

PRESS RELEASE

Full Moon on a Dark Night

Soumya Sankar Bose

Experimenter – Hindusthan Road

17 March – 31 May 2018

Experimenter presents *Full Moon on a Dark Night*, Kolkata based, photographer Soumya Sankar Bose's first solo at Experimenter – Hindusthan Road. The exhibition will open on 17 March 2018, and will be on view until 31 May 2018 at Experimenter, 2/1 Hindusthan Road, Kolkata 700029.

Full Moon on a Dark Night navigates the fragile space between the private and the vulnerable where personal experiences of his friends in Bose's photographic prints become evident. Through the exhibition, as one is drawn into the intricacies and complexities of the relationships between the photographer and the lives that he photographs, several aspects of Bose's gaze come into play. The interplay of light, especially that of diffused sunlit spaces and the donning of costume transports one into a fantastical, dreamlike space which resonates with some of the texts that Bose writes or includes in parts of the exhibition.

In one corner of the gallery, sits a desk where Bose invites the viewers to write letters, penning down thoughts that may come to mind in a growing archive of letters that viewers have previously written. At another section of the gallery is a personal diary, pages of notes of Bose's friends, some of whom one imagines maybe part of the photographs themselves, and loops back into ideas of privacy. Beside a note read out in Bengali is to be heard within the confines of headphones, keeping the conversation personal or at most between a pair. Many of the images capture two people in the frame, and even if they don't appear to be in embrace, there is a strong sense of physicality and intimacy, a familiarity that goes beyond the superficial.

At times the images exude a deep sense of melancholia and longing, both coexisting within the same frame. Animals and humans often intersperse the landscape of Bose's photographs, straddling simultaneous realities where the lines between the staged and the natural blur bringing a deeper engagement with the visual. Bose often spends months researching and spending time and travelling with his friends, who in a way become collaborators, in order to understand their desires, fears, and anxieties, adding an immersive quality to his photographs.

Bose writes about a photograph, "A friend used to tell me about her dreams. For the last sixteen years, she has dreamt of sitting on a chair beside a window in the room in which her sister died. In this dream, she returns home from an unknown war, while a dead body lays in the bed. The identity of the dead character is never clear to her. Is it her lover? Her sister? Maybe her mother? Why is she wearing a warrior's uniform? Is it because she has been fighting for acceptance? Or is it because her mother always told her that it's a crime to love a girl? What is evident to her about her dream is the anxiety she faces in pursuing the love of her choice."

Full Moon on a Dark Night imagines a world unbound by time, in which freedom to live, to one's own desires exists for all, touching upon Bose's interest in psychological aspects around gender identities and antiquated laws and culture that surround these questions. The works on view create a sense of alternate coexistences,

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rarely in public view yet subliminally present in the moments they haunt, viewed through the lens of Bose's camera.

Soumya Sankar Bose (b.1990) completed a one-year diploma in Photography from Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, Dhaka and Angkor Photo festival and workshop. His project, *Full Moon on a Dark Night* was awarded Magnum Foundation's Photography and Social Justice Fellowship in 2017. Bose is the recipient of IFA grant for the project, *Lets Sing an Old Song* in 2015. Bose lives and works in Kolkata, India.

For further information and press related enquires please write to admin@experimenter.in or call on +91.33.2463.0465 or +91.33.4001.2289