

B17DCH17, Dnr: 'fotograf'

INSTITUUT VIR EIETYDSE GESKIEDENIS

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The Argus

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art review

Challenging social images in three-part photo exhibition

JOHN YELD

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matic highlights, no over-statements — at face value it is simply a straightforward record of situations.

minated in a patch of light against a dark background.

Undercurrent

But there is also an unmistakable undercurrent of social consciousness and there is little doubt where the photographer's sympathies lie.

"This is the reality — look, think," Badsha's photographs challenge, as when he depicts a teacher who somehow retains composure while coping with 80 children in her class.

Despite the harsh social milieu, Badsha can find a simple beauty in the most mundane situation, such as the picture where a working woman leans pensively on a pile of boxes, neatly illu-

Sinister

Occasionally he introduces an almost sinister element, as in the photograph of a pension payout where the focus is directed on a gun and people are reduced to dehumanised figures.

The work is all in black-and-white, which is perhaps unfortunate as some of the subjects — particularly the *Bed Of Roses* essay — cry out for the relief of colour.

But then Omar makes no attempt to entertain, and the starker medium suits his purpose well.

The exhibition runs until July 10 and is recommended.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC exhibition by Omar Badsha entitled *Three Photo Essays* is on view at the Shell Gallery in Riebeeck Street.

As is self-evident from the title, the exhibition is divided into three sections — *Bed Of Roses* depicts the annual celebration in honour of a Durban Muslim saint; *Imijondolo* (shacks) is a photographic study of a so-called squatter settlement in the Inanda area outside Durban; and *Imperial Ghetto* documents the predominantly Indian area in Durban where the photographer lived.

These are images of people — at work, at prayer, celebrating, being buried. There are no dra-

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