

DALWADI: A TRIP TO FRANCE, 1970

Photos by Parmanand Dalwadi

As part of the Indo-French arts festival *Bonjour India 2022*, Alliance Française de Pune, in association with Pune Handmade Papers, presents ***Dalwadi: A Trip to France, 1970***, a photo exhibition featuring the work of veteran Indian photographer Prof. Parmanand Dalwadi. Drawn from a larger collection, the displayed photos chronicle Dalwadi's journey in France in the 70s, when he accompanied renowned photojournalist Henri Cartier-Bresson to Paris.

The two kindred spirits struck up a friendship soon after their first acquaintance in 1965 at the National Institute of Design as Dalwadi accompanied the French photographer in his travels across northern India. While Cartier-Bresson captured Indian towns in black and white hues, the young apprentice from Ahmedabad took to assisting and photographing Cartier-Bresson himself. In reciprocal gratitude, Dalwadi was offered a position at *Pictorial Service*, Paris under the guidance of the legendary Pierre Gassmann, with funding from the Ford Foundation.

As indicated in the title, *A Trip to France, 1970* assembles a collection of photographs shot in the era of disco and boogie, when men sported long hair and moustaches and 'la mode' gripped the spirits of women - at a time when both fashion and protests coloured the streets of Paris. Through his iconic Nikon F, Dalwadi recounts incongruous and unusual situations combining humour, tenderness and observations of a contemporary French society.

The vivid and spontaneous nature of the works on view evokes a sense of immediacy, as if to invite the viewer to travel through time and relive the moments of commotion captured all those decades ago. As his interactions with Cartier-Bresson profoundly influenced Dalwadi's style of photography, the exhibition emerges as a requiem for their friendship as well as a tribute to the everlasting Indo-French partnership.

Born in 1940 in a craftsman family in Gujarat, Prof. Parmanand Dalwadi graduated in Fine Arts from M.S.U. Baroda in 1963 and completed his post-graduation in Visual Communication from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad in 1968. He was the President of Alliance Française d'A Ahmedabad for a period of 6 years.