

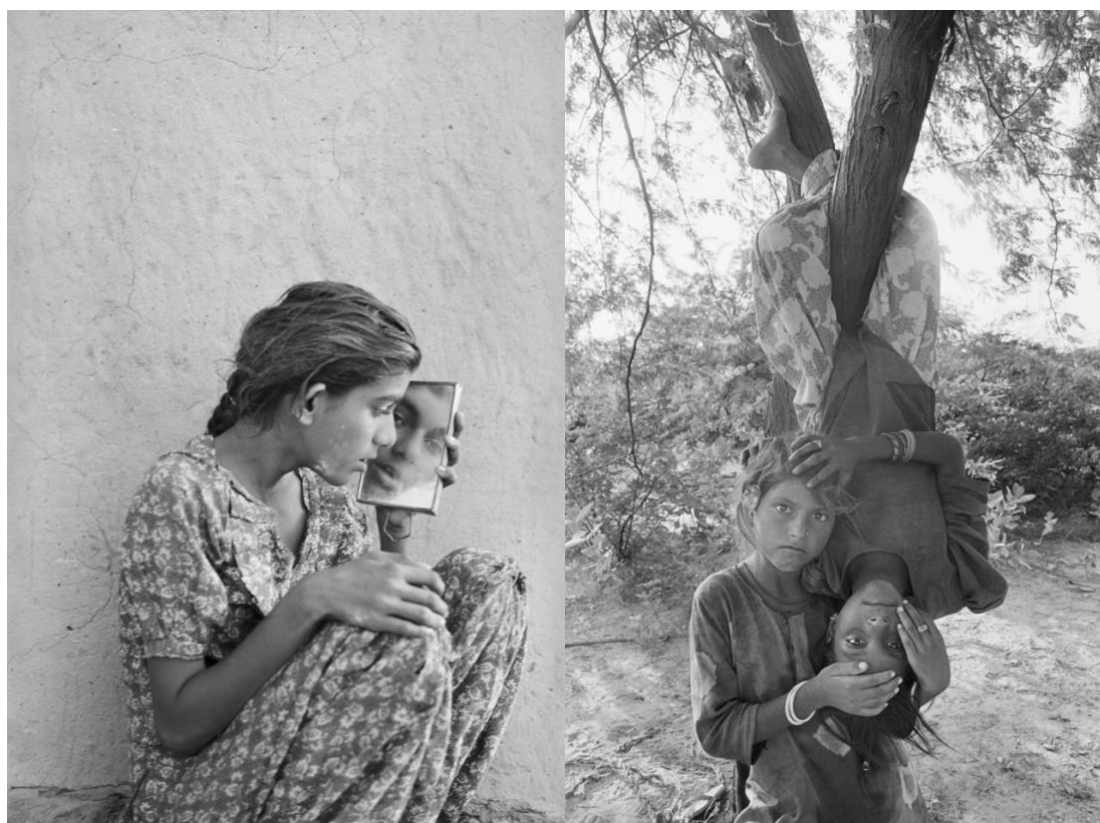
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PRESS RELEASE
28 September 2023

GAURI GILL WINS TENTH PRIX PICTET, WORLD'S LEADING PHOTOGRAPHY AND SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

- Gauri Gill received the prize and 100,000 Swiss Francs (90,000 GBP) at an award ceremony at V&A Museum in London on 28 September
- The winning series is *Notes from the Desert* (1999 - ongoing)
- 12 photographers from 11 countries were shortlisted for the award responding to the theme *Human*
- Prix Pictet also introduced the People's Choice Award in which the public can have their say on their favourite shortlisted photographer from now until the exhibition's close on 22 October
- Hatje Cantz have published a book, *Human*, to accompany the exhibition with highlights from across the entrants from the 10th edition



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Indian photographer Gauri Gill was announced this evening, Thursday 28 September, as the winner of the tenth cycle of the Prix Pictet, the global award for photography and sustainability, receiving the prize of 100,000 Swiss Francs. Gill was selected from a shortlist of 12 photographers by an independent jury.

Gill's work emphasises her belief in working with and through community, in what she calls 'active listening'. For more than two decades, she has been closely engaged with marginalised communities in the desert of western Rajasthan, Northern India and for the last decade with Indigenous artists in Maharashtra.

Her winning series *Notes from the Desert* began in April 1999 when she set out to photograph village schools in Rajasthan. Having grown up mainly in cities, she soon realised that rural schools were a microcosm of a complex reality she knew nothing about. Visiting the same people and places over decades, she witnessed the whole spectrum of life: drought years and great monsoons; dust storms leading to fevers, and floods leading to the rebuilding of homes; epidemics; overwhelmed hospitals and understaffed schools; festivals, feuds, celebrations, and prayers.

About her series, the artist said:

"On my many visits to rural Rajasthan, I have witnessed a complex reality I knew nothing about as a city dweller. To live poor and landless in the desert amounts to an inescapable reliance on oneself, on each other, and on nature. These fragments of shared experience now inhabit a large photographic archive called *Notes from the Desert*, encompassing different narratives and varied forms of image making."

Executive Director of Prix Pictet, Isabelle von Ribbentrop said:

"In a world facing unprecedented challenges, from social inequality to environmental crises, it was crucial to turn the lens towards humanity itself. The theme *Human* provides a platform to explore the complexities, vulnerabilities, and strengths of the human condition. It allows the artists to capture and communicate the stories, struggles and triumphs of individuals and communities around the globe. Through this theme, Prix Pictet aims to foster a deeper understanding of our shared humanity and inspire meaningful conversations about the issues that impact us all. Especially when thinking about the theme *Human*, I strongly believe that instead of the future of photography, we should think about photography of the future. The power of the image lies in its ability to foreground critical and urgent environmental issues in a visually impactful yet direct way."

The shortlisted photographers were:

Hoda Afshar, Iran
Gera Artemova, Ukraine
Ragnar Axelsson, Iceland
Alessandro Cinque, Italy/Peru
Siân Davey, UK
Gauri Gill, India

Michał Łuczak, Poland
Yael Martínez, Mexico
Richard Renaldi, US
Federico Ríos Escobar, Colombia
Vanessa Winship, UK/Bulgaria
Vasanth Yoganathan, France

The independent jury for Prix Pictet *Human* was:

Sir David King, FRS (Chair)
Founder and Chair,
Climate Crisis Advisory Group

Jan Dalley
Arts Editor, *Financial Times*

Philippe Bertherat
President, MAMCO (Musée d'art modern et
contemporain), Geneva

Duncan Forbes
Head of Photography, Victoria and Albert
Museum, London

Funmi Iyanda
Creative Director, OYA Media,
Lagos and London

Jeff Rosenheim
Joyce Frank Menschel Curator in Charge of
Photographs, The Metropolitan Museum of
Art, New York

Sally Mann
Winner, Prix Pictet *Fire*, 2021

To accompany the exhibition, Hatje Cantz have published *Human*, a book featuring the shortlisted photographers together with a selection of outstanding images from a wider group of those nominated for the award. The publication also features essays by the historian David Christian and writer Meehan Crist and a special interview with photographer Sebastião Salgado, the great champion of humanitarian photography, by Michael Benson, the Director of Prix Pictet.

During the award ceremony, Prix Pictet also announced the launch of a new initiative, the Prix Pictet People's Choice Award. The Award allows the public to vote for their favourite shortlisted series and seeks to create dialogue around the vital issues the prize explores. The winner of the People's Choice Award will be announced at the close of the exhibition and will receive a prize of 10,000 Swiss Francs (9,000 GBP). Voting is cast online via Prix Pictet's website.

Following its time at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the exhibition will embark on a global tour during which it will be shown at leading museums in Zürich, Nassau, Istanbul, Dublin, Bangkok, Munich, San Diego, Singapore, and Stockholm.

Notes To Editors

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Prix Pictet *Human*
Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL
29 September - 22 October 2023
Admission free
www.prixpictet.com
www.vam.ac.uk/info/prix-pictet

About Prix Pictet

Prix Pictet is the world's leading award for photography and sustainability. It was founded in 2008 by the Pictet Group with the goal of harnessing the power of photography to draw global attention to critical environmental issues. To date, there have been ten cycles of the award, each with its own theme highlighting a particular facet of sustainability.

Entry is through nomination. Prix Pictet maintains a global network of over 300 nominators, who include critics, curators, and other specialists in the visual arts. Nominators are asked to recommend portfolios that have the power and artistic quality demanded by the prize. Since Prix Pictet's inception, more than 5,000 photographers have been nominated, all of whose work in one way or another testifies to the fragile state of our planet.

From the nominees, an independent jury selects a shortlist of those whose work is considered artistically outstanding and presents a compelling narrative related to the theme of the cycle. After an assessment of the shortlisted artworks in an exhibition setting, the jury chooses a winner, who receives a prize of 100,000 Swiss Francs.

An exhibition based on a selection from each shortlisted artist's portfolio then tours up to a dozen locations worldwide, bringing their work to a wide global audience. Until now, Prix Pictet has staged over 120 exhibitions in more than forty-five cities globally.

The nine previous winners are: Benoit Aquin (*Water*, 2008), Nadav Kander (*Earth*, 2009–10), Mitch Epstein (*Growth*, 2011), Luc Delahaye (*Power*, 2012–13), Michael Schmidt (*Consumption*, 2014), Valérie Belin (*Disorder*, 2015–16), Richard Mosse (*Space*, 2017–18), Joana Choumali (*Hope*, 2019–20) and Sally Mann (*Fire*, 2021–22).

About Gauri Gill:

Born Chandigarh, India, 1970

Lives and works in New Delhi

Series: *Notes from the Desert*

Gill studied at Delhi College of Art, Parsons School of Design, New York, and Stanford University, California. Her work has been shown internationally, including at Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010), The Wiener Holocaust Library, London (2014), San Jose Museum of Art, California (2015) and the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in Kerala, India (2016). In 2017, Gill's work was exhibited at Documenta 14, Athens and Kassel, the 7th Moscow Biennale, and Centre Pompidou, Paris. It has been shown at Museum Tinguely, Basel (2018), MoMA PS1, New York (2018), the 58th Venice Biennale (2019), Chobi Mela, Dhaka (2019), and BAMPFA, Berkeley, California (2020). Gill's first major survey exhibition opened at Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt in 2022, moving to Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebak, Denmark in January 2023. She also exhibits at locations outside the art world, including public libraries, rural schools and non-profit institutions. Her work is held by institutions including The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Tate Modern, London, Smithsonian Institution, Washington and Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland. Her awards include the Grange Prize, awarded by the Art Gallery of Ontario (2011), and an India Today Art Award (2018). She has been a Creative Arts Fellow at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Italy (2013), and was the inaugural Roberta Denning Visiting Artist at Stanford University (2022). Gill has recently published two books with Edition Patrick Frey about her collaborations with rural artists, *Acts of Appearance* (2022) and *Fields of Sight* (2023).