Christopher Pinney: It's now been more than two years since you were arrested. You were still in prison when we last spoke. In your book, you say that while you were in prison, you were releasing images of war, particularly the Lakers and the war that was taking place in the streets. You've shared that you were standing outside with a little baby. And you come up to me and say, "Can you bless this letter?" Particularly because for her to do that was dangerous, because I am, as far as the standing outside with a little baby. And she comes up to me and says, "Can you bless this letter?"

Shahidul Alam: It was a very touching moment. I was not even thinking about the fact that I was going to be put in prison, because I was focused on these images. But the average person didn't know me.

Christopher Pinney: In Ka Ip ana's Warriors, you appear to be fascinated with the utopian possibilities that you were seeing in the streets. The fact that people could see through all that, and still relate to the person that I was, completely ignoring the circles before I got arrested.

Shahidul Alam: One of the things that happens very often is photographers reduce people to visually?

Christopher Pinney: Is that a purely instrumental cloak for racism and discrimination?

Shahidul Alam: I remember Stuart Hall's expression that a Black man with a black camera will not necessarily take Black pictures. The type of pictures I take depends upon my politics, my religion, my race, the style of approach to the way in which I do my work. I think a lot of people get confused about this. I'm not saying that every photographer who is Black, myself included, will take pictures of Black people. But I think for a while there was a lot of talking and no action. Where did it get to? Now it's much better, in terms of the recognition of the work of photographers who are Black. It's much better now.

Christopher Pinney: Could one then say it was an imaginative exploration of the utopian possibilities of the visual?

Shahidul Alam: I found out that people did know, and they would do things. But inside, I wasn't recognized the reality. The decision to title the book The Tide Will Turn is based on the view. What's been happening since?

Christopher Pinney: Let's hope that it is already turning.
Welcome
Issues
Search

aperture.org | Sign In | Subscribe Now | Support

All work is copyright of respective owner, otherwise ©2022 Aperture Foundation. Terms and Privacy

Articles Left. Enjoy this article on us.

Subscribe Already have an account? Sign In