

ART & DEAL



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RINI'S TRYST WITH EXOTIC WORLD - SUMATI GANGOPADHYAY

RAJESH DEB'S NEVERLAND POST OFFICE - GAURAV KUMAR

BIRDS OF PASSAGE: SUNANDA KHAJURIA - KAINAAT FATIMA



LOOKING AT MATSYA—35 mm: SANJEET CHOWDHURY

- RANU ROYCHOUDHURI

Photographer-collector-film-maker Sanjeet Chowdhury's photo-essay title *Matsya—35 mm* is crafted out of years of engagement with fish culture in the port-cities of Calcutta (Kolkata) and Bombay (Mumbai). For at least two decades, Sanjeet looked at fish in their diverse forms as a signifier of cultural practices, a commodity, and an aesthetic object. Indeed, his meticulous attention to fish is a part of his broader interest in the culinary cultures of the two cities he calls home. In many ways, imaging fish translates into Sanjeet's reflection on layered ideas of home, belonging, and collective emotion. Fish often extends a conceptual lens for him to comment on human and non-human interrelationships as they cohabit the planet. Simultaneously, Sanjeet is attentive to the photographic medium with its specificities and potentialities. He used analog-chemical techniques even when they acquired the moniker "retro." His 35mm format and black and white celluloid film allow him to merge the silver-based greys of the print with the hues and grains in the fish form.

From the shores of the Arabian Sea to the neighborhood market of Calcutta, the various locations of fish transactions form the spine of *Matsya—35 mm*. All photographs were made in the public spaces where fish is traded. Yet, a remarkable diversity of visual engagement makes them intellectually intriguing. Some focus exclusively on the fish form under natural and artificial light. In contrast, others highlight the intertwined aesthetic of human and fish forms as they engage in culturally specific markets that condition Sanjeet's visual vocabulary. At the same time, his choice of an analog camera, short lens, and monochrome celluloid film create the texture for his visual narrative.



Sanjeet Chowdhury



