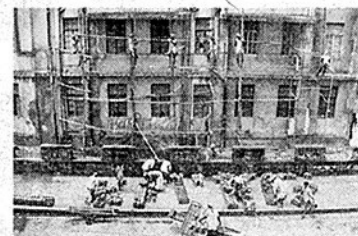




Roadside photo studio



Man with a bag



Dabbawallahs at Sachivalaya



Man asleep on Chowpatty beach (II)

Something about the images of tall buildings covered in chipped plaster, dilapidated repair shops, deserted streets and wrinkled faces, hold your attention.

Photojournalist Pablo Bartholomew's exhibition, *Chronicles of A Past Life-Bombay (1970s-80s)*, at Photoink Gallery in Jhandewalan, reflects the city's culture and a period now lost to time.

Bartholomew's perspective is that of an outsider, who was, "conveniently absorbed by the city."

He commented, "The show is dedicated to a place which gave me, and a thousand others, the opportunity to be cradled and mentored professionally." Pablo added, "It provided friendship, food, shelter and the chance to be someone."

From *dabbawallahs* to a street-side photo studio, and taxi stand, the photos capture various aspects that go into making Mumbai so unique.

Pablo Bartholomew is famous for reportage photos like his *Time* magazine cover of the Bhopal gas tragedy.

The lensman grew up in Delhi, but went to Mumbai at 21, to carve

Mumbai, black & white

Photojournalist PABLO BARTHOLOMEW's shots of 70-80s' Mumbai depict the city as an urban shelter for dreamers. He talks to DIVYA KAUSHIK about a new exhibition based on his personal stories. He had left Delhi for Bombay at 21

a niche for himself. He soon discovered he was not the only one. As vast rivers of people trickled in to fulfill their dreams. They quickly adapted to the local code. As well as the norms practiced by Mumbaikars.

Pablo commented, "India would not have been same without

Mumbai. Not only is there entertainment, advertising, finance. The city embraces cultures and habits."

Having escaped bureaucratic Delhi, leaving behind his troubled teenage life, Bartholomew said he "found acceptance in Mumbai. Not because I was a local son. But



because of my talent and skills as a photographer. This allowed me to find myself grow, workwise.

He added, "Now I can look back with warmth and gratitude, at what Mumbai had to offer me.

He also said, "With grudging reluctance, I had left it, during the

mid 1980s; the death of my father and trouble brewing in the North, took me to journalism.

"Unfortunately, this marked the end of the documentary phase of my work. After I joined journalism and the world of colour, I abandoned my black and white photos."

The photographs present strong images of subcultures, and the urban environment.

The idea, said Pablo, was to capture the city's essence. There is a picture of Amitabh Bachchan relaxing on the sets of *Coolie*, with fellow crew members. Other images include a Parsi gentleman at a wedding, a family on a scooter, a beggar at Victoria Terminus and the manager of an opium den.

Each image like ragpickers fighting. Or a horse-stable in Mumbai tells a story.

Pablo Bartholomew ended, "Often I would wander aimlessly through the streets, hoping to discover the place day by day. I remain amazed by the infinite visual joy of each discovery."

The show is on till Feb 25.

photo courtesy Photoink