

ANATOMIES

PRABUDDHA DASGUPTA

SLEEPING IN THE FOREST

DILEEP PRAKASH

Preview Saturday, 3 February 2018, 6 pm

On view Until 17 March 2018

Gallery hours: Monday – Saturday, 11 am – 7 pm

Closed on Sundays and national holidays

PHOTOINK is pleased to announce two solo exhibitions of black and white photographs by Prabuddha Dasgupta and Dileep Prakash. While both artists have had distinctly different histories and practices, there are intersections in their works that invite conversation.

Prabuddha Dasgupta (1956-2012) was a self-taught photographer who grew up in the cultural chaos of post-colonial India. Although he studied to be a historian, he began his career as a copywriter before turning to photography in the late 1980s. In the decades that followed, he pursued both commissioned and personal projects, bringing to both a bold and very distinct sensuality that very quickly established him as one of the most celebrated fashion photographers in India. The exhibition, *Anatomies* was conceived posthumously in collaboration with his Estate as a series of 26 gelatin silver prints to draw attention back to his interest in nature and more specifically the anatomy of plants. From his earliest photographs made in the 1980s until his untimely death, Dasgupta observed plants not as static still lifes but as erotic and sensual living beings. Though his intention was not to provoke, it is hard to ignore how sexually charged some of his photographs are. The plants are not always perfectly arranged or in full bloom—sometimes they are framed as wilting creatures to remind us of their fragility and past splendour.

Dileep Prakash (b. 1965) is also a self-taught photographer who majored in history and has been photographing since the 1980s. He worked as photo editor at leading magazines until 2007 when he quit his job to devote time to his own projects. His practice is recognizable by his long standing interest in photographing remnants of India's colonial past — the last steam trains (1999-2003), portraits of the Anglo-Indians (2004-2006) and photographs of boarding schools built before India's independence (2007-2010). Prakash's exhibition, *Sleeping in the Forest* is a culmination of a ten year long project which began as a study of British built rest houses in the forests of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand but soon his interest shifted to include the surrounding forest and his relationship with it. Trailing the full moon, *Sleeping in the Forest* is a haunting ode to the unassailable forest at night. Prakash's use of long exposures penetrates the dark, dense foliage and winding paths beyond what the naked eye can see. Always alone while photographing, he sometimes encounters a presence which is recorded in his camera as a strip of light. Presented as large photographs, the forests appear majestic even while asleep.

ABOUT PRABUDDHA DASGUPTA

Prabuddha Dasgupta's prominent solo exhibitions include his retrospective, *A Journey*, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi (2015); *Edge of Faith*, '561/563', Mumbai (2009); *Myth and Memory*, Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milan, Italy (2007); *Longing*, Bodhi Art, New York (2007); *The Erotic Landscape*, NAP/Photo Biennale, Brescia, Italy (2004); *Ladakh*, Le Cashmerien, Paris, France (2002); *In Every Grain of Sand*, Vis-a-Vis Gallery, New Delhi (1999) and *Nudes and other Photographs*, Piramal Centre For Photography as Art, Mumbai (1993). His group exhibitions include *Edge of Faith*, Serendipity Arts Festival, Goa (2016-2017); *Where Three Dreams Cross: 150 Years of Photography from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2010); *Act of Faith*, Noorderlicht Photo Festival, Netherlands (2007) and *Corpo a Corpo*, Galleria Stefano Forni, Bologna, Italy (2004).

Dasgupta's photographs have been widely published in books and magazines, including the Paris Review, Nudi (Motta Editore, Milan) and India Now — New Photographic Visions (Textuel, Paris). He received several awards and grants including the Yves Saint-Laurent grant for photography and his work is in the collections of individuals and institutions such as the Museo Ken Damy, Brescia, Italy, and Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milan, Italy. His publications include *Prabuddha Dasgupta 1956-2012* (2015), *Edge of Faith* (Seagull Books, 2009), *Ladakh* (Penguin India, 2000), *Women* (Penguin India, 1996). He was in the process of publishing his work, *Longing*, when he passed away in 2012.

ABOUT DILEEP PRAKASH

Dileep Prakash's solo exhibitions include *What Was Home*, Photoink (2011), *The Anglo-Indians*, Photo Phom Penh, Phom Penh, Cambodia (2010), Photoink (2008) and Goethe-Institut, Frankfurt, Germany (2006). His photographs have been included in important group exhibitions: *INDIA - Contemporary Photographic and New Media Art*, FotoFest 2018 Biennial, Houston, USA (March-April 2018); *The Portrait: Contemporary Indian Photography*, FOTOFREO, The City of Fremantle Festival of Photography, Fremantle, Australia (2012); *Where Three Dreams Cross: 150 years of Photography from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2010) and Fotomuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland (2011); *The Self and The Other – Portraiture in Contemporary Indian Photography*, Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona (2008) and Artium, Vitoria, Spain (2009) and *Photoquai Biennale of Contemporary Non-Western Photography*, Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France (2007).

Prakash's publications include *What Was Home* (Photoink, 2011), *The Anglo-Indians* (Photoink, 2007) and *Whistling Steam: Romance of Indian Rails* (Roli Books, 2003). He is visiting faculty and jury for the Master's photography programme at National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar and at Sri Aurobindo Centre for Arts & Communication, New Delhi. He lives in New Delhi.