

## Five World-Renowned Photographers Point their Lenses at India

Editorial Preview - CURATED

**"American photographer, Steve McCurry, steps away from India's dense urban center to Jodhpur in the desert state of Rajasthan."**



Robert Polidori, *Alvares Residence, Bedroom #2, Margao, Goa, India, 2002*,  
Archival Inkjet Print, 50 x 40 inches

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By Payal Uttam

For centuries India has held a grip on the Western imagination. Sundaram Tagore Gallery's exhibition at this year's India Art Fair in New Delhi (January 26 to 29) traces the country's influence on a group of notable photographers. The show features works by Annie Leibovitz, Sebastião Salgado, Edward Burtynsky, Steve McCurry and Robert Polidori. From the salt flats of Rajasthan to the surging crowds of Mumbai, their images capture the rapidly evolving landscape of the Subcontinent.

The exhibition opens with Leibovitz's image *Waiting for Guru Maharaj Ji, William Hobby Airport, Houston, Texas, 1974*. Devotees are shown awaiting the arrival of the Indian religious leader. One of the artist's early works, the photograph taps into the fascination with Indian spirituality among America's youth culture in the sixties and seventies. Leibovitz, who began her career in the 1970s with *Rolling Stone Magazine*, is known for her portraits of cultural figures and their impact on society.



Sebastião Salgado, *Church Gate Station, Western Railroad Line, Bombay*  
India, 1995, Gelatin silver print, 48 x 70 inches

Moving into the heart of India's most populous city is Salgado's photograph Church Gate Station, Western Railroad Line, Bombay, India, 1995. The black-and-white print captures the seemingly endless flow of people pouring in and out of the metropolis. Born in Brazil and based in Paris, Salgado has devoted his life to documenting the impact of globalization on humankind. Part of his epic series on migration, this work calls attention to the plight of refugees and migrant workers in India and beyond.

American photographer, Steve McCurry, steps away from India's dense urban center to Jodhpur in the desert state of Rajasthan. In the eighties McCurry photographed the Afghan Girl, a young refugee with haunting green eyes for National Geographic Magazine. Over the last twenty years, he has been traveling to India, repeatedly returning to Jodhpur's ancient quarters. His piece entitled, Boy in Mid-Flight, Jodhpur, India, 2007 captures a sense of youthful optimism showing a boy leaping bare-footed through a brightly painted alley.

In contrast to McCurry, Canadian photographers Edward Burtynsky and Robert Polidori, focus on landscapes and interiors. Burtynsky has spent more than three decades photographing some of the world's largest industrial operations. In his Saltworks #1, Sambar Salt Flats, Rajasthan, India, 2000, he ventures into a barren salt encrusted storage house in the country's salt production hub.

Meanwhile, Polidori, turns his lens to the interior space of a colonial mansion in Goa. Appearing to be frozen in time, Alvares Residence, Bedroom #2, Margao, Goa, India, 2002 illustrates the Portuguese influence on the coastal city. Polidori describes the image as an exoskeleton of the former residents' lives.

Sundaram Tagore Gallery has its flagship in Chelsea, with branches in Hong Kong and Beverly Hills.

#### *India Art Fair*

*Launched in 2008, India Art Fair is one of the region's leading art events. Last year it attracted more than a hundred thousand visitors making it one of the most attended art fairs globally. From London to Tehran, almost fifty percent of this year's participants are international galleries. In 2011 it was announced that Hong Kong International Art Fair's Will Ramsay and Sandy Angus acquired a 49 per cent stake in the fair.*

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