



galeria
presença

March 21st - May 9th 2026

SOUL COMPLEX

Inês d'Orey

“Soul Complex” begins with a question posed by the Indian architect Aditya Prakash in the poem **Chandigarh** – a presentation in free verse : does Chandigarh have a soul? The answer appears within the poem itself: *“this is a city with a soul, with a throbbing heart, and with a thinking sensitive brain.”* It is from this idea — the possibility that a city might possess an inner life — that the exhibition takes its title.

Built from scratch in the 1950s, Chandigarh became one of the most ambitious urban projects of the twentieth century. Conceived after India’s independence, the city was envisioned as a symbol of modernity and of the future. The master plan and the most emblematic institutional buildings were developed by Le Corbusier, in collaboration with Pierre Jeanneret, Jane Drew, Maxwell Fry, and numerous Indian architects and planners. At the centre of this vision stands the Capitol Complex, a monumental ensemble that includes the Palace of Assembly, the Secretariat, and the High Court — large-scale structures in which architecture asserts itself as both a sculptural and political gesture.

Throughout her work in Chandigarh, Inês d'Orey photographed interiors and institutional spaces of the city, exploring the ways in which architecture constructs atmospheres and sensory experiences. Light, material, and scale become central elements, while the spaces — often monumental — reveal a tension between geometric order and human presence. In the large format photographs presented in this exhibition, many of them dedicated to the Capitol Complex, architecture appears as a living body, charged with memory and intention.

The exhibition brings together large-format photographs, light boxes, and an installation dedicated to two important architects involved in the construction of Chandigarh: Jane Drew and U. Eulie Chowdhury. Although they contributed to numerous buildings and to the shaping of the city’s urban fabric, their names remained for decades less visible within the dominant narrative of modern architecture.

By bringing these two architects to the centre of the exhibition, Inês d'Orey extends a line of research that has marked her recent work: the study, identification, and photographic documentation of buildings designed by pioneering women architects of the first half of the twentieth century. This gesture seeks not only to revisit the history of architecture, but also to rebalance the way that history is told.

“Soul Complex” thus proposes a meeting point between architecture, image, and memory. Between the monumentality of modernist structures and the human stories that run through them, the exhibition returns to Aditya Prakash’s initial question: can a city have a soul? In Inês d'Orey’s images, Chandigarh emerges as a complex organism, at once rational and sensitive, where the built space seems to hold the energy of those who imagined it.

High Court

Inaugurated in 1955, the High Court was the first building of the Capitol Complex to be constructed. Its presence is defined by a large external structure that projects like an immense umbrella — a symbolic gesture of protection and authority — covering and shading the terrace. The architecture is organized around the relationship between light, wind, and water: the V-shaped roof collects rainwater and channels it into tanks through large sculpted gargoyles.

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“High Court #1”

Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print

135 x 100 cm

2025







“High Court #2”
Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print
80 x 80 cm
2025



“High Court #3”
Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print in Box Frame
30 x 35 x 30 cm
2025



Bandstand

Detailed by Pierre Jeanneret, based on sketches by Le Corbusier, the gigantic order of stacked brick piers, interwoven with exposed steel structural elements, and the long, uninterrupted sequence of double staircases make this a singular, sublime, and almost surreal structure.

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“Bandstand #1”

Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print

80 x 80 cm

2025







“Capitol Complex #3”
Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print
50 x 50 cm
2025



“Capitol Complex #1”
Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print
50 x 50 cm
2025



“Capitol Complex #4”
Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print
50 x 50 cm
2025





The PGIMER (Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research) is one of India's hospital and medical education complexes. Integrated into the city's modern plan, the complex was developed from the 1960s onwards as part of Chandigarh's institutional expansion, following the principles of functional and rational urbanism that characterize the original project. Designed by Pierre Jeanneret and Jeet Malhotra.

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"PGIMER #1"
Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print
90 x 140 cm
2025



“Neelam Theatre #2”

Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print in Lightbox with Tripod

30 x 35 x 30 cm

2025



“Nirman theatre #2”

Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print in Lightbox with Tripod

30 x 35 x 30 cm

2025



The Neelam theatre

The Neelam Theatre (1961), designed by the Indian architect Aditya Prakash in Chandigarh's commercial center, became one of the cultural landmarks of the new modernist city. Conceived as a public cinema and gathering place, the building asserts itself through simple volumes, solid brick walls, and a monumental curved concrete cornice. For decades, it was a central point in the city's social life, integrating culture, architecture, and urban space in the heart of Sector 17. Over time, however, many of Chandigarh's historic cinemas disappeared or were replaced by shopping centers, and the Neelam became one of the few remaining examples from this period of the city's modern architecture.

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"Neelam theatre #1"

Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print

135 x 100 cm

2025



Secretariat (Secretariado)

The Chandigarh Secretariat (1959) is a long administrative building that defines one of the boundaries of the Capitol Complex. Approximately 240 meters in length, its façade is protected by a system of brise-soleil that filters the intense light of the Indian climate and allows for air circulation. The modular structure organizes government offices along continuous corridors, while ramps and rooftop gardens create spaces for movement and gathering. The rooftop garden has become one of the most popular lunch spots for the roughly 5,000 employees working in the building, especially during the winter. More than a purely functional building, the Secretariat asserts itself as a monumental piece of Chandigarh's civic landscape, appearing from a distance like a large concrete ship advancing over the valley's greenery.

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"Secretariat #1"

Fine Art Photographic Inkjet Print

135 x 100 cm

2025





“Hockey Stadium #1”
Photographic Backlit Print in an Industrial Floodlight
45.3 x 45.3 x 45.5 cm
2025



“Tower of Shadows #1”
Photographic Backlit Print in an Industrial Floodlight
45.3 x 45.3 x 45.5 cm
2025





Inês d'Orey was born in Porto in 1977.

She studied photography at the London College of Printing in 2002 and she won the Fnac New Talents Award in Photography in 2007.

Much of Inês d'Orey's artistic work focuses on the transformation of the heritage identity of the contemporary city, where the architectural object presents itself as a subject of memory, shifting its meanings over time. Architecture, the polis, the boundary between public and private space, and the investigation of places and their contexts are some of the elements that make up her body of work, whose main medium is photography, though it intersects with installation and video.

Her work is included in several private and public collections, including the State Contemporary Art Collection (CACE), the EDP Foundation (PT), the Art Library of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (PT), the Art Library of the Serralves Foundation (PT), the Lisbon City Council (PT), the Porto City Council (PT), the Norlinda and José Lima collection (PT), the Oliva Arauna Collection (ES), and Galleri Image (DK).



For any inquiries, please contact us.