

# Exploring beauty through neglect

SATARUPA PAUL

**I**t has now been a number of years that these two photographers from Kolkata have been working together, though this is the first

collaborative project they have completed. Amusingly, both cite being camera-shy as the reason they chose to take up the profession, though they came to see the camera as the ideal medium to explore their

interests and delve deeper into the subjects that fascinated them.

This first exhibition, *Through A Lens, Darkly*, will be shown in part at the Summit, is a compilation of photographs

and photo-based animation that explores the ruins of India's first and only still camera factory, National Instruments Limited in Jadavpur, Kolkata. "Both of our fathers owned the National 35 still camera,

which was meant to become India's iconic indigenous camera, but never did. We have such fond memories of it. Years later, when we started working on the place where it was created, we understood

not just the history of the place but also the technology behind the camera," says Mitra.

Mitra studied English literature and classical dance and holds a Doctoral degree in Cultural Studies. She worked

as the programme executive at the India Foundation for the Arts and subsequently at the Centre for Studies and Social Sciences, Kolkata. In 2008, she gave up her job to pursue her interests in writing, photog-

raphy and film. Her creative partner, Bhattacharya has a Master's degree in Comparative Literature from Jadavpur University, Kolkata. He also studied Cinematography in the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute. Other than photography, he works with and in many media, including digital imaging, film, video and sound.

The duo started photographing the factory when Jadavpur University decided to renovate it and invited them to document how nature and time had taken their toll on it. Six months of work produced haunting pictures, stark images that provide a glimpse of the silent and eerie world the factory is today. At the Summit, visitors will get a glimpse of four photo animations and three photographs that will be displayed.

"It would be a great pleasure for us to showcase our work alongside some very good artists at the Summit. It provide us and our work really good exposure," says Bhattacharya.



*The Archaeology of Absence*



*Temp Mort*