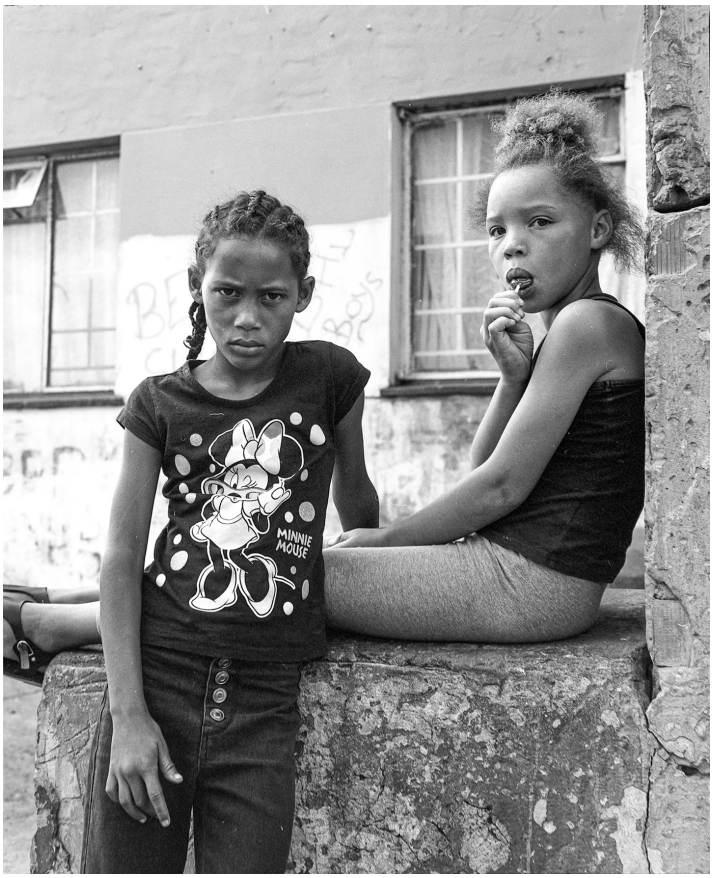
The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness



In Sight

Meet this year's Women Photograph grantees

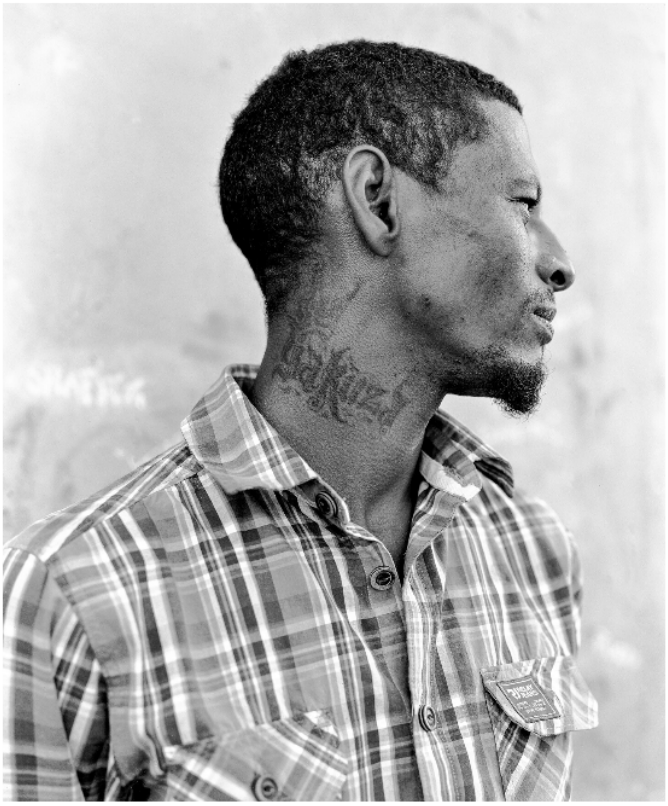
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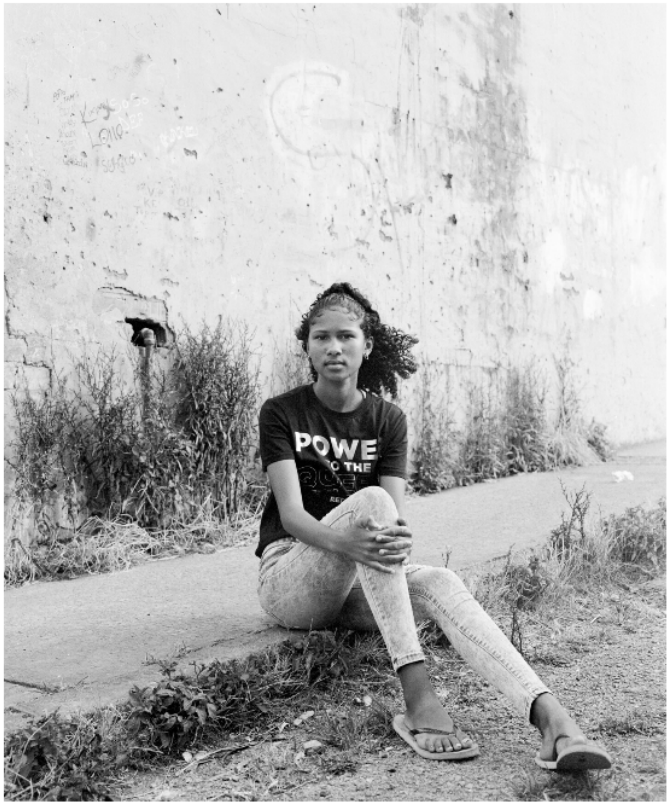
Perspective by Kenneth Dickerman

The winners of the 2023 Women Photograph grants were recently announced. And out of more than 2,000 applications, five were awarded. In addition, one person was awarded the Women Photograph + Leica award. The five awardees will receive $5,000 each while the Women Photograph + Leica award comes with a $10,000 prize. We're taking a look at all the grantees here today.

Starting off with the Women Photograph + Leica Grant, this year's recipient is Farren van Wyk from South Africa and the Netherlands. Van Wyk's project, "Die lewe is nie reg vir my nie" is an exploration of South Africa's gang culture and strives to "counter its perception as male violence and show deeper layers as it is a means of survival and brotherhood."



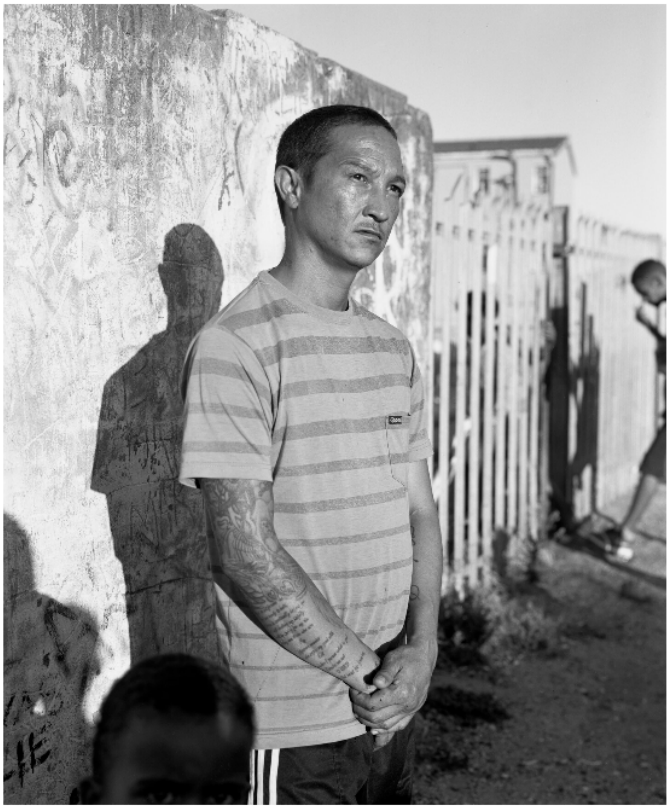
(Farren van Wyk)



(Farren van Wyk)



(Farren van Wyk)



(Farren van Wyk)

Women Photograph summarizes her project by saying:

“Some men step into the gang as there are no real employment opportunities and others step out of the gang for a better future for their children. Being racially classified as Coloured, too, but having moved to The Netherlands at a young age, van Wyk uses portraiture as a means to decolonize the unjust image of the community she was born into.”

Next, we’ll take a look at the Women Photograph Project grants which were awarded to Spandita Malik, Camille Farrah Lenain, Anique Jordan, Dolores Medel and Jean Jasper Gruis.



(Spandita Malik)



(Spandita Malik)



(Spandita Malik)

Malik is from India and the United States, and her project focuses on misogyny in India. Here's how she describes her project: "While misogyny is hardly exclusive to one country or culture, India bears particularly ghastly symptoms. Women are in real danger there: the frequency of domestic violence in the country is impossible to ignore"

Malik collaborated with women who are part of self-help groups for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, and she invited them to use their embroidery skills to "weave their creative voices right into the surface of their own portraits, embellishing and personalizing the images."



Kacim, Lyon, 2022. (Camille Farrah Lenain)



Amina, Marseille, 2022. (Camille Farrah Lenain)



Bouchta, Marseille, 2022. (Camille Farrah Lenain)



Rizlaine's Qran, Marseille, 2022. (Camille Farrah Lenain)

Camille Farrah Lenain's project "Made of Smokeless Fire" explores LGBTQIA+ identities in France's Muslim culture. Lenain describes her project in the following way:

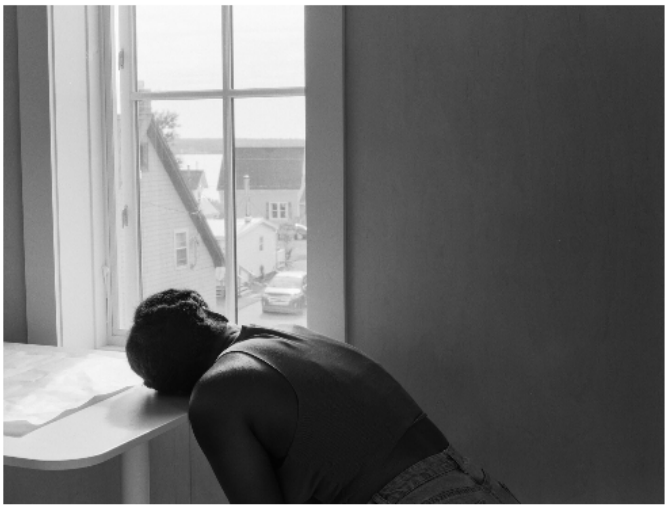
"This project is an homage to my uncle Farid who passed away in 2013. France has the largest proportion of Muslims in the Western world, estimated at 8.8% or the population, or 5.57 million. But still, islamophobia is omnipresent. At the intersection of layered discriminations, *Made Of Smokeless Fire* introduces portraiture and personal testimonies to highlight these experiences and the communities redefining their cultural and religious heritage."



(Anique Jordan)



(Anique Jordan)



(Anique Jordan)

Next up is Canadian photographer Anique Jordan. She describes her project, “Underbelly” with the following words:

“The responses to the pandemic offered us a window into new possibilities. Intricate systems of mutual care, a fierce spotlight on abolition and anti-Black racism, and the public celebrations of caregivers and educators took precedence. We learned to collectively imagine that something else was indeed possible. *UNDERBELLY* is concerned with this “something else.” It centers upon the dreamworld, the imagination, and the spiritual and cultural connections that fuel ways of understanding the world that do not simply rely on the structures built through processes of conquest and extraction.”



(Dolores Medel)



(Dolores Medel)



(Dolores Medel)

Mexican photographer Dolores Medel takes a look at Afro-Mexican communities in Veracruz, Mexico. Her project aims to "investigate the role and lives of often erased Black Mexican women throughout history, intertwining historical and fictional stories with oral tradition, as well as myths and legends of transatlantic voyages that were imposed on them."



(Jean Jasper Gruis)



(Jean Jasper Gruis)



(Jean Jasper Gruis)

Photographer Jean Jasper Gruis is next with their project documenting the transient nature of construction sites in rural Mosselbay, South Africa. Their project is a "long-form meditation on racialised and exploited labour as it is converted into summer houses for the rich and white on one side of the national highway and housing projects for the black and poor on the other, a lethargic attempt to address the country's housing crisis....Gruis documents the lives and agency of the workers on site – and how they create their own spaces even as their labour constructs property for the powerful. Construction work is stereotypically rendered as brute male labour, but Gruis's method of absence explores how tenderness and domesticity are found in these heartlands of masculinised work. Subverting the style of architectural and commercial photography, their work unveils who made the space rather than comically trying to hide it."

You can find out more about Women Photograph and all that they do here.



By Kenneth Dickerman

Kenneth Dickerman is a photo editor. He previously worked as a photo editor at MSN in Seattle and TIME in New York City. Before that, he worked as a freelance photographer specializing in politics and conflict and his work appeared in The New York Times, TIME and US News & World Report among other publications. @dickerman_k