narrated a lot of stories—about travel, work, and the connection between people and their environment.

SINCE

2013

First digital frames, made on a Nikon D90.

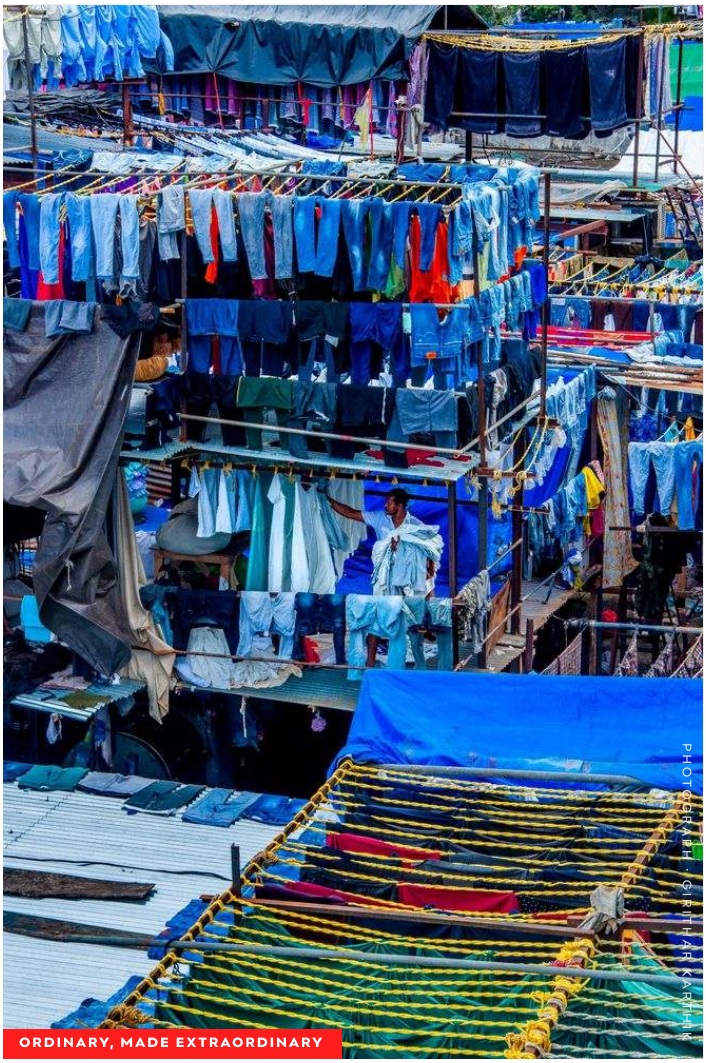
Q How has your work grown over the years, and what key lessons have you learned?

Over the last ten years, I've grown immensely as a photographer. I've been inspired by many things, from Steve McCurry's work to the everyday walks I take. The key lesson I've learned is that photography is not just about capturing an image; it's about telling a story and evoking emotions.

"I love capturing moments that tell a story without words."

GIRITHAR KARTHIK

READING THE LIGHT



ORDINARY, MADE EXTRAORDINARY

EVERYDAY PEOPLE Lighting is crucial in his work — the difference between a scene and a story.

Q Can you share a series that together tells a complete story?

This series narrates the connection between nature, people, and the environment. I sequenced the images to show how these elements interact and depend on each other, creating a cohesive story.

Q Describe the technique in that experimental photo, and why you chose it.

I used traditional lighting techniques, as my photography is completely based on how light falls on the subject. I chose to experiment with this perspective because lighting is crucial in my work—it can transform an ordinary scene into something extraordinary.

Q What made this image challenging, and how did you overcome it?

The biggest challenge was my position—I had to frame the gigantic building with people in the foreground while using the sunlight and background skylight effectively. I overcame it by carefully composing the shot and waiting for the right light.



WAITING FOR THE LIGHT

“My photography is completely based on how light falls on the subject.”

GIRITHAR KARTHIK · ON HIS CRAFT

REFLECTIONS



THE FLEETING MOMENT A young woman, a building, the resilience of everyday work caught at dawn.

Q What emotion did you capture in that fleeting moment, and why is it meaningful?

Early one morning, I saw a young woman who worked as a security guard in a building. I felt her lifestyle and the limited time she had, and I captured that moment to show how she felt and lived. It's meaningful because it reflects the resilience and stories of everyday people.

> *It reflects the resilience and stories of everyday people.*



NATURE, PEOPLE, ENVIRONMENT Frames sequenced so each depends on the last.

Q What was happening behind the scenes in that clip? Share any moments.

This behind-the-scenes clip shows me photographing a baby for a paid shoot. It was a fun and challenging experience, as I had to capture the baby's expressions while ensuring the parents were comfortable.

SCAN TO WATCH

Girithar Karthik behind the scenes on a paid shoot — scan to watch the clip from this story.

"Photography is not just about capturing an image; it's about telling a story and evoking emotions."

GIRITHAR KARTHIK · PHOTOGRAPHER

IN CONVERSATION · MOBILE

No Expensive Camera

SHRI VARSHA JAYACHANDRAN · MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER

Eighteen, one year in, and armed with nothing but a phone: how a college course turned a wish to capture the world into a genre-hopping practice built on a coat, an exam pad and a flashlight.



SHRI VARSHA JAYACHANDRAN

Q What first sparked your interest in photography, especially using a mobile lens?

I've always seen the world around me and wished I could capture it to share with others. When I was younger, I thought you needed an expensive camera to take good photos, so I didn't take many. But recently, I realized that some forms of photography can be done with a cheap mobile camera as well. I want more people to realize this and share their own perspectives too!

Q How did your journey in product, architecture, and nature photography begin?

It all started when I joined college. I've always been interested in photography, but a course called 'The Basics in Photography' really brought out my talent. Without that course and my mentor, I wouldn't have realized my potential! I was asked to photograph various topics, from product to reflection, which motivated me to explore different editing techniques.

THE KIT · SHOT ON A PHONE

CAMERA	A regular phone — Samsung F17
BACKDROP	A black overcoat
STAND	An exam pad
LIGHT	A flashlight, plus a mirror for natural light
EDIT	Snapseed
SHOOTER	18 years old · one year in

THE IMPROVISED STUDIO



SHOT ON A PHONE

Q What's the most important lesson you've learned about mobile photography over the years?

I'm just 18 years old, and it's only been a year since I started. I know many photographers with years of experience, even longer than I've lived, but even in this short time, I've learned how much editing matters. It doesn't matter the quality of the camera as much as the editing that goes into each photo. Though color grading is something I'm still learning, fixing the image in terms of perspective and cropping really brings the change.

Q Describe a moment when you realized mobile photography was your true passion.

For the same course, I was asked to do product photography. I decided to photograph a perfume bottle. The setup and final result were full of trial and error. The background was my black overcoat held up by an exam pad, and the lighting was a flashlight. Without any help, I managed to get a good shot, which I edited and loved. That was my turning point.

> *"It didn't require any professional equipment.*

Q What product photo best represents your style, and what makes it stand out?

It is a perfume bottle. What makes this stand out is that it didn't require any professional equipment. All it took was a black overcoat, an exam pad, a mirror to reflect natural light, a regular phone (in my case, a Samsung F17), and a flashlight for backlighting. I didn't have any helping hands to hold everything in place, so I took the photo with one hand. Avoiding my own reflection in the glass bottle was hard, but once the photo was edited, the final piece turned out wonderful and looked professional.

THE SETUP

One hand.

No tripod, no helping hands — the bottle steadied and the shutter pressed with the same hand.



THE SACRED

Q What story or feeling does your architecture photo convey?

To me, it conveys the color our current world lacks. The vibrancy of the temple shows our culture and tradition so well, and the plain blue sky enhances that beautifully. I want to show the little things we miss looking at every day in our busy lives and also showcase the ancient cultures that India has to offer.

Q What approach did you take to achieve that unique perspective in your street photo?

This shot reflects how I like to experiment with different angles. Instead of taking a regular street photo, I pointed the camera upward to capture the sky, clouds, and palm leaves, while using the power lines to naturally lead the eye through the frame. I also liked the contrast between the cool blue sky and the warm-colored building, which made the image feel more balanced.



THE STREETS

Q What makes your nature photo special to you?

It's a frame-in-frame style of photography. I find this special because it shows how old the tree is. You can see all the way from its roots to the leaves up top. It really shows the grandeur of it. Instead of photographing the tree directly, I used the gap between the white pillars as a natural frame, which draws attention to the trunk and roots.

> *"I want to show the little things we miss looking at every day in our busy lives.*



FRAME IN FRAME

THE EDIT — ONE WATCH, THREE WAYS

Q Walk us through your editing process for a before-and-after shot.

I use Snapseed to edit most of my photos. First, I fix the background using the healing tool. Then I adjust the composition, which includes perspective and cropping. Next, I play around with the tune image settings until I feel the watch really pops out. Since I take photos from my mobile, I use the dehazer to clear them up. Finally, I use the blurring tool to blur out the background, allowing the watch to stand out.

> *"It doesn't matter the quality of the camera as much as the editing that goes into each photo.*



MADE TO POP

THE SUBJECT The same watch, worked until it lifts off the background.



BLACK & WHITE

Q Describe the story behind your photo series of the same product.

These photos are all of the same product, but each with a different way of capturing and editing. The black and white one brings an elegant and dramatic attention to the watch, while the other two are different in terms of editing. One has direct lighting from the top and a blurred background, creating a brighter image with a vibrant pop, while the other uses natural lighting with a darkened background, causing a natural pop. Each tells a different story using the same product.



DIRECT LIGHT A vibrant pop.



NATURAL LIGHT A softer pop.

CONNECT WITH SHRI VARSHA JAYACHANDRAN

INSTAGRAM @varsha._.photography

SHOT ON A PHONE

His Mother's Redmi

RAJNEWTON SONOWAL · MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager, his mother's Redmi 5A and a riverside sunset back home — this is how Rajnewton Sonowal taught himself to hold the whole of nature inside a phone.

Q How did your journey in mobile photography begin?

I started my mobile photography journey in Class 9 using my mother's Redmi 5A. What began as a simple interest gradually turned into a passion. I spent countless hours watching YouTube tutorials, learning photography techniques, and experimenting with different editing apps to improve my skills. Whenever I got the chance, I would compare smartphone cameras, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and try to understand what makes a good photograph. Through continuous learning, practice, and curiosity, I developed my understanding of mobile photography and learned how to capture better images using a smartphone.

Q What was the first photo that made you fall in love with it?

If I remember correctly, the first photograph that truly made me fall in love with mobile photography was a picture of a riverside in my hometown during sunset. There was something special about the colors of the sky reflecting on the water that fascinated me and made me realize how powerful a camera could be in capturing beautiful moments.

THE HANDSET LINEAGE

FIRST FRAME	Class 9
FIRST PHONE	His mother's Redmi 5A
SHOOTS ON NOW	POCO F7
EDITS IN	Snapseed · Xiaomi Gallery
CHASES	Birds · Macro · Night sky



SHOT ON A PHONE — RAJNEWTON SONOWAL, AT HOME

THE EYE, NOT THE GEAR



SPOTTED DOVE — MADE ON HIS EVERYDAY CAMERA

Q What tip would you give someone just starting out?

One piece of advice I would give to anyone starting mobile photography is not to worry too much about owning an expensive or flagship smartphone. A good photograph depends more on the photographer's skills, creativity, and understanding of light and composition than on the device itself. Spend time learning the basics, observe your surroundings, and practice regularly. Even today, I don't use a flagship phone for my photography. I currently use a POCO F7, and it has been more than capable of capturing the kind of photos I enjoy taking.



HOLDING THE SUN — A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

Q What's the story behind your creative composition?

I chose this composition to make the sunrise look more creative and interesting. Instead of capturing the Sun in a conventional way, I aligned it between my fingers to create the illusion of holding it. I wanted to show how a simple change in perspective can transform an ordinary sunrise into a unique and eye-catching photograph.

> *"The camera is just a tool—the real difference comes from the person behind it.*
>
> RAJNEWTON SONOWAL

SIXTEEN SECONDS



POCO F7 F/1.5 · 16S · LOW ISO

Q Tell us about a low-light photo you're proud of.

For this low-light shot, I used a long exposure of 16 seconds with the phone mounted on a stable surface to avoid any camera shake. The wide f/1.5 aperture helped capture more light, while keeping the ISO relatively low helped reduce noise and preserve details in the night sky. I also made sure to shoot from a location with minimal light pollution and later enhanced the image through careful editing to bring out the stars and improve the overall contrast. The key was patience, stability, and making the most of the available light rather than relying solely on the camera hardware.



SURVIVAL, IN MINIATURE MACRO

IN HIS WORDS "Survival of the fittest, captured in miniature. A fleeting, fatal dance between predator and prey among the leaves."

16 SECONDS

One long exposure, a phone braced on a stable surface and a sky with almost no light pollution — the frame at left, held open for sixteen seconds.

THE OVERLOOKED



SHOT ON A PHONE — IN THE WILD



SHOT ON A PHONE — A BUTTERFLY'S WINGS

Q What photo best represents your current style?

These shots represent the direction my photography has taken over the years. I am fascinated by nature, animals, birds, and macro subjects because they reveal details that many people overlook. From the texture of a sheep's wool to the delicate patterns on a butterfly's wings and the tiny world of insects, every photograph is an attempt to capture the beauty that exists all around us. These are the moments that inspire me to keep exploring with my camera.



SHOT ON A PHONE — THE TINY WORLD OF INSECTS

CONNECT WITH RAJNEWTON SONOWAL

INSTAGRAM @the_poetry_of_pixels_

IN CONVERSATION · CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Beyond the Obvious

MONMITA MUKHOPADHYAY · LENS-BASED VISUAL ARTIST · KOLKATA

A self-taught artist who reads the world the way she once read the Earth from orbit — drawn to abstraction, to shadow and pattern, to everything that hides just past what the eye first settles on.

Q How did your journey as a lens-based visual artist begin?

My journey as a lens-based visual artist began as a self-taught practitioner, driven by curiosity and a passion for exploring the world through photography. I'm especially drawn to abstraction, using shapes, textures, light, and patterns to create images that invite personal interpretation beyond the obvious.

MONMITA · AT A GLANCE

HOME	Kolkata, India
BACKGROUND	Remote sensing & IT — reading the Earth from data
PRACTICE	Self-taught lens-based visual artist
DRAWN TO	Abstraction — shape, texture, light & pattern
SIGNATURE	Intentional Camera Movement; black & white
HEADING	Fine-art photography



MONMITA MUKHOPADHYAY

SELF-PORTRAIT

THE VISIBLE & INVISIBLE

THE CREDO · BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

"What truly matters is not simply what we see, but how we see it and how we interpret it. I create an image with my own interpretation, but the viewer completes the work."

THE WAY OF SEEING

Q What first drew you to photography as a medium of expression?

Coming from a background in remote sensing and IT, I was already trained to observe the Earth through data and imagery. Photography became a natural extension of that way of seeing, but with a more personal and artistic purpose. My fascination with seeing began in childhood. I would watch raindrops falling on asbestos rooftops, tree branches, and windowpanes, mesmerized by the countless shapes and patterns they created. It wasn't just the rain — every element in the natural world constantly transformed with light, time, weather, and perspective. The same object could reveal entirely different forms from one moment to the next.



IN FRAME · A MEAT MARKET

Beneath — presence and absence, labour and consumption, and what we choose to notice.

Q What makes your artistic style distinctive, and how does a particular photo reflect that?

The image is not simply about a meat market; it explores the relationship between presence and absence, labor and consumption, and what we choose to notice. I prefer not to explain everything within the frame. Instead, I leave space for the viewer's imagination and personal interpretation. I believe every ordinary place holds extraordinary visual possibilities — my work is an attempt to uncover those moments through careful observation.

> *"Every element on the Earth's surface has its own identity, character, and story waiting to be discovered.*

Q What photograph do you consider your best work, and what story does it tell?

Untitled. This photograph explores the idea of the unknown. A solitary figure disappears into mist, where the path is visible but the destination remains hidden. I am drawn to moments where light, atmosphere, and minimal forms create space for interpretation. Rather than offering answers, the image reminds us that every journey is as much about uncertainty as it is about moving forward.

> *"The path is visible, but the destination remains hidden.*



IN FRAME · A FIGURE WALKING INTO MIST

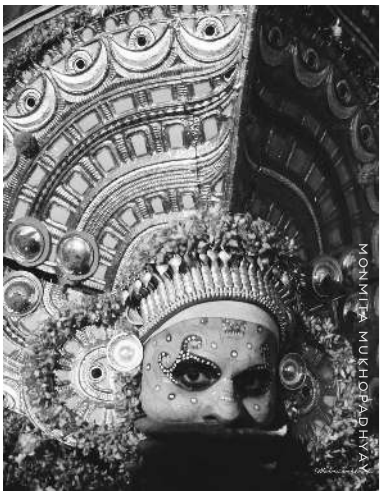
Beneath — the path is visible, the destination hidden.

BEYOND THE FRAME

Q Can you share the story behind a meaningful moment you captured during your journey?

I photographed this during the Kandanar Kelan Theyyam festival in Kerala. While the ritual is famous for its dramatic fire performance, I was drawn to a quieter moment — the intense gaze of the performer before the ritual reached its climax. For me, the eyes carried the entire story. I chose black and white to shift attention away from the vibrant costumes and toward the expression itself.

> *"For me, the eyes carried the entire story.*



IN FRAME · A THEYYAM PERFORMER, KERALA

Beneath — centuries of memory, faith and human endurance in a single gaze.



IN FRAME · LEAVES, IN BLACK AND WHITE

Beneath — movement reshaping reality into something interpretive.

Q How did you achieve the technical effect that demonstrates your experimentation?

This photograph was created using Intentional Camera Movement (ICM) combined with a slow shutter speed. Instead of freezing the scene, I deliberately moved the camera during the exposure to transform ordinary leaves into abstract forms. My intention was not to create a recognizable image of leaves, but to explore how movement can reshape reality into something more emotional and interpretive.

> *"Movement can reshape reality into something more emotional and interpretive.*

Q How did a particular turning point impact your artistic development?

When I first captured the image, I saw a smiling child. But after looking carefully, I became deeply drawn to her eyes. Despite living in poverty, they were filled with life, hope, and innocence. That taught me a photograph is more than a visual record; sometimes its true meaning reveals itself only after we spend time with it. I often think of her as the Face of India.

> *"I often think of her as the Face of India.*



IN FRAME · A SMILING CHILD

Beneath — resilience, joy and dignity: the Face of India.

WHERE IT'S HEADING



IN FRAME · RUSSELL MARKET, BENGALURU

Beneath — a cinematic frame found, not made; the street as a ready-made set.

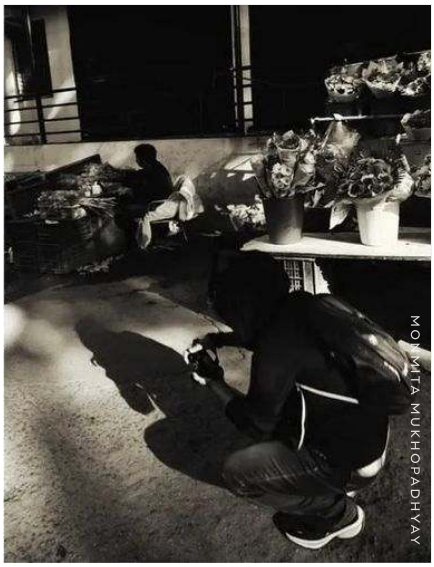
Q How does your background influence the photo that represents your cultural roots?

Growing up in Kolkata, I was raised in a culturally rich family where conversations about art, literature, and especially cinema were part of everyday life. I believe the street itself is a ready-made film set — every wall, window and shadow already exists in a carefully arranged composition; the photographer's role is to recognize it. What drew me here was the interplay of geometry, texture, and color. There is no human presence, yet traces of human life are everywhere.

Q How does the photo you shared hint at where you are heading creatively?

My journey is gradually moving toward fine art photography, where observation becomes expression. I want my photographs to go beyond description and invite viewers to pause, question, and discover their own meaning. I don't see photography as collecting beautiful pictures; I see it as exploring the relationship between the visible and the invisible.

> *"I see it as exploring the relationship between the visible and the invisible.*



IN FRAME · BEHIND THE SCENES

Beneath — the patience of observation, toward a personal visual language.

"Sometimes I feel that art is not something to be questioned endlessly — it is something to be experienced."

MONMITA MUKHOPADHYAY

CONNECT WITH MONMITA MUKHOPADHYAY

INSTAGRAM @monmita_mukherjee17 **WEBSITE** monmitamukhopadhya.wixsite.com/my-site-4

IN CONVERSATION · STREET

The Street as Canvas

RISHIK BHARDWAJ · STREET PHOTOGRAPHER

The lanes of Chandni Chowk, the gates of the Taj, the quiet dignity of a rickshaw puller — a conversation with a Delhi street photographer who reads the everyday city not as a backdrop but as a living, breathing canvas.

Q How did your journey in street photography begin?

My journey started with a simple desire to capture moments with any camera I could get my hands on. Over time, I developed a keen eye for beautifully composed shots of everyday life—the people, the chaos, the fleeting expressions. My first true inclination toward street photography came after I got my second camera, a Fujifilm X-T5. That camera opened up a new world of possibilities, allowing me to see the streets not just as a backdrop but as a living, breathing canvas.

Q The first frame that felt truly special?

It was a photograph of an old man staring into the abyss on the busy streets of Chandni Chowk in Delhi. I asked him if I could take his picture, and he calmly replied, *"Lelo beta, par acchi nahi aayegi"* (Take it, but it won't come out well). After I clicked that photo, I felt a rush—I knew I had captured something truly special.

That moment taught me that the best shots often come from unexpected encounters.

THE GEAR

Fujifilm X-T5

The second camera — the one that opened up a new world of possibilities.



ON THE STREET · DELHI

PHOTOGRAPH · RISHIK BHARDWAJ

THE VISION

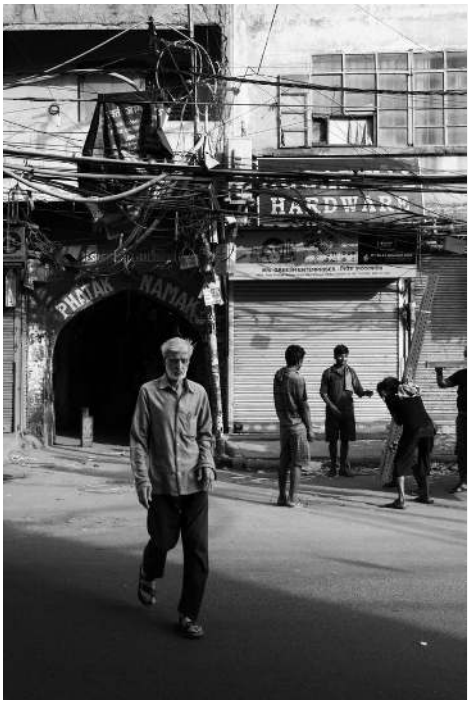
Q How has your approach to street photography evolved over the years?

I started by taking the term "street photography" literally—capturing streets and architecture. But over the years, my style has evolved to include everything from candid portraits to layered compositions and chaotic street scenes. The biggest shift came when I learned to shoot in monochrome. Black and white strips away distractions and forces the viewer to focus on pure emotion. That realization was priceless and completely transformed how I see and capture the world.

> *"Black and white strips away distractions and forces the viewer to focus on pure emotion.*



MONOCHROME Emotion over distraction.



CANDID A connection that transcended familiarity.

Q A candid street portrait that tells a story?

Two kids were talking to an elderly woman they had never met before, as if she were their own grandmother, calling her "Nani." It was a beautiful moment of innocent connection that transcended familiarity. I knew I had to capture it.

THE LINEAGE · WHO I READ

Raghu Rai	emotion
Henri Cartier-Bresson	perfection
Weegee	raw style
Takuma Nakahira	imperfection
Xyza Bacani	vision

> *"Reading and learning about the greats has been a principle of my photography.*

LIGHT & SHADOW



THE EDIT Converted to mono, then masked to bring out detail.

Q What caught your eye in this play of light and shadow?

I was drawn to the stark contrast between the completely dark alley behind the old gentleman and the highly lit buildings with shadows falling on the tarmac road. That interplay of light and darkness created a dramatic, almost cinematic atmosphere that I had to capture.

Q Walk us through your editing for a before-and-after.

First, I converted the photo to monochrome to emphasize texture and emotion. Then I applied optical corrections like cropping and geometry adjustments to refine the composition. Finally, I used extensive masking to bring out the details and create the final look—enhancing the mood without losing the authenticity of the moment.

> *A dramatic, almost cinematic atmosphere — the interplay of light and darkness.*



CINEMATIC The interplay of light, shadow, and human emotion — a narrative that speaks without words.

IN THE FIELD



THE TAJ, REFRAMED Vertical lines through the gates.

Q Why this unique perspective for the Taj Mahal shot?

I wanted to capture a vertical, lines-oriented composition of the gates of the Taj Mahal. This perspective emphasizes the grandeur and symmetry of the architecture, offering a fresh take on a subject that's been photographed countless times.

Q The narrative behind your rickshaw-puller series?

This series focuses on the everyday struggles of rickshaw pullers. Through these images, I wanted to highlight their resilience and the unseen labor that keeps our cities moving. Each frame tells a part of their story—the exhaustion, the determination, and the quiet dignity of their work.

> *"A fresh take on a subject that's been photographed countless times.*



THE RICKSHAW PULLERS The resilience and unseen labor that keeps our cities moving.

"Each image is crafted to instantly connect with the viewer—that's the recipe for making any photograph special."

RISHIK BHARDWAJ

CONNECT WITH RISHIK BHARDWAJ

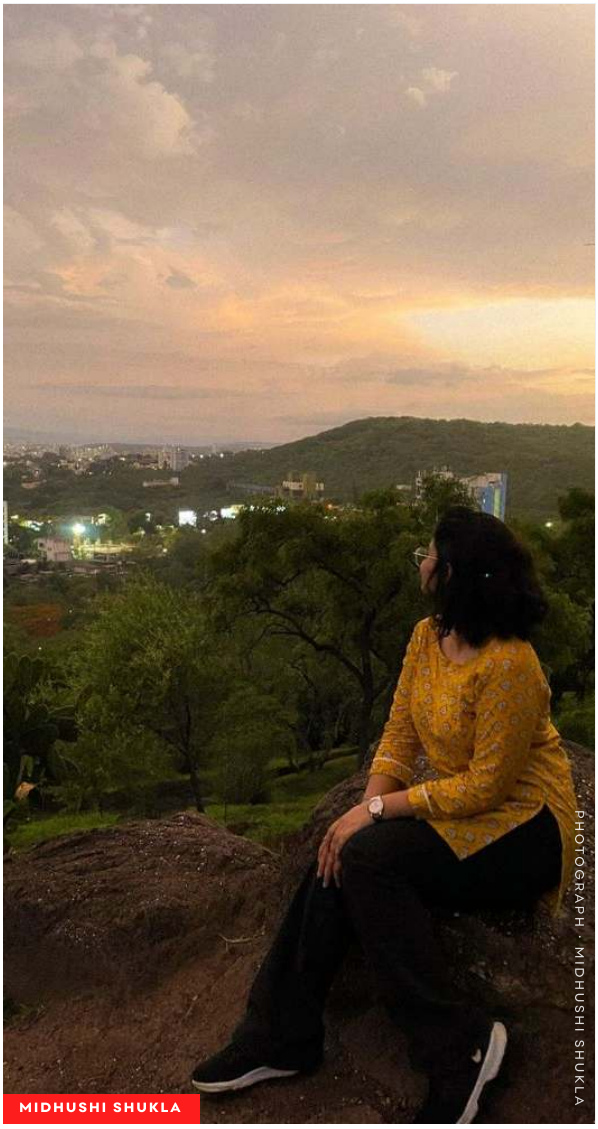
INSTAGRAM @visualsbybiryani **PORTFOLIO** visualsbybiryani.myportfolio.com

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Ghazals and Everyday Light

MIDHUSHI SHUKLA · PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER

Raised on cinema, ghazals, poetry and paintings, she learned to read a feeling in a passing moment—sunlight through the trees, the glisten of an orange being peeled. A conversation about finding the extraordinary in the everyday, and scoring it to a ghazal.



MIDHUSHI SHUKLA

PHOTOGRAPH · MIDHUSHI SHUKLA

Q How did your journey into photography and videography begin?

Ever since I was a kid, I have been surrounded by cinema, ghazals, songs, poetry, and paintings. Expressing emotions in different ways is something I learned through this. There are certain moments in everyday life that invoke a particular emotion—they remind you of a perfume, a song, a quote—and I realized that specific feeling can be captured forever through the lens of a camera. Once I started, there was no going back. I began with the family digicam when I was a child and eventually moved on to phone photography and film photography.

Q What was the first moment that made you pick up your phone to capture something?

Honestly, it's been such a long time that it's hard to remember the very first thing I ever captured. What I do recall is that it must have been out in nature—maybe the way sunlight streamed through the trees in my backyard. That simple, beautiful moment made me reach for my phone.

Q Can you share a photo that best captures beauty in the mundane?

This picture was taken on the way to an early morning 7 am lecture, right outside my classroom. The campus is filled with trees, and the sunrise made it look all the more beautiful. 7 am classes don't seem that bad when such views welcome you.

AT A GLANCE

MEDIUM	Phone & film photography, videography
BEGAN	The family digicam, as a child
INFLUENCES	Cinema, ghazals, poetry, paintings
EYE FOR	Beauty in the everyday

THE EVERYDAY, IN COLOUR

Q How has your experience with phone photography grown over the years?

It's been great, honestly. While there's no doubt that the quality from a DSLR or a high-end camera is superior, phone photography feels more in the moment for me. It's the most accessible form of photography since you always have your phone on you. The introduction of better options, better cameras, and better editing tools in phones has definitely improved over the years, making the whole process much easier and more spontaneous.

Q Who or what inspires your creative vision the most?

What inspires my creative vision the most is, at the risk of sounding cliché, the beauty of everyday life. We're all so busy in our routines that we rarely stop to observe. There is beauty in everything—even a mundane task like peeling oranges can be beautiful if you notice how the sunlight reflects off the surface and how the juice glistens. I'm inspired by the aesthetic of everyday life.



BEAUTY IN THE MUNDANE Late light finding an ordinary chair and wall — the aesthetic of everyday life.



IN COLOUR A morning at the market.

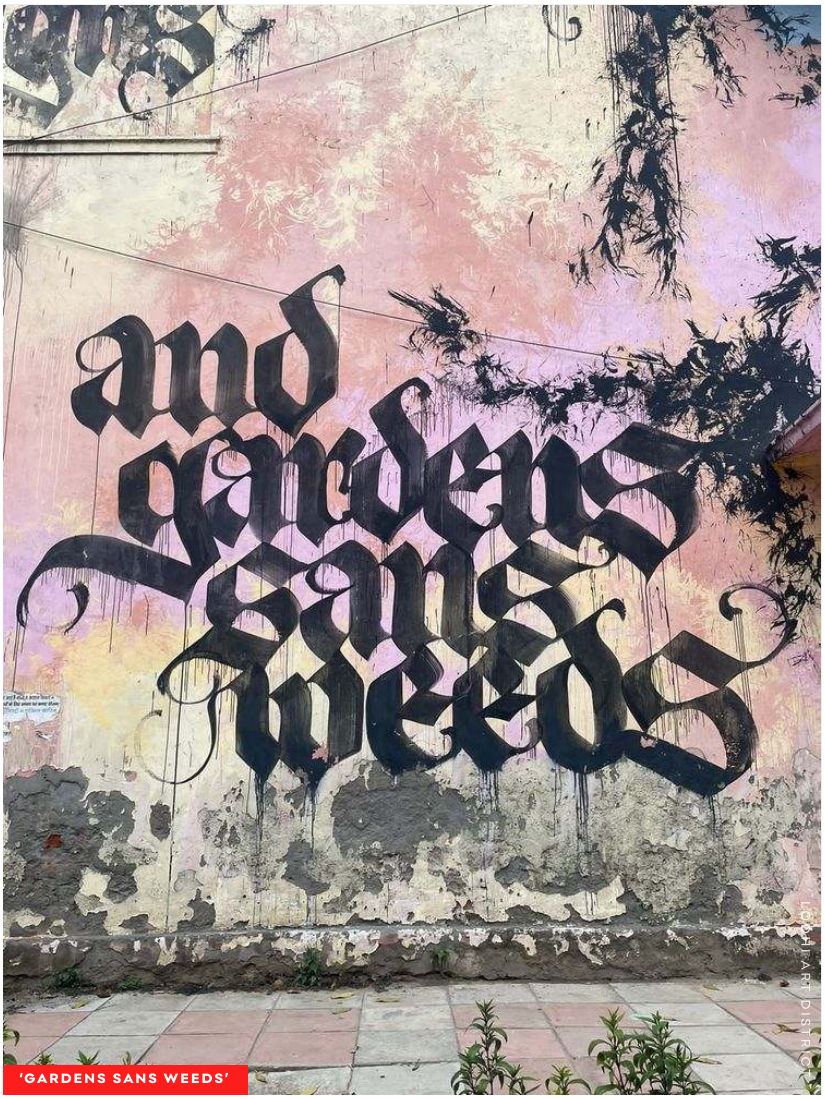


PROMINENT COLOUR Turquoise against the street.

Q What does your editing style or colour grading look like, and what mood do you try to create?

I usually don't like editing photographs too much—I prefer them to be as natural as they were when they caught my eye. However, I do like the colors to be prominent, especially if they create an interesting contrast or are repetitive, as in these pictures. The mood I aim for is one of vibrant authenticity, where the colors enhance the scene without overpowering it.

GHAZAL & GRAFFITI



'GARDENS SANS WEEDS'

THE WEEDS OF ART Niels "Shoe" Meulman's calligraffiti mural in New Delhi, painted with grass brooms (jhadu).

Q Tell us about the still that includes a line of poetry—what's the quote and its significance?

The phrase "and gardens sans weeds" is the closing line of a poem painted as a mural by Dutch artist Niels "Shoe" Meulman. He pioneered the "Calligraffiti" movement, blending traditional calligraphy with street graffiti. This piece was created in the Lodhi Art District of New Delhi during the St+Art India street art festival in 2016. To tie organic nature into the artwork, he painted it using traditional Indian grass brooms (jhadu) instead of standard paintbrushes. The mural is titled "Graffiti Are The Weeds Of Art," and the complete poem reads: "SANS SERIFS NO LETTERS. AND NO WORDS TO READ. SANS WORDS NO SIGNS. NO NAMES IN THE STREETS. JUST ROWS OF BUILDINGS. AND GARDENS SANS WEEDS." Since "sans" means "without," the line literally means "gardens without weeds." However, the poem critiques overly sanitized urban environments, suggesting that a city without signs, names, or street art lacks human character—like an unnaturally manicured garden. Ultimately, it champions graffiti as the uncontrolled, spontaneous expressions of life that give a concrete city its soul.

Q What song or ghazal accompanies this short videography clip, and why?

This video reminds me of the song "Chingari Koi Bhadke" from the film Amar Prem, especially the lyrics by Anand Bakshi:

THE LYRIC — ANAND BAKSHI

"□□□□ □□□□□□ □□ □□□, □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□, □□□□□ □□ □□□ □□□□ □□, □□ □□□ □□ □□ □□□□ □□, □□□□□ □□□ □□□□ □□□□, □□ □□□□ □□□ □□□□, □□□□ □□ □□□ □□□□□□, □□□ □□□ □□□□□"

The imagery of water and movement in the clip perfectly matches the song's mood.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this clip from Midhushi Shukla's story.

NATURE & THE EDIT

Q What is the story behind the video that combines nature footage with a piece of prose?

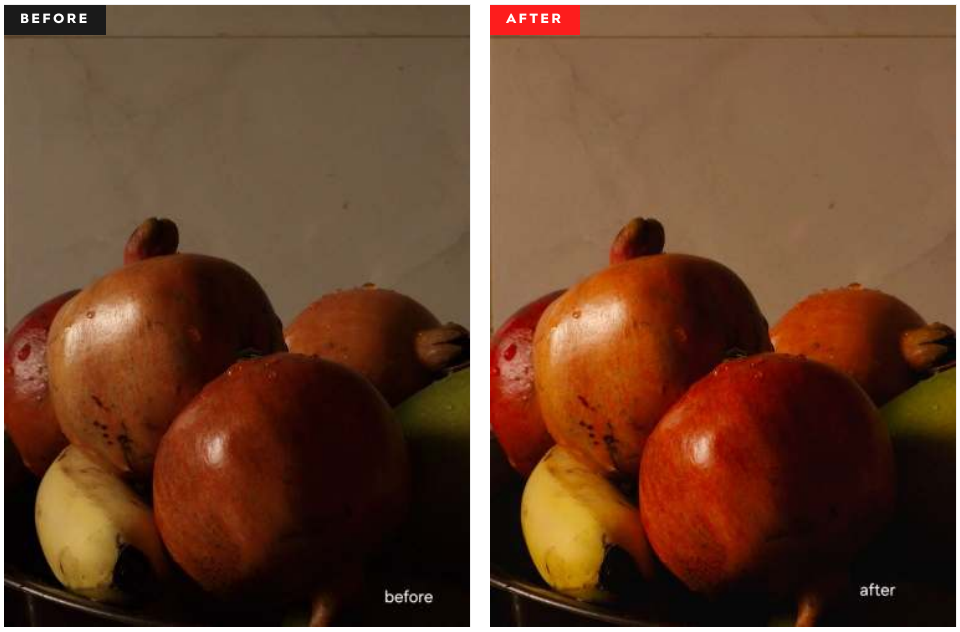
Sometimes, even when you're surrounded by people, you can still feel lonely. Even though you chose to be independent, to be free, to be by yourself, there's a lingering question: is it freedom or is it loneliness? This video captures that duality—the beauty of nature juxtaposed with the solitude of the human experience.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the nature-and-prose clip from Midhushi Shukla's story.

Q Walk us through a before-and-after—what key edit transformed the image?

The key edits I made were adjusting the shadows, highlights, temperature, and saturation, along with brightness and hue. These tweaks helped bring out the natural warmth and depth of the scene, making it feel more inviting and true to what I saw.



BEFORE / AFTER The same bowl of fruit — warmth and depth brought back to what she first saw.

"There is beauty in everything—even a mundane task like peeling oranges can be beautiful if you notice how the sunlight reflects off the surface and how the juice glistens."

MIDHUSHI SHUKLA · @RAMBLINGSANDLENS

CONNECT WITH MIDHUSHI SHUKLA

INSTAGRAM @ramblingsandlens PINTEREST @7easxuDCq

IN CONVERSATION · WEDDINGS

A Lifetime in a Frame

SHUKLA TAPAN · WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER & FILMMAKER

The moment the camera disappears — a wedding photographer and filmmaker who waits for the unposed second when a couple forgets he is there, then keeps it as a memory they can relive for a lifetime.

Q What inspired you to start photography, and how did you transition into wedding photography and video editing?

My passion for photography started with a simple curiosity about capturing real emotions and meaningful moments. I was fascinated by how a single photograph could preserve memories that people would cherish for a lifetime. What began as a hobby gradually turned into a profession as I spent countless hours learning camera techniques, lighting, composition, and storytelling. As I gained experience, I realized that wedding photography was the perfect blend of creativity and emotion. Weddings are filled with genuine, once-in-a-lifetime moments—from joyful celebrations to heartfelt emotions—and I found it incredibly rewarding to document these stories. Alongside photography, I developed a strong interest in video editing because I wanted to bring those memories to life in a more cinematic way. I learned editing techniques, color grading, sound design, and storytelling to create wedding films that feel emotional and timeless.

> *A single photograph could preserve memories that people would cherish for a lifetime.*

AT A GLANCE

DISCIPLINE	Wedding photography & cinematic film
APPROACH	Storytelling over posing — real emotion first
IN THE EDIT	Colour grading · sound design · pacing
SIGNATURE	The candid, unposed moment



BEHIND THE LENS

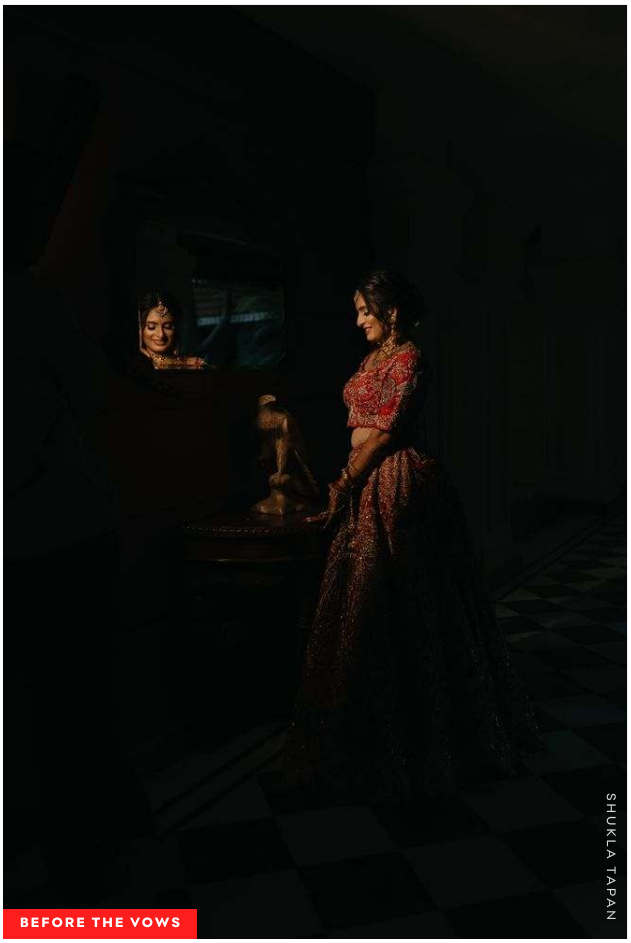
PHOTOGRAPH · SHUKLA TAPAN

THE FIRST LOOK

Q When was the first time you captured a wedding moment that felt truly special?

The first wedding moment that truly stayed with me was during a couple's wedding ceremony when they exchanged their first look. It wasn't about the perfect pose or the lighting—it was the genuine emotion in their eyes. I captured a candid frame where they completely forgot the camera was there, and when I later showed them the photo, they became emotional because it reflected exactly how they felt in that moment. That experience made me realize that wedding photography is much more than taking beautiful pictures—it's about preserving real emotions and memories that can never be recreated. From that day on, I focused on storytelling rather than just documenting events.

> *"I captured a candid frame where they completely forgot the camera was there.*



BEFORE THE VOWS

SHUKLA TAPAN

Q What's the most challenging aspect of balancing photography and video editing in weddings?

One of the most challenging aspects of balancing wedding photography and video editing is ensuring that both tell the same emotional story while maintaining the highest quality. A wedding day moves quickly, and every important moment happens only once, so it's essential to capture everything without missing the genuine emotions or interactions. Over the years, I've learned that good planning, effective teamwork, and an organized editing workflow are key to managing both successfully. My goal is always to ensure that the photographs and the wedding film complement each other, giving couples a complete and timeless memory of their special day.



GOLDEN HOUR

SHUKLA TAPAN

STILLS × FILM

Two crafts, one story.

"Photography focuses on perfecting individual moments, while video editing weaves those moments together into a seamless, cinematic narrative."

Q How has your experience and style evolved over the years in wedding photography and video?

Over the years, my experience has taught me that great wedding photography and videography are about more than just technical skills—they're about understanding people and telling their story in the most authentic way possible. When I first started, my focus was on capturing beautiful shots and learning the technical aspects of photography and editing. As I gained experience, my approach evolved to prioritize genuine emotions, natural interactions, and the small details that make every wedding unique. I became more confident in anticipating special moments rather than simply reacting to them. My editing style has also grown significantly. I now focus on creating cinematic films and timeless photographs with natural colors, balanced tones, and seamless storytelling. Today, my goal is not just to document a wedding but to create a lasting visual story that allows couples to relive their happiest memories for years to come.



THE FRAME · NATURAL LIGHT



THE GRADE · CINEMATIC EDIT

Q A favorite photograph from your portfolio?

This photograph captures an intimate and emotional moment between the bride and groom just before their wedding ceremony. The couple shares a quiet embrace, with soft smiles and gentle eye contact that reflect their genuine connection. Natural backlighting creates a warm, dreamy atmosphere, while the shallow depth of field keeps the focus entirely on their expressions and emotions.

Q Walk us through a before-and-after edit.

This edit was designed to create a dramatic, cinematic mood while keeping the couple as the clear focal point. I enhanced the lighting with a subtle spotlight effect, deepened the shadows, and refined the contrast to add depth. The color grading features cool, rich tones with controlled highlights for an elegant, luxurious atmosphere—a timeless, high-end portrait that emphasizes emotion and intimacy.

THE REEL

Q Tell us about a short video clip of a wedding highlight or cinematic edit you created.

This video captures a relaxed pre-wedding shoot during golden hour in an open outdoor landscape. The couple had a natural, easygoing chemistry and were very comfortable with each other, which made it possible to capture genuine smiles, playful interactions, and quiet, intimate moments without relying on overly posed shots. I focused on natural movement, warm sunset light, and candid expressions to create an emotional narrative rather than simply recording poses. In the edit, I selected the best moments, matched the pacing with the music, applied warm cinematic color grading, and used smooth transitions to enhance the mood. What makes this film special is its simplicity—it reflects the couple's real connection, creating a timeless memory that feels honest, emotional, and elegant.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch the golden-hour film from Shukla Tapan's story.



UNSCRIPTED JOY

Q Your favorite candid moment from a wedding — why is it special?

This candid moment is special because it captures pure, unscripted joy. The couple wasn't looking at the camera or posing—they were simply sharing a genuine laugh together in the middle of their wedding ceremony. Those are the moments that truly define a wedding day. As a photographer, I believe the best images come from real emotions rather than perfect poses. I waited patiently for this natural interaction and captured it at just the right moment, preserving the happiness, comfort, and love they shared. The expressions, body language, and warmth in this frame tell a story that words cannot.

"Creating timeless memories that allow couples to relive the emotions of their special day — every time they look at the image."

SHUKLA TAPAN · WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER & FILMMAKER

CONNECT WITH SHUKLA TAPAN

INSTAGRAM @rajdhanimemories

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Where Words Fail

RANJAN JAIN · PHOTOGRAPHER

Frames of Feeling — a self-taught photographer who chases not what he sees but what he feels: the patience of a peacock at golden hour, a child running a village path, and light breaking through heritage stone.



PHOTOGRAPH: RANJAN JAIN

RANJAN JAIN

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

My journey into photography began with a simple curiosity to preserve moments that words often fail to capture. What started as a hobby soon turned into a passion as I realized that every photograph has the power to tell a story, evoke emotions, and freeze time forever. I found myself drawn to everyday moments—the beauty of nature, the raw emotions of people, and the little details that often go unnoticed. Over time, photography became more than just taking pictures; it became a way of expressing myself. Every frame is an opportunity to create something meaningful, whether it's documenting wildlife in its natural habitat, capturing the magic of travel, or preserving memories that people will cherish for a lifetime.

RANJAN · AT A GLANCE

SUBJECTS	Wildlife · Nature · Travel · Heritage
APPROACH	Emotion over technical perfection
METHOD	Patience, timing & being ready
BELIEVES	A photo should tell a story & stir emotion

"I believe the best photograph is not just one that looks beautiful, but one that tells a story, stirs emotions, and leaves a lasting impression."

RANJAN JAIN

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



GOLDEN HOUR Full plumage, the right moment.

Q What photo best captures your perspective and style?

This photograph stands out to me because it captures one of nature's most mesmerizing performances at exactly the right moment. The peacock, with its fully spread plumage, becomes the undeniable focal point, while the warm golden-hour light enhances every detail of its iridescent feathers. What makes this image special isn't just the beauty of the bird—it's the sense of patience and timing behind it. Wildlife photography often rewards those who are willing to wait, observe, and respect nature's rhythm. For me, this frame is a reminder that the most extraordinary moments happen when preparation meets opportunity.

Q What was the first photo you were truly proud of?

One of the first photographs that truly made me proud wasn't taken after hours of planning—it happened in a split second. I was traveling in a moving car when I noticed a perfect scene unfolding outside the window. Both the car and the subject were in motion, leaving no time to think. I instinctively pressed the shutter. When I looked at the image later, I couldn't believe how perfectly the frame had come together. Despite the movement, the composition, timing, and emotion aligned beautifully. That photograph taught me that great images aren't always about having the perfect setup—they're about being ready to capture the perfect moment.



A FRAME WITHIN A FRAME Shot from a moving car — the everyday road, reflected.



TWO ON A BRANCH A brief, moving moment held in golden light.

Q What photo challenged you technically, and what was the biggest hurdle?

The biggest challenge in capturing this image was balancing timing, composition, and patience. The two parakeets were constantly moving, so I had only a brief moment to capture them together in a natural pose. The warm golden-hour light was changing quickly, leaving little room for error in exposure. This image reminded me that wildlife photography isn't about creating a perfect scene—it's about making the most of an authentic moment with the conditions nature gives you. Patience, quick reflexes, and thoughtful composition were the keys to capturing this frame.

THE BEST FRAMES

Q Which photographs represent your best work?

This collection showcases my perspective on finding beauty in ordinary moments. From a lone parakeet perched confidently atop a saffron flag to vibrant bougainvillea glowing against a tranquil sunrise, each image captures a fleeting moment that might otherwise go unnoticed. The dramatic mountaintop landscape reflects my love for nature's grandeur, while the rear-view mirror composition transforms an everyday road into a creative frame within a frame. Finally, the architectural photograph uses sunlight piercing through the iconic façade to highlight the timeless elegance of heritage and design. Together, these represent my belief that compelling images are not created by extraordinary places alone, but by seeing familiar moments from a unique perspective.



BOUGAINVILLEA, SUNRISE Vibrant blooms glowing against a tranquil dawn — beauty in the ordinary.



THE PARAKEET Perched atop a saffron flag.



THE SUMMIT Nature's grandeur.



THE MIRROR A frame within a frame.



THE FAÇADE Sunlight through stone.

ROOTS & STILLNESS

Q What photo represents your cultural roots and heritage?

This photograph reflects my roots and the environment that shaped me. The rural landscape, the brick pathway, the fields, and the quiet simplicity of the surroundings remind me that beauty doesn't always lie in grand destinations—it often exists in the places we call home. The person walking freely down the village path symbolizes a sense of belonging and freedom. To me, this image is more than a landscape; it's a reflection of my journey, my connection to my heritage, and the values that continue to influence my photography.



THE VILLAGE PATH Home, freedom, belonging.

Q Tell us about a project you're most proud of and the story behind it.

This project is about finding beauty in moments that most people pass by without noticing. The first photograph, taken through a rain-covered window, reflects quiet introspection. The raindrops, monochrome tones, and the watch in the foreground symbolize the passage of time and the calm that rain often brings. The second photograph shifts the mood entirely. Looking up at the towering pine trees against a dramatic sky represents freedom, hope, and the feeling of being small in the presence of nature. They represent my belief that photography is not just about capturing what we see, but about preserving what we feel.



THROUGH THE RAIN Raindrops, monochrome, the passage of time.



LOOKING UP Pines against a dramatic sky — freedom, hope.

CONNECT WITH RANJAN JAIN

INSTAGRAM @lifeby_rjlens_official

IN CONVERSATION · CINEMATIC PHOTOGRAPHY SC. 01 · SEE IT THROUGH

APURBA GUCHHAIT — *on the moment he waits for*

"That split second when they forget there's a camera in the room."

He shoots a wedding the way a director shoots a film — set the light and the colour first, then let the person walk into the mood. A conversation about observation, grief, and the frames either side of the shutter.



SC.01 / TK.01 Apurba Guchhait, self-portrait.

Q How did your journey in photography begin, and what sparked your passion for storytelling through images?

My journey into photography actually began quite early. As a child, I was naturally drawn to art, craft, and leadership, and I always had a deep drive to see my creative projects through to the finish line. When I was around 13 or 14, I got my first PC and developed a massive craze for becoming a YouTuber. I started shooting and editing videos constantly. While I didn't have much family support at the time, my passion for the creative field never faded. My greatest strength has always been observation; I am constantly noticing the small details in my surroundings. Over the years, this keen eye and my heavy background in editing naturally transitioned into taking photos and studying framing. My passion for storytelling was sparked by a simple realization: our world is entirely driven by images. I believe every picture tells a unique story, and finding that absolute perfect angle is what gives an image its voice and allows it to speak volumes.

Q When was the first time you felt a photo truly captured an untold story?

It happened on one of the most difficult days of my life—the day of my grandmother's final rituals. I had been fasting and was emotionally drained, but I had to leave my family to shoot a wedding. When I arrived, the bride was unexpectedly not so excited on her wedding day.

I wasn't in the right headspace to capture typical celebratory photos, but when I clicked the shutter, the resulting image captured a raw, unspoken emotion that completely moved her. It transcended a standard wedding portrait. That was the exact moment I found my true space and purpose behind the lens.



SC.02 / TK.01 The mood set before the person — deep tones, warm skin, a bride caught between poses.

Q What draws you to the 'untold stories' in everyday scenes, and how do you decide which moments to capture?

I believe the best stories happen when people feel like they are just hanging out with a friend. I keep the mood light and approach every shoot with funny talks to make my clients comfortable. When I ask a bride for a 'Colgate smile,' it instantly breaks the ice and eases the tension of the day. I know exactly when to hit the shutter—it's that split second when they forget there's a camera in the room and their true, candid personality shines through.

Q How has your perspective and approach to storytelling evolved over the years?

Early in my career, my storytelling was about capturing a single, well-composed frame. But over the years, my perspective has expanded. I began to realize that some stories need more room to breathe, which has naturally drawn me toward cinematography and filmmaking. Today, my approach to photography is much more cinematic. It's no longer just about a frozen moment; it's about anticipating the motion before and after the shutter clicks, and using advanced color grading to dictate the emotional mood of the narrative.

Q What photo required you to experiment with a new technique or perspective?

Experimenting with wide, environmental framing and an editorial, magazine-style perspective taught me that the space around the subject is just as important as the subject herself. By pulling back and letting the dense background surround her, it shifted my mindset from simply 'taking a wedding portrait' to 'directing a scene.' I learned that giving the subject room to breathe within a grand environment elevates a standard photo into a piece of cinematic art.



SC.02 / TK.02 Pulling back until the environment does as much work as the subject.



SC.03 / TK.02 The cluttered alley, held still by a puddle.



SC.03 / TK.03 Night traffic, quieted through a canopy of leaves.

Q Can you share an image where the composition plays a key role in telling the story?

I chose this triptych composition because my storytelling is heavily influenced by cinematography. A single, static portrait couldn't fully capture the energy of her twirling by the water. By stacking three sequential frames, the composition mimics a filmstrip. It allows the viewer to actually feel the progression of movement, the wind, and the flow of the fabric over time, rather than just looking at a frozen second.



SC.03 / TK.01 Three sequential frames stacked as a filmstrip — the wind and the fabric play out over time.

Q What photo captures a moment of stillness or silence in a busy environment?

In the first image, the busy, cluttered alleyway is instantly grounded by the absolute stillness of the puddle's reflection. In the second, the loud, rushing energy of the night city traffic is quieted by framing it through the still canopy of leaves above. As my work has shifted more toward cinematic storytelling, I've realized that you don't need a quiet room to capture silence; you just need to find the right perspective to freeze the noise.



SC.04 / TK.01 'Ancient Elegance' — the establishing frame that opens the sequence.

Q What series of photos tells a complete story?

The narrative flow of this series is structured exactly like a cinematic sequence. It begins with an establishing portrait ('Ancient Elegance') that introduces the subject and sets a timeless, vibrant mood. From there, it transitions into motion with the black-and-white triptych, which breaks the stillness and allows the viewer to feel her dynamic energy and joy. The story then pulls back into an editorial spread ('Effortless Beauty') to ground her fully within the landscape. Finally, the series zooms all the way in for the closing frame—a macro look at the intricate details of her eyes and traditional jewelry.

Q What photo best represents the 'theory' behind your frame?

The theory behind this frame is rooted in cinematic storytelling and deliberate color grading. I don't just want to document a subject; I want to establish a specific mood before the viewer even registers the person in the frame. My thought process was to use the rich, deep emerald greens of the environment and the wardrobe to create a heavy, dramatic atmosphere, contrasting it with warm, soft skin tones. The theory is that if you treat the lighting and color palette like a film set, a still photograph can carry the exact same emotional weight as a moving picture.



SC.04 / TK.02 Emerald and antique gold, graded heavy — the mood arrives before the person does.

CONNECT WITH APURBA GUCHHAIT

INSTAGRAM @itzagcreations_

IN CONVERSATION · ACTOR & PHOTOGRAPHER

Every Shutter a Decision

INDRAJEET CHATTERJEE · ACTOR & PHOTOGRAPHER

A Bengali boy raised on Tagore, Nazrul and the films of Guru Dutt learns that both his crafts ask the same thing of him — a decision. On the stage he waits for the take; behind the lens, for the frame.

Q How did your journey into acting and photography begin?

My journey started when I was in class five. My father brought home a Kodak camera, but back then, I wasn't allowed to use it often because he said it was very expensive. Occasionally, I would sneak in a few clicks, but every shutter release felt like a big decision since the film rolls were costly. Over time, I kept practicing and refining my skills, and that's how I got to where I am today. As for acting, I spent five years in theater. Growing up in a typical Bengali family, I was surrounded by the works of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam, and I watched films by Guru Dutt. They were my true inspirations.

> *"Every shutter release felt like a big decision, since the film rolls were costly.*

ON THE STAGE —— THROUGH THE LENS

AT A GLANCE

FIRST CAMERA	A Kodak, from class five
ON STAGE	Five years in theatre
ON SCREEN	"Uttar" — dir. Shitij Patwardhan
INSPIRATIONS	Tagore · Nazrul Islam · Guru Dutt
HOME GROUND	The mountains



INDRAJEET CHATTERJEE

PORTRAIT · INDRAJEET CHATTE

ON THE STAGE

Q What drew you to acting after a science background?

I came from a science background and was preparing for NEET, but I realized that acting is a medium where you can convey what you're trying to say without uttering a single word. It's a powerful form of expression. For photography, I see it as a unique way to tell stories—after all, still photographs are the origin of cinema. Both art forms allow me to communicate and connect with people on a deeper level.

Q Tell us about the headshot that represents your acting persona.

In this photograph, I am portraying a boy who has identified with a third gender character since childhood. However, due to societal pressures and the people around him, he grew up believing that being transgender is an offense or a crime. It's a role that explores identity and societal judgment.

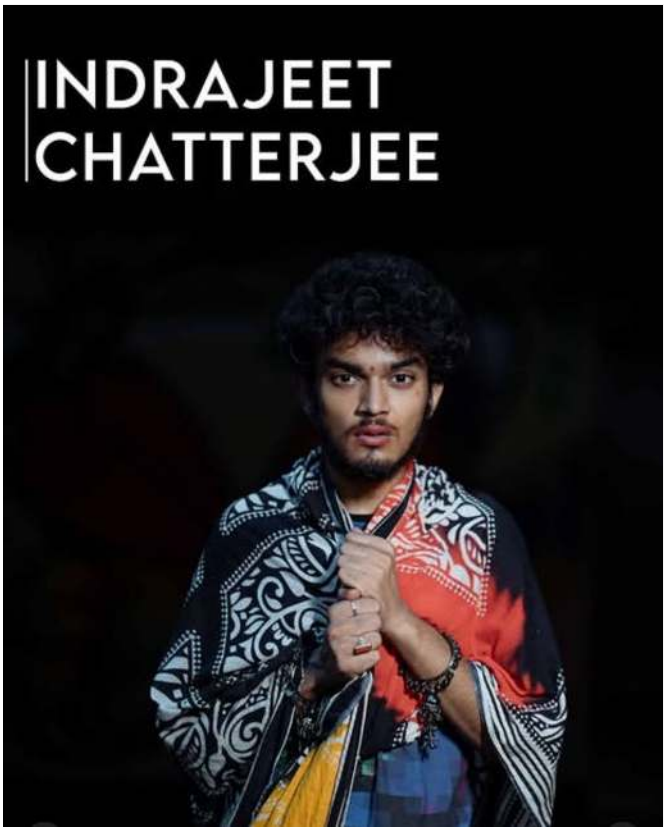
MOST MEMORABLE ROLE

12 takes

One of the most memorable roles I played was that of a beggar. It was a challenging scene that required twelve takes to get right — that experience taught me patience and the importance of persistence in acting.

Q Walk us through a behind-the-scenes moment from a recent project.

This photo was taken when I was standing with the famous director and writer Shitij Patwardhan sir during the shoot of his Marathi film "Uttar." I was lucky enough to get a feature in his film, and this moment captures the excitement and learning experience on set.



THE PERSONA A role that explores identity and societal judgment. · Indrajeet Chatterjee

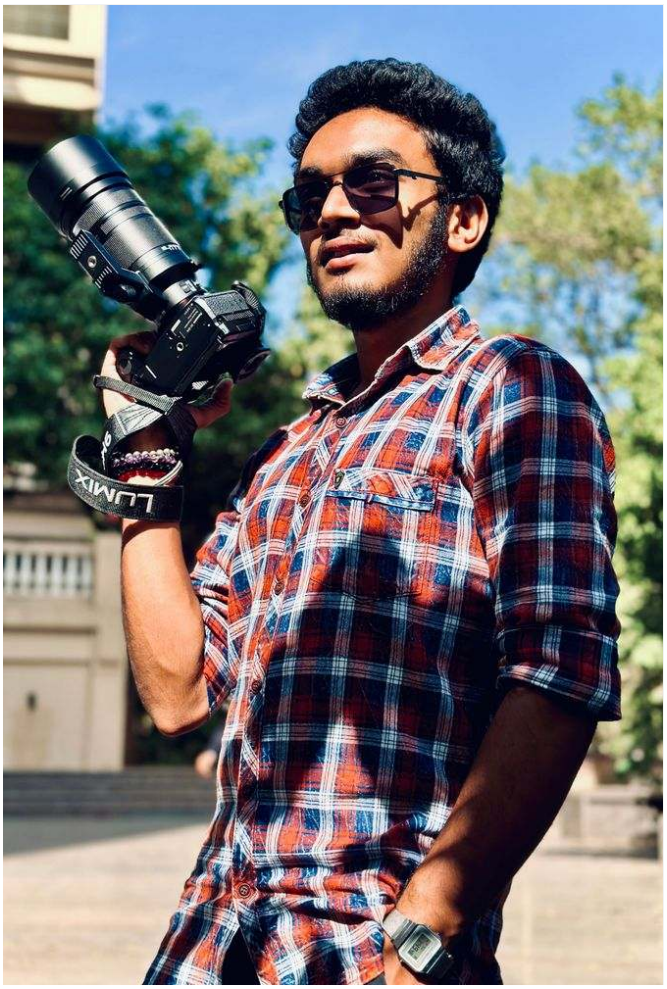


ON SET · "UTTAR" With director and writer Shitij Patwardhan. · Indrajeet Chatterjee

THROUGH THE LENS

Q Why did you choose the image that captures your personal style?

I chose this image because I am holding my weapon—my camera. It represents my passion and my tool for storytelling. It's a symbol of my identity as a creator.



THE WEAPON Holding my camera — my tool for storytelling. · Indrajeet Chatterjee



FROM THE FRAMES · Indrajeet Chatterjee

Q What story does your photographic work tell?

Sometimes, aesthetics lie in fades. This photograph captures the beauty in imperfection and the subtle stories that unfold in everyday moments.



AESTHETICS IN FADES Beauty in imperfection, in everyday moments. · Indrajeet Chatterjee

Q How does your favourite shooting location influence your creativity?

I love mountains. Being in the mountains makes me feel more connected to my mind, my roots, and my creativity. The tranquility and vastness inspire me to think differently and capture unique perspectives.

THE REEL & THE EDIT



THE EDIT In the editing process, I balanced the lighting and primaries, and I played a little with saturation and contrast to enhance the mood and bring out the details. · Indrajeet Chatterjee

Q What did you learn from performing the piece in your video clip?

From this performance, I learned how crucial emotional impact and scene understanding are to acting. It's not just about delivering lines; it's about feeling the character's journey and conveying that to the audience.

> *Still photographs are the origin of cinema.*

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch Indrajeet Chatterjee perform this piece.

"Acting is a medium where you can convey what you're trying to say without uttering a single word."

INDRAJEET CHATTERJEE · ACTOR & PHOTOGRAPHER

CONNECT WITH INDRAJEET CHATTERJEE

INSTAGRAM @_the_bongguy_indra__

IN CONVERSATION · DOCUMENTARY

Seeing Saturn

RUDRANSH SANTINI · DOCUMENTARY & CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHER

From five seconds of Saturn through a telescope to Raghu Rai's photograph of a buried child — a documentary photographer who works by a single flash, pulling grief, the mind and the things we ignore out of total darkness.

Q How did your journey in documentary and conceptual photography begin?

My journey began with two important instances. First, when I saw Saturn and Jupiter through a telescope as a part of an Astronomy Group. That five-second visual of Saturn and its moons rotating, while Jupiter was next to it, was a profound experience. I had to go on Google and search for images of them, and while searching for them, I found an article that said the 10 best astrophotographers to follow. Photography became magical and cosmic since then. Second was when I saw Late Legendary photographer Raghu Rai's image from the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of a dead baby being buried in a grave with his dark black eyes as a mysterious hand rubbing sand off the forehead of the baby. This was such an impactful image from a documentary point of view, and I still keep going back to that image again and again.

RUDRANSH · AT A GLANCE

FOCUS	Documentary & conceptual photography
FORMAT	Analogue · 120 medium format
CAMERA	Hasselblad 500 C/M — 12 frames a roll
PROJECTS	Dov'è La Casa Mia · Symptoms · Bare Minimum
METHOD	A single flash against total darkness



RUDRANSH SANTINI

PORTRAIT · RUDRANSH SANTINI

THE UNFINISHED

Q What was the first project that made you feel like a true photographer?

I don't think I will ever be a true photographer anymore. The death of my father, Jagdish Chander Nagi, and my sister, Marie-France Robichaud, within 2 years span will not allow me to be a true photographer. They were my biggest supporters, and without these two seeing any of my projects has created a big hole in this journey. I will always have the sense that these two people will never see any of my work to give me honest opinions, critiques, and praises when needed. Without their eyes looking at my images, my journey will remain unfinished.

WITHIN

2 Years

The span in which he lost his father, Jagdish Chander Nagi, and his sister, Marie-France Robichaud — the two who saw his work most honestly.

Q What drives you to focus on documentary and conceptual themes over other genres?

I like telling stories about people and the impacts we make on others, different beings, and our surroundings, even though you will rarely find people in my stories. Spending time with your idea for years to create something important that can help people, make them feel heard, give them importance as fellow human beings, and, above all, make a positive impact through a language which is considered "easy" to do is satisfying. There is no substitute for bringing changes and provoking thoughts on subjects which might not get enough attention that it deserves can only be achieved through documentary, for me. The aspect of documenting, as subjective as it might be, has a realness and rawness to it. Something anybody can see in everyday life.

> *"Without their eyes looking at my images, my journey will remain unfinished.*

IN THE DARK

Q How has your approach to storytelling evolved over the years?

I used to be more diplomatic in my approach to not hurt feelings or pick subjects that were incredibly personal to me. But, as I have improved with my skills, now I tend to pick topics that will invite a dialogue and discussion. Not being afraid of picking topics, for example, criticizing religion, politics, laws, or a sensitive topic like suicide and murder, has been the biggest shift over the years. As a documentarian, I should be challenging, shining light on subjects, or even something that is considered blasphemous, which is my duty.



FORESHADOW A frame from the flash work — an ordinary object pulled from total darkness by a single burst of light.

> *"The aspect of documenting, as subjective as it might be, has a realness and rawness to it. Something anybody can see in everyday life."*
>
> RUDRANSH SANTINI · ON WHY HE DOCUMENTS

ILLUMINATED

Q Can you share a conceptual piece that required careful planning, and the concept behind it?

This series was my struggles with suicidal thoughts from the ages of 14 to 16. To signify the utter darkness in my life with simple objects, light became the most important component. So, I came up with an idea of only using a flash to just illuminate the object. Rest is complete darkness, representing my own darkness, and those ways of dying are illuminated because they will allow me to live my life once I am dead. Life was killing me, and the only way to live was to die. To show this idea, was creating innocent images of objects that were not innocent if seen from this light.

THE SERIES · A SINGLE FLASH



INNOCENT OBJECTS A single flash pulls each object out of complete darkness — innocent things that are not innocent if seen from this light.

WHERE HOME IS



DOV'È LA CASA MIA The final frame of 'Where My Home Is' — shot on borrowed Hasselblad film, the moment he found peace.

Q Which photo best represents your documentary style, and what's the story behind it?

The photo 'Buddha' is from a project called 'Dov'è La Casa Mia' (Where My Home Is). It is the final image from the project, showing my personal life journey, during which I finally found peace and fulfillment. Before leaving for Italy, I was dealing with anxiety and stress. But gradually, as the course went on, I started to find myself. I was free, in peace, around people I loved, and found a new love for analogue photography. The camera that I was borrowing from school was a Hasselblad 500 C/M, and looking down on my stomach as the camera placement changes your point of view. 120mm, where you can only take 12 images per roll.

> *"The delayed gratification made me cherish everything related to life and photography.*

ON THE STREETS

Q What does this behind-the-scenes moment reveal about your working style?

With a camera in hand, the only thing that matters is the photo. Being on the streets of Paris in the rain with my bag open, just lying, and I am fully in the moment to take the image. When this photo was taken I had no idea that somebody was shooting it, but I am glad that somebody did. Unfortunately, it is a bit of a grainy photo, but it still delivers the moment.



RUDRANSH SANTINI

PARIS, IN THE RAIN



RUDRANSH SANTINI

BARE MINIMUM

Q Walk us through the technical choices behind your street-lighting work.

I needed two specific lighting styles for 'Bare Minimum', on trash we throw on the streets. One was overcast weather, grey light, and a harsh flashlight. Light that filters through grey clouds naturally creates a vignetting effect when used correctly with flash. This is what I achieved to emphasize the garbage we create daily and just throw on the streets. This project talks about the accountability of us common people to keep our cities clean. The harshness of the flash compels your eyes to look at these garbage items, which we ignore.

"I would be a failed documentary photographer if I were not challenging others. I have to ask questions to everybody, including myself."

RUDRANSH SANTINI · DOCUMENTING THE UNSEEN

CONNECT WITH RUDRANSH SANTINI

INSTAGRAM @rudranshnagiphotography

IN CONVERSATION · ARCHITECTURE

The Architect's Eye

NUPUR SHAH · INTERIOR & ARCHITECTURE PHOTOGRAPHER

A designer who first learned to see spaces on the street — and now reads the story of a room before she ever raises the camera.



NUPUR SHAH

Q How did you first get into interior and architecture photography?

I come from an interior design background, so I've always had an appreciation for how spaces are conceived and experienced. After practicing interior design for a few years, I picked up a camera and began photographing streets purely as a hobby. Street photography taught me to observe light, composition, scale, and the subtle moments that often go unnoticed. Over time, that experience changed the way I looked at architecture and interiors. Instead of seeing them only as designed spaces, I began seeing them as stories waiting to be told through imagery. That shift naturally brought me back to the world of interiors—this time as a photographer. Today, my background in design allows me to understand a designer's intent, while photography gives me the creative freedom to capture the character and emotion of every space.

AT A GLANCE

BACKGROUND	Interior design
STARTED ON	Street photography, purely as a hobby
FIRST JOB	A commercial office shoot, through a referral
ALSO SHOOTS	Product & brand photography
METHOD	Understand the design intent before the frame

THE APPROACH



A WINDOW SEAT, HELD IN LIGHT

THE SPACE Before every interior shoot, she waits to understand the story behind the project — then lets light, material and scale carry it.

Q What was your first paid photography project, and how did you land it?

My journey didn't begin with a paid assignment. I initially assisted a colleague on one of his projects, which gave me valuable hands-on experience and helped me develop my skills in photographing architectural spaces. It was during this phase that I learned not only the technical aspects of photography but also how to work efficiently on-site. My first independent project came through a referral from a colleague. It was a commercial office shoot, and that opportunity marked the beginning of my professional journey as an architecture and interior photographer. It reinforced the importance of relationships, trust, and consistently improving your craft—because often, the first opportunity comes through the people who believe in your work.

Q What inspires your style in product and interior photography?

I wouldn't say my inspiration comes from one particular photographer. It's more a combination of good architecture, thoughtful interiors, and observing light. Even when I'm walking through a city or travelling, I find myself noticing how light falls on buildings, how materials change throughout the day, or how people experience a space. I'm also inspired by architects and designers who create spaces with a strong sense of purpose. Before every interior shoot, I like to understand the story behind the project because that becomes my biggest source of inspiration. For product photography, I build a moodboard first, so the visual direction comes from the brand and the product itself. I believe every project deserves its own identity.

> *"I began seeing them not as designed spaces, but as stories waiting to be told through imagery.*

READING THE SPACE



NUPUR SHAH

A HOME BUILT FOR EASE

Q How has your approach to photographing spaces evolved over the years?

My approach has evolved from simply documenting a space to telling its story. In the beginning, I was focused on creating technically correct images with good composition and lighting. As I gained more experience, I realized that great architectural photography is about capturing the designer's vision and the atmosphere of a space. Coming from an interior design background has played a significant role in this evolution. I naturally pay attention to spatial flow, materiality, textures, and the way natural light interacts with a space. Today, before I even pick up my camera, I spend time understanding the design intent so that every photograph communicates not just how the space looks, but how it feels.

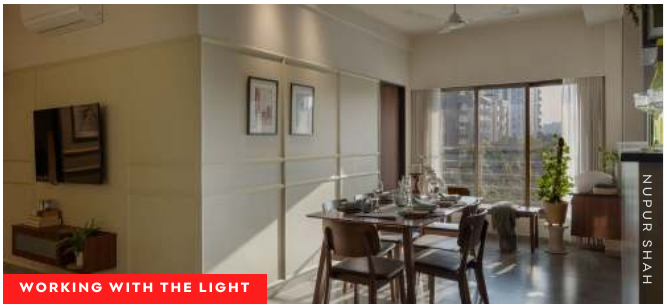
Q Walk us through your editing process for a before-and-after interior shot.

My editing is always minimal and intentional. For this image, I primarily corrected the exposure to bring back the details hidden in the shadows while maintaining a natural balance. I refined the colours, adjusted contrast, and enhanced the textures to make the space feel closer to how it looked in person. The objective wasn't to transform the image, but to let the light, materials, and design speak for themselves.

> *"Before I even pick up my camera, I spend time understanding the design intent.*

Q Tell us about a favourite project and what makes it special.

What makes this home special is its sense of ease. The design doesn't rely on bold elements but instead creates an inviting atmosphere through natural light, warm wooden accents, soft colours, and carefully curated details. Every room flows seamlessly into the next, making the home feel brighter and more spacious than expected. It's a residence that celebrates everyday living, where thoughtful design and understated elegance come together to create a space that feels welcoming from every corner.



NUPUR SHAH

WORKING WITH THE LIGHT

Q Why did you choose natural light for that interior shot?

Natural light felt like the right choice because it enhanced the character of the space. The way it travelled across the walls and floor added depth and warmth that would have been difficult to recreate artificially. I believe architecture and interiors should feel authentic, so whenever the available light supports the design, I prefer to work with it rather than against it.

THE PRACTICE · PRODUCT WORK

Q **What makes a product shot effective? Share some examples from your portfolio.**

An effective product photograph should do more than showcase the product—it should communicate its purpose and personality. I begin by understanding the product and the story the brand wants to tell. From there, I create a moodboard and build the concept around it, ensuring that every prop, colour, texture, and lighting choice supports that narrative. I also like introducing movement or unexpected elements, such as splashes, reflections, floating compositions, or playful setups, when they complement the product. These details add visual interest while keeping the product as the clear focal point. For example, the hair oil shot uses oil drips and reflections to reinforce the product, the mouthwash image uses water splashes to suggest freshness, the toothpaste scene uses lifestyle props to create context, and the protein bar images use floating chocolate and miniature construction workers to tell a creative story.



MOUTHWASH · SPLASH



PROTEIN BAR



PROTEIN BAR



TOOTHPASTE · PROPS

CONCEPT FIRST Every prop, colour and texture is chosen to support one story — a moodboard built around the brand, while the product stays the clear focal point.

CONNECT WITH NUPUR SHAH

INSTAGRAM @plainenpixel_spaces

IN CONVERSATION · ARCHITECTURE & MUSIC

SLR & Six Strings

ANTARPREET SINGH · PHOTOGRAPHER & FILMMAKER

An introvert who shoots the stillness of buildings and the chaos of the music video — he learned to see on his father's film SLR, never quite put down his guitar, and found a way to live inside both.



ANTARPREET SINGH

PHOTOGRAPH · ANTARPREET SINGH

Q How did your journey in photography begin, and what drew you to architecture and music videos?

My father was deeply passionate about photography, and whenever we went on trips, he would bring along an SLR camera. He taught me and my brother how to shoot on film, and that early exposure sparked my fascination with this art form. Later, during school and college, I played guitar but couldn't pursue music professionally, though I always felt a strong connection to it. When I started posting my content on Instagram, I began receiving photography-related work, and that's how I naturally gravitated toward these two niches.

Q What was the first moment you knew you wanted to capture architecture or music videos professionally?

Shooting architecture is more about styling the space, and I was never particularly fond of photographing people, being an introvert. At the same time, as a musician at heart, I wanted to stay connected to that part of myself.

AT A GLANCE

DISCIPLINES	Architecture & music video
CAMERA	Sony A7 IV, full-frame hybrid
SIGNATURE EDIT	Bleach bypass, recreated digitally
FIRST TEACHER	His father — on film
STILL PLAYS	Guitar

> *"Whenever we went on trips, he would bring along an SLR camera.*

Q How has your experience and style evolved since you started?

Change is inevitable with time, and surrounding yourself with people who bring out the best in you is crucial. I try to be around individuals from whom I can learn and to whom I can offer a piece of my craft. There's a significant difference between what I used to do and what I do now. Technical skills can be learned, but photography as an art is deeply personal and subjective. So, what feels right to me is what ultimately makes it into my work.

Q What makes your favorite architectural shot so special?

The brickwork in this shot is entirely handcrafted, exactly as the architect intended. It forms the backdrop of a staircase, and the subject in the frame helps convey the scale of the space. That combination of meticulous craftsmanship and human presence is what makes it special to me.

Q What do you enjoy most about photographing architecture versus filming music videos?

Shooting architecture is a peaceful, meditative process for me. It's about chasing light and shadow as the sun moves, almost like a form of meditation. Filming music videos, on the other hand, is entirely different. A lot of effort goes into planning, and it's more about finding calm in the chaos. There are deadlines, rented gear, and the editing phase can be intense—deciding which color palette to use, which shots to include. Sometimes, after putting immense effort into a shot, it doesn't feel right for the final video, and that's heartbreaking. But you have to choose what's best for the music video, not what you personally feel about a shot.

> *"It's about chasing light and shadow as the sun moves, almost like a form of meditation.*



THE FAVOURITE SHOT Handcrafted herringbone brickwork forms the backdrop of a staircase; a lone figure holds the scale of the space.

SIGNAL — MUSIC

Q Tell us about the music video clip you uploaded—what was the concept or story behind it?

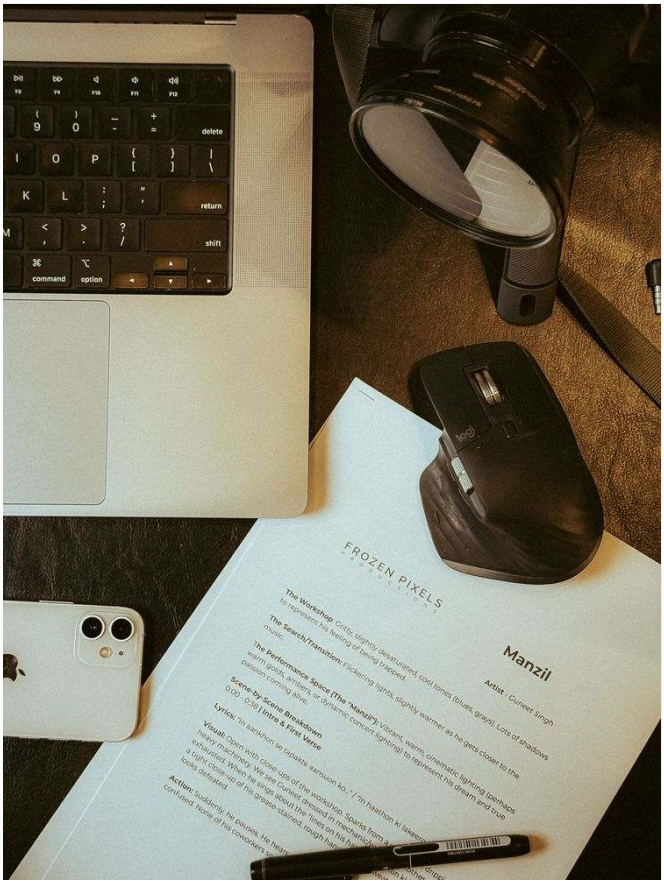
The concept, as the song title "Manzil" suggests, revolves around the artist's journey. His family runs an auto workshop, but his dream is to become a singer and performer. The music video tells that story—his struggle and aspiration to reach his destination.



ON SET The camera, the monitor, and the calm inside the chaos of a shoot.

Q What was the challenge you overcame in that shoot, and how did you tackle it?

One major challenge was relying on a small camera screen instead of having a larger view of the shot. Using an iPad gave me a bigger canvas to see details, scopes, and everything I need as a photographer and filmmaker. It's a game-changer for precision.



THE SCRIPT Reviewing "Manzil" on the day — changes made on the fly.

Q What does your behind-the-scenes image reveal about your creative process?

This image shows us reviewing the script for a song and making changes on the fly. It captures the collaborative and iterative nature of our process—nothing is set in stone until it feels right.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch 'Manzil' from Antarpreet's story.

THE PROCESS — GEAR & GRADE

Q Why is this equipment setup important to your work?

A full-frame camera like the Sony A7 IV is a hybrid powerhouse that lets me shoot high-quality video as well as sharp photos. It's versatile enough to handle both architecture and music videos without compromising on quality.

> *"Technical skills can be learned, but photography as an art is deeply personal and subjective.*

Q What editing techniques did you use in that before-and-after example?

I applied a technique called bleach bypass, which traditionally involves pushing film through bleach to create a silver-ish look in the highlights. I recreated that effect digitally to give the image a distinct, textured feel.



BLEACH BYPASS A silver-ish, textured look in the highlights — recreated digitally rather than in the darkroom.

"So the day I landed my first music video project, it felt like everything clicked into place."

ANTARPREET SINGH

CONNECT WITH ANTARPREET SINGH

INSTAGRAM @antarpreet117 **YOUTUBE** @antarandgagan

IN CONVERSATION · PEOPLE, NOT PLACES

People, Not Places

ARNAV SAHU · TRAVEL & STREET PHOTOGRAPHER

A quiet traveller who lets the camera do the talking — from the fishing harbour of his hometown, Visakhapatnam, to the mountain light of Ladakh, Arnav Sahu keeps finding the same subject in every frame: the people, not the postcard.

Q What first sparked your passion for travel and street photography?

I've never been someone who talks a lot. Carrying a camera became my way of expressing myself. The more I traveled, the more I found myself drawn to the small moments and stories around me. What started as taking photos slowly became my way of capturing the world as I see it. Somehow, I always ended up pointing my camera at people instead of places. A smile, someone waiting for a bus, kids playing on the street, an old man sipping chai—those moments felt more real to me than any famous landmark. They reminded me that every place has its own story, and I just wanted to capture a small part of it before it was gone.

AT A GLANCE

HOMETOWN	Visakhapatnam
FOCUS	Travel & street photography
SUBJECT	People, not places
KIT	Sony a7 IV · Sigma 28–70 F2.8
ON LOCATION	Ladakh · Visakhapatnam harbour
COLLAB	Ladakh Tourism



ARNAV SAHU

PHOTOGRAPH · ARNAV SAHU



STILL FINDING IT Every frame a step further down the road he set out on.

> *"I'm more interested in capturing a feeling or telling a story.*

Q When did your photography first connect with an audience?

I'm still finding my audience, so I don't think there has been one defining moment yet. Right now, I'm just trying to stay authentic to my craft and create work that genuinely feels like me. But whenever someone tells me that one of my photos inspired them to pick up a camera, travel somewhere new, or start creating, it means a lot. Even if it connects with just one person, that feels special. Knowing that something I made could push someone to begin their own journey is what keeps me going.

Q How has your perspective on capturing travel and street scenes evolved?

When I first started, I was focused on getting a good photo. Now, I'm more interested in capturing a feeling or telling a story. I've learned that it's not always about the perfect composition—sometimes it's the small, candid moments that say the most about a place and the people in it.

Q What is the most important lesson from your journey so far?

I think the biggest lesson I've learned is to keep creating and stay true to yourself. It's easy to get caught up in views, likes, and numbers, but constantly chasing them can make you forget why you started. There will be low moments, and this journey takes time. I'm still not where I want to be, but I've learned to trust the process and make work that genuinely feels like me. As long as I'm creating with honesty and enjoying the journey, I know I'm moving in the right direction.

"Keep creating and stay true to yourself. It's easy to get caught up in the numbers — but that can make you forget why you started."

ARNAV SAHU

TWO PLACES, ONE WAY OF SEEING



LADAKH · WITH LADAKH TOURISM

3,500 METRES TO SEA LEVEL A monk in the mountains of Ladakh, seen the same quiet way he would see a fisherman on his home harbour.

Q Which photo best represents your style, and what's the story behind it?

These photos come from two places that are very different but equally memorable to me—Ladakh and the fishing harbour in my hometown, Visakhapatnam. In Ladakh—where I had the opportunity to collaborate with Ladakh Tourism—I wasn't just chasing landscapes. I found myself drawn to the people, the culture, and the quiet moments that made the place feel alive. Every frame reminded me to slow down and simply observe. The fishing harbour, on the other hand, is somewhere I've visited many times. Even though it's familiar, every morning feels different. The light, the fishermen returning with their catch, the conversations, and the energy of the harbour make every visit unique. It reminded me that you don't always have to travel far to find meaningful stories—sometimes they're waiting right where you grew up.

Q Walk us through your editing process for this street shot.

For this image, I wanted to create a more cinematic and timeless feel. I lowered the overall exposure, increased contrast, and desaturated most of the colors to draw attention to the subject and the mood of the scene. I also added deeper shadows and a subtle vignette to guide the viewer's eye down the alley toward the person walking through the frame. The goal was to emphasize the atmosphere and storytelling rather than the colors themselves.



DOWN THE ALLEY

THE EDIT Exposure down, contrast up, colour drained — the eye pulled down the alley to the figure walking through.

> *"Sometimes it's the small, candid moments that say the most about a place.*

IN THE FIELD



THE HARBOUR PORTRAIT No conversation needed — a smile, a nod, a moment before he looked away.

Q What was the interaction like with the subject of your candid street portrait?

I noticed him standing quietly at the fishing harbour and asked if I could take his portrait. He simply smiled and nodded. There wasn't much conversation, but there didn't need to be. As he lit his cigarette and looked away for a moment, I captured this frame. It's one of those portraits that reminds me how a genuine expression can tell a story without a single word.

Q What makes a favourite scene so special to you?

What made that moment special wasn't just the location—it was how it made me feel. I was sitting alone by Pangong Lake when two stray dogs quietly came and sat beside me. We didn't have anywhere to be, and for a while, it was just the three of us, surrounded by silence and the mountains. It's one of those moments that can't really be planned or recreated. That's the memory I took back with me more than the photograph itself.



THE PEOPLE, NOT THE POSTCARD Two faces from the mountains of Ladakh — the subject he keeps finding in every place.

THE KIT

Sony a7 IV
Sigma 28–70 F2.8

One body, one zoom — light enough to keep walking, and to keep pointing it at people.

> *"Not just to capture beautiful places, but to preserve the people and moments that give those places their soul."*
>
> ARNAV SAHU · PEOPLE, NOT PLACES

CONNECT WITH ARNAV SAHU

INSTAGRAM @arnavv.sahu **YOUTUBE** @arnavvsahu

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

Recorded in a Closet

NAVYAA ASTHANA · SINGER-SONGWRITER & PRODUCER

With no microphone, she recorded her first vocals on an iPad in a bedroom closet at fourteen. Today Navyaa Asthana writes, produces and mixes every song herself — carrying them from that closet to the stage.



NAVYAA ASTHANA

Q How did your journey as a singer-songwriter begin?

I started writing lyrics back in 4th or 5th grade. It was around this time that I saw so many artists online releasing their own music at only 14 years old and I knew I wanted to do the same. I released my first song at 14. I made the instrumental with loops, then wrote a melody to go with it, then recorded it all on BandLab. I didn't have a microphone, so I recorded my vocals directly on my iPad in my closet. That was the start of my career as a singer-songwriter.

AT A GLANCE

WRITING SINCE	4th–5th grade
DEBUT	First song released at 14
FIRST TOOLS	BandLab loops — no microphone
RECORDED IN	A bedroom closet, on an iPad
STUDIO TODAY	MacBook, MIDI keyboard, audio interface, mic

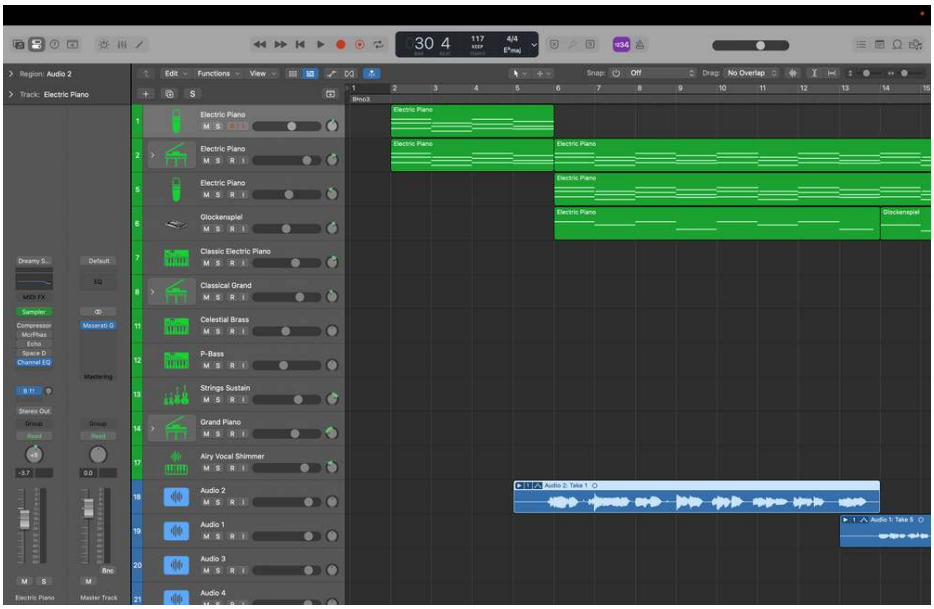
FIRST RELEASE

14

The age Navyaa put out her debut single — instrumental built from loops on BandLab, vocals cut on an iPad.

> *"I recorded my vocals directly on my iPad in my closet. That was the start of my career.*

THE CRAFT



IN THE SESSION Building a track from scratch — piano and pads first, then layer on layer until the idea becomes a song.

Q When did you realize music and dance were your true passions?

I always loved listening to songs, singing and anything to do with music, so naturally I got interested in dancing too. I loved the way that music made me feel. When I was about 8 or 9 years old I began listening a lot of pop and EDM music and fell in love with the emotions that music could evoke. Watching artists play their own music on stage live inspired me even more. I learned that dance was a big part of these performances, so I learned my first hip-hop routine from YouTube, which led me to a dance academy where I got trained in various dance styles. Ever since, music and dancing have been an inseparable part of my life.

> *"I made the instrumental with loops, then wrote a melody to go with it.*

Q How has your style grown since releasing your first song?

When I first started making music, I knew very little about production. I created my first single using loops on BandLab, recorded without a microphone, and mixed it with very little knowledge. Over time, I watched many tutorials and learned from talented musicians who helped me improve my skills. Today, I write my own lyrics, produce my songs from scratch, and record and mix my vocals. Looking back, I can confidently say I'm much closer to making the music I've always dreamed of creating.

Q Walk us through turning a raw vocal recording into a finished track.

Every finished and ready to release song starts out as a simple idea. I usually start by building the instrumental with a few basic elements like piano and pads. After getting the basics done, I experiment with different sounds and instruments that complement the emotion and atmosphere of the song. Once I know how to continue and what is the path to follow, I write lyrics that match the original idea and record my vocals. Finally, I mix everything together to create the finished track. Inspiration can come from anywhere; a melody, a single word, a personal experience, or even something I read.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this clip from Navyaa Asthana's story.

THE STUDIO



PHOTOGRAPH · NAVYAA ASTHANA

THE SETUP MacBook, MIDI keyboard, audio interface and mic — the room lit to match each song's mood.

Q What does your home studio look like, and how does it inspire you?

My setup is quite simple, but it has everything I need to bring my ideas to life; a MacBook, a MIDI keyboard, an audio interface, headphones, and a microphone for recording. As for the atmosphere, it really depends on the type of music I'm making. If I'm working on a bright, summery song, I like the room to be well-lit. For party tracks, I switch on LED lights, and for slower, more emotional songs, I prefer dim lighting. I enjoy matching the atmosphere to the mood of the music because it helps me get into the right creative mindset.

Q What does a typical day of creating and practicing look like?

A typical day always begins with vocal warm-ups and exercises, as I believe consistency is one of the most important parts of improving as a singer. As for creating music, whenever I get an idea, I start writing or producing right away. I'll often spend hours on my MacBook making music, experimenting with different melodies, and singing random words or phrases until they gradually turn into meaningful lyrics. Music is a huge part of my life, and I also try to stay consistent on social media by sharing content about my original music and posting covers of songs by different artists.

"I enjoy matching the atmosphere to the mood of the music — it helps me get into the right creative mindset."

NAVYAA ASTHANA · ON HER HOME STUDIO

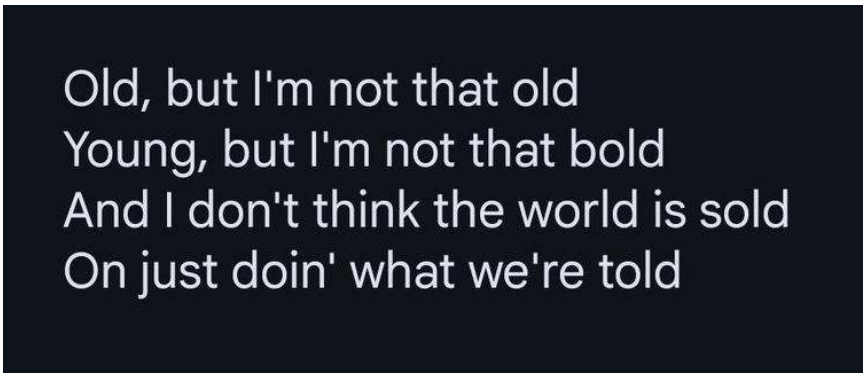
Q How does the final version of a song differ from your initial vision?

As I stated before, at the beginning, every song is simply an idea. Usually, my first actual draft consists of a rough vocal recording of the melody with a few basic instruments to capture the emotion and direction of the song. As I continue developing it, I add more layers, refine the production, improve the arrangement, and polish the vocals through recording and mixing. By the end, the song evolves into something much richer, more detailed, and much closer to the vision I had when the idea first came to me.

Q What was the energy and connection you felt with the audience?

Performing live feels completely different from recording in a studio. Being in front of an audience amplifies not only my energy but also gives me the encouragement to put forth all of my effort when performing on stage. Seeing people connect with my music, sing along, or simply enjoy the performance feels absolutely magical. Those moments remind me why I create music and inspire me to keep improving as both a singer and performer.

THE STAGE



COUNTING STARS · ONEREPUBLIC The lyrics Navyaa keeps coming back to — honest, questioning, and true to yourself.

Q What's the story behind your favorite song lyrics?

These lyrics from 'Counting Stars' by OneRepublic have always resonated deeply with me. I love how they express such honest truths in a poetic and relatable way. It reminds me that it's okay to question the way things are, make your own choices, and stay true to yourself instead of simply doing what everyone expects of you. When I listen to these lyrics, I feel understood and inspired to produce music that is honest and meaningful.



ON STAGE Performing 'I Am' live at a Srajnika, Rachna Sansar event.

Q Tell us about performing an original song live — what made it special?

This video is from a live performance at an event conducted by the creative organization 'Srajnika, Rachna Sansar'. Here, I performed an original song called 'I Am' and some covers as well. It was an unforgettable experience, and performing my own music live in front of an audience made the moment incredibly special.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch Navyaa perform live from this story.

"That was the start of my career as a singer-songwriter."

NAVYAA ASTHANA · FROM THE CLOSET TO THE STAGE

CONNECT WITH NAVYAA ASTHANA

INSTAGRAM @navyaa_asthana **YOUTUBE** @navyaa_asthana **SPOTIFY** Listen **APPLE MUSIC** Listen
AMAZON MUSIC Listen

IN CONVERSATION · MOBILE

Emotions on Campus

KARTHIK MITNALA · MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER

Since his B.Tech days he has photographed the people around him with the phone in his pocket — no dedicated camera, no studio, just the emotion of the moment. A conversation with a campus-born mobile photographer.

WM. How did your journey as a mobile photographer start?

Since my B.Tech days, I have been capturing pictures and emotions of the people around me in college. That's when I started flourishing my mobile photography career, and my journey began with my mother's support. She has always been my biggest inspiration and encouragement.

WM. What was the first mobile photo that made you realise your passion?

I captured a man holding an umbrella during Ganesh Visarjan, and that image had a human emotional touch to it. That's when I realized my passion for photography. My mother also has photography skills, and I think I inherited that from her. My elder brother, Asrith, has also been a great support. Capturing is not just about skills; it's about how you process the perfect moment through observation and creativity.



THE PHOTOGRAPHER Karthik Mitnala, Vijayawada.

WHAT THE PHONE SEES



FRAME 01 Human moments — shot on a phone.

WM. What photo showcases your unique perspective and style?

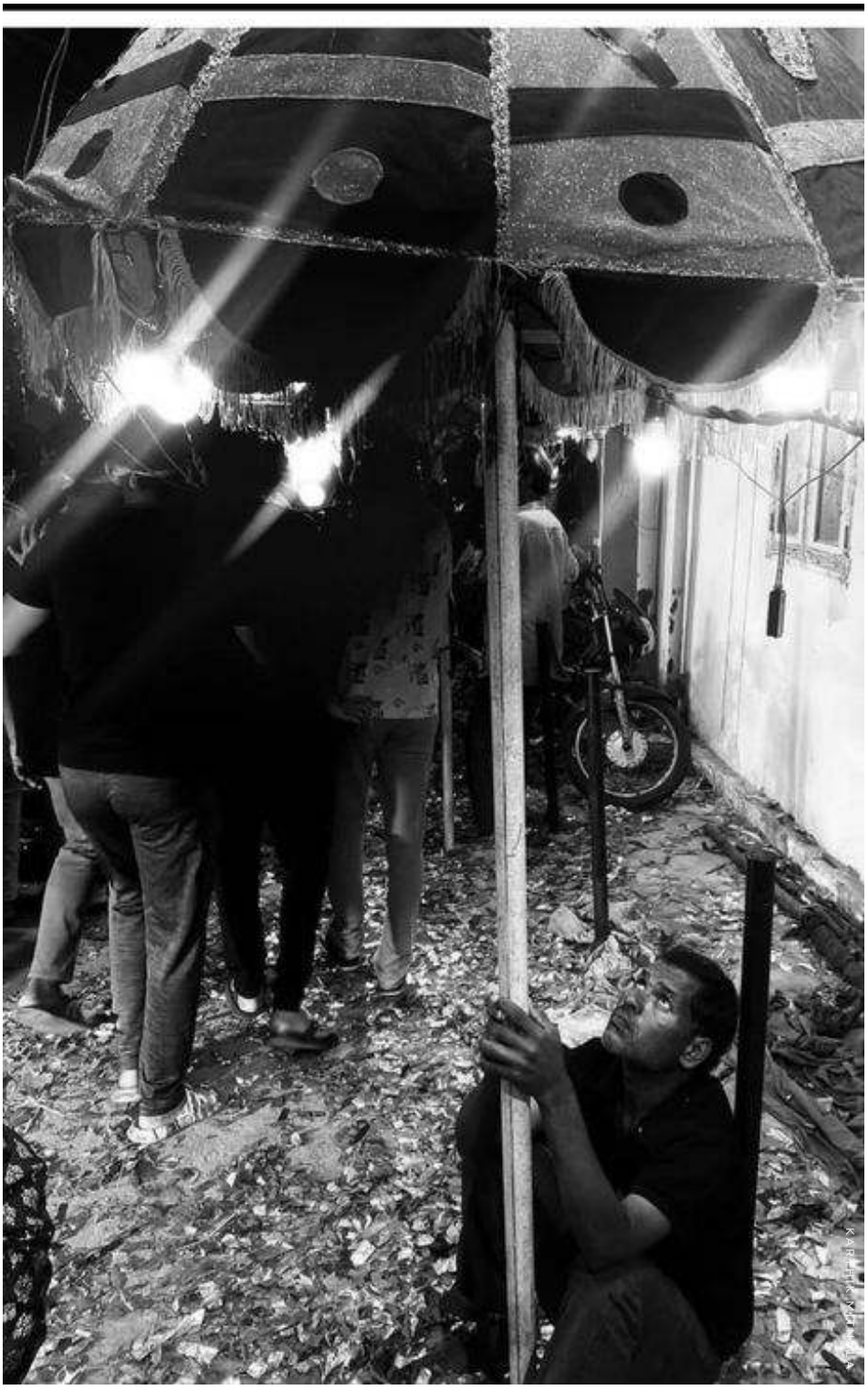
This photograph represents my interest in capturing human emotions, expressions, and portraits from different perspectives. My mother and my elder brother, Asrith, were among the first people to notice something unique in the way I approached photography. Their encouragement motivated me to explore human portraits more deeply. Since then, I have tried to capture people in ways that reveal emotion and individuality rather than simply creating a traditional portrait. My style is still evolving, but I am strongly drawn to authentic human moments and visual storytelling through mobile photography.

WM. What do you find most challenging about mobile photography?

One of the biggest challenges in mobile photography is working within the limitations of a smartphone camera. Lighting conditions, distance, movement, and environmental situations can sometimes make it difficult to capture the exact image I imagine. However, I see these limitations as creative challenges. They encourage me to experiment with different angles, perspectives, and compositions. Mobile photography has taught me that a powerful photograph does not always depend on expensive equipment; observation, timing, patience, and creativity are equally important.



FRAME 02 Sparks & steel.



FRAME 03 Ganapati Visarjan — the emotions and struggles hidden behind the celebration.

WM. Which photo best represents your work?

This photograph represents the emotions and struggles hidden behind the celebration of Ganapati Visarjan. I wanted to capture more than just the event; I wanted to focus on the human emotions surrounding the moment. Every face, movement, and expression carries a different story. Through my perspective, I tried to preserve the authenticity and emotional energy of the scene. For me, photography is about observing these unnoticed human moments and transforming them into visual stories.

WM. How do you approach editing on your phone?

I used the basic editing tools available in my phone's photo gallery. My editing process was minimal because I wanted to maintain the natural and authentic appearance of the photograph. I mainly focused on cropping and framing the image properly to improve the composition and presentation. I made small adjustments where necessary, but I avoided heavy editing. My intention was to preserve the original mood and emotion of the photograph while presenting the subject in a visually balanced way.

> *A powerful photograph does not always depend on expensive equipment.*
>
> KARTHIK MITNALA

LIGHT ON THE ROAD

WM. What photo captures a meaningful moment for you?

The photograph was captured during an early morning car journey when I noticed a beautiful sunrise. It was an unexpected moment that immediately caught my attention. The changing light, peaceful atmosphere, and feeling of travelling created a unique visual experience. I wanted to preserve that simple moment through my camera. For me, journeys are filled with unexpected scenes, and photography allows me to capture those small but beautiful moments that might otherwise disappear with time.

WM. What have you captured in motion, on video?

The video captures a beautiful sunset near the village fields around Vijayawada. The gentle breeze, open farmland, natural light, and peaceful surroundings created a calm and refreshing atmosphere. I wanted to capture the authenticity of village life and the natural beauty of the fields without making the scene feel artificial. The mood of the video is peaceful, warm, and nostalgic. It represents the simple beauty of nature and the quiet emotions we experience when we spend time away from the busy city environment.



FRAME 04 First light, from a moving car.

SCAN TO WATCH

Sunset over the village fields.

SCAN TO WATCH

Another clip from Karthik's camera roll.

CONNECT WITH KARTHIK MITNALA

INSTAGRAM @mkgallerino

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

GUITAR PLAYER AWARDS 2026

Frets on Fire

KHURAIJAM SANJEET · GUITARIST & FOUNDER, SEI-HEK

From a video-game fretboard in Imphal to sharing a Mumbai stage with his idols, Animals as Leaders — the guitarist on teaching himself through YouTube, building an instrumental band around a Manipuri word, and why a melody can say what words never could.

Q **Let's start at the beginning — how did the guitar first come into your life, and what pulled you toward it over any other instrument?**

It was introduced to me through a video game called 'Frets on Fire' and later on 'Guitar Hero'. It was the first time when I saw Steve Vai's live performance on YouTube when I was 14 years old. His showmanship and the way he played the guitar drew me towards this instrument, and later on I discovered various amazing guitar players.

AT A GLANCE

HOME	Imphal, Manipur → Mumbai
PROJECT	Sei-Hek — Manipuri for the melody & rhythm of a composition
TRAINING	Self-taught via YouTube; The True School of Music, Mumbai
GUITAR	.strandberg* — headless, HSS
INFLUENCES	Steve Vai, CHON, Animals as Leaders, Jakub Zytecki
HONOUR	Runner-up, WallMag Guitar Player Awards 2026



KHURAIJAM SANJEET

PHOTOGRAPH · KHURAIJAM SANJEET

"Sometimes, we need a leap of faith and let go."

KHURAIJAM SANJEET · ON 'LEAP OF FAITH'

THE SOUND

Q Do you remember the first moment the guitar truly clicked for you — a riff, a song, or a feeling where you thought 'this is it, this is what I want to do'?

I came across "One" by Metallica through Guitar Hero and got completely hooked on the song. Before I even bought my first guitar, I was already looking online for tabs and tutorial videos, trying to figure out how I would play it. Eventually, my mom bought me my first guitar. The funny thing was, I had absolutely zero knowledge of how a guitar worked. I picked it up, followed the tabs, and thought, "Wait… this doesn't sound anything like the song!" Haha. I had no idea the guitar was completely out of tune. Then, luckily, YouTube recommended a video on how to tune a guitar, and that's when I learned that I could actually turn the tuning pegs and change the pitch of the strings. I tuned it, went back to the tabs, and suddenly I was actually playing "One." I still remember the excitement and the thrill of hearing those notes come out of the guitar and realizing, I can actually do this. That moment completely changed things for me. From there, I just kept wanting to learn more, and the guitar eventually became much more than just an instrument I picked up—it became the main way I express myself musically.

Q Was there a teacher, mentor, or fellow musician who shaped how you play? Tell us about them and what they passed on to you.

For a long time, my only teacher was YouTube. I was completely self-taught growing up. Every song I learned, every technique I picked up, and even a lot of the fundamentals came from watching YouTube videos and trying to figure things out on my own. I was always curious and would constantly go down these rabbit holes of discovering new players, techniques, and styles, and then trying to recreate them myself. It was only later, when I decided that I wanted to pursue music as a career, that I felt I needed to understand the language behind everything I was already playing. That's when I went to The True School of Music in Mumbai, where I studied music theory, improvisation, ear training, and performance. So there was this interesting transition from being completely self-taught through YouTube to actually studying music formally. I think having both experiences has really shaped me as a musician.



SELF-TAUGHT From YouTube tutorials to the live stage with Sei-Hek.

FIRST SPARK

14

The age he first watched Steve Vai play live on YouTube — and reached for a guitar.

Q Bands like CHON, Animals as Leaders, and Jakub Zytecki clearly run through your playing. What is it about instrumental prog and math rock that speaks to you the way lyrics never could?

I think what really drew me to instrumental prog and math rock is that it gives me the freedom to communicate an emotion without having to tell the listener exactly what that emotion is. With lyrics, there's obviously a huge amount of power in storytelling and words, but sometimes words can also define an emotion too specifically. With instrumental music, I feel like the listener gets to bring their own meaning to it. A melody can mean something completely different to two different people, and I really love that. At the same time, I've always been fascinated by the technical side of guitar. Bands like CHON, Jakub Zytecki, and Animals as Leaders showed me that you could have incredibly complex rhythms, unusual chord voicings, tapping, hybrid picking, and all these technically demanding elements, but still make the music feel beautiful and emotional. It doesn't have to be technical just for the sake of being technical. That balance is probably what speaks to me the most—the ability to be rhythmically and harmonically adventurous while still having melody and emotion at the center. I think that's also what I try to bring into Sei-Hek. I want the music to be something you can appreciate as a musician, but also something you can simply feel and connect with even if you don't play an instrument.

SEI-HEK

Q 'Leap of Faith' was the very first single for your own project, Sei Hek. Walk us through how this piece came together — what were you trying to say with it?

Leap of Faith expresses the continuity of one's existence, searching for the morality of life in seeking the ultimate goal, and the need for serenity in our minds through the course of the journey. But then, the road is never easy. Life transitions from the pleasant to the harsh, and along the way, we start to lose hope. The small section in the song where the instrument 'Pena' comes in defines the upliftment of our will to go on, to go for the extra mile. The heavy distorted parts towards the end signify how a broken person rises from being beaten down, confident to tackle what might seem impossible. Sometimes, we need a leap of faith and let go.

SCAN TO WATCH · 'LEAP OF FAITH'

The winning guitar playthrough, from Sei-Hek's debut single.

Q You chose the name 'Sei Hek' — a Manipuri word for the melody and rhythm of a composition. What does carrying that piece of your heritage into your music mean to you?

For me, "Sei Hek" is a way of keeping a connection to where I come from. It's a Manipuri word that refers to the melody and rhythm of a composition, so it felt very fitting for a band that is built around instrumental music. Growing up in Manipur and eventually moving to Mumbai, music has always been a big part of how I've understood and expressed myself. So having a name from my own language felt like a small but meaningful way of carrying that identity with me, especially as the music itself has influences that come from all over the world.

Q What's happening in that section you love to play, and why does it never get old for you?

This is a cover I did of "Bubble Dream" by CHON. It was actually the first song I heard from CHON, and I immediately loved the way they use hybrid picking and harmonics so tastefully. I've always enjoyed playing this section because it's not only musical and fun, but also technically challenging. It's one of those pieces that helps you develop your technique while still sounding really beautiful.

SCAN TO WATCH · CHON COVER

His playthrough of 'Bubble Dream' — the first CHON song he ever heard.

Q Tell us about this guitar — what makes it yours, and how does its tone shape the way you write and play?

This guitar is a .strandberg*, and it's become a really important part of how I play. What immediately attracted me to it was how different it felt from a traditional guitar. The headless design, the balance, the lightweight body, and especially the EndurNeck make it feel like the guitar is almost built around the way I play rather than me having to adapt to it. A lot of my playing involves tapping, wide stretches, fast legato passages, and a lot of movement across the neck, so having an instrument that feels comfortable and balanced really matters to me. It allows me to focus less on the physical side of playing and more on the music. Tonally, I really like the HSS configuration, with the 4th and 2nd position pickups being one of my most used settings.



THE .STRANDBERG* Headless, lightweight, HSS — built around the way he plays.

ON STAGE & WHAT'S NEXT

Q Take us inside that moment on stage — where was it, and what did it feel like to play that night?

This photo was taken when Sei-Hek opened for Animals as Leaders on their Parrhesia India Tour 2024 at NESCO Center in Mumbai. Honestly, getting the opportunity to open for one of my biggest influences was absolutely surreal. At the same time, it was incredibly nerve-racking. I remember being very aware of the fact that I was about to play on the same stage as a band whose music had such a huge influence on me as a guitarist and musician. But once we got on stage, all of that nervousness turned into excitement. Being able to share that stage and play our music to that audience was something I had never imagined would happen when I first discovered Animals as Leaders. Looking back, it's definitely one of the happiest and most memorable moments of my life.



THE LEAP On stage with Sei-Hek.

THE LEAP OF FAITH

2024

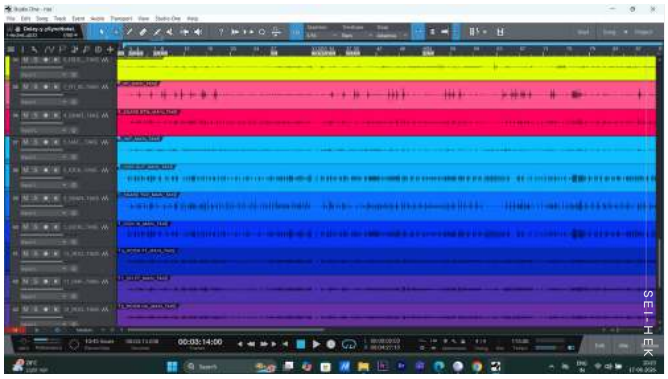
Sei-Hek opened for Animals as Leaders — Parrhesia India Tour, NESCO Center, Mumbai.

Q As a runner-up in the WallMag Guitar Player Awards 2026, what's the one thing you most hope people feel when they hear your guitar?

More than anything, I want people to feel something. Whether it's excitement, nostalgia, peace, or curiosity, I want my guitar to communicate an emotion without needing words. Technique is important to me, but ultimately, it's just a tool to express what I feel.

Q Tell us a little about this idea you're working on — where do you feel it's heading?

'Someday, somewhere' was written after returning to Imphal for a performance nearly two years after relocating to Mumbai. The experience brought back memories of home and the realization of how much had changed. The song reflects the feeling of being caught between where you belong and where opportunities take you, holding onto the hope that someday, somewhere, those two paths will finally meet.



'SOMEDAY, SOMEWHERE' Written after returning to Imphal, two years on from Mumbai.

> *"The song holds onto the hope that someday, somewhere, those two paths will finally meet."*
>
> KHURAIJAM SANJEET

CONNECT WITH KHURAIJAM SANJEET

INSTAGRAM @khuraijamsanjeet **YOUTUBE** @seihek3796

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC & VOICE

The Voice of Silence

ROMA MITRA · SINGER & VOICE ARTIST

The singer, producer and voice artist — a childhood favourite whose family gathered simply to hear her sing — on giving a soul to words, giving a voice to myth, and why she believes stillness, not noise, is where every creation begins.



ROMA MITRA

PHOTOGRAPH · ROMA MITRA

Q How did you first get into music and voice acting?

From my childhood days, when I was just a toddler, I used to sing, and everyone around me would listen and inspire me to sing. One thing they all had in common was that they loved my voice.

Q What was a pivotal moment that made you pursue this creative path?

When I got attention singing in school functions and celebrations, that kind of adulation mattered. Wherever I went, I had to sing at others' request.

> *"I believe silence is the mother of all creativity."*
>
> ROMA MITRA · ON WHERE CREATION BEGINS

THE CRAFT

Q How has your creative process evolved since you started?

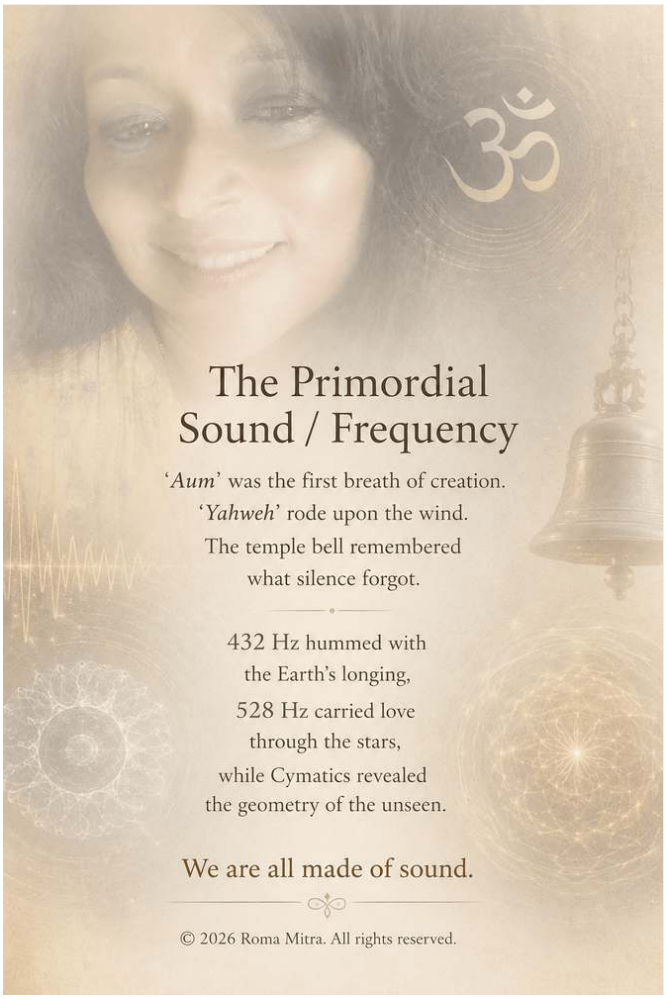
Starting from being only a singer, I now produce my songs and also experiment with my team. I have produced 'TOR SAATHE', a Bengali song, which is now showcased on the Times Music channel.

SCAN TO LISTEN

Scan to hear 'Tor Saathe' on the Times Music channel.

Q What do you enjoy most about combining writing and voice acting?

What I enjoy most about writing and voice acting is the opportunity to bring ideas and emotions to life. Writing allows me to create worlds, explore profound themes, and express thoughts that can resonate with people on a deeper level. Voice acting, on the other hand, gives those words a soul. Through voice, I can convey emotions, personality, and nuance in a way that connects directly with the audience. For me, the two complement each other beautifully. Writing creates the vision, while voice acting breathes life into it. Both are forms of storytelling, and there's nothing more rewarding than knowing that a story or a performance has made someone think, feel, or see the world from a different perspective.



THE PRIMORDIAL SOUND Roma Mitra's own artwork — 'Aum' as the first breath of creation. © Roma Mitra.

Q Tell us about a piece of writing or a script you've worked on.

It's about the Primordial Sound of this universe which heals and loves.

> *"Writing creates the vision, while voice acting breathes life into it.*

AT A GLANCE

DISCIPLINE	**Singer, music producer & voice artist**
SIGNATURE SINGLE	**'Tor Saathe' — a Bengali song, showcased on the Times Music channel**
IN PRODUCTION	**'Mai Samay' — a mythic project fusing Mahakaal & Nemesis**

THE STILLNESS

Q How does your workspace influence your creativity?

My workspace gives me something I value above all else—silence. It's in those quiet moments, free from distraction and noise, that ideas begin to take shape. Silence allows me to reflect, imagine, and connect more deeply with my thoughts and emotions. For me, creativity doesn't emerge from chaos; it grows from stillness.

> "
>
> *When you stop singing at the audience and start singing from your heart, the performance becomes much more authentic.*

Q What was the mood like during that recording session?

If I had to describe my mood during that recording session, I'd say it was a blend of calmness, introspection, and quiet emotional intensity. I wasn't trying to impress anyone or chase perfection. I simply wanted to surrender to the song and let it speak through me. Before I began recording, I spent a few moments absorbing the lyrics and the emotion behind them. Once the music started, I stopped thinking about technique or whether every note was flawless. Instead, I focused on telling the story. I believe that when you stop singing at the audience and start singing from your heart, the performance becomes much more authentic. There was also a sense of peace. Recording is one of the few moments when the outside world fades away for me. The worries, the noise, and the distractions disappear, and all that remains is the connection between my voice and the music. It's almost meditative. At the same time, there was vulnerability. Every recording captures a part of who you are in that moment, and that's both beautiful and intimidating. I wanted the emotions to feel genuine rather than manufactured. If listeners connect with the song, I hope it's because they hear honesty in the voice. By the end of the session, I felt deeply satisfied—not because I believed I had created a perfect recording, but because I had expressed something real. For me, that's always more meaningful than technical perfection. Music is ultimately about communication, and if even one person feels understood or moved by what they hear, then the recording has achieved its purpose.



THE POEM BEHIND THE FRAME Roma Mitra — where, she says, the whole explanation lives.

Q How does this image fuel your creative process?

If you read it, the explanation is in the poetry.

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch this recording from Roma Mitra's story.

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch another clip from Roma Mitra's story.



MAI SAMAY Roma Mitra with Rupankar Bagchi — Time as an impartial, eternal force.

Q Describe the character or story behind this visual.

The protagonist embodies Time as Nemesis—an eternal force that transcends human existence. The character is a unique fusion of Mahakaal, the timeless cosmic power in Hindu philosophy, and Nemesis, the Greek goddess who represents divine justice and the inevitable consequences of one's actions. He is neither a conventional hero nor a villain, but an impartial force that watches over the moral balance of the universe. Through this blend of Eastern spirituality and Greek philosophy, the character symbolizes that time ultimately becomes the judge of every deed, ensuring that every action is met with its rightful consequence.

Q What excites you most about your current project?

What excites me most about this project is its unique fusion of two powerful forces—Mahakaal and Nemesis. To me, Mahakaal represents the timeless, unstoppable force that transcends creation and destruction, while Nemesis embodies justice, consequence, and the inevitable balance that follows every action. Bringing these two ideas together creates something that feels both epic and deeply meaningful. This one has the potential to explore themes of destiny, power, redemption, and the price of human choices. As an artist, I enjoy working on projects that evoke emotion and provoke thought, and being part of such a vision is genuinely inspiring.



ROMA MITRA The voice behind the myth — among the singers she carries with her.

> *"That's me, solely standing with me — the wound and the healing, both created by me. My voice and my pics."*
>
> ROMA MITRA

CONNECT WITH ROMA MITRA

INSTAGRAM @celestemitr **YOUTUBE** Watch **FACEBOOK** Profile

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

The Freedom of Indie

AVEN · SINGER-SONGWRITER · INDIE POP

The first song came on the last bench of a Geography class — and led, eventually, to a stage of thousands. Aven on the freedom of indie, the honesty of songwriting, and chasing a feeling before it disappears.



AVEN

PHOTOGRAPH · AVEN

Q What motivated you to start your journey as a singer-songwriter in indie pop and alternative music?

Music has always been a part of my life, and singing was something I connected with from a very young age. As I grew older, I realized that songwriting allowed me to express emotions and experiences that were difficult to put into words otherwise. What drew me to indie pop and alternative music was the freedom it offers—there are no strict boundaries, and artists can be completely honest and authentic with their sound. I was inspired by artists who blend meaningful storytelling with modern, melodic production, and that encouraged me to create music that feels personal yet relatable. My journey as a singer-songwriter started from a desire to turn my thoughts, emotions, and life experiences into songs that people could connect with. Every song I write is an attempt to tell a story, create a feeling, and remind listeners that they are not alone in what they are going through.

AT A GLANCE

FIRST SONG	'Jaane Kyun' — written on the last bench of a Geography class
SOUND	Indie pop & alternative
WRITES IN	15–30 minutes a song
IN THE WORKS	'Premrog' — currently in demo
BIGGEST STAGE	~7,000–8,000 people

"Music became the place where I could be completely honest with myself."

AVEN · ON SONGWRITING

Q Can you recall the first song you ever wrote? What was it about?

The first song I ever wrote was called 'Jaane Kyun.' I wrote it while sitting on the last bench of my classroom during a Geography lecture when I was in 12th grade. Instead of paying attention to the lesson, I found myself writing down thoughts and emotions that had been on my mind for a long time. The song was about a kind of love that's difficult to explain—a deep connection with someone where you don't really know why you're drawn to them, but you are. It's about loving someone so deeply that they become a part of everything around you. You want them in your dreams, in your melodies, and even in the way your name is spoken. The song explored that feeling of being completely consumed by someone's presence and wondering, 'Why do I feel this way about this person?' I never officially released 'Jaane Kyun,' but it remains very special to me because it was the song that started my journey as a songwriter.

MOST SONGS WRITTEN IN

15–30 MIN

"The first emotion is often the most honest one."

Q What is your creative process like from idea to finished song?

My creative process usually starts with an emotion, a life experience, or sometimes even a scenario that I create in my mind. A lot of my songs come from things I've personally lived through, but I also find inspiration by observing people, listening to their stories, and imagining how certain situations might feel if I were experiencing them myself. One thing that surprises people is how quickly I write. Most of my songs are written within 15 to 30 minutes, often including the final changes. When an idea connects with me emotionally, the lyrics and melodies tend to flow naturally. I don't like to overthink the process because I feel that the first emotion is often the most honest one. Sometimes a single conversation, a memory, or a phase of my life spark an entire song. Other times, I'll imagine a story in my head and write from the perspective of someone living through that moment. Whether the inspiration comes from my own experiences or from observing the world around me, I always try to write in a way that feels genuine and emotionally real. For me, songwriting isn't about chasing the perfect lyric—it's about capturing a feeling before it disappears. If a song can make me feel something when I listen back to it, then I know I've done my job as a songwriter.

> *"Instead of paying attention to the lesson, I found myself writing down thoughts and emotions.*

Q How has your songwriting evolved since you started?

My songwriting has evolved naturally alongside my life. In the beginning, I used to write whatever I was feeling in the moment, and in many ways, that's still true today. The biggest difference is that I've become better at turning those emotions into stories and songs that other people can connect with. Every song I write comes from real events and experiences in my life. Whether it's sadness, love, happiness, longing, or even moments of confusion, I use those emotions as fuel for my songwriting. For me, it was never about sitting down and deciding to write a song. It has always been about expressing something I feel deeply inside. I'm not a very expressive person in everyday life. I often find it difficult to put my emotions into words when talking to people. Music became the place where I could be completely honest with myself. My songs are where I express the feelings I don't always say out loud. Every lyric carries a piece of my experiences, thoughts, and emotions, which is why songwriting feels so personal to me. As I've grown as an artist, I've learned how to shape those emotions into stronger melodies and stories, but the core of my songwriting remains the same—writing from a place of truth and turning life's experiences into music.

Q What stage is your demo 'Premrog' in, and what are your plans for it?

'Premrog' is currently in the demo stage. The songwriting and melody are complete, and I'm now working on shaping the production and overall sound of the track. While my music has always been rooted in emotional storytelling, 'Premrog' explores a blend of indie pop and rock influences, giving it a bigger and more energetic sound. The song revolves around the idea of love becoming so intense that it starts to feel like a 'rog'—something that stays with you, consumes your thoughts, and becomes impossible to ignore. Like most of my songs, it draws inspiration from real emotions and experiences. My plan is to continue developing the production while making sure the raw emotion of the original demo remains intact. I'm really excited about 'Premrog' because it represents a new chapter in my sound, combining heartfelt songwriting with indie pop-rock energy, and I hope to release it in the near future.

CENTER STAGE



FIRST MAJOR STAGE Aven's first performance in front of nearly 7,000–8,000 people.

Q Tell us about the photo you shared of your first major stage performance. What was that experience like?

This photo captures one of the most memorable moments of my journey as an artist—my first major stage performance in front of nearly 7,000–8,000 people. I still remember how nervous I was before stepping onto the stage. Seeing such a massive crowd was overwhelming, and there was a moment when the reality of performing in front of thousands of people really hit me. At the same time, it was incredibly exciting. Once the performance began, that nervousness slowly turned into confidence and pure joy. It was a moment where years of practice, passion, and dedication to music felt like they were coming together. The energy from the audience was unforgettable and made me realize how powerful live music can be. This photo means a lot to me because it represents growth, courage, and the beginning of my journey as a performer. It reminds me that stepping outside of your comfort zone often leads to the most rewarding experiences.

FIRST MAJOR STAGE

7–8K CROWD

"That nervousness slowly turned into confidence and pure joy."

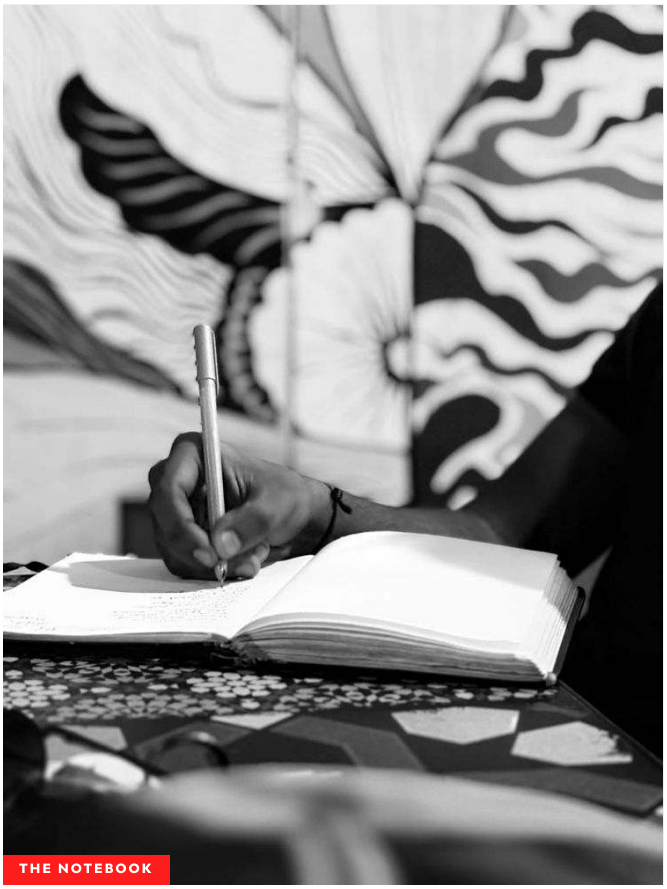
SCAN TO LISTEN

Scan to listen to a clip from Aven's story.

BEYOND THE SONG

Q What story does your songwriting notebook tell about your creative process?

This notebook is where my ideas become songs. Whenever a lyric, melody, or emotion comes to mind, I write it down before the moment passes. Most of my songs start on these pages, often as a single line or thought that eventually grows into a complete track. There are unfinished ideas, crossed-out lyrics, sudden inspirations, and moments of clarity scattered throughout its pages. It isn't organized or perfect, but that's what makes it special—it captures my thoughts exactly as they happen. Every page tells a different story, and together they document my growth as a songwriter and artist.



THE NOTEBOOK



ALBUM ARTWORK

COVER ART Roses, barbed wire and colour — beauty balanced with emotional depth.

Q How does the album artwork you shared influence your own visual style?

This artwork influences my visual style because it shows how powerful simplicity and symbolism can be. Instead of relying on a complex scene, it uses elements like roses, barbed wire, color, and composition to communicate emotions such as love, vulnerability, longing, and pain. That balance between beauty and emotional depth is something I find very inspiring. As someone who works in both music and visual arts, I try to create visuals that feel like an extension of the music rather than just promotional material. I am particularly drawn to its dreamy color palette and the way it combines romantic imagery with darker emotional themes. It inspires me to create visuals that feel cinematic, emotionally honest, and meaningful—artwork that tells a story even before someone presses play on the song.

"Songwriting isn't about chasing the perfect lyric—it's about capturing a feeling before it disappears."

AVEN

CONNECT WITH AVEN

INSTAGRAM @avensings SPOTIFY Listen

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

FROM BEATS TO IDENTITY

Behind the Beat

VARDAN PANDEY · PRODUCER · RAPPER · MIXING & MASTERING ENGINEER

From free-trial DAWs in a bedroom to his own debut album "Mai", Vardan Pandey moves between the desk and the mic — chasing one thing above all else: music that feels authentic.



VARDAN PANDEY

AT A GLANCE

ROLES	Producer, rapper, songwriter, mixing & mastering engineer
STUDIO	Ableton Live · FL Studio · Logic Pro
DEBUT	"Mai" (Me) — four tracks, four collaborators
TRAINING	Mix With Vasudev mixing & mastering course

Q How did your journey as a music producer and rapper begin?

My journey as a music producer and rapper began with my love for Desi Hip-Hop. I grew up listening to artists like Raftaar, Emiway Bantai, Yo Yo Honey Singh, Seedhe Maut, Ikka, Badshah, and many others. However, the real turning point came in Class 12 when I first discovered the world of music production. That's when I learned that Honey Singh wasn't just a rapper—he was also a music producer. That completely changed the way I looked at music and inspired me to create my own sound. Before that, I used to write songs in school just for fun, without thinking of it as a career. But after discovering music production, I realized I could combine songwriting with rap. I started practicing by rapping over type beats on YouTube, and the more I explored, the more passionate I became. I then began learning Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), starting with Ableton Live and later FL Studio. Since I couldn't afford them initially, I relied on free trials for several months. Eventually, after getting the Apple Student Bundle, I started using Logic Pro and took music much more seriously. Alongside producing and rapping, I became deeply interested in mixing and mastering because I wanted complete creative control over my music. Today, I work as a music producer, rapper, songwriter, and mixing & mastering engineer, constantly learning and pushing myself to create better music. My name is Vardan Pandey, and this is how my journey began.

> *"That's when I learned that Honey Singh wasn't just a rapper — he was also a music producer."*
>
> VARDAN PANDEY · ON THE TURNING POINT IN CLASS 12

THE CRAFT



THE SIGNAL CHAIN A MacBook running the session, studio monitors, a condenser mic — and the pair of headphones the whole journey started on.

Q What was the first track that made you feel you were on the right path?

I made tracks like "Khurafati," "Tera Ho Jaana," and "Baatein Ansuni." Especially with "Tera Ho Jaana" and "Baatein Ansuni," this was new for me—I wrote, composed, and presented something that felt genuinely good. That experience made me sure I was on the right track.

Q What does your creative process look like, from beat-making to final track?

My creative process depends on the type of music I'm making. Since I started my journey as a rapper, I naturally began by producing rap beats, but over time I've also started creating melodic and romantic songs. For rap tracks, I usually begin by selecting a BPM that matches the vibe I'm going for. Then I either create my own melody or browse Splice for inspiration. I enjoy using vocal chops because they add a unique texture to the beat. Once the melody is ready, I build the drum section with hard-hitting kicks, snares, and percussion. Sometimes, though, I reverse the process—I start with dark, bouncy drums and then write the melody around that groove. After the beat is complete, I send it to an artist or collaborator. Once they record their vocals, I handle the entire post-production process, including mixing and mastering. For melodic or lo-fi songs, my process is a little different because the emotion usually comes first. Sometimes I find a melody on Splice and start humming ideas over it until lyrics naturally begin to form. Other times, the lyrics come before the music. For example, Tera Ho Jaana started with just the phrase "Tera Ho Jaana" repeating in my mind. I found the right scale for that melody, built the chord progression around it, and developed the song from there.

> *"No matter how a track begins, my goal is always the same — to create music that feels authentic.*

SELECTED PRODUCTIONS

▸ **Khurafati** ▸ **Tera Ho Jaana** ▸ **Baatein Ansuni** ▸ **Wallmack Rap Battle** ▸ **Dil Ye Dastakein**

IN THE MIX

Q How has working as a mixing and mastering engineer shaped your production?

When I first started music production, I honestly didn't understand the importance of mixing and mastering. I used to think it was just about cutting frequencies and making a song a little louder. But once I started releasing my own music on YouTube, I realized how much of a difference a good mix and master actually makes. That's when I decided to invest in learning the craft. I enrolled in Mix With Vasudev's mixing and mastering course, and it completely changed the way I approached music production. It taught me how every element in a song should work together to create clarity, emotion, and impact. After completing the course, I mixed and mastered tracks like "Tera Ho Jaana" and "Ghar Wapsi." Although I haven't released many self-produced songs since then, those projects gave me the confidence to hear the improvement in my work and understand how much the final stage shapes the listener's experience. Today, I enjoy mixing and mastering just as much as producing. For me, they're not separate processes—they're essential parts of creating great music. I often compare it to making a pizza: without the cheese, vegetables, and toppings, it's just dough. In the same way, a song without proper mixing and mastering is missing the flavor and emotion that truly connects with the audience. That's where the production comes to life and where an artist's vision is fully realized.

> “
>
> *A song without proper mixing and mastering is like pizza dough with no toppings — it's missing the flavor and emotion.*

Q What techniques did you apply in your latest mix, “Khurafati”?

"Khurafati" is a hip-hop track I created with my friend SHKLA. The production combines an Indian-inspired sound, featuring tabla and traditional elements, with modern hip-hop drums and hard-hitting 808s. My mixing workflow starts with proper session organization. I reduce the gain of every track to create enough headroom, clean up unwanted audio, name and color-code the tracks, and group drums, instruments, and vocals into separate buses. From there, I use EQ to remove unnecessary low-end rumble, reduce harsh frequencies, and clean up resonances so every element has its own space in the mix. I then apply compression to control the dynamics, especially on the vocals and drums, while keeping the performance natural and energetic. I also use a de-esser to reduce harsh "S" sounds in the vocals. To create depth, I use dedicated reverb and delay buses instead of applying the effects directly to each track. Since the beat combines traditional Indian instruments like the tabla with modern drums, one of the biggest challenges was making both elements sit together without competing for the same frequencies. I carefully balanced the percussion, 808s, vocals, and melodic elements to maintain both clarity and impact. Finally, during mastering, I made subtle tonal adjustments, controlled the overall dynamics, and brought the track to a competitive loudness while preserving its punch and energy. My goal was to give the song a clean, powerful, and commercially polished sound.

THE FUSION

Tabla × 808s

“The biggest challenge was making both elements sit together without competing for the same frequencies.”

Q One piece of gear you can't live without?

If I had to choose one piece of gear I couldn't live without, it would definitely be my headphones. While my MacBook is the heart of my setup, my headphones are the tool I rely on the most for making music. I actually started my entire music production journey with just a pair of headphones. For me, they're not just another piece of equipment—they're where my journey began, and they're still one of the most important tools in my creative process.

THE MIX CHAIN *how “Khurafati” was built, step by step*

01	02	03	04	05	06
SESSION PREP	**EQ**	**COMPRESSION**	**DE-ESS**	**SPACE**	**MASTER**
Gain-stage every track, colour-code and bus the drums, instruments and vocals.	Cut low-end rumble and harsh resonances so each element has its own space.	Control the dynamics on vocals and drums while keeping them energetic.	Tame the harsh “S” sounds in the vocal takes.	Depth from dedicated reverb and delay buses, not per-track effects.	Tonal polish and competitive loudness, punch and energy intact.

FROM BEATS TO IDENTITY

Q Tell us about the recent projects you've been working on.

I've been working on two projects that showcase different sides of my work. The first is a track called "Dil Ye Dastakein"—a romantic song I created for a short film being produced by my college seniors. On this project, I worked as the producer, composer, lyricist, and mixing and mastering engineer. The song takes inspiration from classic Bollywood music while blending it with a modern production style. It's currently in its final stages and is planned for release on Spotify next month. The second is a hip-hop beat inspired by the production style of Tay Keith. After discovering his music and studying his production techniques, I was inspired by his hard-hitting drums, energetic bounce, and minimal yet powerful arrangements. I used those influences to create my own beat while adding my personal style and sound.

Q What was the inspiration behind the vocals on "Sajan"?

The main inspiration behind the vocals was to experiment with alliteration. I built the rap around repeated "P" sounds to create a catchy, rhythmic flow and make the lyrics more fun and engaging. Since "Sajan" is a fun hip-hop track, I wanted the vocal delivery to feel energetic, playful, and memorable.

Q What made "Tera Ho Jaana" special, and challenging?

Tera Ho Jaana was a very special project for me because it challenged me in ways I hadn't experienced before. It was the first song where I put a serious amount of effort into the entire mixing and mastering process, applying everything I had learned. I spent a lot of time refining the vocals, balancing the instruments, and making sure every element fit together naturally. Another challenge was blending a melodic, romantic sound with rap influences. I wanted both styles to complement each other without one overpowering the other, and finding that balance took a lot of experimentation. What makes this project even more meaningful is the response it has received. Seeing listeners connect with the song and show it so much love has made all the hard work worth it. It gave me confidence in my abilities as a producer, mixing and mastering engineer, and songwriter, and it's a project I'm genuinely proud of.

Q Your debut album is called "Mai". What does it represent?

The album features four tracks that blend rap and melody while showcasing collaborations with four different artists. I wrote, produced, mixed, and mastered the entire project myself. Although it wasn't perfect technically, it was my first complete body of work, and that's what makes it special. It reflects the idea of introducing myself to the world.

OUT NEXT MONTH

Dil Ye Dastakein

A romantic track for a college short film — written, produced, composed, mixed and mastered by Vardan himself, releasing on Spotify.

> *"This is who I am, this is my sound, and this is 'Mai'— Me."*
>
> VARDAN PANDEY · ON HIS DEBUT ALBUM

CONNECT WITH VARDAN PANDEY

INSTAGRAM @vardaan_023 **YOUTUBE** @vardaan_023 **SPOTIFY** Listen

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

FROM EMOTION TO ART

What I Couldn't Say

H R KHAI · SELF-TAUGHT MUSIC ARTIST

The songwriter behind 'Closer' and 'Hope' — a law student by discipline, a music-maker by need — on why some feelings can only be said in melody.

Q How did your musical journey begin?

I started making music because it became the best way to express what I couldn't always say out loud. What began as writing lyrics and creating melodies has grown into a passion for making songs that connect with people. I'm still learning, evolving, and trying to create music that feels honest and real.

Q What inspired you to start writing and releasing your own songs?

What inspired me was the feeling that some emotions can't be fully expressed through words alone. Music became my way of telling stories, capturing memories, and turning personal experiences into something others could connect with. I wanted to create songs that feel honest and relatable—whether they're about love, heartbreak, hope, or finding yourself. Releasing my music is my way of sharing a part of who I am and hopefully helping someone else feel understood.



H R KHAI

PHOTOGRAPH · H R KHAI

> *"I started making music because it became the best way to express what I couldn't always say out loud."*
>
> H R KHAI · ON FINDING A VOICE

THE PROCESS

Q How has your sound and creative process evolved since you started?

When I first started, I was focused on learning how to turn my emotions into songs. I experimented with different sounds, styles, and songwriting techniques to find what felt most authentic. As I've grown, I've become more intentional with every part of the process—from writing lyrics to choosing the production and atmosphere of each track. Today, my music is more personal, cinematic, and emotionally driven. I spend more time refining melodies, creating mood, and making sure every song tells a story. I'm still evolving as an artist, but my goal has stayed the same: to make honest music that people can connect with and remember.

Q Describe your setup — the most essential item in your creative process.

My setup is simple but focused. I like to keep my workspace clean and free of distractions so I can stay fully immersed in the creative process. Most ideas begin with a melody or lyric, and from there I build the song piece by piece, experimenting with sounds until everything feels right. The most essential part isn't a single piece of expensive gear—it's my laptop. That's where I write, record, produce demos, and shape the overall vision of each song. It's the place where ideas turn into finished tracks, making it the heart of my creative process.



THE ARTIST H R Khai — away from the laptop where the songs get made.

Q A pivotal moment that shaped you as an artist?

A pivotal moment for me was realizing that I didn't have to make music to fit trends—I could make music that reflected my own experiences and emotions. That changed the way I approached songwriting. Instead of trying to sound like someone else, I started focusing on telling honest stories that felt real to me. Another important step was having the confidence to release my music publicly. Sharing something so personal was intimidating, but seeing people connect with it reminded me why I started making music in the first place.

> *"Authenticity creates the strongest connection — that's the mindset I carry into every song I make.*

THE SONGS THAT CARRY IT

'Closer' · 'Hope'

"The goal wasn't to explain every detail — it was to capture the feeling."

THE FEELING

Q How does the environment around you influence your music?

The environment around me has a big influence on my music. The places I've lived, the people I've met, and the moments I've experienced all find their way into my songs. Quiet nights, busy streets, cafés, long drives, and even the feeling of leaving a place behind inspire the emotions I write about. I try to capture those feelings in a way that lets listeners create their own connection to the music. Every environment carries a different mood, and I enjoy turning those moods into melodies and stories that feel honest and cinematic.

Q How does your cultural background shape the music?

My cultural background is a quiet but important influence on my music. It shapes the way I see the world, the stories I tell, and the emotions I express. Even when my songs have a modern pop or alternative sound, the values, memories, and experiences I've grown up with naturally find their way into the lyrics and atmosphere. I want my music to feel universal while still carrying a part of where I come from. That balance allows me to stay true to my roots while creating songs that listeners from different backgrounds can connect with.

HOW A SONG BEGINS

Emotion first

"I don't try to write the perfect song — I just write honestly."

> *"I want my music to feel universal while still carrying a part of where I come from.*

Q You've described music as personal therapy. How do you translate a difficult emotion into a track like 'Closer' or 'Hope'?

For me, songwriting starts with an emotion rather than a melody. When I'm going through something difficult, I don't try to write the perfect song—I just write honestly. I'll usually begin with a single line or thought that captures what I'm feeling in that moment, then build the lyrics around that emotion. With songs like Closer or Hope, the goal wasn't to explain every detail of my experience. It was to capture the feeling in a way that listeners could relate to through their own lives. Once the lyrics feel genuine, I shape the production to match the emotion—whether that's soft piano, ambient synths, warm guitars, or space in the mix that lets the vocals breathe. By the time the song is finished, it feels like I've turned something heavy into something meaningful. If a listener hears it and feels understood or a little less alone, then the song has done exactly what I hoped it would.

"By the time the song is finished, it feels like I've turned something heavy into something meaningful."

H R KHAI · ON SONGWRITING AS THERAPY

AT A GLANCE

MEDIUM	Songwriting & production	SOUND	Cinematic, emotional pop / alternative
KNOWN FOR	'Closer' · 'Hope'	STUDIO	Laptop-based; clean, distraction-free
ALSO	Law student	METHOD	Emotion first, melody around it

TWO LIVES

Q Juggling music and a law degree is unique. How does your academic discipline shape your music career?

Studying law has taught me discipline, patience, and the importance of thinking long-term—qualities that have been just as valuable in my music career. Balancing academics with music means I've had to manage my time carefully, stay organized, and remain committed even when things get challenging. Law has also given me a better understanding of the business side of the industry, from contracts and copyright to protecting my work as an independent artist. While music is where I express my emotions and creativity, my legal education helps me approach my career with a clear strategy and make informed decisions. For me, the two paths complement each other—one challenges my analytical thinking, the other gives me the freedom to create.

TWO PATHS, ONE ARTIST

Law + Music

"Together they've helped shape me into a more well-rounded artist."

Q What was a fun or unexpected moment during a session?

One of the most memorable moments was how naturally everything came together. Some of the best shots and creative ideas weren't planned—they happened in between takes when everyone was relaxed and just enjoying the process. Those unexpected moments gave the session a genuine energy, and they ended up becoming some of my favorite parts of the project.



BETWEEN TAKES The unplanned moments, Khai says, become his favourite parts of a project.

> *"Some of the best shots and creative ideas weren't planned — they happened in between takes.*

Q One piece of advice for another self-taught, independent artist?

Don't wait for everything to be perfect before you start. Create consistently, release your work, and treat every project as a chance to learn. Focus on improving your songwriting and developing your own sound instead of chasing trends or comparing yourself to others.

> *"Progress comes from showing up, staying patient, and letting your authenticity speak through your music."*
>
> H R KHAI

CONNECT WITH H R KHAI

STREAMING Spotify · YouTube · Apple Music · Deezer & other platforms

IN CONVERSATION · CINEMATOGRAPHY

Films With My Father

SOVION · CINEMATOGRAPHER

A teenager who learned to see by watching films with his father — now telling whole stories in light and shadow, shot frame by frame on a phone.

Q What first sparked your interest in cinematography and set you on this creative path?

It all started when I was a kid, watching films with my father — Satyajit Ray, Harry Potter, Disney, DreamWorks. I've loved telling stories since I was in the third grade, and somewhere along the way, I found photography through watching my father and uncle. That became my way of expressing stories in unique visual languages. Christopher Nolan, Satyajit Ray, Denis Villeneuve, Srijit Mukherjee, Martin Scorsese, and Steven Spielberg are my biggest inspirations. I watch their films along with behind-the-scenes content and interviews, learning as much as I can. Photography is now my daily habit, though I rarely share it on social media — I'm a bit shy and still trying to figure out how the algorithm works!

AT A GLANCE

STAGE	Just finished 12th grade
CAMERA	Infinix Note 40X phone · father's 2015–16 DSLR
STUDIES	Deakins, Hoytema, Fraser, Arkapaw
INSPIRED BY	Nolan, Ray, Villeneuve, Scorsese, Spielberg, Mukherjee
METHOD	Stories told in frames alone



STILL FRAME Sovion



LIGHT THROUGH THE LEAVES

FRAMES WITHOUT DIALOGUE

Q Can you recall a specific moment or project that made you realize cinematography was your calling?

There was a moment while I was writing a screenplay for one of my short films. I was about to take a rehearsal shot, and that's when it hit me: I have a deep connection with cinematography because I can tell stories with frames alone. Even dialogue isn't necessary to describe a scene — the visual language speaks for itself. That realization was powerful and confirmed this was my path.



ONE FRAME, WHOLE STORY Sovion

Q What was the mood or story you aimed to convey in that short video clip you shared?

I had just rewatched Interstellar and Oppenheimer, so I was in that contemplative headspace. One afternoon, while waiting for my father in the garage, I noticed a beam of light coming through a small hole. I casually tried to capture it, and this clip is the result — it felt like a quiet, cinematic moment where the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

SCAN TO WATCH

A beam of light through the garage — from Sovion's story.

Q Walk us through one of your most visually stunning shots — what techniques or lighting did you use to achieve that look?

It was a daytime scene with two siblings playing by themselves, and I was trying to capture a simple moment. Then I noticed how the natural light filtering through the leaves was creating a dramatic, almost cinematic atmosphere. The interplay of shadows and sunlight added depth and emotion. While filming, I managed to grab a few still frames that really captured that magic.



LIGHT & LEAVES Sovion

> *"I can tell stories with frames alone — even dialogue isn't necessary.*

Q How has your approach to visual storytelling evolved since you first started?

I'm still learning, honestly. I look up to the greats — Hoyte van Hoytema, Roger Deakins, Greig Fraser, Autumn Durald Arkapaw — and I constantly study their work. My goal is to be among them one day. Every frame I shoot teaches me something new, and I'm trying to absorb as much as I can from their mastery of light, composition, and emotion.

Q What equipment or gear do you rely on most for your cinematography work?

Right now, I'm a student who just finished 12th grade, and I only have a mobile phone — the Infinix Note 40X — to shoot videos. I do have access to my father's DSLR, but it's from 2015-16, so the video quality and features are quite outdated. Still, I've learned to work with what I have, and it's pushed me to be more creative with limited resources.

WORKING WITH LIGHT

Q What was the most challenging aspect of setting up that behind-the-scenes shot?

The road was busy, and I had to be incredibly patient to get the right frame. There were constant disturbances — people, vehicles, noise — but that taught me the value of waiting for the perfect moment when everything aligns.



BEHIND THE FRAME Sovion on location

Q Why is this particular shooting location or set special to you?

Whenever I shoot something, each location tells me something different. This one in particular has a way of revealing new perspectives every time I frame a shot — it's never the same story twice.

> *"By observing how light falls and changes through the day, I let it guide my compositions.*

Q How did you work with the available light to capture that mood in your natural-light shot?

I've learned to work with what I don't have — and maybe that pushes me to rely more on natural elements. By observing how light falls and changes throughout the day, I let it guide my compositions. It's a meditative process that forces me to be patient and attentive.



SHADOW STUDY Sovion

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this from Sovion's story.

"It felt like a quiet, cinematic moment where the ordinary becomes extraordinary."

SOVION

CONNECT WITH SOVION

INSTAGRAM @sovionfilms **YOUTUBE** @sovion49

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Drama & Depth

TUHIN BHATTACHARJEE · PHOTOGRAPHER

Sparked by Daboo Ratnani, Tuhin Bhattacharjee has traded bright, standard frames for low-key light — a moody, high-contrast eye that turns an ordinary moment into a cinematic story.

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

My journey in photography began with inspiration from Daboo Ratnani Sir. His work motivated me to pick up a camera and start exploring the art of capturing moments.

Q When did you decide to pursue photography seriously?

It was the support from my family members that made me realize I wanted to pursue photography seriously. Their encouragement gave me the confidence to take it beyond a hobby and treat it as a professional path.

THE AESTHETIC

Low-Key

"lighting to create drama and depth."

AT A GLANCE

INSPIRATION	Daboo Ratnani
SIGNATURE	Cinematic, low-key, high-contrast
SUBJECTS	Wildlife · Nature · Portraits
PRACTICE	Independent · freelance



TUHIN BHATTACHARJEE

PHOTOGRAPH · TUHIN BHATTACHARJEE

THE CRAFT

Q How has your photography style evolved over the years?

When I first started, my style was all about capturing raw, candid moments using whatever light was available. It was experimental and vibrant. Over the years, as I mastered lighting and composition, my work evolved into something much more intentional. Today, I've moved away from standard, brightly lit shots toward a much more cinematic, moody, and high-contrast aesthetic.

Q What do you enjoy most about being a freelance photographer?

Working free minded without any hesitation is what I enjoy most. Being a freelancer means you aren't bound by a rigid corporate style guide. You get to build your own distinct visual identity, call the shots on the aesthetic, and watch a personal brand grow from a passion project into a professional reality.

> *I love using low-key lighting to create drama and depth.*



WILDLIFE A close-up look at the intricate details and fierce architecture of nature's tiny warriors. Shot with an ultra-shallow depth of field.

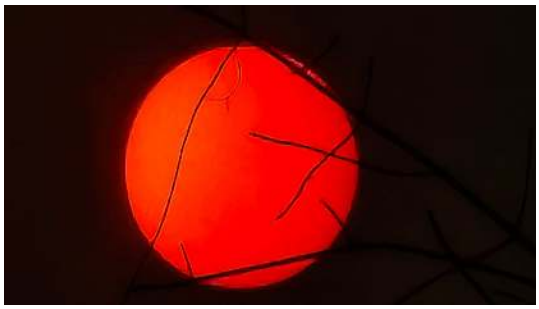


THE SHOOT I clicked this photo in Lakme School of Makeup.



MACRO Another of nature's tiny warriors, held in ultra-shallow focus as the light falls away behind it.

IN THE FIELD



EDITED VS. UNEDITED The editing is necessary for all clicks. It gives more perfection, and colour grading makes it more attractive.



SKY IS NOT THE LIMIT

THE CHALLENGE Wildlife photography requires tracking erratic, high-speed movement. Keeping a razor-sharp focus on the textures of the feathers while the birds are in full motion demands immense precision and quick reflexes.



NATURE Colour, light and the shallow focus that pull one detail out of the frame.

> *"Turning an ordinary frame into a powerful visual story."*
>
> **TUHIN BHATTACHARJEE**

CONNECT WITH TUHIN BHATTACHARJEE

INSTAGRAM @pixel_tuhin

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

AGED 16

First Milky Way

DHAIRYA DESAI · 16 · PHOTOGRAPHER

Ten years old and locked down, he picked up a curiosity that never let go. By sixteen he had already caught the Milky Way — on a phone. A conversation in four frames: the night sky, the mountains, the street and the stone.

Q How did your journey into photography begin?

I'm a 16-year-old photographer with a deep interest in capturing moments, places, and stories through my lens. My journey began in 2020, during the Covid lockdown, when I was 10 years old. What started as curiosity quickly turned into a passion, and since then, I haven't looked back.

> *What started as curiosity quickly turned into a passion, and since then, I haven't looked back.*



DHAIRYA DESAI, 16

PHOTOGRAPH · DHAIRYA DESAI

AT A GLANCE

BEGAN	2020, during the Covid lockdown — aged 10
CAMERA	Sony A6400 with a Sony 18–135mm lens (his own since 2024)
GENRES	Astrophotography · Landscape · Street · Heritage
SHOT IN	Little Rann of Kutch · Pahalgam · Champaner · Sursagar Lake
FIRST FRAME	The Milky Way — captured in 2024, on a phone

2024 · on a phone

He captured his very first Milky Way image in 2024 — not with the Sony, but with a phone. "It amazed me."

THE WILD — NIGHT SKY & MOUNTAINS

Q How has your experience grown across astro, landscapes, street and history?

I had my first real experience using a camera in 2022, and in 2024, I got a camera of my own. I currently shoot with a Sony A6400 paired with a Sony 18-135mm lens.

Q Tell us about your best astrophotography image and the story behind it.

This photograph was taken during a night at the Little Rann of Kutch, beneath one of the clearest skies I had ever seen. Watching the Milky Way become visible above the empty landscape was unforgettable; it was one of those moments when everything around me felt completely still. I wanted the photograph to connect the vastness of the night sky with something familiar on Earth, so I used the car and red light trails as the foreground. Creating the glowing outline required patience and several attempts, but seeing the final frame made the entire process worthwhile. It remains my favourite astrophotography image because it captures not only what the sky looked like, but also the excitement and wonder I felt while standing beneath it.

THE LOCATION

Little Rann of Kutch

"Beneath one of the clearest skies I had ever seen."



ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY A car traced in red light trails, set against the Milky Way over the empty salt desert.

> *Watching the Milky Way become visible above the empty landscape was unforgettable.*



LANDSCAPE The summit still glowing gold while the forest below has fallen into shadow.

Q What's the story behind your favourite landscape photo?

I captured this photograph in Pahalgam as the last sunlight of the evening fell across the snow-covered mountain peaks. Most of the landscape had already entered shadow, while the summit was still glowing with a warm golden light, creating a beautiful contrast between the illuminated snow and the darker forest below. The light lasted only briefly, so the photograph felt like capturing a moment that was disappearing in front of me. What I love most about this image is its calmness—the mountains felt powerful and dramatic, yet the entire scene was incredibly peaceful.

THE STREET & THE STONE

Q Can you share a street photography shot that tells a story?

This photograph was taken near Sursagar Lake, where a large group of pigeons suddenly took flight while others remained scattered across the road. I was drawn to the movement, the long shadows and the contrast between the chaotic birds and the everyday activity continuing around them. I chose black and white because it removed the distractions of colour and allowed the shapes, light and movement to become the main focus. The moment happened very quickly, so the image was largely about observing the scene and reacting at the right instant. To me, it captures the energy of the city—unplanned, crowded and constantly changing, yet capable of producing a strangely beautiful moment.

> *"It captures the energy of the city — unplanned, crowded and constantly changing.*



SURSAGAR LAKE · IN BLACK & WHITE

STREET A flock scatters over the road; shot in black & white so shape, light and movement carry the frame.



CHAMPANER · UNESCO HERITAGE

Q What historical place did you capture, and what was it like?

This image was taken during a photo walk at a place called Champaner, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Q What drives you to explore these different genres?

The curiosity to learn new things drives me to explore different genres of photography.

Q Walk us through the editing techniques you applied to your photos.

I am learning editing on Lightroom. I have just played around with the exposure, saturation, and the overall colour of the image.



ONE RED AMONG THE YELLOW

FROM THE SERIES A lone red bloom in a field of yellow — colour work learned frame by frame in Lightroom.

"Seeing the final frame made the entire process worthwhile."

DHAIRYA DESAI · SIXTEEN

CONNECT WITH DHAIRYA DESAI

INSTAGRAM @personal.desai **WEBSITE** ddclicks.com

IN CONVERSATION · CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Thoughts Made Visible

NITHYA SAI SRI YERRA · CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHER

A high-school photographer who turns feeling and physics into single frames — translating memory, nostalgia and even the ideas of science into images built to make you pause and think.

Q How did your journey in conceptual photography begin?

Ever since I was a child, I have been drawn to creative storytelling through movies and visual art. As I grew older, I wanted a way to express my own ideas and emotions, and photography became that outlet. Conceptual photography especially appealed to me because it allows me to transform thoughts, memories and abstract concepts into meaningful visual narratives. It felt like the perfect medium to bring my inner world to life.

Q What was the first concept you ever photographed, and how did it feel?

The first conceptual project I ever captured was titled Reminiscence. Through this project, I explored themes of memory and nostalgia while incorporating the beauty of Indian architecture. It was the first time I transformed an idea into a visual narrative, and seeing the final images come together was a truly rewarding experience. Creating Reminiscence filled me with a sense of pride and encouraged me to continue exploring conceptual photography as a form of self-expression.



NITHYA SAI SRI YERRA

NITHYA · AT A GLANCE

MEDIUM	Conceptual photography — ideas over aesthetics
SHOOTING SINCE	9th grade; still in high school
FIRST SERIES	'Reminiscence' — memory, nostalgia & Indian architecture
INSPIRED BY	Human emotion & science, particularly physics
METHOD	Natural light, real locations, everyday objects

EMOTION + PHYSICS = A FRAME

HER METHOD

"Photography as a bridge between creativity and intellectual exploration."

MEMORY & EMOTION



FROM 'REMINISCE'

THE HANDS Rather than a face, the frame centres an elderly woman's hands — age, experience and a lifetime of memory in warm sunlight.

Q Tell us about a photo that represents your most iconic conceptual work and the story behind it.

This photograph is part of my album Reminisce, a project that explores memory, time and the stories carried through everyday moments. Rather than focusing on a person's face, the image centers on an elderly woman's hands, where signs of age, experience and a lifetime of memories become visible. The warm sunlight, worn wooden boat and traditional clothing create a sense of nostalgia and reflection. Together, these elements suggest that memories are not only held in our minds but are also reflected in the marks, objects and moments that accompany us throughout life. Through this image, I aim to capture the quiet beauty of lived experience and the passage of time.

> *"Memories are not only held in our minds — they are reflected in the marks, objects and moments that accompany us throughout life.*

Q What was the creative process or challenge in that behind-the-scenes shot?

As a high school student, I do not have access to a professional studio or dedicated photography setup. Most of my work is created using available natural environments, everyday objects and natural lighting. For this photograph, the setting was a real-life location rather than a constructed set, as I wanted to capture an authentic moment and genuine emotions. My approach focuses on observation, composition and storytelling rather than elaborate equipment or staged environments.

THE SERIES

'Reminisce'

Memory, time and nostalgia — her ongoing exploration of the stories carried through everyday moments.

IN THE FRAME · READING THE PHOTOGRAPH

THE HANDS	Age, experience and a lifetime of memories, made visible	WARM SUNLIGHT	A sense of nostalgia and reflection
WORN WOODEN BOAT	The quiet passage of time	TRADITIONAL DRESS	The beauty of lived experience

THE EVOLVING EYE

Q How has your approach to conceptual photography evolved over the years?

As a high school student, my journey in conceptual photography is still in its early stages, but it has already evolved significantly. I have been interested in photography since 9th grade, and with each project I have developed a stronger ability to identify meaningful concepts and translate them into visual stories. In the beginning, I focused mainly on capturing aesthetically pleasing images. Over time, however, I became more interested in the ideas and emotions that photographs can communicate. This shift has helped me approach photography more thoughtfully, paying greater attention to symbolism, composition and storytelling. As I continue learning and experimenting, I find myself creating concepts with more depth and executing them more effectively, allowing my work to become increasingly intentional and expressive.

Q What inspires the themes and ideas behind your conceptual images?

The themes and ideas behind my conceptual photography are primarily inspired by human emotions and the desire to express experiences that are often difficult to put into words. I am fascinated by how photography can visually communicate feelings, memories and personal reflections, allowing viewers to connect with an image on a deeper level. At the same time, I enjoy exploring ideas beyond emotions. I am curious about the world around me and often draw inspiration from concepts in science, particularly physics. I find it exciting to translate abstract ideas and theories into visual narratives, using photography as a bridge between creativity and intellectual exploration. Whether I am expressing an emotion or interpreting a scientific concept, my goal is to create images that encourage thought and spark curiosity.



WARMER TONES Colour grading tuned for a nostalgic mood — edits kept subtle so the emotion, not the effect, leads.

Q Walk us through the editing techniques you used in that before-and-after example.

For this image, I used color grading to enhance the mood and atmosphere. I adjusted the tones to create a warmer, more nostalgic feel that complements the conceptual theme. The goal was to subtly emphasize the emotional quality of the photograph without making the edits too obvious.

THE CURIOSITY

Abstract theory, made visible

She reads physics the way she reads feeling.

> *"It felt like the perfect medium to bring my inner world to life."*
>
> NITHYA SAI SRI YERRA

CONNECT WITH NITHYA SAI SRI YERRA

BEHANCE @nithyasaisri **LINKEDIN** nithya sai sri yerra

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

Full Circle From Goa

AKU-KO · MUSIC PRODUCER · GOA

He left the DAW behind, chased dance floors through Goa, and came full circle to making exactly what he wants — eleven albums, each born in a different city, from a producer who works entirely on the go.



AKU-KO

Q What sparked your interest in music production?

As far back as I can remember, I always wanted to make music. I wrote songs for my band while growing up and started writing music pieces in college. However, music production caught my interest in 2019 when I was introduced to DAWs like Logic Pro. I have been a producer ever since.

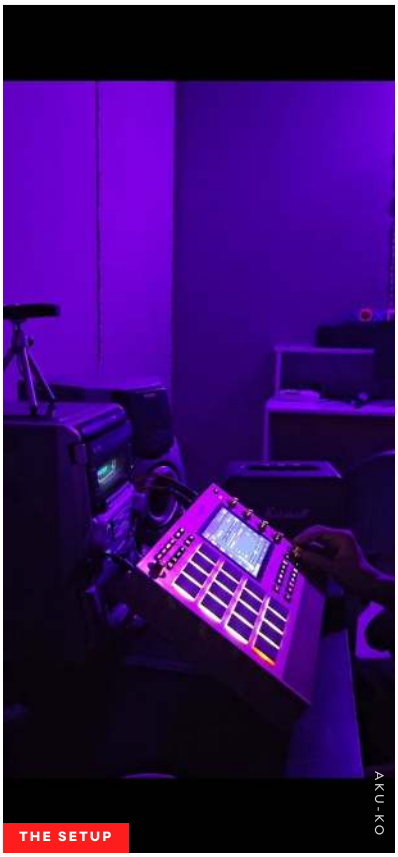


FULL CIRCLE Eleven albums, each made in a different place — Chennai, Bangalore, Nainital and Goa.

THE CIRCUIT

Q How has your production evolved since you started?

It has come full circle now. I started off making what I wanted, regardless of genre. Then I got into the experimental scene for a few years. In 2025, I was performing live electronic music in Goa, so I was totally into dance music. Now, I am humbled by experience and have gone back to making what I wanted, non-genre specific. My latest album, 'Spoken Words for a Distracted Generation,' is a good example of that.



THE SETUP

AKU-KO

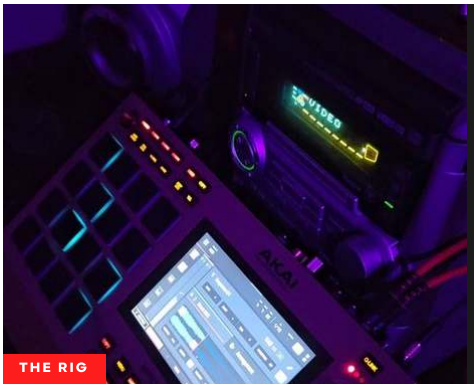
Q Your studio, wherever it happens to be — what does it take?

I usually make music on the go. A nice headphone and my MPC is all I need. The places where I make music are what work for me. That's why all of my previous 11 albums are different from each other—they have all been made in different places. Some albums were made in Chennai, some in Bangalore, some in Nainital, my hometown, and some in Goa. However, when I'm at home, I have a treated room and I use old Aiwa analog speakers for production.

Q Which piece of gear is essential to how you work?

After using DAWs like Ableton and Logic Pro over the years, I felt they were restricting the human side and feel of the tracks. I got an AKAI MPC LIVE 2 in 2023 and have been using that ever since, both for live performance and production. I have been DAW-free since '23.

> *"It has come full circle now — I've gone back to making exactly what I wanted."*



THE RIG

DAW-FREE SINCE '23

AKAI MPC Live 2

The machine that gave his tracks the human feel the software was taking away.

HEARD ON · RADIO ALHARA

A track from his small home setup — played on the streets of Palestine.

THE CIRCUIT · ELEVEN ALBUMS, MADE ACROSS

NAINITAL
Hometown

BANGALORE
Studio years

CHENNAI
Amxx · Aravind

GOA
Live sets · now

FULL CIRCLE

Q The track that best shows your signature sound?

It's sort of a mix of quite a few styles I have picked up over the years. I have also been collaborating with a lot of other musicians. This one has been with an amazing singer-songwriter, Amxx, in Chennai right now. I'm glad he decided to share his first upload with me.

Q A mix you're proud of — what made the difference?

Even though the tracks are different, the difference in the mixes is pretty apparent. I have started working with a very talented and hardworking mixing engineer, Aravind from Chennai. He is a top-tier industrial mixing engineer and a producer himself, and working with him has taken my mixes to the next level, I believe.

Q The track on your desk right now — how does it feel?

Energetic. Suitable for listening in a car at night for an introspective journey.

Q That studio beat session — what were you chasing?

It's just a hard techno session I was having fun with. This is a part of what I picked up in Goa. Just trying to keep the drive up using simple sample sounds.

AKU-KO · AT A GLANCE

BASE	Goa
RIG	AKAI MPC Live 2 · DAW-free since '23
AT HOME	Treated room · old Aiwa analog speakers
HEARD ON	Radio Alhara — the streets of Palestine
MADE WITH	Amxx · Aravind (mix), Chennai

> *Suitable for listening in a car at night — for an introspective journey.*

SCAN TO LISTEN

His signature sound — with Amxx.

SCAN TO LISTEN

The track in progress — made for a night drive.

SCAN TO WATCH

A hard-techno session from Goa.

"To make what you want. Keep your expectations to a minimum. Remember, you 'get' to make music—embrace it."

AKU-KO · THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON

CONNECT WITH AKU-KO

INSTAGRAM @trueakuko WEBSITE aku-ko.bandcamp.com SPOTIFY Listen

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

POETRY → PERFORMANCE

Speech Faster Than Thought

GABRIEL CHARLES GONEPOGU · SINGER-SONGWRITER & RAPPER

It began with poetry and a church choir. Then, in 2017, an NF record lit the fuse — and Gabriel Charles Gonepogu found that rap could finally keep pace with a mind that always ran faster than his mouth.



GABRIEL CHARLES GONEPOGU

PHOTOGRAPH · A BROKEN SOUL

Q How did your journey as a singer-songwriter and rapper begin?

It all started with poetry, actually. I never imagined I'd become a musician. As a kid, I was very active in my church choir, writing Sunday School songs. But it wasn't until 2017, when I heard NF's album *Perception*, that I felt compelled to start writing raps. My speech always seemed faster than my thoughts, so rapping felt like a natural fit. I studied YouTube tutorials on how to rap, and for my college fest, I performed the fast part of "Rap God" at 0.25x speed, then 0.5x, then 1.0x, and finally at 1.25x. Later that same night, I sang Ed Sheeran's "Perfect." And that's how it all began.

THE RAP GOD RAMP · COLLEGE FEST

0.25× → 0.5× → 1.0× → 1.25×

…then, that same night, he sang Ed Sheeran's "Perfect."

> *My speech always seemed faster than my thoughts, so rapping felt like a natural fit.*

FROM POETRY TO PERFORMANCE

> *“A calm feeling washed over me, and I just poured my heart out on stage.”*
>
> GABRIEL CHARLES GONEPOGU · ON HIS BREAKOUT SET

Q When was the first time you performed on stage, and how did it feel?

As I mentioned, the college fest was my first stage. My first live performance outside of that was at a newly opened cafe in Mysore. I reached out to them for a gig, and my payment was a free meal that day. I performed a few covers, but only about five families showed up that night. I was a bit dejected, but I kept going. Among those families was a little girl. After my set ended, she came up to me with a flower and said, "Thank you for singing for us." I still remember getting goosebumps—it was such a meaningful moment for my first live performance outside college.

> “
>
> *She came up to me with a flower and said, ‘Thank you for singing for us.’*

Q How has your experience grown over the years since you started making music?

In many ways, it's taught me patience and helped me recognize my privilege. I still work a day job while pursuing music, even though many others in the independent circuit do this full-time. It's taught me that even when people have different life experiences, we can still come together through music. I think that's something truly beautiful.

Q Explain the vision behind this visual concept.

The blurry imagery represents the soul, which is in a way broken because of life. The entire project is based on faded imagery and broken moments.

Q Walk us through your most electrifying live performance.

It was my first time performing in Bangalore, at a rap cypher hosted by Agniverse. There were so many rappers there, and I was nervous. But when my turn came, a calm feeling washed over me, and I just poured my heart out on stage. The audience started off sitting and nodding, but as I got into it, they came up front and began jumping and dancing along. At the end, people came up to me and said, "Dude, I generally don't jump at shows, but your performance made me." That day remains an awesome memory.

AT A GLANCE

ORIGIN	Church choir · Sunday School songs
TURNING POINT	NF, “Perception” (2017)
FIRST STAGE	College fest — “Rap God”
FIRST GIG	A café in Mysore, paid in a meal
BREAKOUT	Agniverse rap cypher, Bangalore
DEBUT ALBUM	Virtual Tapes Production, Bangalore
PRODUCER	Pratap — voice & tone
DAY JOB	Still working one while pursuing music

> “
>
> *Dude, I generally don't jump at shows, but your performance made me.*

THE BROKEN ALBUM

“The entire album is about accepting your brokenness.”

GABRIEL CHARLES GONEPOGU · ON HIS DEBUT RECORD

Q What's the story behind your unreleased track or demo?

The song is the title track from my upcoming debut album (the title is not yet revealed). The entire album is about accepting your brokenness—how being perfect isn't possible on our own, how it's okay to feel lonely but to understand you're not alone in that, and how to still carry on with hope.

Q What does this particular lyric mean to you?

I think it's the defining lyric for this generation. No one truly knows another person's darkest moments, yet we often act as if we do. And even in a crowd full of people, we can feel alone. These lyrics fully encapsulate that feeling.

> *“Even in a crowd full of people, we can feel alone.*

Q Tell us about the gear or environment you use for creating music.

I recorded the entire album at Virtual Tapes Production in Bangalore. The producer and engineer, Pratap, helped me hone my voice and shape the overall tone for this album. The audio production took about a month to finish.

Q What is the most important lesson you've learned in your music career so far?

You're not competing with anyone else—just yourself. Try to be a better musician than you were yesterday. Keep grinding, not for fame, but for your own satisfaction. When you release something, even if only a few people listen, those few people matter.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this from Gabriel Charles Gonepogu's story.

“In a world full of fake bots, fake streams, and fake views, be authentic.”

GABRIEL CHARLES GONEPOGU

CONNECT WITH GABRIEL CHARLES GONEPOGU

INSTAGRAM @thisisgabrielmusic YOUTUBE @thisisgabrielmusic

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

FIELD LOG · LOOK TWICE

Less Gear, More Eye

NIKHIL · PHOTOGRAPHER

Self-taught and armed with nothing more than a phone, Nikhil learned to look twice at ordinary life — chasing the honest, unforced moments most of us walk straight past.

Q How did your journey into photography begin?

My journey into photography began when I started capturing everyday moments on my phone. Over time, I realized I enjoyed preserving memories and telling stories through images, which motivated me to learn more and improve my skills. It was less about having professional gear and more about developing an eye for the stories unfolding in ordinary life. That initial curiosity eventually grew into a dedicated passion for visual storytelling.

Q When did you first feel like a 'creator' and not just a dreamer?

I think it was when I actually took my idea and turned it into something real—whether it was a project, a piece of work, or even a small step forward. That moment made me realize I wasn't just dreaming anymore, I was creating. It's a powerful shift in mindset, moving from imagining possibilities to actively shaping them. That first tangible result, however small, gave me the confidence to keep building and exploring my creative voice.

> *I wasn't just dreaming anymore — I was creating.*

THE TOOLKIT

One phone. No gear.

Just an eye for the story unfolding in front of it.



NIKHIL

PHOTOGRAPH · NIKHIL

A PATIENT EYE

FRAME № 01



SIGNATURE FRAME Two squirrels, approaching — calm, curious, and in no hurry.

Q What experience has most shaped your growth as a photographer?

One of the most shaping experiences in my journey as a photographer was when I started consistently shooting outside my comfort zone. Early on, I focused only on subjects I felt confident in, but over time I challenged myself to explore unfamiliar styles and environments. That process taught me patience, adaptability, and how to see light and composition in new ways. It also helped me understand that growth comes from experimentation and being willing to make mistakes, which is a lesson that applies far beyond photography.

> *Growth comes from experimentation — and from being willing to make mistakes.*

Q What is the core philosophy behind your work?

I focus on creating work that feels honest and meaningful. My core philosophy is to express ideas in a way that connects with people emotionally while staying true to my own perspective. I believe the most powerful images are those that feel genuine, whether they capture a fleeting expression or a quiet, everyday scene. That pursuit of emotional truth is what guides my creative decisions.

Q Which image best represents your signature style?

This photo shows two squirrels approaching me in a calm, curious way. I see it as a reflection of how I approach my work—patient, observant, and able to build trust over time. It conveys my ability to create a comfortable environment. The quiet connection and natural composition are hallmarks of the authentic, unforced moments I strive to capture.

THE METHOD

WORKS ON	A phone
APPROACH	Observe first, then shoot
LOOKS FOR	Small, overlooked details
VALUES	Honest over staged

№ 02



№ 03



FIELD NOTE A custard apple on the branch — the small, overlooked detail that makes a scene feel real.

IN THE FIELD · WHAT'S UNSPOKEN

FRAME № 04



A QUIET STREET MOMENT

NARRATIVE A moment that tells a deeper story beyond what's immediately visible — the power lies in what's unspoken.

Q What's the story behind this narrative image that speaks without words?

This image captures a moment that tells a deeper story beyond what's immediately visible. It reflects a specific situation where emotions, environment, and timing all came together. The scene represents a theme of quiet observation and connection, and I wanted to highlight how even ordinary moments can carry a strong narrative. The power lies in what's unspoken—the mood, the atmosphere, and the space for the viewer to find their own meaning within the frame.

Q How do you keep an authentic, human perspective?

I focus on capturing genuine moments rather than forcing compositions. I pay attention to small, often overlooked details —expressions, interactions, and imperfections—that make a scene feel real. I also try to stay present and observe before shooting, so the image reflects an honest perspective rather than something staged or overly edited. It's about being a patient observer, allowing the story to unfold naturally instead of trying to direct it.





NIKHIL — ORDINARY LIGHT, LOOKED AT TWICE

IN MOTION

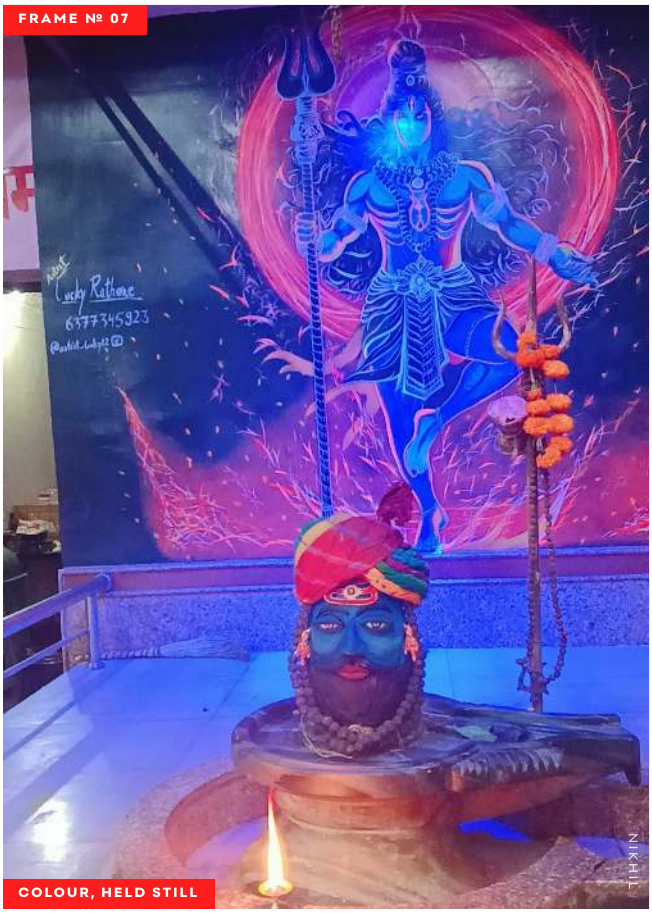
Q **Walk us through the decisions behind a recent edit.**

I aimed to create a clean and engaging flow, so I focused on pacing and visual consistency. Creatively, I chose cuts and transitions that match the mood and highlight key moments. Technically, I used precise trimming, color correction, and audio balancing to keep everything smooth and professional. The goal was to enhance the narrative without overpowering the raw emotion of the original footage, ensuring the final piece felt polished yet authentic.

Q **Which moment are you most proud of capturing?**

This moment is significant to me because it represents the turning point where my ideas started coming together into a clear direction. It reflects the effort, experimentation, and problem-solving that went into the work, making it an important part of my creative journey. The pride comes from overcoming the challenges to capture something that truly felt like a breakthrough.

> *Enhance the narrative — without overpowering the raw emotion of the footage.*



FIELD NOTE Even a festival's noise holds one quiet, held frame.

SCAN TO WATCH

SCAN TO WATCH

SCAN TO WATCH

THREE CLIPS FROM NIKHIL'S STORY — SCAN TO WATCH THE FOOTAGE HE EDITS

"The most powerful images are those that feel genuine — whether they capture a fleeting expression or a quiet, everyday scene."

NIKHIL

CONNECT WITH NIKHIL

INSTAGRAM @Unique.thinker_03

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

FRAMES THAT STOP TIME

One Image, Lasting

SHREE MADHUKAR JAMDAR · LANDSCAPE & TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHER

From the deodar forests of Kashmir to a razor-edged tower in Colaba, Shree Madhukar Jamdar frames the places the rest of us only pass through — and, for a single moment, stops time.

Q What sparked your passion for photography, and how did you get started?

Photography, for me, started with the realization that a single image can have a lasting impact. It captures a moment that would otherwise disappear forever. I was influenced by some truly great captures I came across, and that changed how I saw the world around me. My line of work involves a lot of travel, and that became my biggest inspiration. Over time I started shooting everything that felt interesting in a frame, be it aerial shots of clouds, architecture, food, culture, nature, abstract details. No fixed genre, just moments worth preserving. At the end of the day, photography is one of the few things that genuinely stops time. That's what keeps me hooked.

FIELD NOTES

ORIGIN	Jammu & Kashmir, on 35mm film — the 1990s
SHOOTS	Landscape · Architecture · Aerial · Abstract · Food · Culture
VANTAGE	From flights — coastlines & cities, scale & geometry from above
ON THE MAP	Ladakh · Kolkata · Trivandrum · Colaba
SIGNATURE	Framing — where the intention lives



SHREE MADHUKAR JAMDAR

PHOTOGRAPH · SHREE MADHUKAR JAMDAR

THE EYE

Q When was the first time you realized you had an eye for capturing landscapes or architecture?

I remember going to Jammu & Kashmir with my family back in the 90s. We took some photos on a 35mm film, of the endless green plains, tall pine and deodar trees, it felt like heaven. Whenever I opened that album later, those photos took me straight back there. That's when I truly understood the power of a photograph.

Q How has your photographic style evolved over the years?

Travel played a huge role in that evolution. Shooting from flights opened up a whole new perspective. Seeing landscapes, coastlines and cities from above gave me an appreciation for scale and geometry that completely changed how I shoot on the ground too. Generally I try to capture a shot with the intention of evoking that same feeling I had in that exact moment.

Q What do you hope viewers feel when they see your work?

I get comments from people interested in travel, abstract, landscape and photography in general. So the feedback is always meaningful and comes from people who genuinely understand the craft. The most common thing I hear is about framing, whether it's a landscape, an aerial shot or something abstract, people seem to connect with how I compose a shot. That means a lot because framing is really where the intention lives, it's how you guide someone's eye and draw out that emotion.

> *"Framing is really where the intention lives — it's how you guide someone's eye and draw out that emotion.*



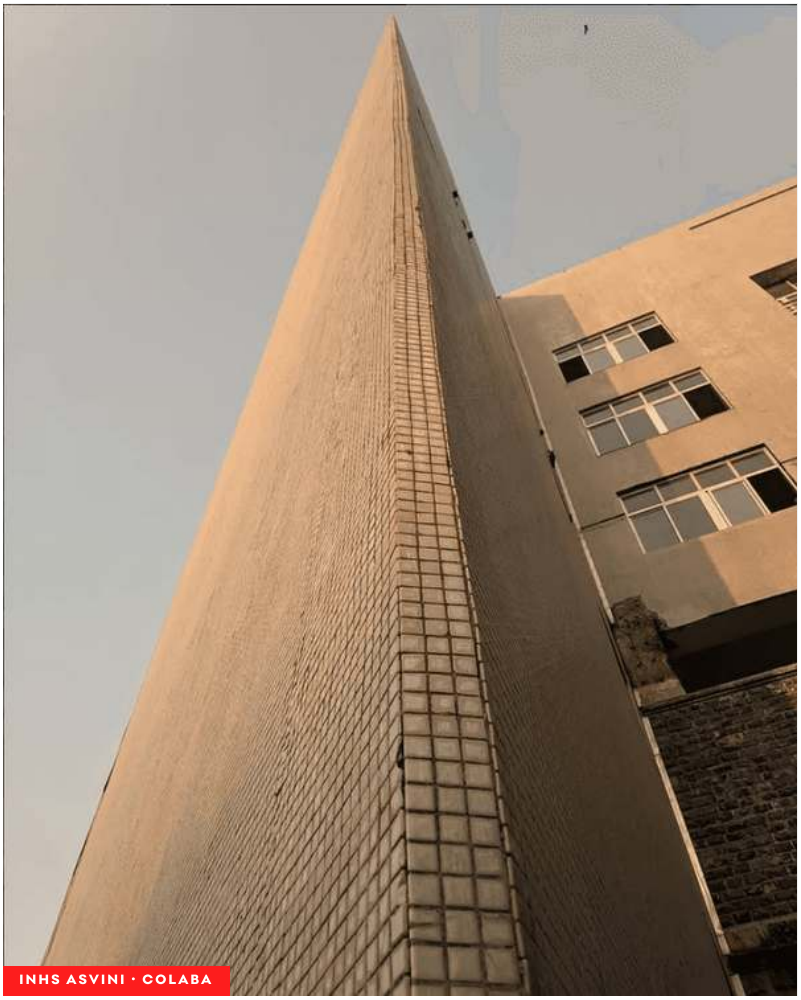
KOLKATA, FROM THE AIR "This was taken leaving Kolkata, and I didn't fully realize what I had until my friend pointed it out. The Hooghly River, Vidyasagar Setu, Eden Gardens, the Race Course, Victoria Memorial — all in a single frame."

FRAMES & PLACES

COLABA · MUMBAI

Q What's the story behind your abstract or architectural photo?

This is INHS Asvini, the naval hospital at Colaba. Standing at ground level, I noticed this sharp, razor-like corner cutting straight up into the sky. There was something almost brutalist about it, imposing, angular, unapologetic.



INHS ASVINI · COLABA

SHANGHUMUGHAM · TRIVANDRUM



OLD COFFEE HOUSE · TRIVANDRUM

WALK US THROUGH THIS FRAME "This is the Old Coffee House at Shanghumugham Beach in Trivandrum — originally a palace of the Maharajas of Travancore, later home to the beloved Indian Coffee House. The blue sky, the architecture, the tall roof, the murals along the boundary wall, all came together in one frame."

NUBRA VALLEY · LADAKH



NUBRA VALLEY · LADAKH

MY FAVOURITE FRAME "This was on the way to Nubra Valley. It wasn't a planned shot, just a moment that was captured. The frame has a river rushing through a rocky valley, snow-capped peaks rising under a vivid blue sky, and colorful Buddhist prayer flags stretching across the foreground."

"At the end of the day, photography is one of the few things that genuinely stops time. That's what keeps me hooked."

SHREE MADHUKAR JAMDAR

CONNECT WITH SHREE MADHUKAR JAMDAR

INSTAGRAM @lllshreelll YOUTUBE @lllshreelll

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

A Film Called 2.0

ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

It began with a film. The Tamil blockbuster 2.0 and its bird-guardian PakshiRajan sent a young Keralite first to study birds — then, in lockdown, to chase them with a camera. More than twenty species on, Ashik Sha Musthuff is still learning the patience of the wild, one frame at a time.

Q How did you first fall for wildlife photography — the moment birds became what you wanted to point a camera at?

My first glance at wildlife photography wasn't from a photography perspective. It all started with the movie 2.0, the second part of the Tamil film Enthiran starring Rajinikanth. The character PakshiRajan influenced me to protect birds and wildlife. I first studied about birds, and then in 2020, during the corona time, I accidentally stepped into photography. I began by photographing insects like dragonflies and butterflies, and then I moved on to birds. I've photographed more than 20 birds, including the paradise flycatcher and the grey-fronted green pigeon.

SELF-TAUGHT SINCE

2020

From lockdown dragonflies and butterflies to twenty-plus bird species.

Q What was the first sighting that made your heart race before you'd even raised the camera?

The first moment I realised I should continue this photography was when I photographed the blue mormon. This butterfly is called Krishna Shalabham in Kerala. It was a rainy day. After my sleep in the morning, I took my camera and started to look for rainy-filled photographs. That time, I accidentally found the blue mormon. It was a big one. I shot it with a problem-functioning Canon EOS 1300D with a 50-250mm entry-level camera.

> *"The character PakshiRajan influenced me to protect birds and wildlife.*



ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF

PHOTOGRAPH · ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF

IN THE FIELD



MALABAR GIANT SQUIRRELS · ATHIRAPPILLY

Q Tell us about an encounter that wasn't with a bird.

This story was quite amazing. One day, my mind was filled with innate energy, and I decided to go to Athirappilly waterfalls in Kerala. That day, I photographed this picture of a group of Malabar giant squirrels.

Q Is there someone who shaped how you see the wild?

Yes, my mentor in this field is Sudhir Shivram. I'm also inspired by documentarians like David Attenborough and Bertie Gregory.



GREY-FRONTED GREEN PIGEON

> *I searched on the internet, and I was blown away by the name.*



FROM THE FIELD

Q What's the story behind your favourite bird portrait?

This is the grey-fronted green pigeon. One day, while I was photographing around the outskirts of my home, I suddenly heard a sword-swirling sound. When I looked, it was a group of pigeons. I photographed one and searched on the internet, and I was blown away by the name.

Q What keeps drawing you back to the place you love to shoot?

This is called Pakshithara in Kerala. It's situated at Cherpu, a small village near Thrissur town. There is a wide variety of birds, more than 1000 species.

> *A small village near Thrissur — and more than 1000 species of birds.*

THE LONG LENS



A RECENT FRAME

THEN & NOW Canon EOS 1300D to Sony Alpha — the gear grew with the dream.

Q Looking back, what are you proudest of — and where is this heading?

I'm proud of myself for doing wildlife and nature photography. It was one of my childhood dreams, and the pandemic made me pursue it. But now, I'm focusing on becoming a wildlife documentary director for National Geographic and BBC. I haven't had a chance yet, but I firmly believe this feature in WallMag will lead my future to that big dream.

Q What changed between an early photo and a recent frame you're proud of?

Nothing unusual. The early photographs were taken with an entry-level camera, while this one was taken with a Sony Alpha M4 and a Sigma 150-600mm zoom lens.

Q And the shot that took real patience?

I waited for five minutes for this frame. After this, I started to upload about bird counts on E-bird, and I got an appreciation certificate from E-bird in 2023.

"I firmly believe this feature in WallMag will lead my future to that big dream."

ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF

AT A GLANCE

BASED	Cherpu, near Thrissur, Kerala
STARTED	2020, during the lockdown
MENTOR	Sudhir Shivram
FIRST KIT	Canon EOS 1300D · 50-250mm
NOW SHOOTS	Sony Alpha M4 · Sigma 150-600mm
RECOGNITION	eBird Appreciation Certificate, 2023

BIRDS PHOTOGRAPHED

20+

Including the paradise flycatcher and the grey-fronted green pigeon.

> *"It was one of my childhood dreams, and the pandemic made me pursue it.*

STILL CHASING

Q What's in your field kit?

I just use the camera and lens. I don't use tripods yet.

> *I'm focusing on becoming a wildlife documentary director for National Geographic and BBC.*



ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF

FROM THE FIELD

THE NEXT FRAME Somewhere in Assam or Arunachal, a red panda he has yet to meet.

> *"My biggest dream is photographing the red panda in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh."*
>
> ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF · THE SHOT HE'S STILL CHASING

CONNECT WITH ASHIK SHA MUSTHUFF

INSTAGRAM @Ashikframes_photography

IN CONVERSATION · LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Landscapes Along the Way

AMIT MAJUMDER · LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER

He never set out to be a photographer. Travelling across India for work, Amit Majumder kept stopping for the light — and a single frame at Bhatkal Lake in 2002 turned the road itself into a lifelong subject.

Q How did your journey in nature and landscape photography begin?

My journey started when I traveled across India for work. I was captivated by the beautiful landscapes, diverse nature, and scenic views I encountered along the way. Those early experiences sparked a deep appreciation for the natural world, and I began capturing moments that resonated with me. Over time, what started as casual snapshots turned into a passionate pursuit of landscape photography.

Q What was the first landscape photo that made you feel truly proud?

The first photo that filled me with pride was taken in 2002 at Bhatkal Lake. It featured a family with a young child, set against the serene backdrop of the lake. That image holds a special place in my heart because it marked the beginning of my photographic journey and reminded me of the beauty in simple, everyday moments.

Q How has your approach to capturing nature evolved over the years?

Over the years, my approach has evolved significantly. Initially, I would take photos spontaneously during vacations. Now, I plan my shoots more thoughtfully, experimenting with different techniques, compositions, and lighting conditions. I strive to tell a story through each image, whether it's the play of light on a landscape or the intricate details of a scene.

> *"What started as casual snapshots turned into a passionate pursuit of landscape photography.*



AMIT MAJUMDER

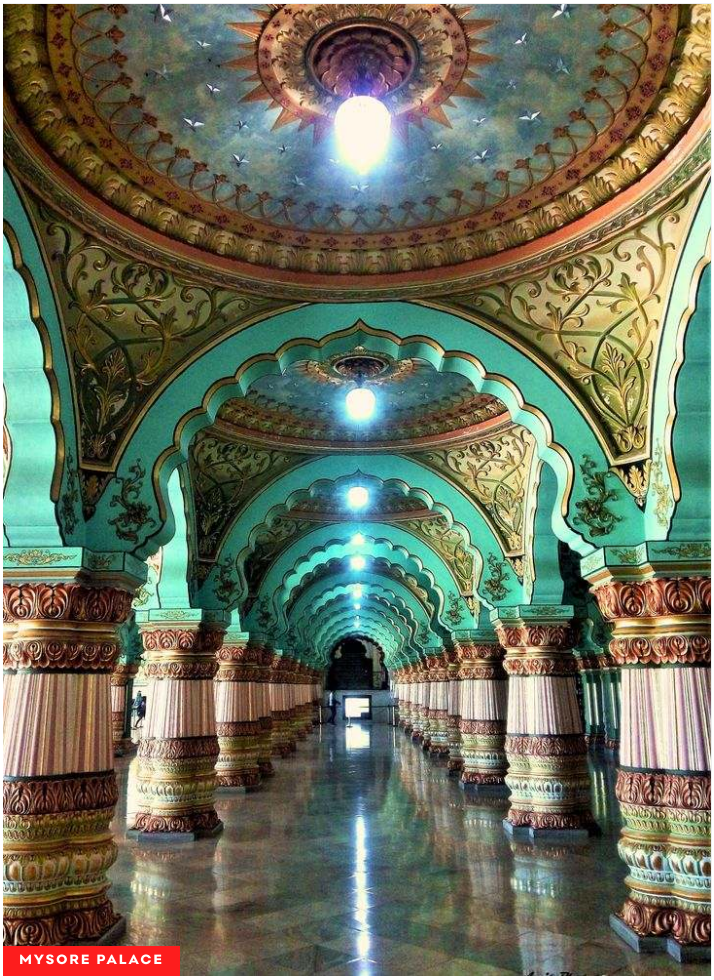
THE ROUTE

FIRST FRAME	Bhatkal Lake, 2002
IT BEGAN	On the road, travelling India for work
WAYPOINTS	Goa · Mysore · Hampi · Masinagudi
THE LIGHT	Golden hour, open blue skies
POST	Adobe Lightroom Classic

WAYPOINTS · A MAP OF THE JOURNEY

Q What are some of your favourite landscape photos that you've captured?

These images vividly capture all possible areas of the landscapes I've explored, from the grandeur of Mysore Palace to the ancient ruins of Hampi, the serene Shanta Durga Temple in Goa, and the rustic roads of Masinagudi. Each photo holds a memory and a story that I'm proud to share.



MYSORE PALACE



HAMPI



SHANTA DURGA · GOA



MASINAGUDI

Q The most challenging location you've ever photographed?

I haven't encountered a location that I would consider extremely challenging yet. Every place offers its own unique set of conditions, and I try to adapt and make the best of whatever situation I find myself in.

THE LIGHT ALONG THE WAY

Q What makes the lighting in your favourite shot so special, and how did you capture it?

The lighting in this photo is special because it was captured during sunset in Goa. The golden hour light created a warm, magical glow over the scene. I saw a speedboat cutting through the water, and the combination of the setting sun and the boat's motion made for a perfect photo opportunity. I quickly composed the shot and clicked, freezing that fleeting moment of beauty.



GOLDEN HOUR A speedboat cutting the water as the sun set over Goa — a fleeting moment, frozen.

> *"I saw a speedboat cutting through the water, and the combination of the setting sun and the boat's motion made for a perfect photo opportunity.*



THE CRAFT



THE EDIT Contrast lifted, temperature warmed — the natural beauty enhanced, never overworked.

Q Walk us through your editing process for a before-and-after transformation.

For this edit, I used Adobe Lightroom Classic. I started by highlighting the key elements of the image, then increased the contrast to make the details pop. I also adjusted the temperature to give the photo a warmer, more inviting tone. The goal was to enhance the natural beauty without making it look overly processed.

Q How would you describe your photography style?

My photography style is characterized by bright, open blue skies filled with natural light, which gives an uplifting and serene feel to my images. I aim to capture the essence of a place in its most authentic and beautiful form, often focusing on the interplay of light and shadow to create depth and emotion.

> *"The first photo that filled me with pride was taken in 2002 at Bhatkal Lake — it reminded me of the beauty in simple, everyday moments."*
>
> AMIT MAJUMDER

CONNECT WITH AMIT MAJUMDER

INSTAGRAM @amit.majumder.370

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Documentaries to Birdsong

SEEMA DAS · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER · ODISHA

She grew up watching the wild on a screen. Then she borrowed her father's film camera, bought a 300mm lens, and discovered that the documentary was already running — on the wire outside her own balcony.



SEEMA DAS
Self-taught, still a student of the craft — one body, one 300mm, no tripod.

Q What first sparked your interest in nature and bird photography?

While my journey technically began with standard family photography, my true creative calling lay elsewhere. Since childhood, I've had a deep reverence for the natural world, sparked by hours of watching wildlife documentaries on Animal Planet and National Geographic. That early fascination eventually evolved into a passion for capturing birds and nature in their rawest elements. As a self-taught photographer, I still consider myself a student of the craft, constantly learning how to beautifully translate that childhood wonder into a single frame.

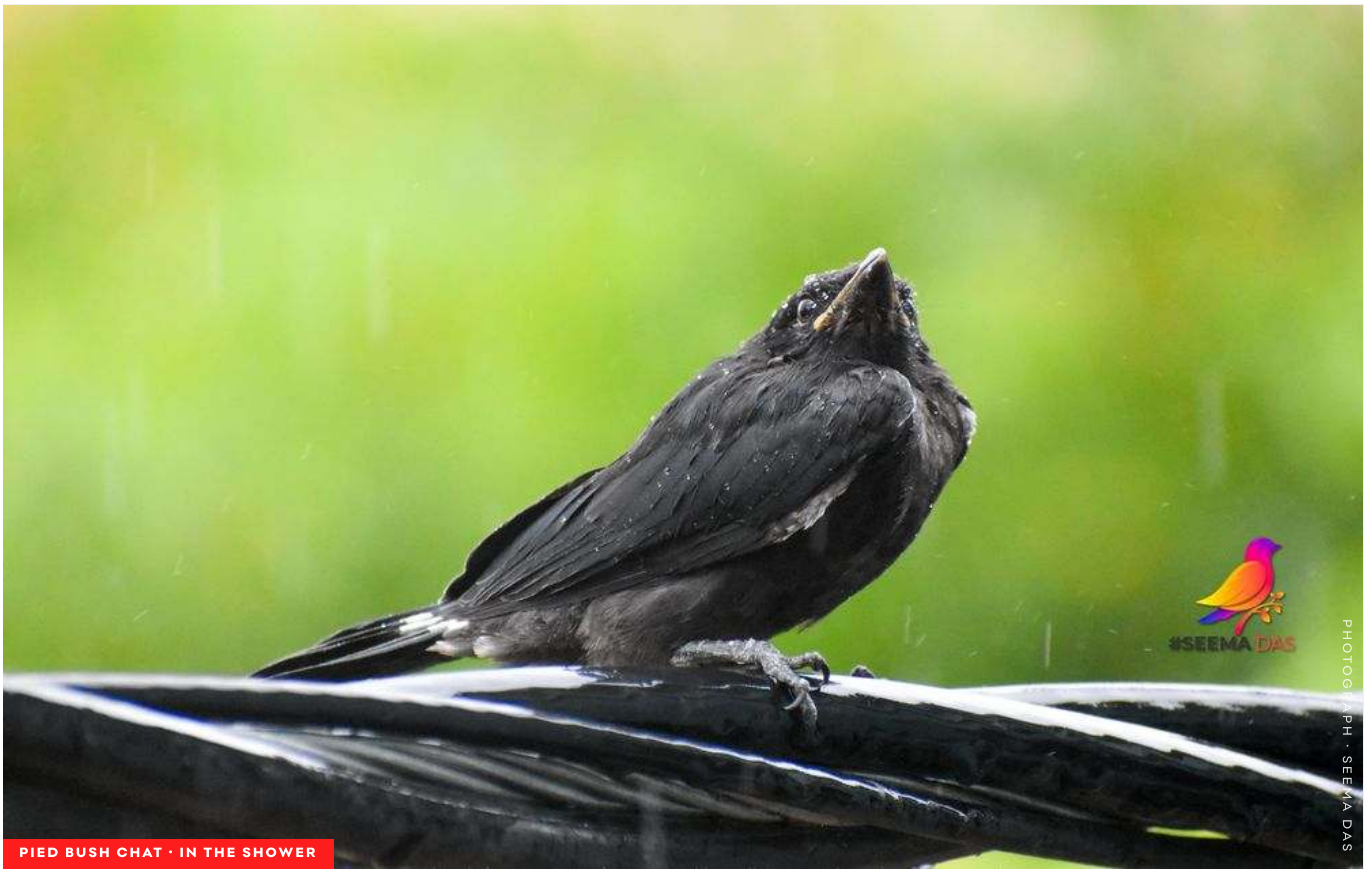
Q How did you get your first camera and start your journey?

Looking back, my photographic journey started in the sweetest way possible: as a child using my father's vintage Canon film camera. That old reel-loaded camera was the cradle of my passion, where I first learned to frame the world by clicking candid family moments. Over the years, my gear evolved alongside my curiosity. I transitioned into the digital age with an Olympus FE-115, followed by a Canon IXUS 265 HS, and spent plenty of time experimenting with a Sony Xperia Android phone. Finally, in 2019, I stepped into the world of DSLR photography with the Nikon D3500, which is where my dedication to learning this art form truly took flight.

AT A GLANCE

GENRE	Urban wildlife & birds
HOME GROUND	Her own balcony
FIRST CAMERA	Her father's vintage Canon film
GEAR	Nikon D3500 · 300mm zoom · no tripod
BREAKTHROUGH	Cyclone Fani, May 2019
POST	Adobe Lightroom, minimalist

IN THE RAIN



PIED BUSH CHAT · IN THE SHOWER

THE PROUDEST FRAME A hatchling on a slender wire, wary of flight yet entirely unbroken by the downpour.

Q Tell us about a photo of a bird in its natural habitat that you're most proud of.

One of my most cherished images is of a tiny Pied Bush Chat hatchling trapped in a soft summer shower. It was perched upon a slender wire, seeking shelter as the relentless raindrops formed a delicate symphony around its small, drenched body. What moved me most while looking through the lens was its unwavering determination. It chirped softly, hesitant and wary to take flight amidst the downpour, yet its spirit remained completely unbroken. You could see a glimmer of hope in its bright, beady eyes. To me, this image captures the beautiful duality of nature: the essence of survival paired with absolute vulnerability.

> *"Courage can be found in the most unexpected places, prompting us to find strength in our own rain-soaked moments.*

Q What has been the most memorable bird sighting you've captured?

In bird photography, sometimes the most profound moments happen right at home. My most cherished memory is tracking a Purple-rumped Sunbird couple who decided to nest on our balcony. I lived through every milestone with them, from the architecture of their nest to the hatching of their chick. Their story became legendary to me when Cyclone Fani struck in May 2019. While the storm's fierce 140–175 km/h winds shattered heavy metal structures around us, this tiny sunbird family defied the odds. Amidst a storm so furious that humans were completely locked indoors, the mother bird continued to feed her little one, her nest remaining perfectly intact. It was a beautiful, humbling reminder that nature's design possesses a fierce resilience that engineering can rarely match.

III THE BALCONY WATCH



WEATHERING TOGETHER

SIDE BY SIDE A pair of doves on the wire, holding their line against the grey — shot handheld, no tripod, from the same balcony.



ON WATCH A Shikra holds its post — stillness as its own kind of strength.

Q What equipment do you find essential for bird photography?

My essential kit is very streamlined: just my DSLR and a 300mm zoom lens. Since I don't use a tripod right now, I rely entirely on keeping my hands steady manually to fight camera shake, which has been a great way to build up my instincts and stability. Even so, I consider a tripod a true must-have for the genre. It's the next key piece of equipment on my list to help handle the weight of long lenses and guarantee rock-solid sharpness during extended waits in the field.



THE KIT One body, one 300mm zoom — steadied by hand, not tripod.

Q Describe the location and circumstances of the video you just uploaded.

I shot this video in 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown, right in the brief gap I got between my online Post Graduate classes. The entire world was at a standstill, but right outside my balcony, life was fighting its own quiet battle. For me, filming this scene from my balcony wasn't just a break from class—it was a profound lesson in resilience, reminding me that we can find the strength to let our own songs ring out, even when the tempest lingers on.

SCAN TO WATCH

The Pied Bush Chat hatchling, unbroken in the rain.

A second clip filmed from the balcony.

IV THE POND'S QUIET



QUIET POISE A common species revealing an uncommon grace — poised, focused, quietly balanced.



LOCAL COLOUR A flash of gold in an ordinary garden.



INDIAN POND HERON The framing she waited for.

Q What makes that moment special to you?

As a bird photographer, you learn to wait for the split second where a common species reveals an uncommon grace. I captured this Indian Pond Heron perfectly balanced in what felt like a classic ballerina pose. Framed by the delicate texturing of the leaves and bright seed pods, this moment beautifully captures the symmetry, focus, and quiet poise of urban wildlife.

Q What editing techniques did you apply to enhance the image?

I rely on the Adobe Lightroom app to give my wildlife images their final polish. For this shot, I focused on subtle color grading and selective sharpness. I meticulously adjusted the contrast to separate the Indian Pond Heron from the dense leaves, and lightly enhanced the saturation of that unique blue flash on its beak. My editing approach is always minimalist—using Lightroom simply to draw the viewer's eye straight to the elegance and texture of the subject.

Q Why is that bird species your favorite?

I have a deep affection for the Indian Pond Heron. Most people pass them by because they blend so perfectly into the background, but watching them closely reveals so much character. I love their deliberate, stealthy walk—it's like watching a tightrope walker. Plus, during the breeding season, they develop this magnificent, vivid blue stroke right at the base of their beak. Capturing that sudden flash of brilliant color against their usual earthy tones is a rewarding challenge for any photographer. They prove that you don't have to travel to a remote rainforest to find spectacular wildlife; extraordinary beauty lives right in our local ponds and wetlands.

CONNECT WITH SEEMA DAS

INSTAGRAM @seemadas_230495 **YOUTUBE** @seema861

IN CONVERSATION · MUSIC

MOVEMENT I · RHYTHM

Music as Meditation

JYOTIRADITYA BHUJANG · MUSIC ARTIST

The drummer-turned-producer on the rhythm he was born into, the stillness he found in the studio, and the patience — sabr — that gave his most personal song its name.



PHOTOGRAPH · JYOTIRADITYA BHUJANG

JYOTIRADITYA BHUJANG

AT A GLANCE

FIRST BEAT	Tabla & bongos, at home as a child
TURNING POINT	Discovered the drums
FIRST SONG	"Jeene Ki Wajah," released at 15
FOUNDED	5th Dimension Records
LIVE SERIES	Untreated Sessions

Q How did your musical journey begin?

My musical journey began very naturally during childhood. I grew up in a home where music was always around, and rhythm was the first thing that deeply connected with me. My parents noticed that connection early on and enrolled me in tabla classes while also bringing instruments like bongos and tabla into the house. A few years later, I discovered drums, and something about them immediately fascinated me. I started learning, performing in school bands, competitions, and local stages, and slowly music became more than just an interest — it became a calling. When I was around 15, I released my first original song, "Jeene Ki Wajah," and that phase opened another side of me. Alongside rhythm, I discovered my love for melodies, songwriting, and eventually music production. Over the years, I played with several bands in the independent and metal scene, and every project taught me something valuable — not just musically, but personally. Later, studying music production in Mumbai changed my perspective even further. Spending long hours creating music consciously and quietly made me realise that music, for me, is also a form of meditation. As my journey evolved, I started releasing my own music and collaborating with independent artists, which eventually led me to create 5th Dimension Records. The idea behind it was simple — to support artists who have original music and help give their songs a life, just like people once helped me believe in mine. That same feeling later inspired Untreated Sessions, a live acoustic series focused on capturing music in its rawest and most honest form. Music has shaped me not only as an artist, but also as a listener, a collaborator, and a person constantly learning to understand life a little more deeply through sound.

MOVEMENT II · STILLNESS



IN THE JAM ROOM Playing drums for himself — these days, his most regular gig.

Q What's the vibe of that photo?

Honestly, the last time I performed live was quite a few months ago. The picture I shared is actually me playing drums for myself in my jam room — at this point, that's probably my most regular "gig" now. Otherwise, most of my time is spent quietly sitting in the studio producing music and working on ideas. I think I've slowly become more of a studio person these days — just with louder thoughts and drum fills occasionally.

Q Describe your songwriting process from idea to finished track.

I don't think I follow one fixed songwriting process. Songs usually begin very naturally for me — sometimes with a melody, sometimes with a rhythm, a production idea, or even just a random thought that stays with me. It's a very intuitive process, and I try not to force it. Sometimes an idea comes instantly, but takes months to fully become a song. I spend a lot of time simply listening and sitting with the idea, and somewhere in that process, the next emotion or sound slowly starts revealing itself. At times I begin with production and build the composition around it, while other times a few casually written lines unexpectedly turn into songs later. I think the most important part of my process is honesty — staying connected to whatever feels genuine in that moment and letting the music grow naturally from there.

Q How has your work as a singer-songwriter, producer, and drummer evolved?

My journey as a singer-songwriter, producer, and drummer has evolved very organically over the years. Drumming became my foundation and taught me discipline, energy, and the importance of listening while performing with bands and playing live. Over time, songwriting became a more personal space where I could express emotions and experiences more honestly. Music production added another dimension to my journey and changed the way I hear and understand music completely. Today, these roles no longer feel separate from each other. Together, they have shaped my identity as an artist through my independent work, 5th Dimension Records, and Untreated Sessions.

IN THE STUDIO

Logic Pro

His primary DAW, run through an RME Babyface Pro interface with Naumen monitors and microphones.

> *"I've slowly become more of a studio person these days — just with louder thoughts and drum fills occasionally.*

MOVEMENT III · SABR

Q What is the story and emotion behind the song "Sabr"?

The song "Sabr" came from a very personal phase of my life. I wrote it during a time of transition when I was dealing with a lot internally and trying to find clarity, patience, and trust within myself. The line below was actually something I needed to hear myself during that phase. More than writing a song, it felt like I was having a conversation with my own mind and heart. It was a reminder to slow down, trust the process of life, and not lose faith during uncertain moments. Because of that, "Sabr" is very close to me emotionally. I think it carries a very honest part of who I was at that time, and maybe that's why people connect with it in such a personal way.

> *"Tu sabr kar, khud pe fakr kar, jo hona hai ho jayega, jo tera hai miljayega…"*
>
> JYOTIRADITYA BHUJANG · FROM "SABR"

Q What was the first moment you knew music was your calling?

The first real moment I understood that music was my calling was when I started playing drums during my school years. Until then, music was something I deeply loved, but once I sat behind a drum kit, I felt a connection that was difficult to explain in words. It felt natural, almost like a language I already understood somewhere within myself. Performing in school competitions, playing with bands, and sharing that energy with people gave me a sense of purpose and belonging very early in life. Over time, I realised that music was much more than performance for me — it became a way of expressing emotions, understanding life, and finding inner stillness.

SABR, TRANSLATED

Patience

"A reminder to slow down, trust the process of life, and not lose faith during uncertain moments."

Q Which indie or experimental artists shaped your sound most?

I feel discovering your own sound is a lifelong journey. As an artist, you pass through different emotions, influences, experiences, and experiments before you slowly begin to understand what truly feels honest and real to you. My early influences came from metal and progressive bands like Avenged Sevenfold, Lamb of God, and Slipknot, which shaped me strongly as a drummer and performer. But over the years, some of my deepest inspiration has come from the independent artists and musicians I've had the opportunity to collaborate with personally. I believe that is where music feels the most genuine — when people create honestly from their own experiences and emotions.

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch "Sabr" — Jyotiraditya Bhujang.

Q What made those early live performances special to you?

These performances were very special to me because they were the phase where I was constantly playing live with bands, competing, and growing as a drummer and performer. Around 2015–16, winning competitions and performing on different stages gave me a lot of confidence and helped me truly discover myself as an artist.

Q What does your creative workspace look like?

My creative workspace is usually very calm and comfortable — a lot of sitting or lying down in the studio room, thinking about ideas, listening carefully to sounds, sipping coffee, and having long conversations with friends and musicians about music and life.

> *"There's always laughter, random thoughts turning into songs, and somewhere in between all of that, creativity naturally finds its way.*

CODA

Three roles, one identity

Singer-songwriter, producer and drummer — today they no longer feel separate from each other.



IN THE STUDIO Jyotiraditya Bhujang

"Music, for me, is also a form of meditation — it teaches presence, listening, patience, and awareness."

JYOTIRADITYA BHUJANG

CONNECT WITH JYOTIRADITYA BHUJANG

INSTAGRAM @jyotiradityabhujang **YOUTUBE** @jyotiradityabhujang **SPOTIFY** Listen **LINKEDIN** Jyotiraditya Bhujang

5TH DIMENSION RECORDS

INSTAGRAM @5thdimensionrecords_ **YOUTUBE** @5thdimensionrecords **WEBSITE** 5thdimensionrecords.in

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

The PowerShot Years

AMAAN SHAIKH · SELF-TAUGHT PHOTOGRAPHER

One pocket camera, a love of golden light, and a simple belief: even the simplest gear can make a meaningful image — with patience and vision.

Q What sparked your passion for photography, and how did you get started?

My passion for photography started with my Canon PowerShot A2300. I loved capturing sunsets, landscapes, and everyday moments from unique angles. Over time, I began learning composition, lighting, and editing through practice and online tutorials. Photography became a way for me to express creativity and tell stories through images. Every photo I take motivates me to keep improving and explore new perspectives.

Q Can you recall the first time you took a photo that made you feel truly proud?

The first photo that truly made me proud was a golden-hour landscape I captured with my Canon PowerShot A2300 HD. Watching the light, colors, and composition come together made me realize photography is more than taking pictures—it's about telling a story. It reminded me that even simple equipment can create meaningful images with patience and vision.

THE FIRST CAMERA

A2300

The Canon PowerShot that started it all — sunsets, landscapes, everyday moments from unique angles.



AMAAN SHAIKH

PHOTOGRAPH · AMAAN SHAIKH

THE SLOW LOOK

Q How has your approach to photography evolved since you first began?

When I first started photography, I focused mostly on taking beautiful pictures. Over time, my approach has shifted toward telling stories and capturing emotions rather than just scenes. I have learned to pay closer attention to light, composition, timing, and the small details that make an image meaningful. I also spend more time planning my shots and editing carefully to enhance the natural feel instead of overprocessing. Photography is no longer just a hobby for me—it's a way to preserve moments, connect with people, and continuously challenge myself to grow as a visual storyteller.

Q What nature or landscape photo showcases your unique perspective?

This photograph captures the quiet harmony between water, sky, and the town resting along the shoreline. The still surface of the lake mirrored the drifting clouds and towering trees, creating a sense of balance that immediately caught my attention. What drew me to this moment was the contrast between the vibrant blue sky, the deep shadows of the forest, and the calm reflections below. As a photographer, I'm always searching for scenes where nature and light come together to create emotion.



STILLNESS Water, sky, and a town along the shoreline

> *A reminder to slow down and appreciate the beauty hidden in ordinary moments.*

Q What aspect of photography challenges you the most?

The biggest challenge for me is creating images that tell a meaningful story rather than just looking visually appealing. Whether I'm photographing portraits, nature, or landscapes, I constantly work on balancing composition, natural light, emotion, and timing to create photographs that connect with people. Every shoot teaches me patience, observation, and the importance of seeing beyond the obvious. I believe the challenge of storytelling is also what makes photography so rewarding.

Q Which portrait best captures the essence of your subject?

This portrait captures a quiet moment of connection between subject and surroundings, telling a story of stillness, curiosity, and coexistence with nature. Through light, texture, and composition, I wanted to preserve an authentic moment that often goes unnoticed and invite viewers to slow down and appreciate the beauty hidden in everyday scenes.



COEXISTENCE A quiet moment of stillness and curiosity

THE WARM EDIT

Q What does your raw photo reveal about your post-processing workflow?

I begin with the RAW file to preserve as much detail and dynamic range as possible. My workflow starts with correcting exposure, white balance, and contrast while maintaining the natural atmosphere of the scene. I then refine highlights and shadows to recover detail, followed by selective color grading to enhance mood and visual storytelling. For automotive and street photography, I focus on clean compositions, subtle sharpening, noise reduction, and removing distractions while keeping textures realistic.



FROM RAW Automotive & street — clean, warm, cinematic

> *"Ordinary places can become extraordinary with patience and timing.*

Q What photo represents a turning point in your journey?

These photos marked the moment I stopped simply taking pictures and started telling stories through light and atmosphere. Capturing the warmth of the sunset against the city skyline and natural surroundings showed me how ordinary places can become extraordinary with patience and timing. It inspired me to keep exploring dusk, sunsets, and the emotions they create.



DUSK Warmth of the sunset against the city skyline

"My editing style leans toward warm, cinematic tones — a balance between realism and emotion."

THE FRAME



THE EDIT Rich orange tones, petal texture, warmth

Q What changes did you make in the before-and-after edit, and why?

I enhanced the image while keeping it natural and true to the original scene. I adjusted the exposure and contrast to add depth, increased the vibrance slightly to bring out the rich orange tones of the marigold, and improved sharpness to highlight the intricate details of the petals. I also refined the shadows and highlights to balance the lighting and create a stronger separation between the subject and the background. The goal of the edit was to emphasize the flower's texture, warmth, and visual impact while preserving an authentic and realistic look.



UNIQUE ANGLES Everyday moments, seen in warm light

> *I loved capturing sunsets, landscapes, and everyday moments from unique angles.*

AT A GLANCE

CAMERA	Canon PowerShot A2300 HD	SIGNATURE	Warm, cinematic tones
SUBJECTS	Portraits · Nature · Landscape · Automotive · Street	APPROACH	Story over scene; patience & timing
LEARNED	Self-taught — practice & online tutorials	LOVES	Sunsets, dusk & golden-hour light

"Every photo I take motivates me to keep improving and explore new perspectives."

AMAAN SHAIKH

CONNECT WITH AMAAN SHAIKH

INSTAGRAM @shadowpixelz.framez

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

The Sky Was Beautiful

NIKITA YAZHINI · SKY & LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER

A self-taught eye that began on a lockdown rooftop, looking up — from phone snapshots of the sky her family teased her for, to a red moon at midnight and lakes hidden between the hills.

Q How did your journey in photography begin?

I started taking photos around 2018 when I got my first phone. I used to capture a lot of pictures of the sky, but my family always made fun of me for it. I asked my parents if I could take a photography class, but they said no. It wasn't until college that I began to take more interest in photography, and thanks to Formula 1, it just made me want to take more photos and experiment with different types of photography.

Q What was the first moment you knew you wanted to capture the sky?

It was during the lockdown in 2019. I was studying for my 10th-grade exams, thinking, 'Will they even hold an exam, and if so, when?' There was so much uncertainty. During that period, I decided to go to the terrace every day. Day after day, I looked at the sky and watched planes land. One day, the sky was beautiful, and I took a photo. From that day on, I've been taking photos whenever I can.

> *Day after day, I looked at the sky and watched planes land.*

AT A GLANCE

STARTED	2018, on her first phone
FIRST SUBJECT	The sky
TURNING POINT	A lockdown terrace, 2019
ALSO SHOOTS	Landscape · sports · street



NIKITA YAZHINI

PHOTOGRAPH · NIKITA YAZHINI

Q What are some of your favorite landscape photos from your portfolio?

The first photo of the surfer, fishermen, and kayakers is special because it shows three different groups of people at sea. I feel like it captures how our world works—some go to sea because they enjoy it, others because their family depends on it. The second photo of the mountain view I took during my trip to Ooty, one last trip before my training period started. I loved the trip because it allowed me to take photos I'd never taken before. The third and fourth are from the same Ooty trip; being able to take good photos like those on an iPhone 14, known for being worse than the iPhone 13, made me happy. The fifth photo I took at my university in Texas. I had the opportunity to study in the USA for a semester in 2024, and it was one of the best decisions I've ever made. This picture shows how calm it was there—not just the place, but also my inner self.

> *This picture shows how calm it was there — not just the place, but also my inner self.*



NIKITA YAZHINI

A LAKE ENCLOSED BY MOUNTAINS



NIKITA YAZHINI

THE MOUNTAIN VIEW, OOTY



NIKITA YAZHINI

Q What nature photo best represents your unique perspective?

I was on a trip, and the taxi driver told us there was a location nearby with a lake enclosed by mountains. We all immediately said, 'Yes, please take us there.' We walked down a narrow road to see this beautiful lake, with people fishing in the distance.



NIKITA YAZHINI

THREE GROUPS AT SEA

AFTER DARK



LUNAR ECLIPSE · SEPTEMBER 2025

ALMOST MIDNIGHT A very plasticky Amazon tripod, half an hour of settings, and the clouds on one side with the moon on the other.

Q **Which sky or moon photo are you most proud of?**

The first photo I took during a lunar eclipse in September 2025. I remember running up the stairs to the terrace, carrying my very plasticky tripod I bought on Amazon with my dad because it was almost 12 AM. I sat there for half an hour trying to find the perfect camera settings. After struggling for 10-15 minutes, I finally set up the tripod, found the perfect setting, and took many photos. This one is the best from that night—the clouds perfectly on one side and the moon on the other made it even better. The second photo was taken after it finished raining on Diwali 2025. I went to the terrace with my mum to get the clothes, and I had my camera with me.

ALMOST MIDNIGHT

Half an hour

on the terrace hunting for the perfect settings — a plasticky tripod, a racing clock, and one red moon.



DIWALI 2025

> *The clouds were beautiful — I wanted to eat them because they looked like cotton candy.*

THE EDIT

Q Can you walk us through your editing process with an example?

The raw photo was a bit dull, so I wanted to add a cooler tone and more saturation. I started playing around with the color grading tool in Lightroom until I got the desired result. I'm still in my learning phase of editing because it intimidates me a little, but I've been experimenting with it more than I used to in the past.



COOLER TONE, MORE COLOUR

Q How has your experience and style grown over the years?

I used to only take photos of skies and never edit them, just posting them as they were. Now, I prefer my photos warm. I still love capturing skies, but I'm delving more into sports photography and experimenting with street photography. I like to experiment with color when I'm editing now, whereas before I was scared to try new things. I've learned to never stop learning.

Q What was the experience behind the behind-the-scenes content you uploaded?

I probably wouldn't call this a behind-the-scenes footage—you can hear people talking in the video. I usually don't take behind-the-scenes photos or videos because when I'm taking photos, I get lost in the scenery and focus on capturing the perfect shot, even if it takes multiple tries.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this clip from Nikita Yazhini's story.

THE KIT

CAMERA	Canon 200D Mark II
LENSES	18–55mm · 75–300mm — the favourite, for telephoto shots
ON THE GO	iPhone 17 Pro, when the camera can't come along
EDIT	Lightroom — warm tones, colour grading

"The world is filled with beautiful places like this — and I want to visit all of them in this lifetime."

NIKITA YAZHINI · SIGNALS & STILLNESS

CONNECT WITH NIKITA YAZHINI

INSTAGRAM @yazhini_1920

IN CONVERSATION · MOBILE

A Droplet in the Valley

AJITESH RAGAVENDRA · MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER

A year with a phone in hand and an eye trained on the smallest things — a droplet, a temple wall, the last light on the sea.

Q How did your journey in mobile photography begin?

My journey started as a passion. I was always fascinated by the idea of capturing moments, and my phone became the perfect tool to explore that interest. It began with simple shots, but soon I realized how much potential there was in mobile photography.

Q What was the first moment when you realized your phone could capture something truly special?

It happened when I was in a valley and managed to capture a water droplet. That moment made me see that even the smallest details could be transformed into something beautiful through the lens of my phone.

AT A GLANCE

MEDIUM	Mobile phone
EDITING	Adobe Lightroom
SHOOTING	Under a year, seriously
SUBJECTS	Forests, temples, mountains
TECHNIQUES	Long exposure, macro



BY NIGHT

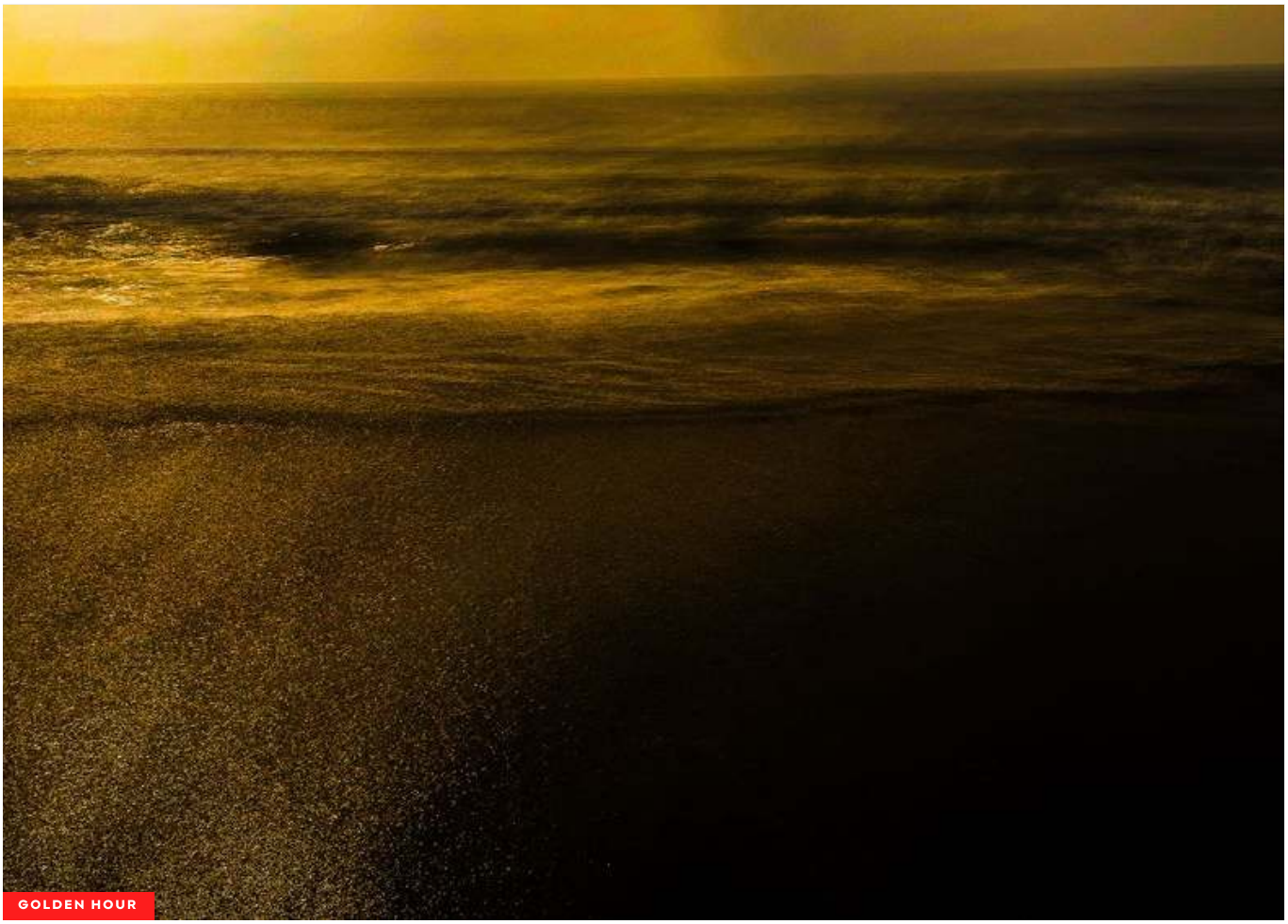


THE TEMPLE



SKYWARD

LEARNING TO SEE



GOLDEN HOUR

Q How has your experience with mobile photography grown over the years?

It's been less than a year since I started taking it seriously, but my interest has grown immensely. I've learned to see the world differently, paying attention to light, composition, and timing. Every day brings a new lesson, and I'm constantly experimenting to improve my craft.

Q What type of subjects do you most enjoy photographing with your mobile device?

I'm drawn to forests, temples, and mountains. There's something magical about capturing the serenity of nature and the intricate details of ancient architecture. These subjects allow me to tell stories through my images.

> *Be awake all the time.*

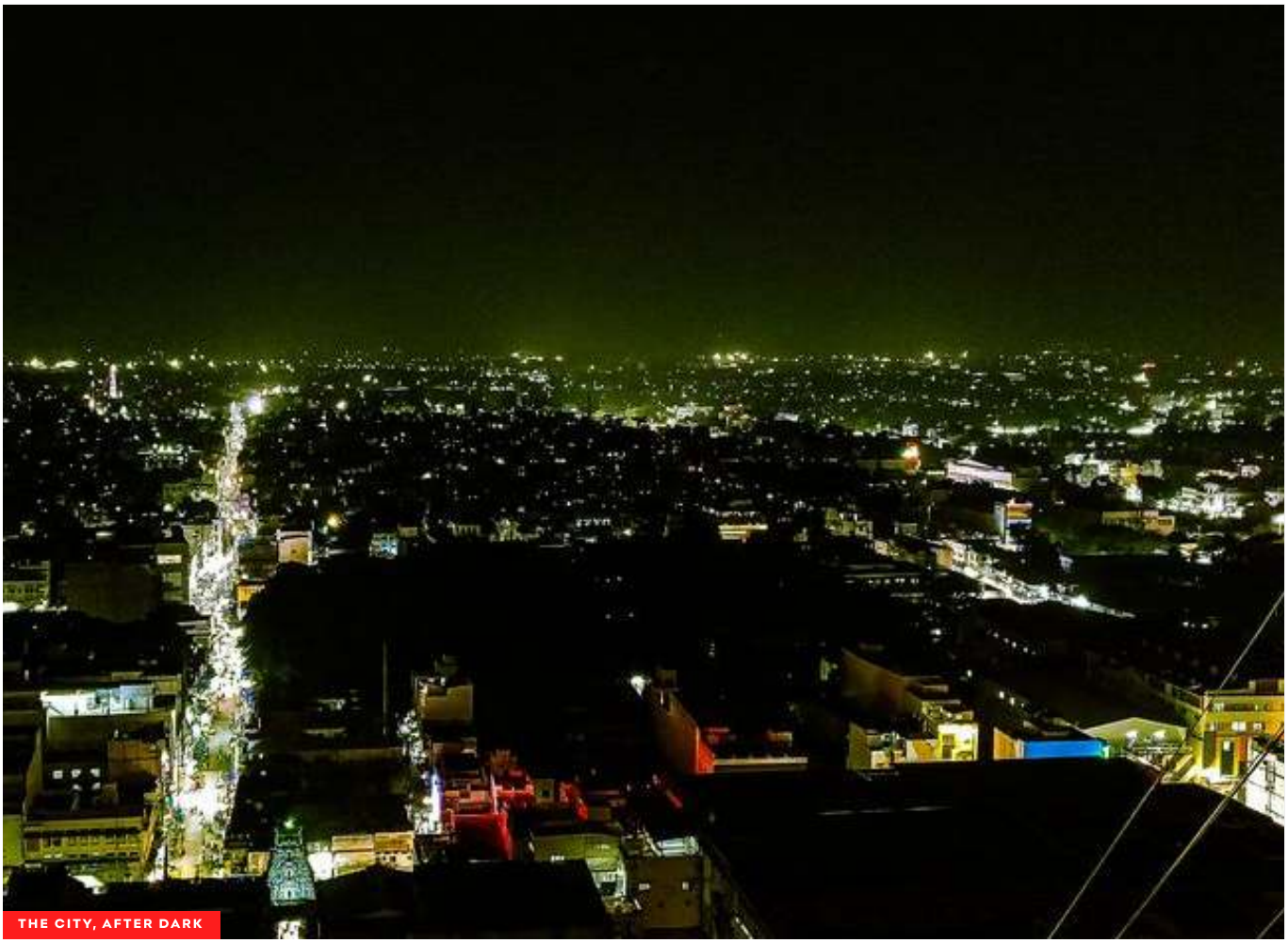
Q What are some of your favorite photographs from your portfolio?

The efforts make it special, along with the lighting. Each photo represents a moment of patience and observation, and the way light interacts with the subject is what truly brings it to life.

Q What app or tool do you primarily use for editing your mobile photos?

I primarily use Adobe Lightroom. It offers a great balance of control and simplicity, allowing me to fine-tune exposure, colors, and details right on my phone.

IN THE FIELD



THE CITY, AFTER DARK

Q How did you handle the lighting challenge in that shot?

I located with my camera — meaning I positioned myself and adjusted the angle to make the most of the available light. Sometimes it's about moving a few steps to find the perfect spot where the light falls just right.

Q What's your process for using creative techniques like long exposure or macro?

I used long exposures and macro techniques, depending on my location and perspective. Long exposure helps create a sense of motion and time, while macro allows me to capture intricate details that often go unnoticed. I choose the technique based on what story I want the photo to tell.

Q Describe the composition and emotions you aimed to convey in that portrait or street photo.

I wanted to capture a sense of alertness and presence, as if the subject is fully engaged with their surroundings. The composition focuses on the eyes and the subtle expressions that tell a story.

CONNECT WITH AJITESH RAGAVENDRA

INSTAGRAM @thatsnotmeyo_

IN CONVERSATION · MOBILE

SHOT ON A PHONE

Only Ever a Phone

URVI SURAJIT DUTTA · MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER

No professional camera — only a phone. A self-taught mobile photographer on chasing sunsets, reading a restless monsoon sky, and learning that change, too, can be beautiful.

Q How did your journey as a mobile photographer begin?

My journey started quite unexpectedly. I never owned a professional camera, so my phone was the only tool I used to capture the little moments I felt were genuinely interesting in my eyes—all the sunsets, street scenes, nature, or just everyday life that I felt needed to be preserved. I just really like capturing memories, so what started as casually taking pictures eventually turned into a passion for finding stories in ordinary stills and storytelling visually through my clicks.

AT A GLANCE

TOOL	Smartphone — no pro camera
SUBJECTS	Sunsets, skies, nature, street
EDITING	Adobe Lightroom
BEST LIGHT	Golden hour & blue hour

> *I knew even if it was a raw click, it was a great one.*



ONLY EVER A PHOTO

PHOTOGRAPH · URVI SURAJIT DUTTA

GOLDEN HOUR



GOLDEN HOUR A seaside sunset — the raw phone frame whose colour and framing first made Urvi proud.

Q What was the first photo you took that made you feel truly proud?

There was this one time I was at the beach chilling while listening to music. As I slowly watched the sun going down, I also saw various stories unfolding right in front of me—I saw a couple, I saw a family laughing, I saw some friends chilling together, I saw a few crabs, I saw birds flying and heard them chirping. That made me want to capture that moment so that I could simply feel those exact feelings I felt while I was living it. I went on clicking that shot. What made me proud was how beautiful the color palette and framing were for that particular pic. I wasn't very knowledgeable about the technicalities of a picture, but I knew even if it was a raw click, it was a great one.



DRAMATIC SKY Nature and urban life in one frame — a silhouetted skyline against a restless monsoon sky.

Q Tell us about a stunning sky you captured. What made it special?

It was actually when I woke up in the morning, and it was monsoon, so it had been days since I last saw the golden and orange shades reflecting brightly in the sky because it had been raining so much. But this was sudden. It was a beautiful sunrise, but the sky was also filled with grey dark clouds. So this shot is pretty dramatic, as both nature and urban life are highlighted with a color palette that goes with orange, purple, and golden shades, with a silhouetted skyline of the area showing a perfect contrast.



BLUE HOUR Finding light in the little things — a quiet glow against the dark, still only a phone.

Q **Why do you prefer shooting during golden hour or blue hour?**

I usually prefer shooting in the evening because that time of day feels more peaceful to me. The golden, soft tones add depth and warmth to the photographs and make them look more visually appealing yet calm at the same time. I like to reflect what I am feeling through my shots and also like to capture the transition from day to night. This is why I prefer shooting during this time of the day.

Q **What inspires you to capture nature and sky scenes?**

I am someone who does not like changes and finds peace in their comfort zone. But capturing nature itself speaks a lot to me because it's constantly changing yet peaceful enough. That particular thing inspires me to capture all the different various sky scenarios, as it reminds me that changes can also be beautiful.

Q **How has your photography style evolved over the years?**

Well, as I said earlier, at first I was just drawn to sunsets and beautiful things in nature—basically everything that looked visually appealing to me. But as I have grown more and more into capturing such shots, I have started to notice the little details: the composition, color grading, the frames, and even the perspective. I have grown into someone who captures stuff beyond the subject itself so that there's a visual story that reflects to the people who are actually viewing my clicks. I have learned to observe the world in a much more detailed manner, and it makes me feel good.

CONNECT WITH URVI SURAJIT DUTTA

INSTAGRAM @urvii_2012 **PINTEREST** @urvi_1805

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Sunday Suspense

NEHA SHARMA · FILMMAKER & PHOTOGRAPHER

Neha Sharma began with written stories and paint before a media degree turned her toward the lens. In a world of chaos and competition, she chooses peace — reading the silence of nature as her subject.

THE ORIGIN

Q How did your journey as a filmmaker and director begin?

My journey began with writing stories and painting. I am also a media student, which helped me channel my creative passions into filmmaking.

Q When was the first time you realized storytelling through film was your passion?

It hit me when I started listening to Radio Mirchi's Sunday Suspense—it was so gripping and inspiring that I knew I wanted to tell stories through film.

AT A GLANCE

BEGAN WITH	Writing stories & painting
TRAINING	Media student
THE SPARK	Radio Mirchi's 'Sunday Suspense'
SUBJECT	The silence of nature
TOOLKIT	Adobe Photoshop
IN THE FIELD	Varanasi · Kolkata



NEHA SHARMA

NEHA SHARMA

THE SILENCE OF NATURE



THE SHORE Neha Sharma

Q What unique perspective do you bring to your photography and filmmaking work?

I focus on connecting with the soul rather than just clicking a button. For me, it's about capturing the essence of the subject.

Q Tell us about a still or a photo that represents your cinematic style.

The silence of nature. Today's world is full of chaos and competition.



DOWN TO EARTH Neha Sharma

> *"That's why I choose peace and silence while clicking my images — to represent the rhythm of nature.*
> NEHA SHARMA



WINTER MORNING OF KOLKATA Neha Sharma

THE CRAFT

Q How has your experience grown, from your first project to your most recent?

It has been a fantastic experience. I've met so many people, visited new places, and documented stories that matter. Each project taught me something new.

Q Walk us through your post-production process.

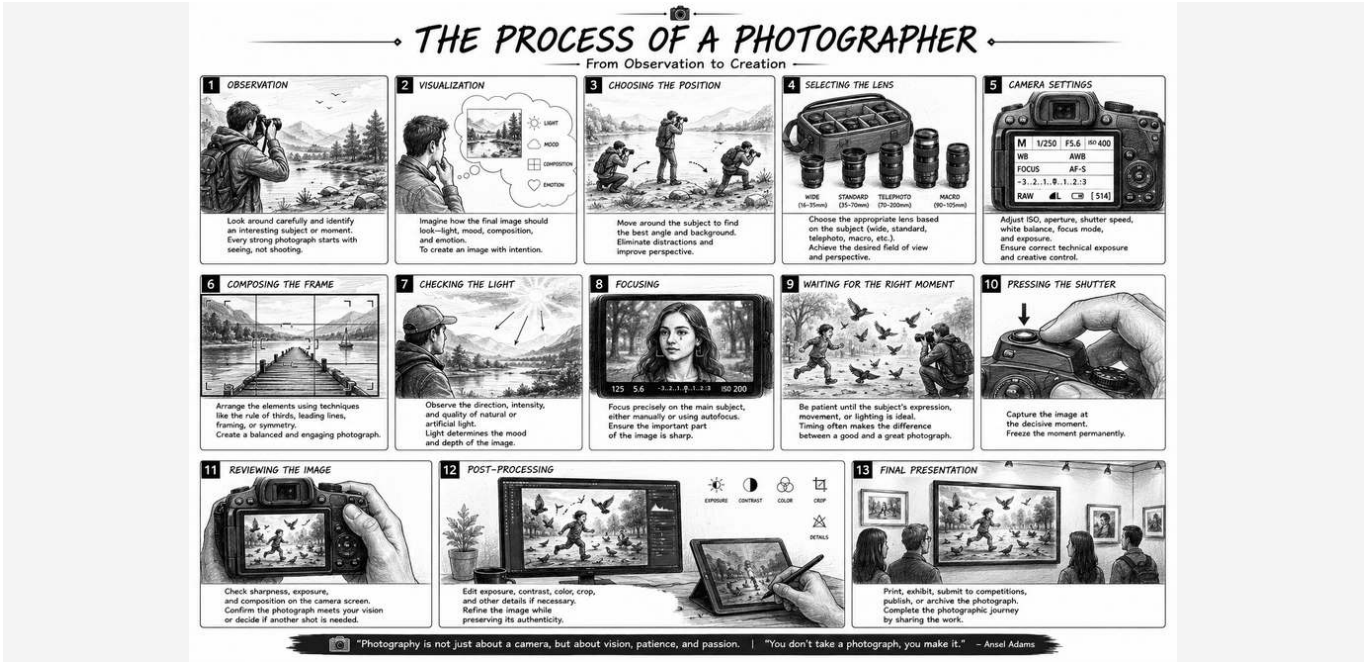
I used Adobe Photoshop 19 for color grading, portrait retouch, masking, and color balance. These techniques help correct, enhance, and present the image to the audience in the best possible way.

Q Describe the scene you storyboarded – what inspired it?

The storyboard is titled "The Process of a Photographer." It outlines the steps from observation to final presentation: observing, visualizing, choosing position, selecting lens, adjusting camera settings, composing the frame, checking light, focusing, waiting for the right moment, pressing the shutter, reviewing the image, post-processing, and finally displaying the photograph in an exhibition. I was inspired by the meticulous journey every photographer goes through to create a meaningful image.



THE MORNING OF KOLKATA Neha Sharma



THE PROCESS OF A PHOTOGRAPHER Storyboard · Neha Sharma

IN THE FIELD

Q What was the most challenging aspect of the production? How did you overcome it?

The rain was the most challenging aspect—I had to keep an umbrella in one hand and click images with the other. But I managed by staying patient and adapting to the conditions.

Q Select one image from the portfolio and tell us the story behind it.

The Ganga aarti of Varanasi was another challenging situation for me. That day, I woke up early in the morning when it was very cold and almost nothing could be seen. I worked till midday to capture the real vibes of the old city, Kashi.



BEHIND THE SCENES On location · Neha Sharma



GANGA AARTI · VARANASI "To capture the real vibes of the old city, Kashi." — Neha Sharma

CONNECT WITH NEHA SHARMA

WEBSITE teemugisto.my.canva.site/neha-sharma-welcomes-you

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Himalaya to Handloom

SUBHABRATA BISWAS · PHOTOGRAPHER · MUMBAI

Kolkata-born, Mumbai-based, and an engineer by profession — across fifteen years Subhabrata Biswas has let his camera carry him from the rugged, magnetic landscapes of Leh to the quiet, fading workshops of India's traditional craftspeople, with a deepening love for documentary, street, and the timeless mood of black-and-white.



PHOTOGRAPH · SUBHABRATA BISWAS

FROM THE MOUNTAINS

Q Tell us about yourself and how you'd describe your visual style.

I was born and brought up in Kolkata, though Mumbai has been home for nearly eighteen years now. Professionally, I work as an engineer, but much of my life outside work has been shaped by travel and photography. Over the past fifteen years, the camera has gradually become less of a tool and more a way of observing the world through visual storytelling — capturing the quiet beauty of fleeting moments, the emotions hidden within everyday life, and the stories reflected in local faces, streets, culture, and flavours.

While my early work focused largely on travel and landscape photography, over time my interests have gradually evolved towards documentary and street photography, along with a growing inclination towards the timeless character of black-and-white imagery.

AT A GLANCE

BASED	Mumbai — born in Kolkata
WITH A CAMERA	Fifteen years
WORK	Landscape · Documentary · Street · B&W
PUBLISHED	Asian Photography, Outlook Traveller, Nat Geo Traveller, Lonely Planet
PROJECT	'Echoes of Craft'

THE HIMALAYAN YEARS



PANGONG · LAST LIGHT

WHERE IT BEGAN Leh — three journeys in, and the place his landscape photography truly started.

Q How did your journey into landscape and travel photography begin, and what inspires you?

Frankly speaking, I never had a specific plan to become a landscape photographer. However, the colours, textures, layers, and sheer magnificence of nature have always fascinated me, and whenever I travel with a camera, I instinctively feel compelled to capture those moments.

My journey began just after my secondary school examinations, when I started exploring the Himalayas through trekking, carrying a simple film camera with me. What began as simple holiday travel gradually turned into a decade-long relationship with the mountains, shaping both my perspective and my photographic journey.

Beyond landscapes, I have always been equally drawn to human faces and untold stories. Storytelling through photography is something deeply personal to me. I constantly look for moments, expressions, and characters that often go unnoticed, and through my lens, I try to reveal the emotions and narratives hidden within them.

Q Which shoots, locations, or milestones are you most proud of?

Well, Leh would definitely be the first place that comes to my mind. I have been fortunate to travel across the world and experience many beautiful places, yet Leh remains especially close to me because, in many ways, that is where my journey into landscape photography truly began. There is something incredibly rugged, mysterious, and almost magical about its landscapes that keeps pulling me back — I have already been there three times, and hopefully there will be many more visits in the future.

I had dreamt about visiting this place since childhood, long before it became a mainstream tourist destination, and being able to experience and photograph it over the years feels like fulfilling a dream, at least partly.

Some of the photographs from these journeys were later published as photo stories and series in print media, including Asian Photography Magazine, Outlook Traveller, National Geographic Traveller, and Lonely Planet, which remain among the milestones I truly value.



LAMAYURU · LADAKH The monastery in the ranges.



MOONLAND The lunar formations near Lamayuru.

THE HUMAN FRAME



THE SHARPENER

ON THE STREET A knife-sharpener at his pedal wheel — the kind of unnoticed character his lens returns to.

Q Who do you create for, and what feeling or impact do you want your work to leave?

In many ways, I create for myself first — to preserve moments, emotions, memories, and stories that deeply move me while travelling and observing the world around me, rather than creating for any particular audience alone. At the same time, if my photographs are able to make someone pause for a moment, feel connected to a place or a person, or look at everyday life from a different perspective, then I feel the image has served its purpose.

Through my work, I want to evoke a sense of emotion, nostalgia, curiosity, and sometimes even silence. Whether it is the vastness of a landscape, the character in a weathered face, or the fleeting rhythm of a street scene, I hope my photographs leave behind an honest and lasting impression.

I am particularly drawn to images that tell stories without needing too many words. Especially in black-and-white photography, I feel emotions often become more timeless and universal. If viewers can pause and imagine the untold story behind a frame, connect with the human emotions within it, or simply feel transported into that moment, that is the kind of impact I aspire to create.

> *“Photography is not just about documenting a place, but about preserving the feeling of being there.*
>
> SUBHABRATA BISWAS

Q A belief or philosophy that reflects your approach to photography?

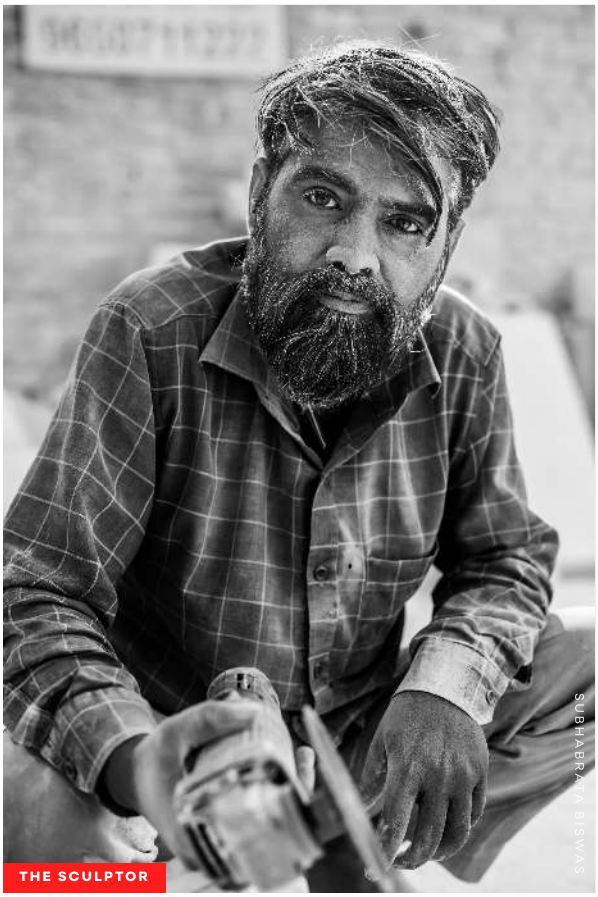
I believe the best photographs are the ones that make people pause and feel connected to a moment, a place, or a story beyond the frame. Hence, gradually over the years, more than perfection, I have found myself increasingly drawn towards authenticity — the mood of a landscape, the character of a face, and the emotion hidden within ordinary moments.



THE GRIND Steel drawn across the grinding wheel.



THE POTTER'S RHYTHM Clay on the wheel.



THE SCULPTOR

A STRUGGLE AGAINST TIME A marble sculptor — one of the fading professions at the heart of the series.

Q What are you currently working on or excited to create next?

Currently, I'm working on a long-term documentary project conceptualised around the theme 'Echoes of Craft: A Struggle Against Time and Technology.' Over the years, while travelling through different parts of India, I've often found myself deeply drawn towards people who continue practising traditional crafts and handmade work despite living in a world increasingly shaped by machines, automation, and fast production. Somewhere, I felt these stories deserved to be seen, remembered, and preserved.

Through this series, I'm trying to document not just the craft itself, but also the lives, emotions, environments, and silent dedication behind these fading professions. From roadside knife sharpeners moving through city streets, to potters, marble sculptors, handloom weavers, block printers, and lac bangle artisans in Rajasthan — every encounter has felt like stepping into a living piece of history sustained through patience, skill, and generations of inherited knowledge.

What excites me most about this project is its human and cultural depth. I hope this work can eventually become a small visual archive of traditions and livelihoods quietly resisting disappearance in the face of rapid modernisation.



AT THE HANDLOOM A weaver at work.



BLOCK PRINTING Pattern pressed onto fabric by hand.

CONNECT WITH SUBHABRATA BISWAS

INSTAGRAM @subhabrata.biswas **WEBSITE** subhabrata-myphotowork.com

IN CONVERSATION · PHOTOGRAPHY

Journals Became Frames

VEDIKA GOYAL · PHOTOGRAPHER & VISUAL STORYTELLER

From diary pages to camera frames — a self-taught storyteller who kept her name hidden for years, letting the pictures speak first.



VEDIKA GOYAL

Q How did your journey as a storyteller begin?

My journey as a storyteller didn't begin at a specific point—it's always been a part of me. I've always been someone who observes the world a little differently. Even the simplest conversations turn into stories in my mind. It started with journaling, where I'd write about my day as if it were a story. During the lockdown, I picked up my old Sony 4x Optical Zoom camera and started taking pictures. That's when I realized photography, just like writing, could become another medium to express my thoughts and my point of view.

Q What was the first moment you realized you could express your perspective through photography?

When I started showing my photos to my friends and family, I would always tell them the story behind them—what I saw, why I clicked that moment, and the perspective I wanted to share. Later, when I started posting them on social media, I kept my identity hidden for years. I wanted people to connect with the photographs first, before knowing the person behind them.

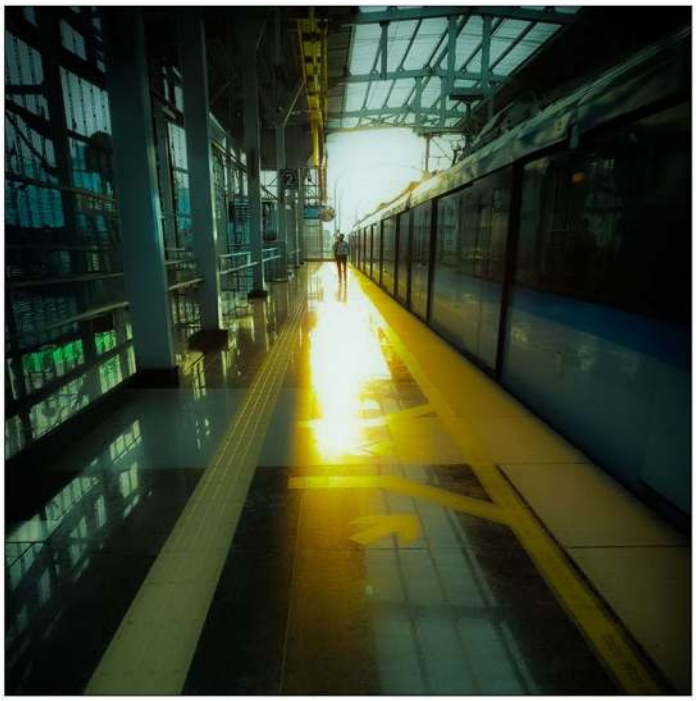
THE STORYTELLER

MEDIUMS	Photography, video & writing
BEGAN WITH	Journaling — writing each day as a story
FIRST CAMERA	An old Sony 4x Optical Zoom, picked up in the lockdown
APPROACH	Story first — identity kept hidden for years
FIND HER	@fusion_mynd

A STORY IN EVERY FRAME

Q How has your experience in visual storytelling grown over the years?

Every year, my experience in visual storytelling grows alongside me. As I explore, learn, and experiment, my way of seeing the world keeps evolving. That growth shapes my thought process, and it finds its way into every photograph, video, and story I create.



THE FRAME Vedika Goyal

Q What photo best represents your storytelling through photography, and what's the story behind it?

This photograph depicts that we're all caught in a loop, following the same routine every day. It can often feel like we're walking through it alone, but sometimes the universe sends us quiet signs that we're not. The light in this photograph says it all.

> *"Even the simplest conversations turn into stories in my mind.*

Q What personal experience has most shaped your unique perspective as a creator?

Growing up, I was always an average student. But these creative mediums—especially visual storytelling—changed how people saw me. Through photography, videos, and expressing my thoughts creatively, people began to know me for my perspective. It wasn't just recognition; it gave me a sense of belonging. For the first time, I felt I had something that was truly mine—my own way of seeing the world and telling its stories.

Q What message or emotion did you intend to convey in the video you uploaded?

In this video, I wanted to convey that sometimes there's so much going on inside your head. Everything feels messy, and you have so much you want to say, but you can't find the right words to express what's happening within you. It's okay to choose silence sometimes. It's okay if some days, you don't know how to express what's going on inside your mind.

Q Walk us through a specific editing technique from your video work.

It's a paper cut shoot and edit, so I used motion graphic style to showcase this project work for one of my clients.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this from Vedika Goyal's story.

BEHIND THE LENS



THE OVERLOOKED Vedika Goyal

Q Share a photo of a moment often overlooked by others, and what makes it special.

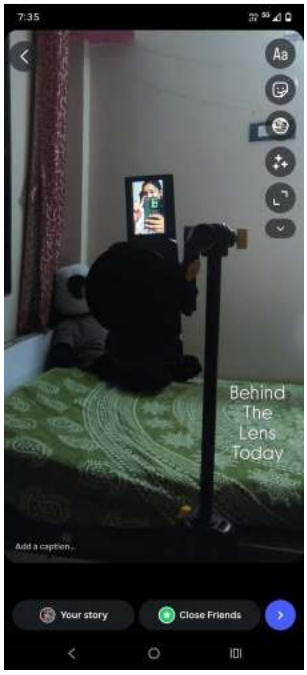
This photo is very close to my heart because I went to one street shop, and this girl is just peeking from that little corner and smiling, just like she is enjoying our presence. She was just enjoying the people around and wanted to play. When I clicked her picture, she was so happy, as if she felt special that day. It just reminds me of the innocence in childhood that we all had once in our lives.

Q What does this work reveal about you that your audience might not know?

I love my work because I enjoy doing it, and to be honest, if I don't enjoy doing it, I won't be great at it. So, I think my humorous side is what my audience might not know.

Q What does your creative process look like in that behind-the-scenes photo?

The photo I uploaded is of me shooting some angles for my content, where I use myself only for the shots. The process is hectic because you need to be a multitasker—set up, act, adjust everything—but then it's kind of enjoyable since you know how the result will look like.



ON SET Self-portrait

Q How does your writing enhance the visual story you tell?

This is one of the scripts I wrote for a personal short film. Writing also enhances my work style because I always get clarity on what needs to be done and how I will deliver the output. Writing boosts my creativity and helps me with clarity.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this from Vedika Goyal's story.

CONNECT WITH VEDIKA GOYAL

INSTAGRAM @fusion_mynd

IN CONVERSATION · MOBILE

Atmosphere Over Accuracy

ANUKTSAROOP SINGH NATURE & ATMOSPHERIC MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHER

Nineteen years old, one Xiaomi 14 Ultra, and a habit of waiting on weather — fog, first light, gathering cloud. He shoots the mountains not as they are, but as they feel.



OPENING FRAME Heavy cloud gathers above silhouetted peaks — the fleeting atmosphere he waits for.



THE EYE Anuktsaroop Singh.



FIRST LIGHT Dawn on the high peaks.

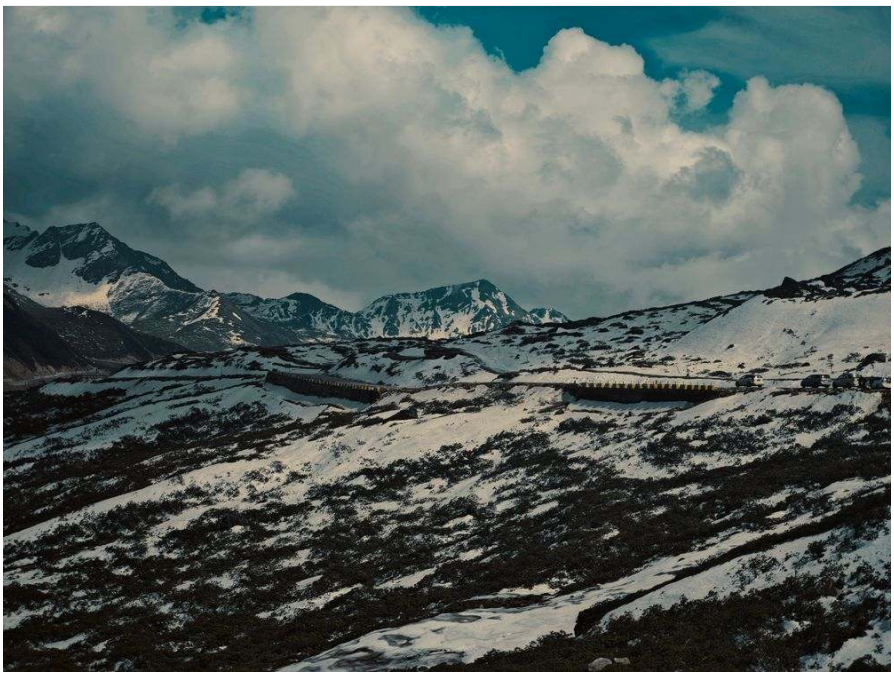
How did your journey in nature and atmospheric mobile photography begin?

My journey into photography started when my father bought a Xiaomi 14 Ultra. I was really impressed by what the camera on the Xiaomi 14 Ultra could do. This got me curious about photography. During a family trip I started taking pictures of landscapes and skies. I also took pictures of moments in nature. When I looked back at these photos I realized how much I enjoyed taking pictures to preserve moments. I then started learning about photography on my own. I practiced taking pictures. Tried out different ways of taking them. I learned about light and how to edit my photos. What started as something I just liked doing became something I was really passionate about. I made an Instagram page. Started sharing my photos one by one. For me photography is about making people feel something when they look at my photos. My goal is to make people feel like they are, in the moment that I captured in the photograph. Photography has taught me to slow down and look at the world carefully. Every picture I take is my way of sharing this feeling with people.

CONDITION: FIVE WEATHERS — SELECTED FRAMES · XIAOMI 14 ULTRA

▶ A few of his favourite nature photographs

Every frame in this set was chosen to show a different side of how I see nature. The violet flower is a piece of macro work where a shallow depth of field lets a single subject stand out against thick, contrasting foliage — a minimalist image built on colour and texture. The moody, snow-capped peaks under heavy cloud are where I lean into shadow and dramatic lighting to give a scene emotional power and scale. The procession moving across a foggy plain uses soft natural light, layered mist and distant mountains to create depth and a sense of timelessness. The golden-hour mountains bring colour theory and warm light together for a balanced, professional finish, and the winding road through the snow uses leading lines to carry the eye into the landscape and convey the feeling of a journey.



LEADING LINES The winding road carries the eye into the landscape — the feeling of a journey.



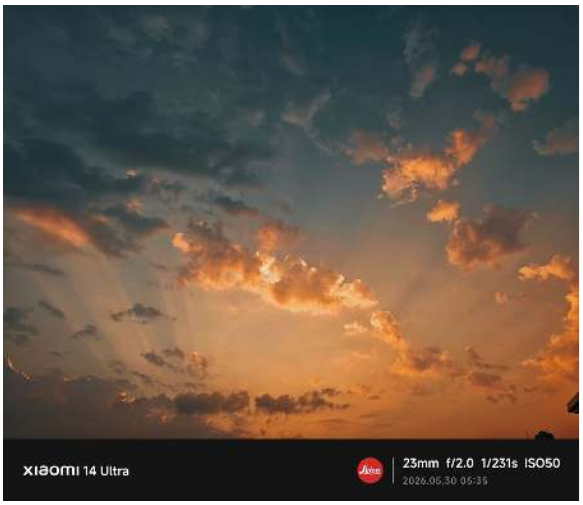
MACRO Violet flower against thick foliage.



SHADOW Snow-capped peaks under heavy cloud.



TIMELESSNESS A procession crossing a foggy plain, layered mist behind it.



GOLDEN HOUR Warm light, balanced colour.

CONDITION: AGAINST THE LIGHT 209MM · ISO 5000 · 1/17S

What inspires you to capture nature and atmospheric scenes with your mobile device?

What draws me towards the subject of nature is the fact that it is ever-changing. Every sunrise, cloud-filled sky, mountainous terrain, or even something simple in nature is capable of creating a unique atmosphere that stays there just for an instant. It is about preserving those moments through the art of photography that drives me to take pictures. Atmospheric settings have been a fascination for me for many years now, since they tend to make one feel certain things. It is all about capturing light, weather, shadows, and colors that transform the entire scenery. Being able to use a mobile phone is quite an advantage when taking photographs since it is available any time, anywhere. The ability to take shots whenever a sudden inspiration comes my way makes everything possible. It is all about sharing the atmosphere with other people who might be touched by the photo.

Shooting in challenging light

To capture these low-light scenes, I rely on a combination of manual control and the high-performance optics of the Xiaomi 14 Ultra. My goal is always to maintain the atmosphere of the scene while ensuring the subject remains sharp. For the moon shot, the primary challenge was the extreme contrast between the bright moon and the dark, cloudy sky. To overcome the backlighting, I used the telephoto capability (209mm) and relied on the camera's ability to handle high ISO (ISO 5000) to capture enough detail in the clouds without completely blowing out the exposure of the moon itself. The 1/17s shutter speed allowed enough light in to define the cloud texture. For the wall lamp, the backlight is the subject itself. By using a faster shutter speed (1/100s) and a moderate ISO (ISO 1000), I was able to manage the high-intensity light source from the lamp, preventing light bleed into the surrounding walls. This allowed the camera to maintain deep, clean blacks in the shadows, which is essential for a moody, cinematic finish.



MOON 209mm · ISO 5000 · 1/17s



WALL LAMP 1/100s · ISO 1000

> *"I want them to feel the atmosphere and the emotion of the scene even if they were never there."*
>
> ANUKTSAROOP SINGH



GOLDEN HOUR Crepuscular rays break through scattered cloud.

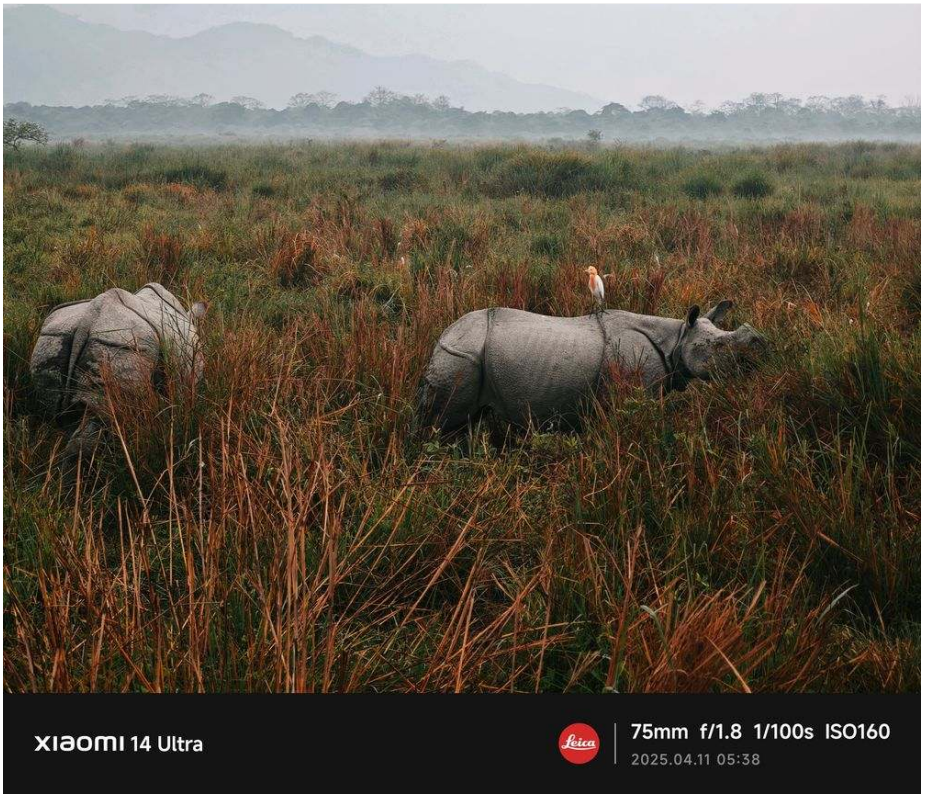


POWERFUL SERENITY Warm light catching the cloud edges above the peaks.

CONDITION: MISTY GRASSES — A THREE-FRAME STORY · FROM THE WILD

A three-photo story from the wild

These three photos convey a cohesive story of interconnectedness and symbiosis within the natural world. The story begins with a solitary rhinoceros standing in misty, golden grasses, highlighting the intimate bond between the rhino and the small bird perched upon its back as a symbol of mutual dependence. The narrative continues as the scope widens to include a pair of rhinos, emphasising that even in such a grand landscape, existence is a journey best travelled in companionship. Finally, as the setting shifts to the warmth of the afternoon, the focus transitions to a resting herd of deer, reinforcing that cooperation and social cohesion are the fundamental rhythms of nature.



ONE A rhino in misty, golden grasses — and the bird on its back.



TWO Company in the grassland.



THREE A resting herd, afternoon.

CONDITION: THE ONE THAT'S HIS — ONE FRAME



AS THEY FEEL The mountains not as they are, but as they feel.

The photograph that is distinctly his

This image is a reflection of my core philosophy as a photographer: to capture the landscape not just as it is, but as it feels. What makes it distinctly mine is the intentional cultivation of a moody, cinematic atmosphere that invites the viewer to pause and contemplate the scene's emotional weight.

My style here is defined by three elements. Atmospheric tension: rather than chasing harsh, bright light, I embrace softer, dramatic lighting to give the mountains a sense of timeless mystery. Minimalist framing: by focusing on the interplay between the massive, jagged peaks and the expansive, turbulent sky, I strip away unnecessary details to focus on the raw scale of the environment. Emotional narrative: my work is centred on evoking a mood rather than documenting a location.

CONNECT WITH ANUKTSAROOP SINGH

INSTAGRAM @anaukat.captures

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

The Yellow Wasp

SOLANKI DHAVAL RAJESHKUMAR · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

A self-taught wildlife photographer who traded cartoons for Nat Geo — and one phone snapshot of a wasp for a life spent waiting, quietly, in the wild.

Q What sparked your journey into wildlife photography?

It all started quite unexpectedly. I was sitting in my room one day when I noticed a yellow wasp perched on my window. On a whim, I pulled out my phone and photographed it, and in that moment, something clicked. I have always been a wildlife lover at heart—ever since I was a kid, I used to watch Nat Geo and Discovery instead of cartoons. That simple photo of the wasp reignited that deep passion and sent me down the path of wildlife photography.

Q What was the first moment that made you think, 'I want to keep doing this'?

The very first spark came from that yellow wasp on my window. But the moment I knew I was hooked for life was when I photographed my first bird with an actual camera—an Asian Koel. The thrill of capturing that bird, with its glossy black feathers and striking red eyes, made me realize that this was more than just a hobby; it was a calling.



NAT GEO, NOT CARTOONS A wildlife lover at heart, long before the first camera.



IN THE FIELD Dhaval Solanki — somewhere between dusty trails and silent forests, chasing stories the wild whispers.

IN THE FIELD



THE HERO FRAME

THE HERO SHOT A month of failed attempts, four-hour waits and a 102°F fever — all for a single frame of the Baya Weaver.

Q Walk us through your 'hero' shot. What's the story behind it?

I had been trying for this shot for almost a month. Every attempt failed, but I kept returning to the same place again and again, studying the behavior of the Baya Weaver closely. I focused on one bird, kept my shutter speed high, and used all focus points to improve my chances of capturing the perfect frame. It was never easy. Sometimes I stood there for four hours or more, waiting for that one moment. Even with a 102°F fever and a migraine, I continued shooting because I knew wildlife photography is not just about taking a camera and clicking a picture — it's about patience, dedication, understanding animal behavior, and never giving up. The moment I finally captured this frame, it felt incredibly rewarding. It reminded me why I hold a camera: to showcase the journeys, struggles, and beauty of wildlife through my perspective.

> *"Sometimes I stood there for four hours or more, waiting for that one moment.*





ON ITS TERMS Approaching an animal in its natural habitat — slowly, silently, and always on the subject's terms.

THE VISION



A MINI STORY This moment captures more than just wildlife — it reflects patience, respect, and the silent connection I feel with nature.









FROM THE FIELD Every frame reminds me why protecting these wild stories matters before they disappear forever — four frames, each shown whole.

REFLECTIONS



THIS IS THE REASON I HOLD A CAMERA

WHY THE CAMERA This is the reason I hold a camera — to showcase their journey to the world.

SCAN TO WATCH

Watch this clip from Solanki Dhaval Rajeshkumar's story.





WHERE IT BEGAN · THE YELLOW WASP

CONNECT WITH SOLANKI DHAVAL RAJESHKUMAR

INSTAGRAM @ds_naturestories

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Lockdown Dream

JENIFER V · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

How a locked-down 2020 and a backyard full of bee-eaters and robins became a life spent waiting, quietly, in the grasslands — for the kindness of wild things.

Q How did your journey in wildlife photography begin?

My photography journey began during the 2020 lockdown, which was a dream I had cherished since childhood. As a kid, I used to watch Nat Geo and Animal Planet with my mother—those were my greatest inspirations, just like for many photographers. I've been following my passion ever since, working hard to achieve big goals, and right now I'm proud of who I've become.



IN THE FIELD

JENIFER V

AT A GLANCE

BEGAN	2020 lockdown — a childhood dream
FIRST LOVE	Backyard birds — bee-eaters & Indian robins
IN THE FIELD	Point Calimere · Koothankulam · Mudumalai
APPROACH	Natural light, minimal edit, always on their terms



JENIFER V

PHOTOGRAPH · JENIFER V

THE CRAFT

Q What first made you fall in love with wildlife?

The first thing that truly drew me into photography was the birds in my backyard. Early mornings, I would watch bee-eaters, Indian robins, and many other species—I never realized so many birds visited our land. Capturing their grace and stunning colors made me fall in love with nature, and that love eventually turned into a deep passion for wildlife photography.

Q How has your photography style evolved over the years?

My photography style has evolved from simply capturing moments to telling meaningful stories. Over the years, I've developed a stronger eye for light, composition, emotions, and details. Each photo now reflects not only what I see but also how I see the world, making my work more intentional and authentic.

Q What makes this particular blackbuck photo special to you?

This image was taken at Point Calimere. The blackbuck is a highly social animal that can reach speeds of about 80 km/h—they are the fastest running mammals in our country. But when I approached them politely, they gave me space to mingle and didn't run away. Their kindness and the friendship between the two of them was magnificent.

> *Wildlife is always a miracle—if we give them kindness, they return it double.*

Q What is the most challenging aspect of wildlife photography for you?

The most challenging aspects are managing light and camera settings while maintaining a safe distance from birds and animals. The key challenge is finding species without disturbing them. Capturing them in their natural habitat is crucial because that's when you can get stunning, unexpected moments.



POINT CALIMERE The blackbuck — India's fastest land mammal — photographed on its own terms, unhurried and unafraid.

IN THE FIELD



BAR-HEADED GEESE

THE CHASE A ten-minute run across a field for a first, close encounter with the highest-flying birds on earth.



Q What story does this photo of the bar-headed geese convey?

When we visited Koothankulam Birds Sanctuary during the off-season, there were no birds, and I was very sad. We decided to return home via another route, and I spotted something moving in the distance. My family, my biggest supporters, stopped the car and encouraged me to go take the shot. I ran for about 10 minutes and found a stunning group of bar-headed geese—it was my first time seeing them so close. I later learned they are the highest-flying birds, crossing the Himalayas at altitudes of 8,000 meters. Freezing that moment was a thrilling experience—the chilliness, the location, and the birds all played perfectly together.

Q What does a typical day in the field look like for you?

A typical day in the field starts early, with my gear ready and a lot of patience. I spend hours observing, waiting for the perfect light and behavior. It's not just about taking photos—it's about being part of nature and understanding the animals.

Q What tips do you have for aspiring wildlife photographers?

Enjoying the journey is more important than the destination, because in the journey we learn many things about patience, courage, and love for nature, birds, and animals. Love and trust the process. Freezing wildlife moments in their natural habitat is ethical and a way of understanding and protecting nature. We must respect and protect wildlife at any cost.

SCAN TO WATCH

Scan to watch a clip of wildlife in action from Jenifer V's story.

REFLECTIONS

Q Walk us through your editing process for the images you shared.

My editing process starts with basic adjustments like exposure, white balance, and contrast to create a balanced image. I then fine-tune highlights, shadows, colors, and sharpness while keeping the photo natural. Finally, I make selective adjustments to draw attention to the subject, remove distractions if needed, and ensure the final image reflects the mood and story I wanted to capture. I never do too much editing—I always prefer the natural way of portraying wildlife.

Q What is your favorite location or habitat for wildlife photography?

Ultimately, the best habitat depends on your subject—grasslands for big mammals, wetlands for birds, forests for elusive species, and mountains for high-altitude wildlife. I love open grasslands with beautiful natural light and unobstructed views, as well as dramatic golden sunrises and sunsets. For me, the outstanding habitats are Point Calimere and Mudumalai Tiger Reserves, where you can observe hundreds of resident and migratory bird species.



ON LOCATION



PATIENCE, NOT HASTE Early light, a long lens, and hours of waiting — the natural way of portraying wildlife.

CONNECT WITH JENIFER V

INSTAGRAM @__jennifer__v

IN CONVERSATION · WILDLIFE

Branches, Then Forests

PRABHUDUTTA BEHERA · WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

What started as a hobby with a few birds and squirrels has become an exciting journey through jungles — capturing the raw beauty and untamed spirit of wildlife.



PRABHUDUTTA BEHERA



CAMELS AT DUSK

Q How did your journey in wildlife photography begin?

My wildlife photography journey began in 2018 with a simple fascination for nature. Armed with a camera and endless curiosity, I started by photographing birds perched on branches and squirrels darting through parks. Every click taught me something new about patience, timing, and the beauty of wildlife. As my passion grew, so did my desire to explore beyond local surroundings. Gradually, I began venturing into forests and wildlife reserves, spending hours tracking animals in their natural habitats. The thrill of spotting majestic creatures like tigers and lions in the wild inspired me to push my limits and improve my skills. Each photograph tells a story, and every adventure deepens my connection with nature.



PERCHED ON A BRANCH Where it all began.

INTO THE FOREST

Q What was the moment you knew wildlife photography was your passion?

It was when I observed wildlife and realized I could capture their emotions through the lens. Documenting the emotions and behaviors of animals in their natural habitats became incredibly fulfilling. I found myself drawn to transforming wildlife moments into compelling visual narratives, preserving authentic animal emotions and behaviors through the art of photography. Showcasing the emotional depth and beauty of wildlife through my lens is what truly drives me.

> *"The real challenge is being willing to wait for hours, sometimes days, for that perfect shot.*

Q How has your photography style evolved over the years?

I can't pinpoint exactly how it has changed, but I can say it's way better than when I started. My understanding of light, composition, and animal behavior has deepened, and I've become more patient and intuitive in the field. Each trip teaches me something new, and my style continues to evolve naturally.

Q What wildlife species do you find most challenging to photograph and why?

I wouldn't say any species is particularly challenging, but I have one piece of advice for anyone choosing wildlife photography: you need patience. Capturing a moment takes time, whether it's waiting for a bird to take flight or a predator to make a move.



BENGAL TIGER · IN THE WILD

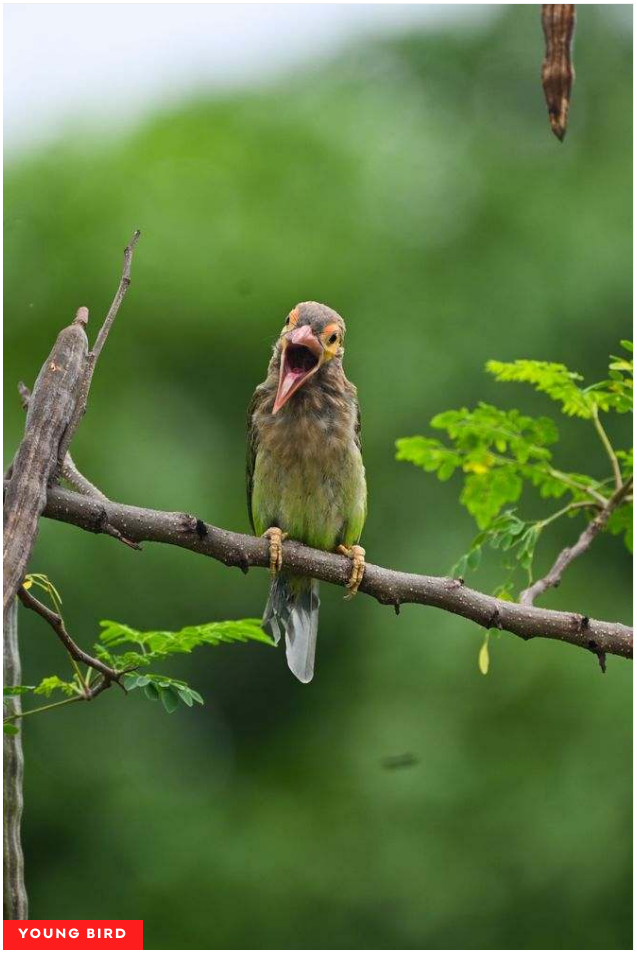
THE FRAME

Q What photo best represents your wildlife photography style?

These images capture the essence of my work: pigeons sharing a tender moment of companionship, a peacock displaying nature's masterpiece, a white tiger in serene strength, camels silhouetted at sunset, and a young bird expressing its vibrant personality. Each photo reflects my love for storytelling through wildlife.



PEACOCK



YOUNG BIRD



WHITE TIGER



CAMELS



PIGEONS

IN THE FIELD



EYE TO EYE

Q What details in the animal's expression or eyes stand out to you in a close-up portrait?

The eyes immediately draw attention—they convey a sense of calmness, curiosity, and quiet strength. Despite the animal's powerful presence, the relaxed posture and soft gaze create an emotional contrast, revealing a rare moment of vulnerability and serenity in a majestic predator.

Q How did you handle challenging lighting conditions to achieve this result?

Managing the ISO and aperture was key. I adjusted the settings to balance exposure while maintaining image quality, ensuring that the backlight added drama without losing detail in the subject.

Q Why is your favorite wildlife photography location special to you?

This location is in my hometown, and I loved the shot I captured there. It holds a personal connection, and the memories of that day make it truly special.



BACKLIGHT



HOMEGROUND

CONNECT WITH PRABHUDUTTA BEHERA

INSTAGRAM @_.prabhudutta._

WALLMAG AWARDS 2026

The Finalists' Honour Roll

Across the ten WallMag Awards judged this cycle, these are the Top 100 finalists — chosen by community votes alone, before the jury convened to decide the winners announced on 27 July 2026. Each roll is listed alphabetically, without rank: every name here stands equally.

Rap Awards 2026

99 FINALISTS

00AK
7EiGhT
Ace aka Mumbai
Akki Nindhaniya
Akshat Saraswat
Akshit Kumar
Alone16
AlphaGod
ALTER_EMIZAN
Aman
Amanx
Amar Brahma
Anirban Roy
Aryan Pandita
Ashish Pal
Ayan Ansari
Brodaskiz
Christopher Dsouza
Deepak Meldoddi
DEJ GANZA
Devanshu
Dheeraj Chhatriya
Dheeraj Maske Aka It's MD
Dhruv Chauhan
Drew & Roots
Ess-K
Frenzy Blaze
Gaurav Katoch
Harman Singh
Haseeb
Hash Bawa
Ibnu Shajil M
Ilh Eagle
Itsblive
Jigar Shah
JOEL
Karmic Sky
Kash
Kiran Nidhalkar
Krish Chouhan
Lekh
Lone
MC DARSHAN
Meenuharshithasrinivas
Mohd faisal
Mohit
Mov.ill
Mridul Upadhyay
MRINAL KANTI ROY
Nigavithran
Ommy Khan
Parth Rangra
parthsan
Paxive
Phenamoly
Pratik
Prince Bajpai
Priyanshu Thapa
Purple Dawg
Rahul Rao
Raj Aryan
Ranjith Kumar M
Reuben Thomas
Rinjee
RISKY RAPPER
Romil Rathod
Sarrvattam
Mukherjee (Sarrvy)
SATRaah
Satwik Shukla
Satyam Pandey
Seyed Abdul Kader
Sharkb50
Shiv Bali Prasad
Shivam Singh
Shivansh Pandey
Shraddhasurrrr
Shreya Kulshreshtha
Shreyash Chapre
Shubham Authentic
SiCK
Sid G
SIDD_X
Sunny Sanyal
Swappy Boi
T-RAGE
TANTRA
Teddy
Tejas uke
Topchee
Tushar Sharma
vansh oswal
Vardan Pandey
Viraaj Singh
Vishnu Sarma
X. music 401
Youngten59
Zaid
Zedano
□□□□□kaa□ music

Cover Artist Awards 2026

99 FINALISTS

A Simple Chord - Music & Films
Aakashi
Aarush Sharma
Aashna Morwal
Aayush Srivastava
Abhishek Shankar
Achin Jindal
Adamya Vats
Aditi Anvita
Aditya Sinha
Adrija
Aerjun Mahanore
Aishani Tomar
Akash Pratap
Akshat Sahu
Alina Gomez
Amit Jadav
Ananta Adhikary
Aniruddha Vele
Ankit Pathak
Ankit Thakur
Ankur Bhattacharyya

Cover Artist Awards 2026
(continued)
99 FINALISTS

Anu
Arpit lal
Arpitkumar
Aseem Dhal
Ayan Sen Choudhury
Ayush Bagchi
Ayush Kumar
Barath Raghavan
Boidurjya Dyuti Chowdhury
Debanjan Pakrashy Deep
Dev Kishorre
Dipankar Nigam
Divyanjali Chowdhury
Eddy
Hardik Sawalkar
Harpriya Chakradeo
HEMAN BABU
Hming Than Sanga Kholhring
Inderidk
Javeed Ali Khan
Joel
Joewin shamalina Ketaki
Krrish Kumar
Kshitij Kiran
Lavanay Sain
Lekha Venkat
Manish Adtani
Mukul izardar
Naisha Nazar
Nandini Nair
Nandinii Roy
Navyaa Asthana
Nishant sharma
Nishita Verma
Nitin 0312
Nixon KJ
Parag Jain
Parth Khokhariya
Pavan shenoy
Prakhar Mehrotra
Prathamesh Joshi
Priya Singh
Rahul Jogdand
Raja Rajeshwari
Ranjith Kumar M
Reuben Thomas
Ritesh Sharma
Ritesh Singh
Riya Mishra
Robin
Rohith Kishore
Rythm Sachdev
S.Rohail Mohamed
Sagar jain
Sai Murahari
Sanju Musik
Sarvesh Chaudhary
Sharayu Mandhane
Shekhar Momen
Shiba Ekka
Shreys Divvaakar
Shubh Shah
Sidlydian
singer ashif maliya
Somraj Das
Soumyadeep Das
Sumit Sunny
Suraj Roy
Suraj Yadav
Suskang A Sangma
T Cee
Talya
Tanya Mandare
Vasudha Singh
Vivek Deb

Independent Music Creator Awards 2026
100 FINALISTS

€lite
22nd V
Aantarim
Aanya Khanna
Abdul Kadir Ali
Aboveclouds
Adarsh Krishna
Adarshkumar Singh
Aditya Gurnale
Ajanya Kaul
Akash Kohli
Akhilesh Ramachandran
Amar Brahma
Amey Walekar
Anirudh Nambiar
Anmol Kukreja
Arjunsinh Chavda
Ashwin Ivnati
Avinash Kumar Raghuvanshi
b ravi
BassKaster
Civilized HQ
Dhiman Das
Divyam Behal
Dj Vish
Dr. Nitish kumar Rawat
Emon Goswami
Gaurav
Grace Charmz
Happy Soul
Harish S
Hayensa Hazowary
I APPAN
Idée Digital Media
KAPOW!
Kaushal Pandey
Ketan Handa
Kevin Marshall
Kunal
Kunal Sanjay mehra
Lafz
LEELA
Maharaja Rapper (Naushivkumar Varma)
Martian Keys
MAX MANAN
Musafir Bunny
Naad
Nandinii Roy
Naru parai isai

Independent Music Creator Awards 2026 (continued)

100 FINALISTS

Navyaa Asthana
Neha Arora
Nilesh kumar agarwal
Niranjan Saravanan
NISHACHAR
Offbeat Karma
Palden Sherpa
Parth bhatt
Parth Rana
Payel
Poonam Bhuneja
Prakas Anand K
Prakruti Yadav
Pranav Tanwar
Rabiul Miah
rahulpr music
Rakhi R Nath
Ram Suyal
Rishin babu
ritesh sharma
Rohan Saha
Rushi Vyas
Sachin M.A
Saju R
Sanil Levi
Santosh mane
Seyed Abdul Kader
Shams Qabid
Sharon Joseph
Shashank Acharya
Shetty Akshay Krishna
Shreyansh Mishra
Simon prakash
Soham Kulkarni
Souryadeep Chatterjee
Subhodeep Bhattasali
SugarLily
Sunny Sanyal
Susmit Limaye
TANUSHKA RAJPOOT
Teddy
Tirkéy
VaarKaar
Vamsi ismaV
vansh oswal
Vanya Creado
Veekesh foujdar
Vishal
Vishnupriya T V
Vs Siddhu
Yuvanshree Dhayanithi

Vocalist Awards 2026

100 FINALISTS

Aadhavie
Aantarim
Abhirudra Tiwari
Aditi Anvita
Akshit singh
Angel Bawa
Aniruddha Vele
Ankita Sadhu
Apurv Gupta
Apurva Dubey
Aradhya Rao
Aritra Chakraborty
Arjun
Ashirbad Dash
Ashna Manaf
Aswin A
Ayush Joshi
Ayushh
Ayushman Nirola
Bairagi
Baljeet singh
Bhushan patil
Christopher Dsouza
Civilized HQ
Dadi Jeshwitha
Debanjan Pakrashy
Devendra Khirole
Dharshini Dharsh16@
Dhiman Das
Dhyanam HP
Dibyalipsa Patra
Diya Purohit
Geet Manocha
Gopika I G
Gulam Mustafa
Indrani Ghosh Roy
jaisingh daf
Jenifer Nancy
Jercia Abraham
Kenzul Manna
Khyathi Sri
Kiran Rathod
Lalit S
Lasya K A
Mangal Dubey
Mansi Agrawal
Maya Manikantan
Melcher Duarte
Mridul Dosar
Mridul Singhania
Nandinii Roy
Navyaa Asthana
Neelakshi Das Pawar
Nitesh Pandey
Nwaab Sohel
PANKAJ KIKANI
Pankaj Muguri
Parosi Chowdhury
Parth Pandey
Parth Rana
Prabhnoor Singh
Rajarshi Bhattacharyya
Rajasee Bhattacharya
Ramandas Nair
Ranjith Kumar M
Rishhad Dave
Roma Mitra
Roshan Verma
Sagar Raina
Sagnik
Samhita
Saransh Peer
Sarathkumar A
Shambhavi Majumdar

Vocalist Awards 2026 (continued)

100 FINALISTS

Shanmukh Puppala
Shiverwood Shade
Shruti Rathore
Shubham raj
Siddharth Sharma
Singer Sam
Siri
Soham Kulkarni
Soham Kundu
Soujash Banerjee
Sruthi rajesh
Stuti Kapoor
Sunny Sanyal
Suraj Rathore
Suraj Yadav
Surmandeep Singh
Suskang A Sangma
Swanandi Sadolikar
Tannushri Rai
Thanmaya Ranjith
Varush Gautam
Vedant Shyam
Vikrant
Vinodha
Vipin Gupta
Yashica Bane

Guitar Player Awards 2026

100 FINALISTS

Aakash L
Aayush Taneja
Abhijeet Sarsar
Abhishek bhalla
Abhishek Sengyung
Aditya Kamble
Along Naga
Anahad
Anik Debnath
Anindya Sengupta
Ankit Sharma
Anmol Kukreja
Anmol Shrestha
Anshul Chaudhary
Aqram
Ashish joshi
Atharva Sachan
Atindra Kumeriya
Avi Noir
Bedanta Saikia
Biki Biswas
Bishnu Hazarika
Bitan Dey
Chris Jason
Diethovizo Khate
Dishant Samota
Diwas Tamang
Donchang Sangma
EmmanuelSamsonEgbert
Geetank Saroya
Gidel Jacob
Gugu Sekhose
Harsh
Hhh 3uu
hriday arora
IMMANU VEL M
Joshua Livingston
Joydeep Mondal
Junaid Siddiqui
Karthik Ramaswamy
kaushik Ravindran
Keerthan Joshua
Khuraijam Sanjeet
Krish Deuba
Krishav Biswas
Kumar Vaibhav
kushalnubone
Laqshya Javalagi
Mrinmoy Bhowmick
Nick Tombing
Nicky Darjee
Nirav Adrian
Palaksh Aksoliya
Palden Sherpa
Piyush Bhute
Prabhakar Tomar
Pragyan Sarkar
Pranab Deka
Pranav Sanjai
Prodipta Das
rajesh giri
Ranbir Sharma
Reinhardt Dias
Rohit H. Sivaram
Ruchen Rai
Rudhrapriyo Paul
Saayan Tewari
Saikat Majhi
Samarth James
Sambhab Sekhar Patra
Sambit Sardar
Samuel
Sandip Bala
Sankhadeep Mitra
Sayan Das
Shaik Adnan Hyder
Shaun Dsouza
Shivam Deb Barma
Shiverwood Shade
Shivrajsinh Chavda
Shivshant Upadhyay
Shubham Lad
SKYDRIFTERS Official
Soumyadeep Das
Subhoshis Das
Sujanya
Sumwang Sumnyan
Swayam Acharya
Tarun Bisht
Tashi Bhutia
Tonmoy Borah
Turbayan
Vaastu
Vaibhav Mahajan
Varun Dutt
Vedant Barshikar
Vidip Singh Negi
Vishal gondyan
Vishal Kumar
Yeshurun

Creative Photography Awards 2026

100 FINALISTS

Aatmaja Roy
Abhishek Karthik
Abinath konthoujam
Aditya Sunilkumar
Aditya Vyas
Ali Mansur (Ali palsana)
Amrita Dey Chatterjee
Anand Dhande
Aniie Bala
Anirban Das
Anuj kumar tiwary
ANUSH RAJ R
Archit Sharma
arindam bhuiya
Arnab Bhunia
Arnab Biswas
Athish SR
Ayushman Singh Thakur
Bishal Shaw
CKS Photography & Film's
Daiwik Kaushik
Dasan Kharmawphlang
Dharmendra Vasavada
Dhruv Patel
Dibyajyoti Das
Ditsa Shihurkar
Divyesh Bhesaniya
Harsh Kumar
hriday arora
Hrittick Pakre
Hrittick Photowala
Indrajeet Chatterjee
Ishan Wankhade
Jignesh Chavda
Jit roy
Kamal Singh Meena
Kapil Bhagwat
Kevinder Singh
Kriti Aggarwal
Manojit Sasmal
Mayur Shedge
MOHAMMED asif pathan
Mohit Krishna
Monojit Dutta
Mudavath Mahesh
NAVIN Jayaraman
Neerudi Prasad
Nikhil Paul
Nikhil Rawal
Nisheeth Dashrathlal Pimpaldara
Ojit Sharma
Pavan Dimmeta
Pooja Kumari
Priya Ojha
Purkait Raj
Purnesh
Renuka Murmu
Resh Pooran
Rishit Sharma
ROBIN KUMAR
Saanvi Goyal
Sai Aasritha
Sai Sethi
SANDEEP KUMAR
VANGARI
Sathree
Savan Tank
SAYAN
Sayan Bakshi
Shiron Dass
shishir desai
SHIVANSHU GOEL
Shounak Pal
Shyam
Souhityo Das
souvikk ghosh
Sravan Kumar
Sreehari Saju
Srinivas
Srishti basu
Srujith Reddy
Subha Sen
Subhradeep chakraborty
Suchismita Bakshi
Sudipta Das
Suman Das
Suman Maity
Sunandita Choudhury
Sunny Aryan
SuryaMitra chaganti
Suvrodip Saha
The Classic Photographer
Kolkata India
Vashale Devi
VASU GUGULOTHU
Vijay Ganesh H
Vikash Aaryan
Vinod Kumar Ramala
Vishal N
Yamini Bhatt
Zanul Abedin
Zooming Zindagi

Wildlife Photography Awards 2026

100 FINALISTS

Aathithya V S
Abhay Prajapati
ABHIJITH WARRIER
Abhirup Lahiri
Abhishek Kantebet
Alan Varghese
Alberto Gutierrez
ALVIN MATHEW
Amit Jariwala
Anaga Elsa Thomas
Anandhu M
Anindya Dasgupta
Anuj Deore
Anushka Singh
Apurba Nayak
Archit Sharma
Armaan Malhotra
Arun Chandra Reddy Demagu
Asees Sidhu

Wildlife Photography Awards 2026 (continued)

100 FINALISTS

Ashish Deuskar
Bestin Sunny
Chandramouli
Dakshesh Ashra
Dishnu Ghosh
Divyansh Bhanot
Falisha Manhal
Farhan Bhati
G Prejin
Gaurav Nakra
Gopi R K
GURVINDER SINGH CHHABRA
Harshad Daswani
Himanshu Patra
Hrittick Pakre
Indrajeet Chatterjee
Jayesh Goyal
JOHNSON JOSE
Kallol Ghosh
Kershon R
KI NG
Kishore M
Koushik Mahato
Kriti Aggarwal
Kumardip Ghosh
Lokesh Balwant Mate
Malhar Mahadevia
Manya Baldha
mayank dutt
Mohamed Shafeek MOHAMMED asif pathan
Mohit Kumar
Mohua Mukherjee
Monojit Dutta
Narayanan Iyer
Neerudi Prasad
Niharika Prasad
Nikunj Raj
Nishan
Nitesh Nagpal
Padumma Gohain Parth
Parth Bhatt
Parth Sharma
Pavan Dimmeta
Prachi Samant
Princy gupta
Prithvisingh Kapoor
Punit Dhameja
Rajasekaran Rajakumar
Rajeev Jain
Rashmi Dsouza
Roopal Aditya
Sachendra Yadav
Samuel Dias
Shyaam Maniraj
Shyam Mishra
Siddharth D
Sk Siddique Ali
Solanki Dhaval Rajeshkumar
Souvick Mukherjee
Sowjanya K N
Sreenath S
SRIDHAR SIVARAM
Srinivasan Ramachandran
Subhabrata Biswas
SUBHAJIT DATTA
Sudeep Banerjee
Sumeet Kotharkar
Sundeep Kumar Kheria
Surabhi Sapra
Susnata Hore Ray
Tirth Vagadiya
Vasanth Prabhu
VASU GUGULOTHU
Vijay Ganesh H
Vinit Padhiyar
VINU ANAND S
Vishal N
Yadnya Masali
Zuha Hussain

Black & White Photography Awards 2026

100 FINALISTS

Aanya Srikar
Abhijit Roy
AKASH GHOSH
ALVIN MATHEW
aman Kulshrestha
Amogh Sushilchandra
Amrita Dey Chatterjee
Anirban Das
Ankush Bhagvat
Anushka
Appu Abner
Arghadeep Chinya
Arijit Ganguly
arindam bhuiya
Aritra Chakraborty
Arkodeep Roy
Arnab Sarma Sarkar
Arnav Sahu
Arun Chockalingam
Aryaman Sharma
Asmit Ghoshal
Babu
Barkha Singh
CHINMAYA SENAPATI
Daiwik Kaushik
Debasis Paik
Dev Jha
Dev Rai
Dev Raj
dia john photography
Garv Rajput
Gokul Krishna
Hrishikesh Nair
Jilan Pathak
Jinansh Doshi
joydeep bhattacharjee
Keshav Agarwal
KILI POYAVAN
Kriti Aggarwal
Kushal T
Lawma Ralte
Mahati Saraf

Black & White Photography Awards 2026 (continued)

100 FINALISTS

Mainak Dasgupta
Manojit Sasmal
Manya Baldha
Mayur Shedge
mieshaa sarkar
MOHAMMED asif pathan
Mohit Asrani
Monojit Dutta
Navneet Kumar
Neerudi Prasad
Nisarg Mehta
Om Goupale
Oviul Maruf
Pavan Dimmeta
Pavan Sridhar
Pranay Kaduskar
Prapti Khan
Preethi Kavunder
Pritam Sarkar
Priya Ojha
Priyansh Tripathi
Rahul Khanra
Rahul Kumar
Raj
Rajesh Dhar
Rommani Pal
Saanvi Goyal
Samiksha Sapkal
SANDEEP KUMAR VANGARI
Satwik
Savan Tank
Sayan Bakshi
Sayan Bose
Shidhanta Nandy
Shiron Dass
SHIVANSHU GOEL
Shraddha Karanjekar
Shubhabrata Bose
Shubham Kumar
Shubham Vinod Singh
Shyam ganju
Siddhanth Chakraborty
Souhityo Das
Sriaravindan S
Sridharshni Srinivas
SUBHAJIT DATTA
Subham Padhan
Suma Shastry
sushovan Sar
Swagato Mondal
Tejas Kapoor
VASU GUGULOTHU
Vicky Kashyap
Vijay Richhiya
Vikash Aaryan
Vishal BD Jha Sarkar
Zooming Zindagi

Wedding Photography Awards 2026

78 FINALISTS

Abhishek Saha
Ajay Solanki
Ajin Achankunju
AKASH GHOSH
Amal Shaji Karikuzhy
Aman Varma
Anand Dhande
Anindya Phani
Appu Abner
Apurba Guchhait
Arkadip Mondal
Arun P
Ashutosh Kumar
Ayush Gupta
Ayushman Singh Thakur
Bhagirath Behera
Bhavsar Films
Biby Paul
CKS Photography & Film's
Darshan hingu
Debjit Dey
DEBRAJ BISWAS
DEVAN MANUEL
Diganta Photography
Dipankar Dutta
Eashan Ghosh
Eshana Banerjee
Gujrathi sainath
Harsh Patel
Harsha Vardhan
Hitesh Malpani
JADAV KALPESHBHAI GANPATBHAI
John Vijay Raj
Kaustubh Joshi
Kolkatar Chobiwala
Kotresh A N
Krishna Teli
Laxmishree
MOHAMMED asif pathan
Mohd amir
Monojit Dutta
Nachiket Sharma
Payal Bhavsar
PKD ARTS
Raj
Rajas daryapurkar
rajdhani memoriesmaker
Raju Alam
Ravi patel
Rishabh Parmar
Roshan Solse
RS Wedding Bells
Sagar Prajapati
Sahil Jadhav
Satyam Pixels
Sawan Tyagi
Sayan Bakshi
SAYAN BISWAS
Sayantan Ganguly
Sayoni Manna
Shawnlee Nath

Wedding Photography Awards 2026 (continued)

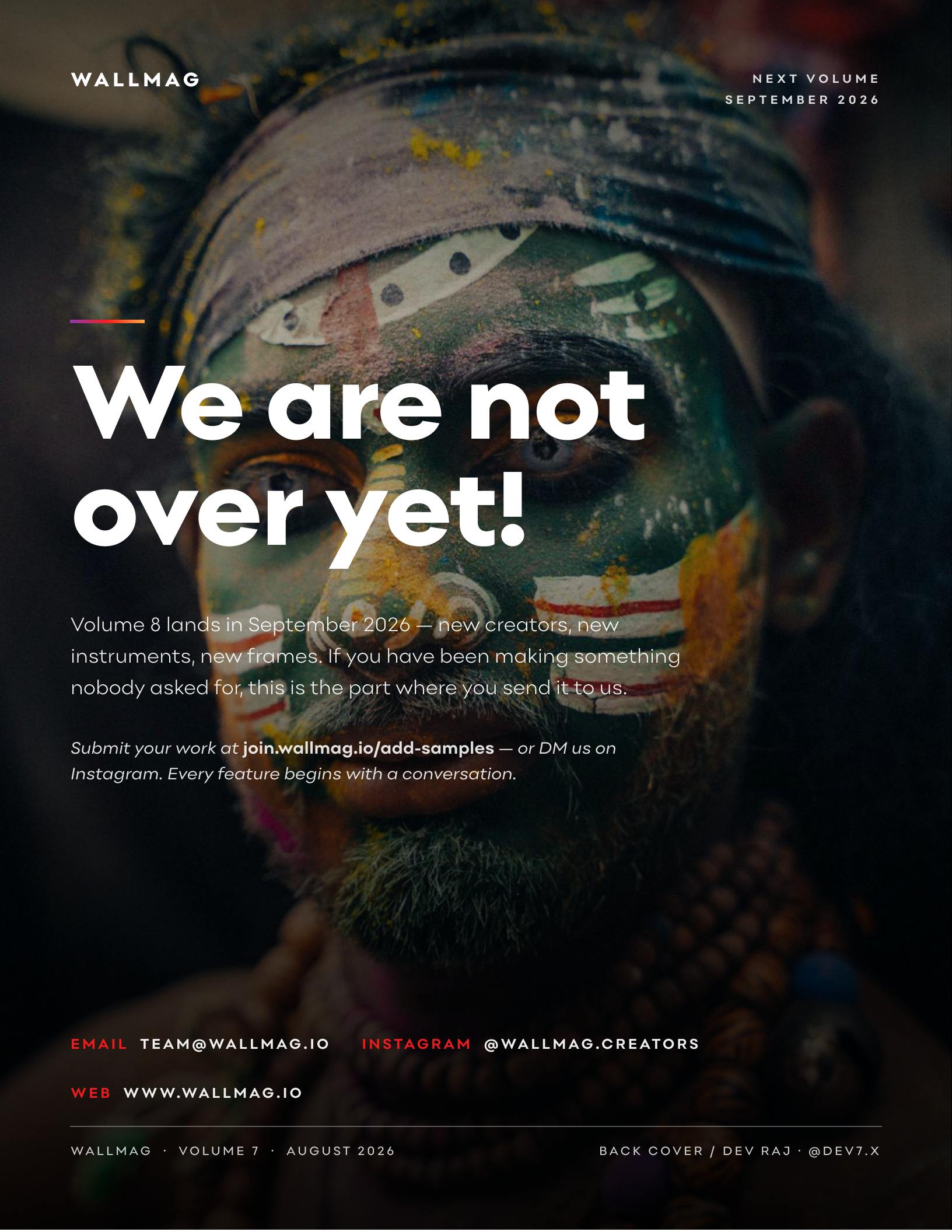
78 FINALISTS

sidharth Biswakarma
Souhityo Das
SOURAV PAL CHOWDHURY
Sourav Raul
Subham Ghosh
Sujay DUTTA
Sujay Hawaldar
Suraj S. Devlekar
The Classic Photographer Kolkata India
The Weddings Planet
v Ganesh Varada
vaydehi khandelwal
Vipin Ji
Viraj Ankit
Vivaah Picture Factory
YASH PALEJA

Mobile Photography Awards 2026

99 FINALISTS

Aanya Srikar
Abhishek Karthik
Aditya Kumar
Ahan Majumdar
Ajay Mittisila
Ajay Pawar
AKASH GHOSH
Akash Kumar
AMALPMANI
Ameer S
Amrit Pal
Anand Dhande
Anand Dhande Patil
Anushka
Aparna Kochumon
Appu Abner
Argha Sikdar
Arghadeep Chinya
Aritra Bhattacharya
Aritra Chakraborty
Ashwin Temples Heritage Nature
Ayush Kumar Sah
Binay Bhowmik
BIPRORSHI SANKAR CHATTERJEE
Daiwik Kaushik
Debraj Das
Dev Yadav
Dharmendra Vasavada
Dhriti Ramesh
Dibyajyoti Das
Durgesh Sinha
Fahad Sk
Falisha Manhal
Gopi Jampana
Hrittick Pakre
Indra Chatterjee
Ishaan Johar
Ishaan Kashyap
Joseph Titto
Kanishka Gupta
Kevinder Singh
Kriti Aggarwal
Loyal Manuka
Mahesh Pihal
Mainak Dasgupta
Mohit Asrani
Mohsin Hm
Monojit Dutta
Mouli D
Neerudi Prasad
Nikhil Gadekar
Nikhil singh
Nikhil V
Niyas Rahiman k
Om
Oviul Maruf
Pavan Dimmeta
Pawan Toor
Prabhav gupta
Priya Ojha
Pulkit Jain
Rishik Bhardwaj
Rishit Jhorar
Rohit Kumar
SAGNIK PALIT
Sai krshna
Sakshi Chauhan
SANDEEP KUMAR VANGARI
Sanya Kakkar
Sayan Bakshi
Sayandeep Pal
Sayoni Manna
SHERIN KASIM
Shidhanta Nandy
Shubhadip Das
shubhra sau
Snehanshu Nayak
Souhityo Das
Soumayan Biswas
Sourojit Samanta
Srujith Reddy
Subhabrata Biswas
SUBHAJIT DATTA
Subhajit Mali
Subham Padhan
Sudipta Das
Suma Shastry
Sunny Lalwani
Suparna Samanta
Swapnil Sahu
The Classic Photographer Kolkata India
Ujjwal patel
Vashale Devi
VASU GUGULOTHU
Vijay Ganesh H
Vishal N
Vishal Nayak
Vyshnav Karuna
Zeyaul Ali



We are not over yet!

Volume 8 lands in September 2026 — new creators, new instruments, new frames. If you have been making something nobody asked for, this is the part where you send it to us.

Submit your work at **join.wallmag.io/add-samples** *— or DM us on Instagram. Every feature begins with a conversation.*

EMAIL TEAM@WALLMAG.IO INSTAGRAM @WALLMAG.CREATORS

WEB WWW.WALLMAG.IO