

THE KITE RUNNERS OF HYDERABAD

Description

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I have â??clicked upâ?? my skills and the needed emotions after I joined the â??Telangana Photographic Society,â?? at Hyderabad, popularly referred to as TPS. Young and old, hobbyists, professionals, and masters, TPS is an assembly of keen, avid, dedicated shutter lovers.


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Because I live in Vijayawada, five hours away from Hyderabad city, I occasionally participate in the regular photo walks, presentations, and workshops that excite me. As a hobbyist, I wish to gather hands-on knowledge about digital photography and its confusing manipulation of the range of gearshifts.

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A month ago, a program was announced as a part of monthly regular photo walks, marking the event of the International Kite Festival. The theme was to capture the vibrant multi-patterned kites and the spirited artisans assembling the colored papers, twines and threads, and bamboo dowels. The place is the famous Mangalghat Street in Dhulpet, in the old city of Hyderabad. Itâ??s a dedicated two-kilometer-long make-shift selling area to make and market the staggering array of kites and all its paraphernalia.

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I couldnâ??t join the event, but I visited the place alone the following week, and here I share my visual sensations.

I entered the street, and the scene in front of me was discouraging. Looking at almost no crowds moving about, where I expected a flush of blooms and colors, a roar of buying and selling, the scooters hooping past, it looked like an empty theater after a show. Dirt and litter strewn everywhere.

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An hour before, when I was getting ready with my camera gear, my seven-year-old grandson Kaushal, who has been showing keen bonding interest in accompanying me wherever I went, readied himself to join me. I was hesitant about whether he would be a distraction when I engrossed myself in choosing the subjects and lost intently tackling the view-finder.

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But his childish insistence, pleading with the dark, rolling eyes, melted my suspicion. He jumped into the car along with me.

Throughout the trip, I enjoyed the intimacy of Kaushal snuggling on my lap and peering out at the gathering crowds, readying for the daily chores, and the morning sun kissing his curious face. I spoil him a little, and he gives me love and hope.

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We were too early for the kite market to open their shutters. I drove around Hyderabadâ??s narrow and empty streets for an hour with nothing else to do. I noticed a question of disappointment on Kaushalâ??s tender lips for not getting to the stalls of Kites that he had been eagerly waiting for. I was afraid he might get bored and ask me to take him home. But he seemed happy with the merry-go-rounds through the rows of the padlocked shops packed back-to-back in age-old buildings â?? slowly coming alive with activity.

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I parked my car at a secure place, holding Kaushal in one hand and the camera in the other, debating and imagining how I must fix the compositions. I walked into the â??panoramic paradise of the kite runners.â??

A wide-eyed kid beside me, an expensive camera tight in my grip, I presented an awkward profile among the hard-working older men in unassuming attire and eager looks and waiting for a profitable day.

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The road looked skiddy wet, pools of water flowing down; perhaps it might have rained the previous night. â??Let me hold Kaushal a little firmer,â?? I said to myself.

I made Kaushal sit in a somewhat bigger kite shop and put candy in hand as an incentive. I asked the shop people to keep an eye on him when I walked down Mangalghat Street to seek permission from the shop owners and compose my thoughts and efforts to correlate visually with the people, the colours, and the patterns.

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Street photography throws rather unexpected, unfriendly situations and suspicious stares while capturing life in a public place â?? jostling crowds, unfavorable lighting, speaking to and convincing strangers, and a bit of luck. Chances are; usually, nothing works in our favour.

I made Kaushal a reluctant nomad for a while, having to squat in a few shops, allowing me to run my errands. I assured him a bigger treat. I never let myself move away far and stayed within his relaxing gaze. Thus, I went about my job for a couple of hours.

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I always give my friends a piece of free advice â?? that pursuing photography has an inbuilt healing character. But, watching and holding close to my grandson, I recognized a new insight on that day. Grandkidâ??s closeness not only carries a healing warmth but also makes a miracle to put a smile on our faces and wink at us with a golden gesture as if conveying, â??Though retired, you are my best friend ever.â?? So are my images of the â??Kite Runnersâ?? â?? full of smiles and hope.

Category

1. Places

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