

LENS SPEAK

Colour blind

Srikanth Kolari brings his images of celebration, destruction and the struggle and ultimate victory of life in everything, to the city. *What's Hot* catches up with the ace lensman

The world is full of colour and if you live in India, you're surrounded by a vibrancy that follows you everywhere you go," says photographer Srikanth Kolari. His photographs, however, are always in black and white, and tell many a woeful tale with heartbreaking honesty. The vast underbelly of injustice and inequality, where tragedy and suffering are all in a day's work raises its ugly head and Srikanth's camera awaits it in readiness.

Tragedy happens, often with a streak of inevitability, and victims are left to cope with their suffering as the tidal wave of the present carries them forward along with the debris of the past. "The tsunami in Tamilnadu occurred five years ago and people are still suffering," says Srikanth. "I met a woman who lost her husband and all her belongings five years ago. The amazing part is how they all go back to the sea just the same."

Having dabbled in various kinds of photography to make ends meet,

it was a restless yearning for something more that led Srikanth Kolari to travel the world and document his journey in photographs. Far from being your everyday novice who rushes into everything he sees with an eager lens and more often than not, a lack of insight, Srikanth prefers not to jump at everything that meets the eye.

So why are all his pictures in black and white? "I think colour is distracting," he replies. "In India, especially, you're surrounded by colour. With black and white, you're getting straight to the point, without any unnecessary deviations along the way." Bright colours as far as the eye can see, that mask the dirty grey of poverty and affliction under a veil of vibrant beauty.

Srikanth doesn't want to be called a photo journalist or even an artist. "I'm not qualified enough to be either," he remarks. "The most I can say about myself is that I am a messenger. I want to make people aware of what others are going



Srikanth Kolari

through. The rest, they can decide for themselves."

A messenger who brings not just words or facts to light, but emotion and the notion that life, in all her wondrous beauty and effortless elegance, can be as cruel as a raging animal when the mood strikes. As cold blooded as a wild cat, she marks her prey and makes her move, still with that tempestuous beauty and savage grace, leaving a trail of catastrophe and despair in her wake.

— DARSHANA RAMDEV

HOT SPOT

Thereafter — Journeys in Jharia, Kashmir and the Tsunami coast, Sua House, 26/1, Kasturba Road Cross, Till April 20, 10 am to 7 pm (except Sundays)

