

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, CHANDIGARH ADMINISTRATION

Press Release

Chandigarh, August 28; Diwan Manna is the artist of the month September in Department of Public Relations, Chandigarh Administration official website. The department has started choosing a Chandigarh based eminent artist as artist of the month, in which Manna is the first artist to be chosen for this honour. The selected artist's brief biodata with photograph & his art works has been placed on the official website of the department www.chdpr.gov.in.

Mr. Manna, known for his soulful images, is considered a pioneer among art photographers. He is one of the first exponents in conceptual photography in India. His artistic technique and expression is unique and has a style of its own.

Manna's present works are about his journey in search of trying to come to terms with the insidious and unrecognized forms of degradation of our sense of life and honour within ourselves as well as in others. He is not merely interested in presenting images of destruction of human goodness, courage and beauty, but tries to tap the unsuspected and as yet unrealized sources of tenderness, fortitude and humanity in us.

Diwan Manna shows us many aspects, in three successive phases, of his work. The black and white of his first work, and then the fiery contrasts of colours in his more recent work are only metaphors of eternal combat that men engage in to reach the light.

Diwan Manna reveals both his real compassion for his contemporaries as well as his admiration in front of the beauty and dignity of beings, for he knows how to affirm in his colour compositions his conviction of seeing in woman the future of the world and all its magic.

This is how Diwan Manna speaks to us and passes from social violence, precariousness of life of men and women living in the shadows like the forgotten, to the solitude of beings and their anguish. Few series of black and white photographs of technical mastery and perfect classical beauty precede here then big photographs, in intense colours, with carefully thought out portrayals that are like inner and symbolic dreams. Life, Woman, Hope.

An encounter with these pictures is a disquieting and an empowering experience. It brings out our hidden humanness, which in fact becomes an experience of self-realization for each one of us. It opens a reservoir of fellow feeling across cultures, languages and political milieus.

In a way the experience of the collection of these works recovers for us our lost humanity. We can hear the pangs within us of the humanity being reborn.

Diwan Manna was invited as a part of a cultural exchange in France to photograph people and Le Corbusier creations in May-June 2006, and an exhibition of these photographs along with his counterpart from France Michel Dieudonne who photographed Corbusier creations in Chandigarh, India, would be held in Saint-Etienne, France from November 20, 2006.

Diwan is also a part of an exhibition along with two French photographers in Lille, France from 14 Oct 2006 to 14 Jan 2007. One more exhibition "Ages of Separation" is being held at the Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Center, New Delhi, from 20 to 26 September 2006. Diwan combines photography with painting, body arts and acting to create works that defy definition. He has been exhibiting extensively across Europe including France, UK, Germany and Poland for the last about 15 years and has collections with some prestigious museums and institutions of Europe. He is a recipient of National Award in Photography by the Central Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, India (National Academy of Fine Arts).