

Santanu Chakraborty

Demerec, 1 Bungtown Road, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724, Email:- schakrab@gmail.com, Phone:- (609) 439 7205

Born: July 11th, 1976, Calcutta, India

Through art I try to find what is important to me. What is worth seeing? What is worth remembering? What do I want to show others? Often it is simply a search for pleasure in creating an image of a revealing moment. The beginnings of my artistic self were due to an early training in painting and a fascination with natural history. Only in graduate school did I turn to photography as my primary medium of expression.

While traveling through Ladakh, a province in India that borders Tibet, I became aware of the immense diversity, rich history and unique culture of its people. It is also a place of great natural beauty. But it is a beauty of a very stark kind. Cold desert, fractured rock and yet a warm and stoic people. This is a place whose brutal and often fragile beauty grew on me to forge a strong bond. It is a place that promotes introspection by stripping you of all but the bare essentials of life.

The work in my Ladakh portfolio stems from my first trip to this region. This is a region whose tolerant Buddhist culture is under challenge. And it's wonderfully remote and pristine lanscape is beginning to be attacked by "development". I plan to return here every year from 2006 onwards to document and cherish one of the last places on earth.

Since I moved to New York in 1999, the urban Metropolis has been a source of great fascination. Nowhere else have I found such a remarkable mix of co-existing cultures and people ...

Documenting New York City and other such melting pots that will be the centers of the new world will be a lifelong passion. Although I frequently wander the streets of Manhattan, my current focus of work in New York City is the Jackson Heights region in Queens Borough. Walking the streets here one comes across people from North America, South Asia, South and Central America, Eastern Europe, Tibet, East Asia ... Capturing this diversity and mix of cultures and people has been a rewarding experience and is an ongoing everyday project. Seeing this everyday co-existence of "different" people is also a reason to have hope for our future.

Bodies of Work

Below I list some of my significant ongoing projects.

- Ladakh and Lahaul Spiti, India
- Bengal, India
- Small World Cafe, Princeton
- Metropolis - New York City