



OLIVER BAROT

"It is in India that I rediscovered photography. The people, their culture and this land, all of them inspired me. One day I would like to publish a book of black and white photographs on India, and I would like to call it "India, Land of Light". Since the last ten years, I have been collecting pictures to express my deep love for this country. I've been associated with The Editions Auroville Press International, and they have printed this picture in many of their publications.

I had shot this picture at Rameswaram, Agni Tirtham (Tamil Nadu). It was around 6.30 am, an instant of eternity. I see the sea, when the sun is rising, as one of the most powerful subjects, and one of the most difficult. I think this image expresses humanity's aspiration for light. In the image, there is a secret wonderment and peace in the heart of the women standing in the sea. Everything seems suspended, the fisherman looks frozen in a sea made of milk. Everything is at the very edge between light and darkness, the whole universe is aware of its own splendor.

With my camera held in my hand, I let nature and its people act naturally and waited. The composition emphasized the feeling of the mystery of life. Standing at the seashore, the film pushed to 800 ASA and with an exposure of 1/125 of a second at f/5.6, I took three shots. A lot of work was done in the dark room, treatments like burn and dodge was applied in many parts to highlight the details without losing the depth of the blacks. However, I burnt the sky very dramatically to give a feeling of the sun rising from the darkness of the night, without transition. I used a resin coated multigrade paper from Ilford (pearl finish). I used the grade 3 filter. This photo has so much contrast that it would be very difficult to get it with a color negative film (and impossible with a slide film). But the technical aspect is not the most important one. I used a black and white film to increase the intensity, and give more depth to the picture. It's obviously a matter of personal feelings, but there are certain images, like this one, I cannot imagine in color." ■

He was born in Paris and learnt photography in France. The rich spirits of India got him to pick up his camera again, after a gap of a few years. From his home in the tiny town of Auroville (Pondicherry, India), *Oliver Barot* has grown as a graphic designer and photographer at The Editions Auroville Press International (EAPI). He is currently experimenting with a variety of films. He talks to *Neelam Doulatramani* about one of his favorite images.

Specifications

Camera	:Nikon FM (35 mm SLR)
Lens used	:Zoom 70-210 mm
Exposure	:1/125, f/5.6
Film	:Ilford FP4 Plus

