

For Immediate Release

TREES

Photographs by Raghu Rai (1968-2012)

Opening Reception on Thursday, 26th September, 2013

On view till 30th November, 2013

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

Closed on Sundays and national holidays

As a partner gallery of the Delhi Photo Festival, Photoink is delighted to announce the opening of the exhibition, *Trees* by Raghu Rai. To accompany this exhibition, we have published a book by the same title to be released on September 29th during the festival at the India Habitat Centre. This photo book is an extraordinary collection of black and white photographs drawn from an archive spanning over forty years.

The *tree* has been one of those enduring subjects, which has been consistently photographed since the beginning of photography. It has been an object of reverence and awe. An avid gardener and nature lover, Raghu Rai's photographs were not made in pursuit of a book or exhibition, which he has made many and had plenty of. Instead, we witness his unrelenting and private passion for a subject he had no option but to make photographs of. In Raghu Rai's photographs, the tree is idealized for its beauty and mourned when it is destroyed. Through his lens, we experience the tree as a living monument—not only as a graphic symbol but we also observe human presence around it. The tree is not always a solitary figure to be revered. In contrast to the path breaking reportage and street photography Raghu Rai's name has become synonymous with, this exhibition of photographs is unusually still and silent.

ABOUT RAGHU RAI

Raghu Rai (b.1942) is arguably the most well known photographer in India. He qualified as a civil engineer and began photographing at the age of 23. He joined the *The Statesman* newspaper as their chief photographer (1966-1976) and thereafter was the Picture Editor with *Sunday*, a weekly news magazine published from Calcutta (1977-1980). In 1971,

impressed by Rai's exhibition at Gallery Delpire in Paris, the legendary photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson nominated Rai to Magnum Photos, which he could only join in 1977.

Rai took over as Picture Editor-Visualizer-Photographer at *India Today*, India's leading news magazine in its formative years. He worked on special issues and designs, contributing trailblazing picture essays on social, political and cultural themes of the decade (1982-1991), which became the talking point of the magazine.

He was awarded a Padmashree in 1972, one of India's most important civilian awards for his photographs of the Bangladesh refugees, the war and surrender. In 2009, he was conferred the Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French government. National Geographic, CNN, BBC and Ministry of External Affairs have made documentaries on him to recognise his contributions to photography.

Raghu Rai's photo essays have been published across the world's leading magazines and newspapers since the late 1970s, making him amongst the most widely published Indian photographer. He has authored more than 35 books in his career. Some of his major publications include *Saint Teresa of Calcutta: A Celebration of Her Life and Legacy* (2017), *People: His Finest Portraits* (2016), *Picturing Time: The Greatest Photographs of Raghu Rai* (2015), *Bangladesh: The Price of Freedom* (2013), *Varanasi: A Portrait of a Civilisation* (2011), *Bombay — Mumbai: Where Dreams Don't Die* (2010), *India's Great Master — A Photographic Journey into the Heart of Classical Music* (2010), *Calcutta — Kolkata* (2008), *Raghu Rai's India — Reflections in Black & White* (2007), *Raghu Rai's India — Reflections in Colour* (2008), *Men Metal and Steel* (1998), *Tibet in Exile* (1991, 2012), *Raghu's Delhi* (1985, 1992), *Calcutta* (1989), *Taj Mahal* (1986), *The Sikhs* (1984, 2002), *Mother Teresa — Faith and Compassion* (1971, 1996) and *India Gandhi* (1971, 1985).

Rai's exhibition history in India and abroad is exhaustive and his photographs are widely collected in India and abroad by both museums and private collectors. His major solo exhibitions include *Trees* at Photoink (2013), Foto Freo Festival, Perth (2011), Format Festival (2011), *The Journey of a Moment in Time: Raghu Rai* at National Gallery of Modern Art (New Delhi & Mumbai, 2008), *Photographs: Raghu Rai* at Casa Asia, Barcelona (2008) and Asiatica Film Mediale, Rome (2008), *A Retrospective: Raghu Rai* at Les Recontres De La Photographie, Arles (2007), *India* at Museo Capitolini Centrale Montemartini, Rome (2005), *Bhopal 1984-2004* at Melkweg Gallery, Amsterdam (2005), *Exposure* at Drik Gallery, Dhaka and at Leica Gallery, Prague (2004), and *Solo Show* at Sala Consiliare, Venice and at Photographic Gallery, Helsinki (2003), *La India* at Centro de la Imagen, Mexico City (1999) and *A Retrospective: Raghu Rai* at National Gallery of Modern Art (1997).

Raghu Rai lives with his wife and two daughters in New Delhi.