



Pondicherry

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Photographs by Sebastian Cortes
Photographs by Pascal Bruckner
Photographs by Akash Kapur

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- A thoughtful photographic journey into the fascinating city of Pondicherry - the former French colony in India
- Captures the essence of how the East meets the West today, in Pondicherry

Pondicherry is an extended photo essay, which has as its main focus, the photographer's perception and visual interpretation of the city of Pondicherry. The photographer journeys into the metaphorical and anthropological folds of the city, searching for a sense of "place" – his interpretation of a specific environment and how it's inhabited. The photographer goes beyond the walls and penetrates into the private sphere, into homes, spaces and routines, which exemplify a certain culture or cultures, always searching for visual messages that compose the tapestry of perception, both of the past and of the present. The perception of "place" is also offered in words. The photographer has sought out the participation of several noted French and Indian writers, who have offered very personal and insightful views of Pondicherry – words and images working in a complimentary way for an artistic perception of Pondicherry.

Sebastian Cortes, born in New York, took up photography in 1980 while at the New York University film school, where he studied and collaborated with many of the best names in the industry. In 1985, he moved to Milan and pursued fashion and lifestyle photography assignments for many international magazines, as well as for commercial clients, while also concentrating on portraits and personal work. In 2004, Sebastian moved with his family to India. His award-winning photography is greatly appreciated and has enriched several book projects. Currently, he divides his time and energy between commercial, editorial, and artistic projects, both in India and Europe. **Pascal Bruckner** began writing in the vein of the so-called 'nouveaux philosophes' and counts among their best known French proponents. He published 'Parias' (Parias), 'Lunes de Fiel' (adapted to film by Roman Polanski) and 'Les voleurs de beaute' (The beauty stealers) (Prix Renaudot in 1997). An essayist for the 'Nouvel Observateur' Pascal Bruckner has always had a deep love and understanding of India. **Akash Kapur** is a longtime resident of the Pondicherry area. He has written for 'The Economist', 'Granta', 'The New Yorker', 'The New York Times', and pens the 'Letter from India' for 'The International Herald Tribune'. His first book, a work of narrative nonfiction on social transition in modern India, will be published by Penguin-Riverhead (USA) in 2012. **Dr. Amin Jaffer** is International Director of Asian Art, at Christie's. For twelve years a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, he is the author of the ground-breaking volumes, 'Furniture from British India and Ceylon' (2001) and 'Made for Maharajas: A design diary of Princely India' (2006) and is the co-editor of 'Encounters: The meeting of Asia and Europe: 1500-1800' (2004), which accompanied a blockbuster Victoria & Albert exhibition, which he co-curated. He generated and was external curator for the exhibition 'Maharaja: the Splendour of India's Royal Courts' and co-edited the accompanying volume (2009).