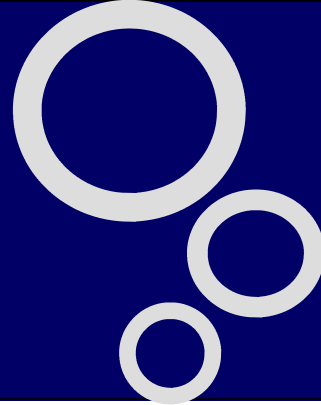


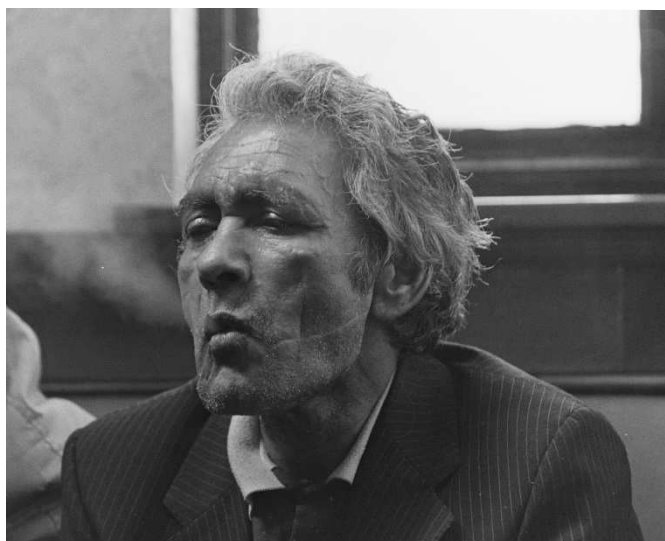
The Gallery

@Idea Store Whitechapel



Raju Vaidyanathan: Brick Lane Born 1983-1989

23 January - 27 March 2017



Growing up in Spitalfields in the 1980s, Raju Vaidyanathan took thousands of photographs of his neighbourhood but could never afford to develop his negatives into prints. A selection of his extraordinary images are exhibited here - an insider's view of community life in Brick Lane, captured by an Asian teenager. Still living and working in Tower Hamlets, Raju enrolled on an Idea Store Learning Photography course in 2015 and finally began to develop his negatives, seeing his own work for the first time in nearly thirty years.

Raju's camera recorded more than just the derelict buildings and run-down streetscapes which tend to dominate visual representations of Brick Lane during this period. What we've found so refreshing and unique about Raju's photographs are the glimpses they provide of interior scenes in the lives of local people: regulars at the Seven Stars or the Beigel Bake, Bengali activists lobbying the council, the Queen Mother's visit to Whitechapel Gallery, bargain hunters at Cheshire Street market, the Bangladeshi Youth Movement (BYM) football teams in action, an elderly Jewish shopkeeper behind his counter and Joi Bangla Krew on stage at the Half Moon Theatre.

We are delighted to host to this exhibition, Raju's first, and also – we think - the first exhibition of 1980s Spitalfields featuring work by a photographer of Asian heritage. On show is a selection of images from Raju's extensive archive, printed by hand in the darkroom at the Shadwell Centre and presented with highly descriptive captions written by the man himself.