

Archive of Now: Photography in Kashmir 1986-2016

Book talk with Sanjay Kak

Discussants: Hafsa Kanjwal (Lafayette College) & Debashree Mukherjee (MESAAS)

In this book talk, acclaimed documentary filmmaker and writer, Sanjay Kak, discusses his curated book project, *Witness*, which brings together images by nine contemporary photographers from Kashmir and raises questions about the place of artistic practice in zones of conflict. In Kak's own words, "Witness began as a sort of 'archival' project, one of recovery. By the time it came out in 2017 it very much belonged to the present, as Kashmiri photographers suddenly emerged out of the shadows, with Pulitzers and global acknowledgement to follow. Two years later, as the slender autonomy enjoyed by the State was revoked in August 2019, a brutally enforced media clampdown followed, including on photographers. A silence has fallen on what was a fairly vigorous space. In some odd way *Witness* has returned to its early position as an archive."

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