

PRESS RELEASE

THE SEVENTH EDITION OF THE MAST PHOTOGRAPHY GRANT ON INDUSTRY AND WORK / 2023

Announced today the winner, Hicham Gardaf (Tangier, 1989)
Jury's Special Mention to Lebohang Kganye (Johannesburg, 1990)

Fondazione MAST, Bologna January 25th – May 1st, 2023

On Wednesday, January 25th, Fondazione MAST presents the works of the five finalists of the seventh edition of "MAST Photography Grant on Industry and Work", a photography competition on industry and work dedicated to emerging talents: Farah Al Qasimi, Hicham Gardaf, Lebohang Kganye, Maria Mavropoulou, Salvatore Vitale.

These young photographers, selected from fifty-three candidates from all over the world, have developed an original and unpublished project for the Fondazione MAST. The winner has been announced today: Hicham Gardaf (Tangier, 1989) with the project *In Praise of Slowness*, has been selected by the Jury composed of Isabella Seràgnoli, François Hébel, Milo Keller, Michael Mack, Simon Njami, Alona Pardo, Giovanna Silva, Urs Stahel, Francesco Zanot. The Jury's Special Mention has been awarded to Lebohang Kganye.

The exhibition, curated by **Urs Stahel** and set up in the Photo Gallery, also featurse the works of the **twenty-four finalists of the previous editions**, forming a large, multi-faceted exhibition, a sort of **tour of the world through images**, to celebrate both the tenth anniversary of MAST and the fifteen years of commitment to organizing the Grant for young photographers (the first was awarded in 2008).

"Through the MAST Photography Grant on Industry and Work, Fondazione MAST offers young photographers the opportunity to confront the issues related to the world of industry and technology, to the systems of work and capital, to inventions, developments and the universe of production, and often, their innovative and unseen before gaze, forces us to confront incongruities, fractures, phenomena and perhaps even abysses that we had previously neglected or tried not to see "Urs Stahel explains."



The five finalist projects address the changes that affect the **rapid transformation of the world of work and its essence**: "When we talk about the industrial revolution — writes Urs Stahel in the introductory text of the catalog — we usually refer to a time frame that affects the last 250 years, characterized by technical and technological development. (...) In the last 250 years, however, the development of technology, science, and economy has been so rapid, dynamic and radical as to give rise to a real and permanent revolution, which has upset the lives of the generations that have succeeded, shaking them to their foundations."

The projects selected for this seventh edition of the competition, while different are linked by the topicality of the theme addressed and characterized by the variety of the representation chosen.

- Farah Al Qasimi (Abu Dhabi, 1991) focuses on the large Arab community of Dearborn, Michigan, the hometown of Henry Ford and the historical site of the Ford Motor Company, which shows a hybrid character and is an expression of two cultures, the Arab and the American.
- In Praise of Slowness by Hicham Gardaf (Tangier, 1989), winner of the seventh edition of the Grant, is a tribute to slowness: the core theme is represented by the contrast between the prosperous, flourishing and expanding part of the city and the historic center with its ancient charm, the fresh shadow at the base of the walls that mark its perimeter, the slow and reflective pace of people and street vendors.
- Lebohang Kganye (Johannesburg, 1990), author of a work that is not just photographic, proposes
 in the project Keep the Light Faithfully, narratives of great effect and depth for which she received
 the Jury's Special Mention. In a sort of Chinese shadow theater, Lebohang Kganye stages
 moments of South African life that have as their protagonists, photographed characters whose
 silhouette is cut out and applied on cardboard, the settings enhanced by a skilled theatrical
 lighting.
- The work of **Maria Mavropoulou** (Athens, 1989) *In their own image, in the image of God they created them* uses artificial intelligence and in particular a text-to-image conversion software: thus, a multiplicity of images so suggestive as to ask us whether artificial intelligence will always be constrained to reality by photography, or if one day it will be able to create a more meaningful work of art independently.
- **Salvatore Vitale** (Palermo, 1986) creates *Death by GPS*, a project that is radical in several respects: it evokes the atmospheres of a laboratory, a television studio and a place that has been the scene



of disorders at the same time. The quick sequence montage juxtaposes documentary photographs of real events and staged sabotage videos, inviting the viewer to reflect on the incongruities of automation.

The catalog, published by Fondazione MAST in Italian and English, is edited by Urs Stahel and contains texts by Negar Azimi, Federica Chiocchetti, Dominik Czechowski, Elvira Dyangani Ose, and Nikolas Ventourakis, the selectors of the five artists.

Founded in 2007 to support research on the image of industry and work and to give voice to emerging talents, the MAST Photography Grant on Industry and Work, promoted by Fondazione MAST, allows young photographers who win the scholarship to develop a project on the themes in question and to realize an exhibition accompanied by a catalog. Over time, the competition has contributed to the creation of a photographic collection of contemporary artists who are now part of the historical and articulated collection of industrial photography of Fondazione MAST.

NOTES TO EDITORS

MAST PHOTOGRAPHY GRANT ON INDUSTRY AND WORK 2023

January 25th - May 1st, 2023

Fondazione MAST

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www.mastphotogrant.com
www.mast.org

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ABOUT FONDAZIONE MAST

Fondazione MAST is an international cultural and philanthropic institution, based on Technology, Art and Innovation, founded in Bologna in 2013. Located next to the headquarters of the Coesia industrial group, in a multi functional complex conceived as a link between the company and the community, MAST is an open place of sharing and collaboration where every citizen has access to learning, to art, to photography. The exhibition spaces host temporary exhibitions dedicated to industrial and work photography

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