

Beat: Arts

PHE granted awards to the best photography books of the year

In four categories

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USPA NEWS - The Best Photography Book of the year, international category, has been granted to *Illustrated People* by Thomas Mailaender, published by RVB Books and Archive of Modern Conflict. *Illustrated People* is the translation into book form of a performance by Thomas Mailaender.

He applied to the skin of models 23 original negatives selected from the Archive of Modern Conflict's collection before projecting a powerful UV lamp over them, thus revealing a fleeting image on the skin's surface. The book comprises the resulting shots combined with a series of photographic documents found in AMC's collection. The Best Spanish Photography Book of the Year is *Everybody Needs Good Neighbours*, by Arnau Blanch, published by RM and La Caixa. It is a photographic project that starts from a very specific territory, the photographer's hometown, the village of Vilobí d'Onyar. This municipality of some 3,000 inhabitants is characterized by its location at the confluence of transport infrastructures.

Although Vilobí d'Onyar might seem a typical village within the geography of Catalonia, its quality as a "no-man's-land" surrounded by infrastructure has turned it into a dismembered territory. The photographer approaches this territory in a unique way, seeking out novelty and surprise in what is familiar to him, exploring both the transit space and the people who inhabit it.

Best Self-Published Photography Book has been granted to *PAIN*, by Toni Amengual. *PAIN* is a portrait of the current situation of crisis and social cutbacks in Spain. All the pictures in the book were taken with a mobile device camera between 2010 and 2012. The final book format is presented two years later, 2014, when politicians and mass media are devoted to convey an optimistic message of recovery.

In spite of these messages, the images of the suffering population in the streets presented in the book are still as current as when they were taken. The book is composed by 120 photographs bound in 240 pages and folded in the Japanese way, thus to get to them the pages have to be tore up. Besides, an Honorable Mention was granted: *Salitre*, edited by Juan Valbuena and published by PHREE. The result of the project *Salitre* is a box of thirteen books, one made by each of the twelve Senegalese residents living in an overcrowded-house, featuring photographs, drawings, words and documents (ID cards, passports, official letters, papers").

The additional thirteenth book includes images taken exclusively by Juan Valbuena inside the overcrowded-house until its eviction (interiors, portraits, objects, daily life"). Outstanding Publishing House of the Year Award has been granted to AMC -Archive of Modern Conflict-. It is an organisation and independent publisher based in London. It was established in the early 1990s and maintains an archive of vernacular material relating to the history of war, primarily photographs but also manuscripts and objects, covering the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

412 publications and self-publications from 23 countries -Germany, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Spain, United States, France, Greece, The Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and Venezuela- have been submitted to the competition for The Best Photography Books of the Year. Winners and a selection of submitters up to 127 are displayed at the exhibition The Best Photography Books of the Year, host by Biblioteca Nacional de España. Open until October 4, 2015.

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