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Asia Society Texas Center Opens New Exhibition *Scraping the Sky: Photographs by Vicky Roy*

Exhibition Opens August 10, Focuses on Extreme Architectural Feats: Building in the Himalayan Mountains and Rebuilding the World Trade Center in NYC



Vicky Roy, "Chitkul, Himachal Pradesh," India, 2015. From "The Scarred Land: New Mountainscapes" Series, Photograph, © Vicky Roy Photography.
Vicky Roy, From the "World Trade Center" Series, 2009, Photograph, © Vicky Roy Photography

HOUSTON, July 23, 2019 — Asia Society Texas Center (ASTC) welcomes photographer **Vicky Roy** for his ASTC debut in *Scraping the Sky: Photographs by Vicky Roy*. The photos showcase humanity’s unceasing drive to build at great heights by juxtaposing two extremes of architecture: building in the Himalayas and reconstructing the World Trade Center.

Never before shown in the U.S., the Himalayan photos reveal an architectural style and building process most people will never see: how structures can be built with such limited raw materials, in tremendously challenging conditions, and yet how residents are determined to thrive at the “roof of the world.” These photos evoke both the natural beauty of the Himalayas but also the human aspiration to occupy the region and sustain life at such extreme temperatures and heights, despite the environmental cost.

Roy’s World Trade Center photos have never been seen outside NYC, and they mark the 10th anniversary of this series, in which he was one of only four photographers selected to photo-document the massive reconstruction project, a pivotal moment in American history. As with the Himalayan photos, these shots also evoke the challenge of height and a human sense of determination and resolve, to rebuild a building that has such symbolism in society, both in the U.S. and around the world. Roy’s photos pay homage to many constituents: those who built the original building, as well as the



victims of 9/11, their families, and those who planned and worked on the reconstructed World Trade Center.

“There’s a long history of exhibiting the work of photographers from Asia in Houston, and we are delighted to contribute to that history by sharing these impressive black-and-white series by Vicky Roy” says **Bridget Bray**, ASTC’s Nancy C. Allen Curator and Director of Exhibitions. “He travels and gains access to places many of us can never see, and these rare projects at the World Trade Center and in the Himalayan mountains demonstrate that.”

Roy is a star on the rise; he was named to *Forbes’* Asia 30 Under 30 list in 2016 and is a two-time TEDx speaker. A native of India who grew up in poverty and learned photography from an intervention program for New Delhi street children, Roy has become one of the most in-demand photographers of his generation. His work has been seen in San Diego, Hong Kong, London, Switzerland, Johannesburg, Athens, NYC, New Delhi, Kolkata, and Mumbai, among others.

Roy’s first exhibition at Asia Society appears in ASTC’s Faye Sarofim Grand Hall and is free to all visitors.

- Exhibition dates: Saturday, August 10–Sunday, October 20, 2019
- Admission: Free
- Hours: Tuesday–Friday, 11am–6pm; Saturday–Sunday, 10am–6pm
- Location: Asia Society Texas Center, 1370 Southmore Blvd, Houston, TX, 77004 (in the Museum District)

About the Artist

Originally from West Bengal, India, **Vicky Roy** ran away as a child from his home and started working as a rag picker at the New Delhi Railway Station. After participating in skills-building programs for children living on the streets run by the Salaam Baalak Trust in Delhi, he studied photography at Triveni Kala Sangam and then apprenticed under Anay Mann. In 2007, he held his first solo exhibition titled *Street Dream* at the India Habitat Centre in Delhi, which was supported by the British High Commission.

Vicky Roy’s first monograph *Home Street Home* published by the Nazar Foundation (New Delhi, India) was released at the second edition of the Delhi Photo Festival (2013). His solo show *This Scarred Land: New Mountainscapes* was exhibited at Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi, India in 2017. He was a part of Houston FotoFest Biennial and Kochi Muziris Biennale, both in 2018. Roy was awarded the MIT Media Fellowship in 2014, and was included on the *Forbes* Asia 30 under 30 list in 2016.

About Asia Society Texas Center

With 14 locations throughout the world, Asia Society is the leading educational organization promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among the peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the rest of the world. Asia Society Texas Center executes the global mission with a local focus, enriching and engaging the vast diversity of Houston through innovative, relevant programs in arts and culture, business and policy, education, and community outreach.

This exhibition is organized by Asia Society Texas Center. Exhibitions at Asia Society Texas Center are presented by Wells Fargo. Major support comes from Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen,

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Nancy C. Allen, and Leslie and Brad Bucher, as well as The Brown Foundation, Inc., Houston Endowment, and the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance. Generous funding also provided by The Clayton Fund, Texas Commission on the Arts, Wortham Foundation, Inc., The Franci Neely Foundation, Olive Jenney, Nanako and Dale Tingleaf, and Ann Wales. Funding is also provided through contributions from the Exhibitions Patron Circle.