



REDSEA GALLERY

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**ROHIT CHAWLA: OUT OF THE BOX**

**14 JAN - 19 FEB 2017**



*Wanderlust-Untitled #4* by Rohit Chawla (2010), photograph on Hahnemuhle archival paper, H102 x W142cm

*Singapore, 29 December 2016* – For the first time in Singapore, REDSEA Gallery has the great pleasure of presenting a selection of works by renowned contemporary photographer Rohit Chawla. One of the most eminent fashion and commercial photographers of his time, Rohit turned his attention to photographic art and portraiture in a desire to capture the personality and soul behind the images. Featuring works from his most notable series *Wanderlust* and *Out of the Box*, these elegantly poised portraits have a strong sense of design and form, with a focus on the subject and their self-expression. “I just want to do simple images with strong graphic sensibilities. I don’t want any distractions of background. I want the people. Doing anything else takes away from the purity of the image. I believe in the minimal,” says Rohit.



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In the series entitled *Wanderlust*, Rohit takes a look at the pastoral nomadic community of the Rabari tribe in India, one that has withstood the onslaught of time yet retained its identity. He pays tribute to the tribal members' natural flamboyance, their use of traditional textiles, intricate embroidery and motifs, celebrating the relentless spirit and style of this wandering tribe. Working with a Mamiya medium format camera and shooting at all different times of the day, the project took Rohit over six months to complete, shooting the nomadic community members exactly as he came across them in the Indian desert.

Rohit's work has received great critical and international acclaim, with *Wanderlust* having been exhibited and sold out in both London and Paris. In addition, he has collaborated with numerous well-known creative and celebrity names, one such collaboration resulting in the series *Out of the Box*, featuring a selection of notable individuals. All of the subjects in this collection share the same unharnessed approach to life and work, continuously challenging the confines of existing ideas and developing new and original ones. From prominent writer Michael Ondaatje to esteemed architect Frank Gehry, to Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan, a selection of 6 portraits from this series will be part of the show.



From left to right: *Michael Ondaatje, Frank Gehry and Shah Rukh Khan: Out of the Box* by Rohit Chawla (2013),  
photograph on Hahnemuhle archival paper, H53 x W35cm



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Completing this exhibition is a haunting image taken for the magazine India Today. Part of a series of projects engaging with the refugee crisis in Syria, controversial Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei worked together with Rohit to recreate the image of drowned infant Alan Kurdi, whose lifeless body was washed up on a beach near the Turkish town of Bodrum in September 2015. Working on the Greek island of Lesbos, a key point of entry for many refugees into the European Union, Ai Wei Wei and Rohit's striking and iconic image makes a strong political and humanitarian point, highlighting the plight of thousands of people desperately searching for a better future.



**Untitled by Rohit Chawla (2016)**, photograph on Hahnemuhle archival paper, H102 x W153cm

Rohit Chawla's exhibition *Out of the Box* will open to the public on Saturday 14 January 2017 and will run through until Sunday 19 February 2017. All works will be available for sale and a selection will also be available to view online at [www.redseagallery.com](http://www.redseagallery.com).

### **ABOUT ROHIT CHAWLA**

Recognized as a leading contemporary photographer, Rohit started his career, and spent almost two decades, in advertising at JWT before eventually starting his own design and film production company. His solo exhibitions include *Wanderlust*, *Tribute to Raja Ravi Verma*, *Klimt-The Sequel*, *Free da! – The Homage*, *Fine Art of Food* and *Wearable Art Collection*. Rohit's works have been exhibited at various venues worldwide and his photographs are part of private collections and museums. The central theme of his work is essentially travel, which he considers the perfect antidote to stress. He spends his time between Delhi and Goa.



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## **ABOUT THE RABARI**

The Rabari, also called the Rewari or Desai, are an indigenous tribe of nomadic cattle and camel herders and shepherds that live throughout northwest India, primarily in the states of Gujarat, Punjab and Rajasthan. Other Rabari groups also live in Pakistan, especially in the region of the Sindh Desert. Traditionally, the Rabari followed a highly nomadic way of life, living in tents or under the open skies, raising cattle, camels and goats. Today, only a very small percentage of them are truly nomadic, with the majority settled on the outskirts of cities, towns and villages in semi-nomadic lifestyles, following the seasonal rains for periods of time, then returning to their villages.

The Rabari are known for their distinctive art, particularly the mirrored and whitewashed mud sculpture-works that adorn their homes and villages. They are also renowned for their detailed embroidery and beadwork, including clothing, bags, household decorations and animal trappings. These works highlight significant events, rites and values in their lives, as well as historical events important to the entire tribe, helping perpetuate Rabari heritage.

## **EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS**

*Opening Night Reception*

Friday 13 Jan, 2017

6.30 - 8.30pm

With Guest of Honour H.E Mr. Jawed Ashraf, High Commissioner of India to Singapore

## **UPCOMING FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS**

India Art Fair: 2 – 5 Feb, 2017

Zhuang Hong Yi: 4 Mar – 16 Apr, 2017

For additional information and images, please contact: **Sofia Coombe** - [sofia@redseagallery.com](mailto:sofia@redseagallery.com)

## **ABOUT REDSEA GALLERY**

Founded in 2001, REDSEA Gallery is one of Singapore's leading contemporary art galleries. It has firmly established its reputation, both locally and in the wider Asian art market, as an institution that represents a highly exclusive and international selection of well-respected and emerging artists.

REDSEA Gallery occupies a truly unique 600 square metre space at the heart of Dempsey Hill, once the colonial army barracks and now one of Singapore's architectural and cultural heritage sites. The gallery is used primarily for exhibitions but also as a venue for private and corporate events, offering a range of private client and corporate consultancy services, art rentals and art history talks.