



Press information

Scarlett Coten receives the Leica Oskar Barnack Award 2016

French photographer Scarlett Coten is honoured with the Leica Oskar Barnack Award 2016 for her series of photos entitled 'Mectoub'. The winner of the Newcomer Award is photographer Clémentine Schneidermann with the photos of her project 'The Unbearable, the Sadness and the Rest'.

Wetzlar, 28 September 2016 Today, the two winners of the Leica Oskar Barnack Award 2016 were announced in the course of a gala award ceremony and exhibition opening in Berlin attended by more than 300 invited guests from around the globe.

The winner in the category 'Leica Oskar Barnack Award' is Scarlett Coten who entered an impressive series of images with the title 'Mectoub'. In her series, the French photographer shines a revealing light on the supposedly archetypal machismo of men in the Arab world. Her portraits draw the eye to the dichotomy between social conformity and personal desires. Scarlett Coten's fascination for the various aspects of changing society in North Africa and the Middle East began in the days of the Arab Spring. Her images reflect a woman's eye for composition that enabled her to capture extremely intimate portraits of the men she portrayed with her camera. With 'Mectoub', a play on words combining the Arab 'maktub', that stands for the inevitable in the sense of 'It is written ...', and the French 'mec' a friendly slang expression for macho, Coten manages to take a subtle look beneath the veneer of traditional male roles of the Arab world. The winner of the main category of the Leica Oskar Barnack Award receives a cash prize of 25,000 euros and Leica M-System equipment to the value of a further 10,000 euros.

This year's 'Leica Oskar Barnack Newcomer Award' goes to photographer Clémentine Schneidermann for her series with the title 'The Unbearable, the Sadness and the Rest'. About a year ago, the Parisian-born photographer moved to the town of Abertillery in South

Wales. She had already completed her studies in Newport and, in the course of a sojourn as photographer in residence, she began to document the way of life in the region. Although embedded in beautiful countryside, the region is burdened with immense economic and social problems. After the collieries were closed, the communities of the 'Valleys' of South Wales' slid into a post-industrial crisis. Her project, 'The Unbearable, the Sadness and the Rest', combines the genres of documentary, portrait and fashion photography in extremely unusual ways. As the winner of the 'Leica Oskar Barnack Newcomer Award' Clémentine Schneidermann receives a cash prize of 10,000 euros and a Leica rangefinder camera.

This year is the first time that a further ten finalists have each been awarded cash prizes of 2,500 euros.

'I would like to congratulate this year's winners, Scarlett Coten und Clémentine Schneidermann, in the name of the entire jury of the Leica Oskar Barnack Award. With their photographs, both have impressively cast a humanistic eye on elements of modern society in which people take centre stage. With their exceptionally direct visual language, the two photographers highlight relevant social and socio-political issues of contemporary society', commented Karin Rehn-Kaufmann, director general of Leica Galerien International. 'Alongside the enormous diversity and impressive quality of this year's more than 3,200 entries from 108 different countries, we are also particularly pleased with the success of the reorientation and simultaneous revitalisation and strengthening of the Leica Oskar Barnack Award'.

For the first time, Leica Camera AG will be publicly presenting the works of all twelve finalists in the context of a major exhibition in the 'Neue Schule für Fotografie', Brunnenstrasse 188-190, 10119 Berlin. The 'Leica Oskar Barnack Award' exhibition, a part of the official programme of the European Month of Photography (EMOP Berlin), can be viewed daily from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. from 29 September to 23 October 2016.

A special issue of LFI Magazine presenting the winners and finalists and their comprehensive portfolios will be published to accompany the 'Leica Oskar Barnack Award'. Further details can be found at www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com.

Biographies

Scarlett Coten (*1958) works on long-term projects as a freelance photographer, predominantly in North Africa and the Middle East. In 2000, after completing her studies at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie in Arles, she travelled to Egypt to realise her first important series of photos. For 'Still Alive', she spent months in the company of nomadic Bedouins in the Sinai Desert. She has been working on her 'Mectoub' portrait project since 2012 and pictures from this series have already been shown at numerous exhibitions.

Clémentine Schneidermann was born in Paris in 1991 and discovered photography on the streets of Paris in her youth. She studied photography at the Centre d'enseignement professionnel de Vevey in Switzerland from 2009 to 2012. Between 2012 and 2014, she gained her masters in documentary photography at the University of Wales in Newport. This is also where she shot the series she entered for the Leica Oskar Barnack Award 2016.

About the Leica Oskar Barnack Award

The Leica Oskar Barnack Award is one of the longest-established and most prestigious international photographic competitions and has been held this year for the 36th time. The challenge to photographers entering the competition is to perceive and document the interaction between people and their environment in creative and groundbreaking style.

Notes to Editors

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