



Distinctive Image

featuring...

Rajdeep Biswas, MPSA, EFIAP, FFIP
Kolkata, India

This month's *Distinguished Image* artist was born and lives in Kolkata, India. **Rajdeep Biswas, MPSA, EFIAP, FFIP**, remembers vividly how he first got interested in photography. He says it started off like other vacations with his parents. His father always kept his Olympus® AF-1 locked up and he never got to touch it. On this vacation to Kashmir in 1989, Rajdeep remembers that his father handed him a camera and said, "Let's see...take a picture." That first image was of his parents with the backdrop of beautiful Kashmir and Dal Lake. He says, "It was a dream moment for me! I captured more images of Kashmir as I roamed around with my parents." Then he had to wait 15 days to see his first ever image. When he did, it gave him a sense of overwhelming pride.

His interest in photography grew with the passing of time. His first film camera was a Nikon FM2. He was young and did not know how to focus manually. He remembers learning to focus manually from an uncle who lived in the neighborhood. He was only allowed one roll of film until he finished the roll and had them printed. He remembers his father taking his camera away about a year before he was to complete school to keep him focused on his studies. There was a long break until he completed his education and started working. Now he could afford his own camera, but there was no time to pursue his interest and hobby with a new career. He would get some time during weekends when he would roam around with his camera but became bored with the long time between finishing a roll and getting it developed.

By Larry Cowles,
HonPSA, GMPSA/P,
EFIAP/p

Photos © Rajdeep Biswas,
MPSA, EFIAP, FFIP

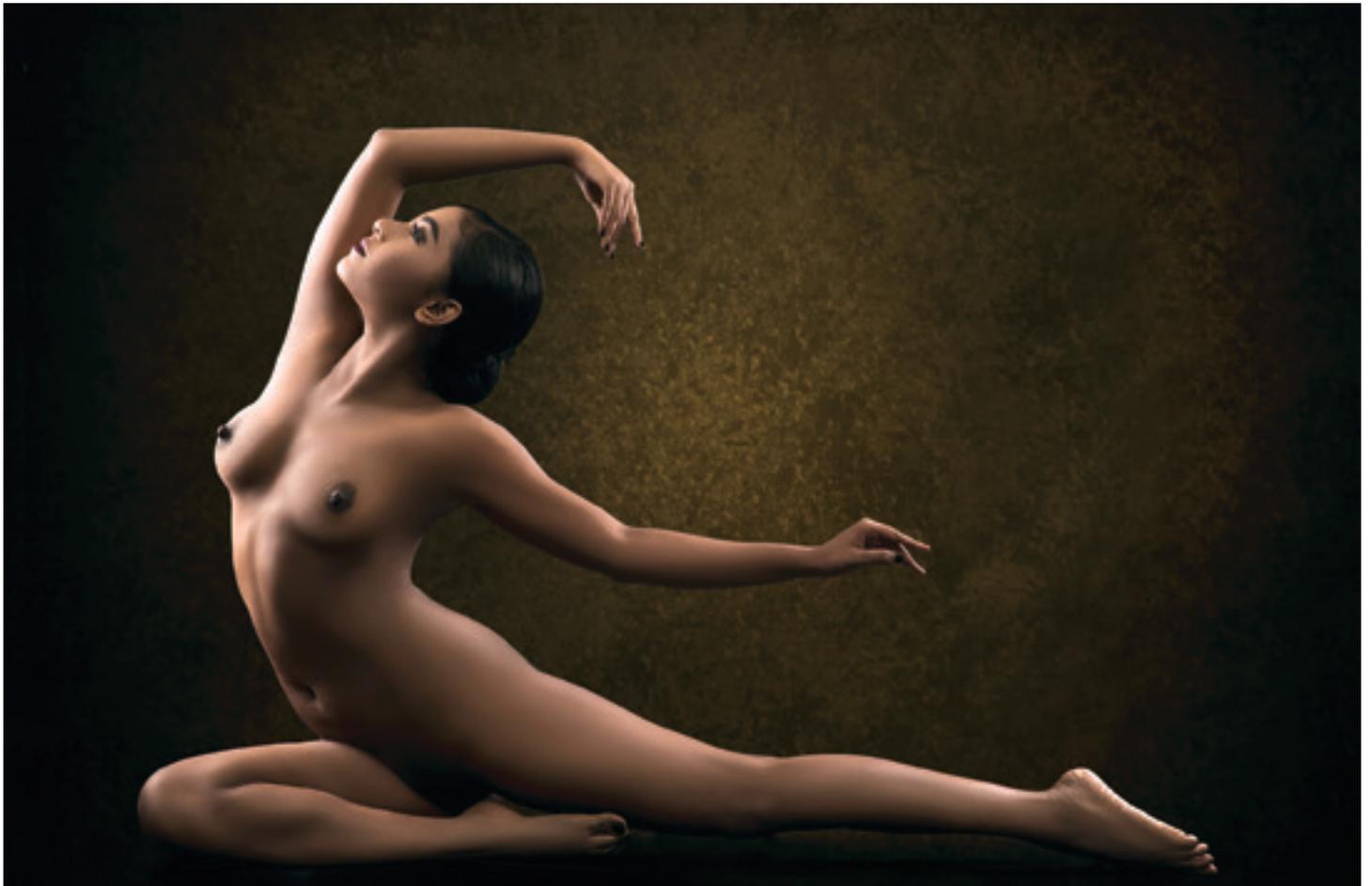
He stopped his weekend photography, and it was not until 2008 when he said goodbye to that job and came back to Kolkata that he started reliving his passion.

Rajdeep visited photography exhibitions in his area and was always amazed at the images he saw. He felt he needed to learn more but it was not until 2012 that he got the chance to learn the basics of photography. He enrolled in a basic photography course at Fotounit, Kolkata. He completed the basic course and then enrolled for a Diploma in photography at the same institute. During his tenure as a student at Fotounit, he met Dr. Anjandev Biswas, one of the faculty at the institute. He mentored Rajdeep in many aspects of photography, way beyond what was required in his classes. By 2012, he was entering national exhibitions but felt the need to know more about exhibiting and the tools needed to enhance his images.

He met another member of the faculty, Mr. Tapas Basu. Not only did he teach Rajdeep but included some of his friends. Rajdeep kept on participating in national and international exhibitions worldwide being able to achieve Associate of Federation of Indian Photography (AFIP) in 2013, then achieved Fellow of Federation of Indian Photography (FFIP) in 2015. While participating in exhibitions, he felt the need



Juhi 1



Poetry



FS 7251



Black 90



Poetry



Symmetry 2

to understand why one particular image would win over another. While he got different opinions about a particular image he never got an answer to this question. He took a break from exhibiting and started studying the technicalities of photography in depth. He met the late Mr. Anup Paul, MFIAP, ARPS during this time which piqued his interest in portraiture. He learned the fine tuning of portraiture and fine art nude from Mr. Paul. Rajdeep has become an avid follower of the portraiture work of artists around the globe.

Rajdeep went on to complete his Diploma in Photography with high marks. He achieved AFIAP in 2015. That same year, he was inducted as a faculty member by the institute from which he completed his Diploma in Photography. As a member of the faculty at Fotounit, he conducted classes on various subjects like Exposure, Flash, Still Life, Indoor Portrait, Jewelry and Product photography etc. Conducting classes on various subjects also acted as a refresher and updated his knowledge on the subjects. His approach while conducting classes was always practical. He believes that theory is important, but one needs to understand the practical issues which are encountered during photography. Rajdeep says, "Relying solely on your equipment may land you in situations where you might not be able to capture what you want. It is important to know your equipment to use it proficiently. While capturing an image, it is important to pre-visualize. This does not happen overnight. It develops with time and experience. It is

important to understand what you are doing and how to identify your point of improvement."

While participating in exhibitions, he encouraged others from his club to join in participating. They formed a team and represented their club Fotounit in various national and international salons. While going for photographic distinctions, he realized the need to comprehend the rules and regulations of different affiliating bodies worldwide and took a keen interest in PSA and RPS. He remembers visiting each tab of the respective websites to understand what the organizations do and what they offered.

Rajdeep joined PSA in 2015. The first thing he did after receiving membership confirmation was to enroll in the Image Analysis course. This course gave him understanding in a different direction. He completed the course in 2016 and also completed his EFIAP. **Suman Bhattacharyya, MPSA**, PSA ESD Region 2 is the person who motivated him to volunteer for PSA. It was September 2017 when he started as PSA PIDC Galaxies & Diamonds Ratings Director. It was a transition time from paper applications to digital for PSA stars. It was a learning experience and he gives thanks to **Mr. Tuan Tran, MPSA** who trained him for his responsibility as SRD. He received immense support from **Nancy Speaker, QPSA**, PID Director whenever he had any query.

During this time the Nature division was going through a tough time. He offered his help as SRD for Nature to **Jim Bodkin, APSA, PPSA**.



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Since April 2018, he has had the additional responsibility of SRD for Nature. Since early January 2019, he has been entrusted with another responsibility of Star Ratings Coordinator for PIDC. Rajdeep is always promoting PSA in India and has introduced over 24 new members to PSA. He makes it a point to reach out to each one of them for any assistance they require for matters related to PSA. In 2020, Rajdeep will be Exhibition Chairman for PSA International exhibition for the PID division.

Rajdeep waited with patience to achieve his MPSA, which he achieved on in October 2018. It was a long wait because he only participates with the best images per his understanding from a particular shoot. Remaining images are kept to understand the areas of improvement. Since his early days of participation, he has believed in using new images rather than participating with old images. Over the years, he has received honorary distinctions from various organizations associated with photography. He is a member of Sille Sanat Sarayi Club, Turkey since 2016 and was honored with SSS/r distinction by SSS photo club in June 2018. He was honored with Hon. FICS by Image Colleague Society International, USA in January 2018. He is also a life member of ICS. In January 2019, he was honored as Fellow of Asia Photographers Union, Singapore.

Artist's Statement



By profession I am working as one of the Directors in a Private Limited Company in India. I consider myself an amateur photo enthusiast. I believe that knowledge is excellence. The more we learn and experiment, the more we understand and evolve as better photographers. Technology is changing and evolving every day. However, the basics of photography remain the same. The foundation of excellence begins with basics. So, it is important to be updated and to have an open mind to accept changes.

Being a frequent photographic judge, I have a philosophy on judging. I always had the intention and will to experience nature, travel and journalism photography before I could feel myself fit for a jury chair. In addition, I made sure that I had recognition from each section that I participated in before I could even think of judging images for those sections. Since 2017, I have had the opportunity to be member of the jury for many national and international salons. I believe that merely understanding photography is not enough. It is important to experience and learn. At any given point of time, only one image of a particular subject is captured. Indeed, that image is special and

unique. But we need to understand whether it is competitive. Being a participant in salons has helped me form an understanding of competitive imaging. I have never tried to find out what an individual jury member may like. I have always participated with the set which I believe are best from me.

PSA has motivated me to continue experimenting with my imaging. With experimentation, I come up with new thinking and learn or explore new areas which add to my experience as a photographer. PSA has motivated me to go out of my comfort zone and to try different genres of photography. PSA has also motivated me to keep up with the latest trends in photography. With different courses available for PSA members, service to have images analyzed and so much more, joining PSA has helped me in several areas. PSA is an open platform where budding photographers from across the globe can join and explore. PSA is not about exhibitions only; it is an approach to spread interest in photography throughout the globe. Where else would you get a platform with active help from a mentor, browse through past issues of *PSA Journal* and learn, volunteer and help photographers from around the world? To me, PSA is all about members helping members.



Nude 7228

Technique

Since 2014, I started concentrating on my area of interest—indoor light portraiture and fine art nudes. I have had immense help from my close friends and associates who assisted me in my indoor shoots. I discuss images with a very few who have the time, patience and willingness to exchange points of views.

In 2016, I underwent a spine surgery. Post surgery, I have had to restrict my movements. I was no longer allowed to take much strain. This sudden change in life made me change my attention and direction in photography, again. I had to minimize outdoor photography activities. This gave me more time to look back at my photography work and find my areas of improvement. I have been a Nikon® user for long time. For indoor portraiture, I use Nikon D7100, D750. I prefer using lenses of more than 70mm in focal length, generally using a Nikkor® 70-200 f/2.8. For fine art nudes, I use the same camera and lens. In addition, I use a Nikon 24-70 f/2.8 or Tokina 12-24 with D7100 when I intend to take distorted figures or formations. I use Elinchrom lights for portraiture and fine art nude photography.

I have a professional makeup artist assist me in my shoots. I do communicate what I am looking for and what I intend to capture. I always prefer



Ipshita 9621

to concentrate on the shooting part. Selection of subject/model is important. I do that according to the concept I wish to work on. I never select a subject and then think of what I should do! It is important to get familiar with the model. If I am unable to communicate what I am expecting, I can't expect the subject to pose for me the exact way I want. I always tell the model about my key light and the area of her movement. It is also important to understand when the subject is tired; when the model becomes tired you will no longer get good images.

I always try to aim for in camera excellence. I try to avoid light leaks on the subject, avoid cutting of subject's eye with the outline of the face, avoid capturing excessive white part of the eyes when the model is looking in a particular direction and so on. I avoid complete darkening of the background. I feel it is important to have depth and detail in an image. For processing an image, I use Adobe® camera raw and Photoshop® CC. I do beauty retouch on the portraits. However, I prefer to keep a certain amount of natural detail. ■