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of the Visual Arts and Film Studies of the Concerned 15 December Urban  
Photography- Roads and Paths and Stairways to the Unknown

Realistically, speaking it is the Urban Photography genre that best explains the photographs I have chosen for my course portfolio. The essential thing about these photographs is that they no way intend to convey a complete or total urban experience. In fact they are totally inadequate to do so. Rather, almost all the photographs in this portfolio select a segmented aspect of urban life and abbreviate it within the domain of time and space (Bate 106). They rather simplify and isolate their subjects from the larger urban context to which they belong. These photographs primarily being two dimensional, totally fail to convey the urban experiences they focus on. Thereby, it is the very brevity, simplicity and limited scope of these photographs that highlights the enormity and complexity of urban life. In other words these photographs accentuate urban complexity, by capturing simple themes, which in this case happens to be roads, paths and stairways. It does need to be mentioned that the chosen theme is something that is recurring and ubiquitous in all urban scenarios. The idea behind this portfolio is not to showcase amazing things, but rather to present simple aspects of urban life in a way that amazes and provokes. These photographs provoke the viewers to perceive the regular and mundane aspects of their urban existence in a new way. The photographs I have selected distil a facet or quality of the urban life in a very physical and confined manner.

Though all these photographs subscribe to a common theme, yet, they do capture utter diversity underlying the regular urban commutes. To achieve versatility and variety, they rely on the contrasts between the ambiance,

setting and architectural style marking each specific path and road (Liggett 120). The strategy to shoot these photographs from different elevations has added a subtle third dimension to them. The amazing thing is that though people are absent from many of these shots, still they are emphatically evident, going by the fact that these alleys, stairways and paths accrue relevance in relation to people only. It is their inseparable association with the urban human existence, which imbues them with a range of meanings, contexts and ideas (Liggett 120). Though these photographs do not catch people directly, yet, they speak much about them and the kind of lives they live. It is this aspect of this portfolio that adds multiple layers of meaning and appeal to each individual photograph and makes it more dynamic.

The one other thing that makes this urban photography portfolio so interesting is that each single photograph in it catches the differences in the feel and moods one comes across in different areas. If on the one side it catches the conformity and rigidity underlying a stairway, on the other side it showcases the spaciousness and serenity marking a secluded alley. This portfolio in a way celebrates the thematic possibilities existing in the otherwise prosaic urban life.

#### Works Cited

Bate, David. *Photography*. New York: Berg, 2009. Print.

Liggett, Helen. *Urban Encounters*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. Print.