

Fotobogen: From Madras to Chennai – 50 Years of Street Photography

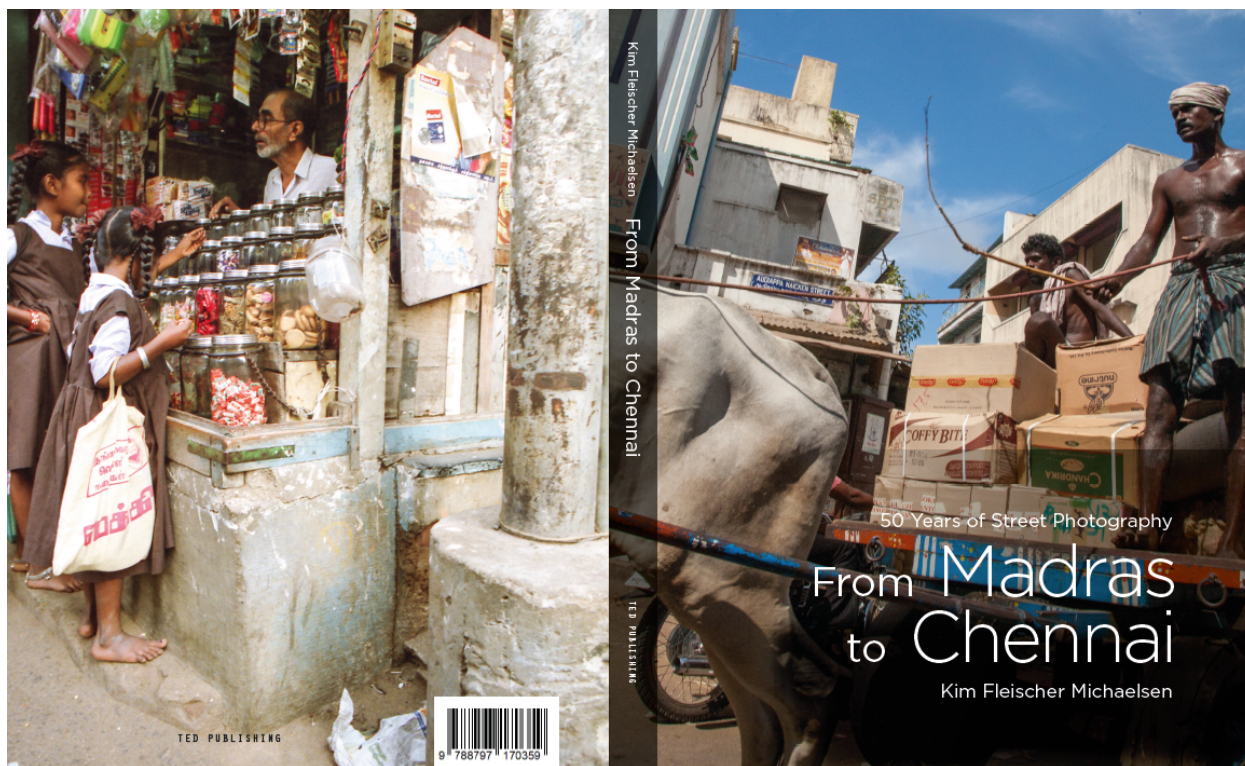
Marts 2022 udgav jeg bogen: *From Madras to Chennai – 50 Years of Street Photography*, som kunne have interesse for Dansk Indisk Forenings medlemmer. Bogens omslag kan du se nedenfor, og under den min indledende tekst.

Bogen er udgivet på forlaget Ted Publishing og kan bestilles i alle boghandlere. Den koster 228 kr, men foreningens medlemmer kan bestille bogen hos mig for 150 kr på min mailadresse kfm@nexs.ku.dk.

Hvis salget af bogen giver overskud, bliver det doneret til en NGO i Chennai, der støtter udsatte børn.

Jeg er medlem af fotoklubben Photographic Society of Madras, der blev grundlagt i 1856, og jeg har sendt nogle bøger til dem. Et af medlemmerne, den prisbelønnede fotograf Udayan Sankar Pal har omtalt bogen meget positivt på Facebook – det kan du se allersidst.

Kim Fleischer Michaelsen



Fascinated by life in the streets

All the photographs in this book are from George Town, one of the oldest districts of the Indian town Chennai, which was Madras until 1996. I started taking photographs during high school, and it has been a hobby ever since. After graduation I wanted to experience - and photograph - the world: In 1969 I hitchhiked from Denmark to Italy, and from there I took trains and busses through Yugoslavia, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan to India. I did not have much money, but bus and train tickets for the whole journey cost less than 30 USD, and in India I could live for one USD a day for food and hostels. I had not been outside Europe previously and was utterly enchanted by India. The culture was completely different from anything I had experienced before, and I stayed for a longer period in Madras.

I have visited India and Madras/Chennai nine times since 1969, most recently in 2019. On every visit I have been back to the same streets of George Town, taking more photographs each time. I often walk from the Chennai Central railway station along Bose Road and into the narrow streets packed with shops and people. Over the years I have spent many hours exploring the neighbourhood, experiencing the life of the streets, eating the local South Indian food, masala dosa and curries, and drinking lassi and chai.

The streets are still bursting with life: there are children playing everywhere and parents taking care of them, families, hardworking men and women, there are flower markets and markets with vegetables, fish or meat, transport of all kinds of goods, and sacred cows calmly walking around. Many of the streets are dedicated to a particular business. Such as Thambu Chetty Street with hardware and home appliances, or Anderson Street with stationery and large shops stocking mainly wedding cards.

I have always felt safe and very welcome in Madras/Chennai, and not once have I experienced any negative reactions to my taking photographs in the streets. Only seldom have I met other foreigners.

In 1972 my street photography from Madras was exhibited at Copenhagen Main Library. The exhibition consisted of 35 large black and white prints, 40x60 cm, most of them taken with 24 mm wide angle in portrait format and with no cropping, as are most of the photos in this book. The exhibition was later shown at several libraries around Denmark. Up to 1998 I photographed exclusively with black and white films, but then switched to colour to capture the vibrant colours of the street life.

Many of the photographs in this book have children as their focus. I have always been fascinated by the dynamic activity and the curiousness of children. Experiencing the life of children in India, and especially in Madras/Chennai, has had an impact on my working life. Both seeing happy and lively children, but also seeing children malnourished, ill and living in poverty, with all the consequences this would have on their lives. During my training as a medical student I worked in the Kalahari Desert in Botswana for 6 months, and as a young doctor I spent two years, from 1980 to 1982, with my family in Botswana, working as a regional medical officer. The life and health of children have been a central focus throughout my working life as medical practitioner, and later as professor of paediatric nutrition. Many of the scientific studies in which I have been involved have been with infants and young children from low and middle income countries. The research has focused on how nutrition can influence health, growth, development and wellbeing of infants and young children.

In this book I hope to share with the reader my fascination with the people of George Town and with the dynamic life of its streets, a fascination that has drawn me back to this place repeatedly throughout half a century.

Kim Fleischer Michaelsen

Copenhagen, January 2022



Udayan Sankar Pal

March 21 at 1:30 PM · 🌐



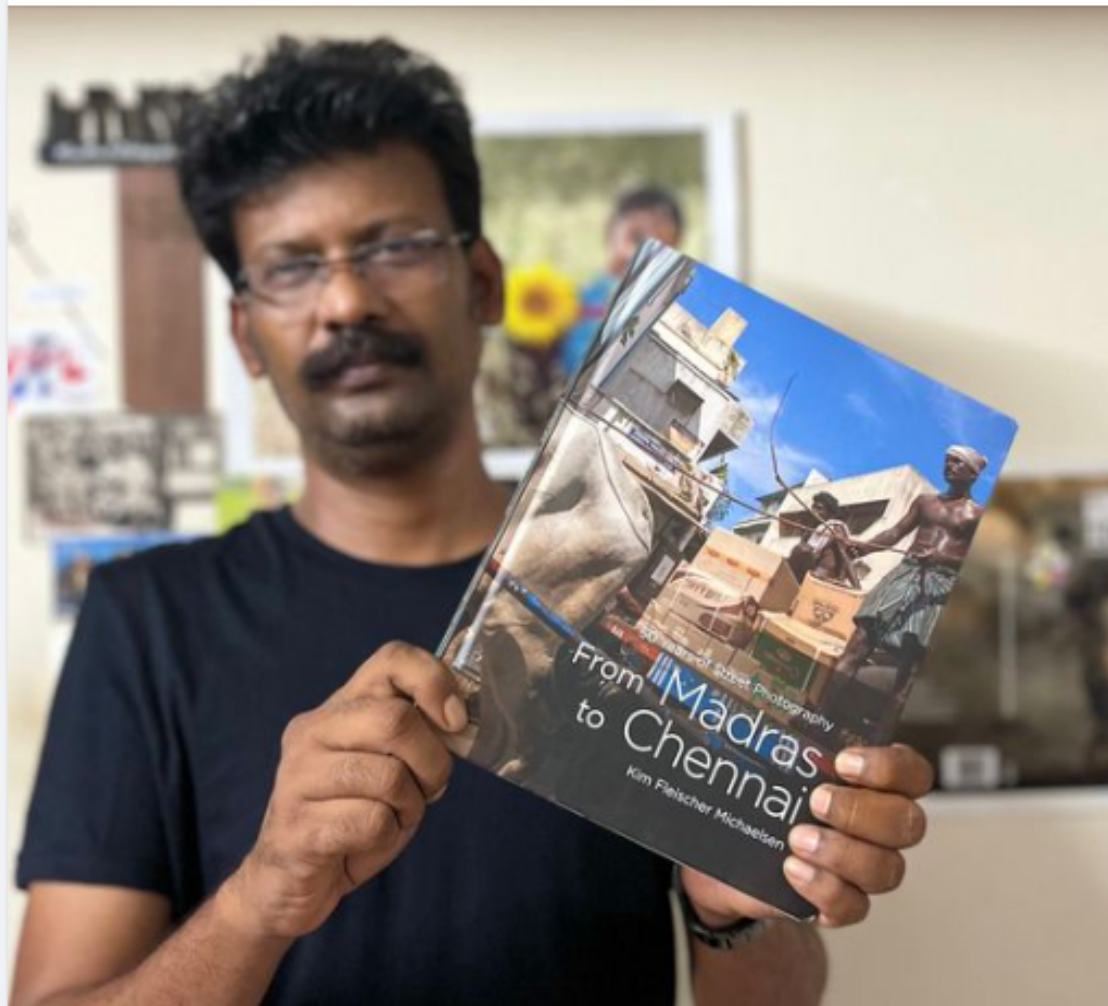
A beautiful gift from Denmark!

Dr Kim Fleischer Michaelsen, an avid street photographer sent his book (Title: From Madras to Chennai) for a few of us PSM Members (Photographic Society of Madras).

It's an incredible book where he beautifully captured the true essence of Chennai Streets. This book is a result of 50 years of Street Photography & 9 visits to Chennai from Denmark. He first visited Chennai in 1969 and last in 2019.

Moreover, the profits from this book will be donated to an NGO supporting vulnerable children in Chennai.

I always believe one needs to be a good human being to be a good photographer & Dr Kim is one of the finest examples.





Udayan Sankar Pal

April 1 at 6:47 PM · 🌐



The book is becoming my boy's best friend!

We were waiting to meet my friend this evening as I wanted to give him this book for his reference. Usually a busy body, I was pleased to see my son engrossed in the book oblivious to the traffic or the noise on the road.

My photo books are one of the only things that keeps him so engaged and in one place, a stark contrast from his usual busy naughty activities.

