



ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS STRATEGY OF THE PICTET PHOTO AWARDS

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Abstract:

The selfish ambitions of mankind have done terrible damage to our planet. The results of the understanding that puts people in the foreground have caused great destruction in nature. The disasters that followed the warming of the climate made visible the effects of excessive consumption, unplanned urbanization, and destroyed forests on ecology and therefore on humanity. In recent years, the focus of art has also clearly shifted to ecology. Projects that define the coming of the world to the present and suggest future scenarios have been supported by institutions working on culture and art. In this context, photographers, who keep the record of the change of the world, are an important figure in individual or collaborative work on the subject. One of them is the Pictet Photography Award, which financially supports photography projects in the context of the environment and sustainability. In this article, the mission of the Pictet photography award, its method of operation, the reason for the selection of the determined themes and their importance today, the definition of the final photography projects in terms of content and aesthetics, and how they contribute to the photographers will be discussed. The names considered as examples were chosen from photographers using various aesthetic expression methods. In addition, each of the sample projects corresponds to a topic determined as a theme.

Keywords: Prix Pictet Award, photography, art and ecology, sustainability, awareness

1. Introduction

Global warming, which has increased in the last fifty years, has turned into a global crisis. Our planet is getting warmer, so the glaciers are melting, and the methane gas released by the melting of the glaciers will seriously affect sea creatures and species will disappear. The fish rate in the seas has decreased due to wrong and overfishing. Garbage thrown into the oceans has covered an area of kilometers. Lands become barren, forests are destroyed by fires or human beings. This uncontrolled intervention to nature has

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increased the number of disasters such as floods and landslides. The contribution of culture and art institutions and artists is needed in raising awareness as one of the solution partners.

The majority of artists who focus on ecological issues choose to work with scientists, experts, academics who research the subject. Scientific data can be complex and difficult to understand for those who are not well-versed in the subject, whereas it can become more memorable with creative expression of art. Some artists work with NGOs and activists. For example, photographer Mandy Barker got an invitation from the Greenpeace organization and started working together after she took photos by collecting and grouping the plastics that washed up on the shores. Barker takes the photos while Greenpeace cleans up the plastic that washes up on shores around the world. We learn about the type and location of the garbage, through the photographs Barker edited with a style that evokes like a space garbage on a black background. The outcomes of such partnerships reach a wider audience because of the followers of both parties. Most of the time, data, statistics are not remembered, but it is possible to remember thanks to the impressive projects in the example of Mandy Barker.

On the other hand, artistic projects involving local communities are more successful in terms of awareness, continuity, prevalence and empathy. For example, The Walk project is the journey of a giant puppet, symbolizing a nine-year-old Syrian refugee girl, starting in Turkey and ending in Manchester. Traveling to 10 cities in Turkey alone, Amal interacted with local people, children and adults. Participating in events of local organizations and artists, Amal conveys the fears and hopes of a refugee girl searching for her mother. The Amal project is an emotional march that represents the plight of refugees trying to reach Europe from Turkey through difficult and dangerous ways. The Turkey leg was organized by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts. İKSV constantly includes the subject of ecology in its works in the field of culture and arts. For example, "The Seventh Continent", the subject of the 16th Istanbul Biennial, has opened up the relationship between art and ecology through works that deal with ecology from different perspectives. Ecological crises in the global context were frequently discussed in previous biennials.

İKSV published the "Culture and Art for Ecological Transformation" report in February 2021. This report, prepared by Associate Professor Hande Paker, provides a comprehensive assessment and recommendation. This report aims to create a common ground for the arts and culture field to reflect on the ecological crisis and produce solutions. Based on the finding that a comprehensive ecological framework is lacking for the stakeholders of the field in Turkey, the report first examines the historical process of dealing with the climate and environmental crisis, and takes a closer look at concepts such as "sustainability" that have undergone a shift in meaning. It aims to correctly position the field of culture and arts in the big picture and to break the perception that it is secondary in ecological transformation, based on concrete examples (Paker, 2021). With questions such as how to reduce the carbon footprint and energy consumption in the events to be held, it points that were not taken into account before but now need to be changed with a holistic perspective.

Established in 2007, Noor Photography Agency stands out with its studies on climate change, excessive consumption, forced migration and authoritarian regime. Many photography institutions such as Noor provide workshops, training, project support and scholarships to young photographers in the context of their mission. Let's examine in detail the Pictet Photography Award, which allows photographers to bring their projects to life, circulate and continue their new works.

2. Pictet Award

Switzerland-based Pictet Group provides financial support to projects in the context of culture, environment and sustainability. The Pictet Award (Prix Pictet), for which they were first held in 2008, was established to support photography and sustainability projects around the world. Participation in Pictet is different from other photography competitions. The names of photographers who have produced a photographic project on the subject, proposed by selected people from all over the world, experts in the field of visual arts, journalists, photographers, curators, museum and gallery managers are among the candidates.ⁱⁱ The selected jury then determines the 12 finalists (sometimes more) and the winner. The prize money is 100,000 Swiss Francs. In addition to this award, the Pictet Commission invites one of the finalists to photograph an ongoing project in the context of sustainability run by non-governmental organizations. Afterwards, the photographs are exhibited at international photography festivals and the book is published. For example, on the theme "Earth", the commission supported Azafady's (UK-Madagascar joint NGO) Voly Hazo project to plant trees and protect natural forest, both to prevent soil degradation and to halt the progression of desertification. Photographer Ed Kashi has also been commissioned to photograph these works. Kashi's final project is on Niger Delta oil (Prixpictet, 31.07.2021).

The topics announced by the Commission (nine times until 2021) are: Water, Earth, Growth, Power, Consumption, Disorder, Space, Hope and finally Fire. The photographers who won these awards, in order of subject, are: Benoit Aquin, Nadav Kander, Mitch Epstein, Luc Delahaye, Michael Schmidt, Valérie Belin, Richard Mosse and Joana Choumali. The last theme, Fire, has not been finalized yet. The themes have been chosen to draw attention to sustainability issues in a global context that affect nature and people. There are no genre or technical limitations in the proposed photography projects. A rich portfolio of different perspectives and methods of expression on the subject emerges, with photographers researching, interpreting and inspiring project texts.

The first theme of the Pictet Prize is "Water" (Water, 2008). The existence of man and other living things on earth is largely related to water. *"Ultimately, through water, we can see the first and most devastating manifestations of climate change: threats to our food supply, health, fragile ecosystems, the ground we live on, and even to our peace and security."* (Prixpictet.

ⁱⁱ Three people from Turkey provide consultancy: Sinem Yörük, founder and manager of Elipsis Gallery. Levent Çalikoğlu is the chief curator of the Istanbul Museum of Modern Arts. Sena Çakırkaya, Curator of the Istanbul Museum of Modern Arts Photography Department.

02.08.2021). In the final works, we see photographs that examine the water issue from various aspects in different geographies of the world.

Edward Burtinsky, one of the finalists, in his project, which deals with how the global industrial economy threatens the planet, recorded oil fields, dams, and China's rivers that are dangerous to drink, even to touch, due to chemical wastes in the water. These poisonous rivers, some of which are presented in panoramic photographic format, make their way into the oceans. The project of Lynn Davis, one of the finalists, covers a period of approximately 20 years. On his travels to Greenland to photograph the glaciers, she witnessed the gigantic icebergs gradually changing shape and shrinking each time. Davis's first mystical experience turns into melancholy and then into the consciousness that nature is rapidly disappearing. Christian Cravo has photographed rituals in regions such as West Africa, the Middle East, the Amazon and Southeast Asia, where water is of primary importance for people in religious, ethnic and cultural contexts: to be purified with water, to leave the burdens of the past in the water, to leave the wishes of the future, to be thankful for what water brings. In another photographer, we witness the destructiveness of water. Two weeks after Hurricane Katrina, Robert Polidori traveled to New Orleans to document the extent and traces of the devastation.

Pictet Award winner Benoit Aquin's project named "Chinese Dust Bowl" deals with the increasing desertification of soils in China due to human use. By over-pumping rivers and groundwater resources for overgrazing of animals and irrigation of agricultural lands, 400 thousand square kilometers of cultivated and green areas have turned into desert. *"You can't see the horizon as if the sky and earth were painted with a yellow-brown palette. Dry river beds emerged like inscriptions on the surface of the planet. It is as if we are looking at an image of the post-human world,"* describes Mirjam Kooiman Aquin's photographs (Kooiman, 2018: 145). This dense dust seriously threatens human health, so residents are forced to migrate to other places. Experts predict that in the near future, there will be a forced population migration due to climate change. War, hunger/famine, the search for economic welfare as well as climate migration have been added to the cause of forced migrations and refugee movements.

It is in human hands to prevent the pollution of water resources and the drying up of groundwater, but for this, first of all, it is necessary to reduce the production diversity and consumption surplus. By measuring the water footprint, we can find out how much water is spent on the product we buy. Water footprint is the amount of direct and indirect water used for the consumption and production of goods and services. (Türe, 2017: 17). Rainwater is green water, surface and groundwater is blue water, and fresh water to clean polluted water is gray water. Learning the water footprint of a product, for example not buying a product with a large gray water footprint, is an individual act, but informing and raising awareness of the society can be achieved by changing public policies in this direction.

The second theme of the Pictet Prize is "Earth" (Earth, 2009). Due to climate change, floods are experienced in terrestrial areas. It is predicted that the coasts of some countries will be underwater in the near future. The possibility of flooding the fields will bring food problems with it. Today, due to the chemical interventions made to get more products,

the soils are getting dry, and the product will soon become unavailable. Cutting down forests and destroying nature cause erosion. Human selfishness disrupts the ecological balance, and it is he who will suffer the most.

The award for the earth theme was given to Nadav Kander's project, which depicts the relationship of people between land and river along the Yangtze river, which stretches for 6,500 km in China. *"The river is engraved in the consciousness of the Chinese,"* says Kander, *"even those who live thousands of kilometers from the river. It plays an important role in people's spiritual and physical lives."* (Brown, 2014: 25). Kander draws attention to the rapid progress of the country's economy, while at the same time damaging its own land and people. *"Although it was never my intention to shoot documentary photographs, there was always a sociological context in this project. The displacement of three million people on a 600-kilometer stretch of the river and the impact on humanity of a country moving rapidly into the future are themes that will inevitably come into play."* (Brown, 2014: 26)

The project of Edgar Martins, one of the finalists, is about the forest fires that took place one after the other in Portugal between 2005 and 2008. These fires are thought to be caused by climate change causing extreme heat and drought, and by fast-growing but flammable eucalyptus trees in reforestation efforts. Martins trained firefighters and coordinated with the National Fire Protection Service to shoot these images. (Prixpictet. 08.08.2021). In two photos we see tiny sparks reflecting on the water surface, in another we see the weeds in the foreground burning. Other photographs in the project are mostly close-ups with no depth of field, with smoke filling the space between tree branches and trunks. The photographs are far from revealing the gravity of the situation. The lines formed by the bodies, the soft effect of the smoke and the red tone of the flame transform the photographs into a picturesque landscape. After a while, we are drawn back to reality, because the green tones of landscape painting and traces of life are missing in the images. With deforestation, hilltop dwellings and giant wind turbines, the classical genre of landscape painting and photography will need to be redefined. Forest fires are the saddest and most devastating issue in recent years. There is a loss of biodiversity and the extinction of animal species. Unfortunately, the burned forests are opened to development over time, and even if greening is done, there is no chance to bring the wild nature back because it is man-made.

The collage photographs of one of the finalists, Sammy Baloji, are about a memory work of the period when Congo was under Belgian colonial rule. The plant and factories built to extract the Congo's rich mines are now abandoned, but transformed into places of memory where ghosts of the past roam. Photographer Baloji has placed black and white portraits of the Westerners who run the mines and the locals who work there, on the colored records of these structures. The images of nude, some of them chained men, women and children Congolese standing in rows taken from archive photographs of the colonial period force the viewer to face the past.

Magnum Photography Agency photographer Chris Steele-Perkins criticizes the erosion of natural beauty in the name of modernization, comparing pictures of Mount Fuji in Japan made by Hokusai and other Japanese artists in the early 1800s to photographs and paintings. Over the years, Mount Fuji has inspired many artists. It is

preserved in the collective memory as a magnificent work of nature. However, this image is destroyed.

Mitch Epstein, who won the theme of "Growth" (Growth, 2011), photographed the effects of the energy sector on human life and ecosystems in twenty-five states of America for five years in his work titled "American Power". *"Growth no longer meant progress, but self-destruction,"* he says to describe the extent of the disaster (Prixpictet, 25.07.2021). For this reason, he also included renewable energy models such as wind, solar, biotechnology, which are cleaner energies, in his photographs.

Nyaba Leon Ouedraogo from Ghana is one of the photographers who made it to the finals with The Hell of Copper project, which focuses on the health and environmental impact of e-waste sent to his country from Europe and America. According to the UN, up to 50 million tons of electrical and electronic waste is thrown away every year in the world. The health problems that children (between 15-25 years of age) working in the Aglobloshie market, where the photographs were taken, are exposed to harmful substances and materials are listed by Greenpeace in 2008 as follows:

"Lead: mainly found in cathode tubes and monitors, can damage the nervous, reproductive and circulatory systems.

Mercury: found in flat screens, can damage the nervous system and brain, especially in young children.

Cadmium: found in computer batteries, this toxic product is dangerous to the kidneys and bones.

PVC: This plastic, which is used to insulate electrical cables, releases carcinogenic chemicals that can cause respiratory, cardiovascular and dermatological problems when burned. These toxic substances also poison the land where cows and sheep graze and the water they drink." (Ouedraogo, 28.07.2021).

Electricity and electronics is one of the sectors with the highest consumption of surplus and thus generating large amounts of waste (e-waste). The software of devices such as mobile phones and computers is constantly renewed, but the hardware remains low in performance. Or when a malfunction occurs in the device, the user prefers to buy a new one instead of having it repaired. Therefore, more e-waste occurs in developed countries such as European countries, America and Japan, but these electronic garbage or second-hand materials are sent to other countries by ships. *"For the recycling of e-waste, 30 dollars should be spent in the USA and 20 euros in Europe, 2 dollars in China and 2 euros in India. In addition to cheap labor, it is also effective that no facilities or measures are required for the recycling process."* (Akin and Kuru, 2011:4)

The Pictet award with the theme "Power" (Power, 2012) was given to French photographer Luc Delahaye for his photographs taken between 2008-2011. Delahaye has won awards many times before for his war photographs, he took in countries such as Lebanon, Afghanistan, Sudan, Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Chechnya. While working for Magnum, one of the oldest and most important photography agencies, he resigned from this agency in 2004 and made radical changes in his career. He stopped using 35mm

cameras and started taking pictures with large format technical and panoramic cameras. These techniques are not suitable for shooting moving subjects on battlefields. There have been changes in the photographer's approach to subjects, not just in the technical context. For example, in his panoramic photograph "Palestine Hotel" (2001), we see a cityscape with a large hotel in the centre. This is a hotel where international press members and photographers were stationed during the United States' intervention in Iraq. The abundance of antennas on the vehicles in the parking lot of the hotel confirms this. In addition, the traces of the conflict in the distance, black smoke rises. In this frame, Luc Delahaye has moved away from the subject in a way that contrasts with the photographs he had taken at close range before, and directed his gaze to the hotel where the members of the press were staying. Even if we don't see those who view, write and report the war, they are the ones that come to mind. This subjective critical approach continued in his other photographs. In the photograph he took at the OPEC meeting held in Vienna in 2004, we see the representatives of the member countries and the members of the press together in a panoramic format. In a classic news photograph, the photographer should have taken it from the point where he was, but he preferred to photograph all the participants, the narrator and the narrator by taking his position in the opposite direction. This perspective includes many things: the countries that drive the world economy, the real reason behind the wars, and the hypocrisy of the press. Read in this context, Delahaye's photo has more meaning and reality than news photos. He exhibits these last period photographs, which he named "History", in important art centers of the world. The transition from news agencies to art galleries and museums as a medium is also part of its change. Evaluation in the context of photography as a work of art liberates the photographer.

Regardless of the award, the Pictet commission gives Simon Norfolk the opportunity to work with Medair, which works on disaster risk reduction in Afghanistan. Norfolk is known for its photographs taken with a technical camera in post-war geographies. He collected the photographs he took in geographies where the war ended but the traces of which can still be seen, under the "Cronotopia" series. The term chronotopia is borrowed from the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975). It describes the ability to read and see all layers of time and space, as in literature or Norfolk's photographs. Even though time has passed since the end of the war, its traces are still present in the place. In addition, archaeological remains and historical buildings meet in the same frame like the transparent layers of time. Like Luc Delahaye, Simon Norfolk uses technical cameras. This camera, which is heavy and slow, but offers a great quality in details and angles, is in accordance with the spirituality of the chronotopia issue, as it has witnessed many periods in the history of photography.

The theme of "Consumption" (Consumption, 2013) directly points to people. In his article titled "Deep Ecology", Abdülkadir Çuğun wrote that the passion for dominating nature turned into a passion for exploiting nature with the industrial revolution, and this passion fueled the consumption economy. He made a pessimistic but justified determination by saying that nature and human beings have come to the point of extinction due to excessive consumption. (Çuğun, 2011: .10). There is a similar

sentiment in the Pictet commission's choice of the subject of consumption: *"In our relentless effort to satisfy our unquenchable desires, we have emptied the seas and devastated the lands. We've built huge empires based on luxury goods and created demand for basic necessities we didn't know we needed. We have sustained this through the sometimes thoughtless exploitation of the world's poorest people."* (Prixpictet, 07.07.2021).

Most of the land suitable for agriculture is cultivated to provide food for cattle and cattle. However, if less meat is consumed, agricultural areas can be used for vegetable and fruit production. On this subject, the documentary named *Wasted* provides detailed information with examples. German photographer Michael Schmidt appreciated Pictet's "Consumption" (Consumption, 2013) theme with his work "Lebensmittel" (Food item). Sadly, Schmidt passed away three days after the announcement. Between 2006 and 2010, Schmidt researched and filmed on the European food industry, covering everything imaginable about food, from household food to fields, factories and the packaging industry. In this project, where he worked in black and white and color, some images evoke the New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit) movement, examples of which we saw in Germany in the 1920s, especially Albert Ranger Patzsch's close-up and clear objects: a box of eggs, a green apple, cowpea on the shelf. It is not possible to read a clear criticism of the food industry through the buildings, fields and wastes in his other photographs. Schmidt preferred to exhibit his photographs in multiple groups. Thus, by piling up all the data on the food issue in front of the audience, it allowed people to make their own inferences. Does a bright green apple keep the doctor away, or does pesticide come to mind when you look at the photo?

After the consumption topic, the theme of "Disorder" (Disorder, 2015) was determined. There is a balance between order and disorder in nature. Today, however, this balance has been disturbed by people. *"Our attempts to impose order only draw attention to widespread disorder,"* said Honorary President Kofi Annan. *"With each passing day, our illusion of order is shattered."* has commented. (Prixpictet, 01.08.2021). Man considers himself superior to nature, intervenes in nature, changes it for his own interests. However, these interventions disrupt the functioning of ecology. We see the results of this in the projects that make it to the finals. Pieter Hugo shot portraits of people suffering from serious health problems in an electronic dump in Ghana from exposure to toxic gases from burning waste. Changing climatic conditions with the effect of global warming caused many flood disasters in various regions. Gideon Mendel has focused on this subject since 2007, shooting in England, Germany, Haiti, Thailand, Pakistan, Australia, Nigeria, Philippines, Brazil and India. The photographer preferred the typology style instead of the documentary genre used in disaster photographs. While the interiors of the houses and spaces are half filled with muddy water, some more, the people living here stand in the middle and look at the camera with a neutral expression. The contrast between form and content in Mendel's interpretation evokes the coexistence of order and disorder.

The 2016 theme (Space) covers all three of the concepts of "Space/Place/Emptiness" when translated from English. As stated in the explanatory text, a theme as broad as space itself has been deliberately chosen to relate to the issue of

sustainability. Overpopulation, air pollution, garbage filling the oceans and even space can be addressed in this context. When viewed from space, man has only one living space, and that is the Earth. In the world, living spaces are getting smaller and smaller. Excessive and unconsciously consumed residues are thrown into the oceans. It is a misconception that the oceans covering three quarters of the world can tolerate this. Forests are destroyed for needs and to open up more space. On this subject, David Attenborough presents data on how much wildlife has dwindled over the years in his stunning documentary "A Life From Our Planet". By 2020, the rate of wild nature remaining in the world is only 35%. (Attenborough, 2020).

One of the jury members of the space theme is world famous photographer Sebastiao Salgado. Salgado has taken photographs documenting the human condition over the years. The "Workers" project, which he worked on between 1986-1991, helped him understand how the wheels turn in the world as a photographer with an economics education. In his project "Mass Migration" (1991-1999), he made a conclusion that humans are terrible, aggressive creatures. (Wenders, 2014). The tragedies he witnessed in Rwanda, Congo and Yugoslavia deeply affected him both mentally and physically and he stopped taking photographs. His re-starting of photography was made possible by the "Genesis" (Creation, 2004-2013) project. His desire to take photographs again came when the Terra Institute, which he and his wife Leila founded, started to reforest the lands where he was born and grew up. These lands, which were Atlantic rainforests in his childhood, have disappeared over the years, losing their ecosystem and water resources. However, with the couple's reforestation efforts, it has turned into a forest with 400 different trees today. Seeing the formation of a new ecosystem in such a short time is a hope for Salgado, it creates a desire to take pictures again. In this context, he wants to take photographs that can be love letters to nature, to show his respect to nature, to show nature, animals, places and people as they were at the beginning of time. Together with his wife, he plans the Genesis project in every detail, in which he will photograph what has remained the same since the first creation of the planet. For eight years, in 32 subjects, he photographed subjects that physically challenged him, from north to south, from the coldest to the warmest, from the Galapagos Islands, where Darwin formed his theory of evolution, to the Zoe tribes of the Amazons mentioned in 16th-century Jesuit inscriptions. While taking these photographs, he realized that he was a part of nature like a turtle, tree, pebble. The Genesis project presents us with an optimistic world compared to a damaged and destroyed world. At the Terra institute he experienced that the destruction of nature can be reversed. Many water sources have been reformed and wildlife has returned. (Salgado, 2017). Salgado is one of the most important names on the Pictet jury with his experience, sensitivity and excellent photography on the environment and sustainability.

The winner of the space theme is Richard Mosse with his project "Heat Maps". The photographer has worked with thermographic cameras that can detect living things up to 50 kilometers away. These cameras are mostly used in advanced weapon systems and for border surveillance. This camera converts the temperature difference into a heat signature. It reads the biological trace of human life, and does not perceive skin color. With this work, Mosse tries to highlight the biopolitical aspects of the refugee and

migration situation facing Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In the photographs, we see the traces of immigrants and refugees taken with a thermal camera. In the text of the project, the photographer quoted Foucault as a mass, not as an individual, but as a human species. It is not possible to see race or gender in his photographs, we can only determine that he is biologically human. Giorgio Agamben's "The basic biopolitical paradigm of the West today is the camp, not the city." In his words, he tries to express the borders and immigration situation with the heat traces of the people he realized with thermal cameras. (Prixpictet, 14.07. 2021)

The issues we have exemplified above are vital issues that we must confront and find solutions to. We must respect nature and each other, change environmental policies and move on to a sustainable lifestyle. With the same wish, the Pictet commission chose the theme for 2020 as "Hope". We have learned what the problems are, we are aware of who and why. Now is the time to find solutions. In this context, projects that will create "hope" were invited. Can projects on recycling, reforestation and sustainability in line with the work of scientists make us look to our future with hope? (Prixpictet, 10.08.2021)

The Hope Award was given to Joana Choumali, a female photographer from Ivory Coast. The name of her project "Ça va aller" means everything will be alright. The photos were taken with an iPhone 3 weeks after the terrorist attacks in Grand Bassam on 13 March 2016. The streets of her once happy childhood are filled with sadness and pessimism. She embroiders on photographs as an act of resistance and keeping hope. In eco-feminist thought, it is the male-dominated perspective that destroys nature and causes wars. Women are productive and healer. Like Choumali's patiently and diligently processing of her photographs, woman is the one who nurtures hope.

The ninth theme, the finalist list of which has been announced, "Fire" (Fire, 2021) has been chosen as an expression of the unstoppable overheating, unstoppable forest fires, the inability to return extinct species, and the pain felt by the course of the world in recent years. Hope seems suspended for a while.

3. What Pictet Awards Serve

The themes chosen by the Pictet awards point to today's ecological problems. Starting with the most vital elements of life such as water and the Earth, the effects of humankind on ecology with growth ambition and consumption frenzy have been recorded with photographic projects. In this context, Pictet Group has an extremely comprehensive visual archive on ecology and sustainability. This accumulation provides valuable data to individuals and institutions working on the subject.

Pictet believes that photography has an influential power in public opinion. That's why Pictet Group continues to support sustainability projects in many parts of the world. While choosing the themes, they decided according to the most important issues of the agenda. Thus, the projects of the photographers working on this subject have become widespread through the exhibitions they opened, the books they published and the sharing in the virtual environment.

There is no requirement that the photographs related to the subject be of documentary type. There are no technical limitations such as black-and-white, color, analog, digital. Works from all types of photography suitable for the determined theme were nominated. This diversity was also observed in the projects that made it to the finals. For example, Valérie Belin, who won the irregular theme, made still life setups with mostly plastic materials. Ross McDonnell, one of the finalists for the theme of Hope, shot prosthetic legs that she acquired in an orthopedic hospital in Afghanistan in front of a plain white background. The object-oriented shooting method isolated from the space is preferred for product promotion, archival and scientific records, as well as an aesthetic model of post-photography.

Approximately 12 projects that made it to the finals are exhibited at major festivals around the world, their books are published and they are circulated in the virtual environment. Les Rencontres d'Arles (Arles, France), one of the most important photography festivals that was founded in 1970 and still continues, hosts the works of the finalists. Afterwards, the prints are circulated in many cities such as Saatchi Gallery London, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. In addition to interviews and news broadcasted in virtual and print media, Pictet's mission is announced and the work of photographers is promoted. The dissemination of the information network can be effective in raising awareness about the theme. One of the most important aspects of all these activities is that finalist photographers have the opportunity to contact people or institutions where they can develop their projects.

The prize money of one hundred thousand Swiss francs, which is quite high, provides financial support for the photographer to realize his future projects. This amount is quite high compared to the prizes given by other competitions. Thus, the problem of the photographer having to spend from his own pocket or trying to find funds is eliminated. The photographer will save time as their next project has already received funding.

A communication network can be formed between the financial supporters of the Pictet group, non-governmental organizations and photographers in the realization of new projects. Therefore, the photographers who make it to the finals have the chance to work and dialogue with non-governmental organizations.

The Pictet Award can be an example for other organizations that will support sustainable projects in the field of environment and ecology. Thus, the sustainability of the subjects the photographers work on can be ensured. The spread and awareness of Pictet projects can be followed by other institutions and open up new project opportunities.

Some of the photographers who won the Pictet awards or made it to the finals are world-renowned for their previous projects. Some photographers, whose works could not reach the global media, had the opportunity to share their works in the photography community thanks to the competition. Although the internet world creates a global information network, sometimes many valuable studies can be overlooked in this data density.

The steady continuation of the Pictet awards gives insight into the research and work of academics and scientists working on ecology, sustainability and photography. For example, a master thesis on Pictet Photography Awards is being made at Dokuz Eylül University, Institute of Fine Arts, Department of Photography.

The impact of the Pictet awards on the public may be a source of inspiration for similar formations.

The fact that the finalist photography projects contain all kinds of photography gives the idea that photographers working on the environment and sustainability can evaluate a wide perspective and different expression possibilities in their new projects.

It is possible to attract the attention of the public, to convey information on this issue, and to raise awareness due to the themes chosen as the themes and the projects that made it to the finals.

The issues that affect our world and humanity have been repeatedly mentioned by scientists over the years. However, the photographic image can be more effective on society. We knew that the oceans were turning into garbage and that this situation affected many species. The reality of the event left an unforgettable impression on society when photos showing birds dying from plastic and metal waste in their stomachs were published. Photography has the power to touch people's conscience.

Of course, the issue will not be solved only by raising awareness of the society. There is a need for more institutions to reason and change Pictet's efforts to make the environment and sustainability issues visible.

Finally, when we do in-depth research, it has been revealed that some institutions that support environmental, photography and social responsibility projects are not very innocent and sincere in their past or in their subsidiaries that they are still operating. Of course, hypocritical cunning activities to take advantage of the agenda will not remain hidden forever.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

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