



## Charles Fréger: "*Aam Aastha*"

### Opening

Saturday, March 14

5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

### Exhibition Dates

March 14 – April 18

### Opening Hours

Thursday, Friday and Saturday 3:00 pm – 6:30 pm

**CARTACEA** Galleria is pleased to announce the presentation of *Aam Aastha*, a new project by French artist Charles Fréger, created in India.

Born in Bourges in 1975, Fréger trained at the École régionale des beaux-arts de Rouen and, over the past twenty-five years, has developed a distinctive body of work grounded in portraiture as a tool of contemporary anthropology. Through the documentation of traditional costumes and collective identities, he captures the rituals, histories, and narratives of communities around the world.

Fréger's practice operates at the intersection of photography, anthropology, and performance, resulting in a series of iconic projects and publications. Among them are *Wilder Mann* (2012), in which he documented European folk traditions through vivid and powerful portraits, and *Cimarron* (2019), dedicated to exploring the African diaspora in the Americas.

With *Aam Aastha*, Fréger continues his long-standing investigation into collective identities and ceremonial expression, further expanding his visual research within the cultural landscape of India.



Charles Fréger Mahishasura, Yakshagana ( Village de Bathiyadukka, Kasargod, Kerala) Edition of 5 + 2 AP Print 101 x 77 cm

In 2020, Charles Fréger embarked on a new body of work in India entitled *Aam Aastha*, exploring the embodiment of the deities of the Ramayana, one of the two great epic poems of Hinduism.

Travelling across more than twenty states throughout the country, he documented the often spectacular personifications of these deities as they appear in sacred dances and theatrical performances staged in temples, theatres, and during street festivals.

Their representations vary from state to state and from community to community, revealing a highly regulated social structure, as the performance of these roles is traditionally reserved for individuals belonging to the lower Hindu castes.



Charles Fréger Radha, Phulon Ki Holi (Holi avec Fleurs) ( Bray, Mathura,Uttar Pradesh) Edition of 5 + 2 AP Print 101 x 77 cm

For over a decade, Charles Fréger's projects have been supported by the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès.

Among his major exhibitions, particular note should be made of his first major Italian retrospective, *Fabula*, presented at Armani/Silos in 2018. The exhibition brought together more than 250 images spanning the entirety of the photographer's oeuvre. In 2016, the series *Yokainoshima*, dedicated to masked figures in Japanese ritual traditions, was exhibited at Fondation d'entreprise Hermès – Le Forum, at the Musée des Confluences, and subsequently at Rencontres de la Photographie.

At the Château des Ducs de Bretagne, he presented a solo exhibition dedicated to the *Cimarron* project in 2019, followed in 2022 by an exhibition devoted to *Aam Aastha*.

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