



Picture Parr-fect Magnum photographer Martin Parr doesn't believe in the perfect pretty picture and uses the lens to dissect society, almost grotesquely **RUHANI KAUR**

MARTIN PARR RUBBISHES the thought that pictures capture reality. "Photographs are an exaggeration. And, of course, my pictures are isolated, I am not even pretending to tell the truth. I am just having my own little indulgences. I am highly manipulative, creating fiction out of reality, but I am doing it consciously." He describes his genre as documentary photography, but is quick to add that it is his responsibility to interpret the common world through images. "I make a critique about society through photography."

For Parr, all published work is propaganda. "Even a family album states 'we live in a happy family'. People are always shooting weddings but funerals are just as important." Parr's take on touristy places is similar; he focuses on the ugly and the dirty. He reserves particular disdain for the cell-phone camera, wondering, "God knows what happens to all these terrible photographs. Thank God for computers. They can be edited so they are stuck in memory drives, billions and billions of them."

Leisure, consumption and communication are the concepts he has explored in the nearly 50 books he has produced and the countless exhibitions he has held over the years.

Parr's innovative approach has had Magnum conservatives raising their eyebrows, only to make him a full-time member in 1994. He is currently shooting every beggar who approaches him on this trip. "People just don't know where to look or what to say. They just look away." ■

PHOTOS MARTIN PARR



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THE DIAGNOSTIC LENS

1 Chennai

2 Untitled

3 The Gymkhana Club, Darjeeling

Martin Parr in India will show at Photoink, New Delhi, till 27 March