



NEWS OCT 03, 2023

# Gauri Gill Wins Leading European Photo Award

BY ANNA LENTCHNER



Portrait of GAURI GILL. Courtesy the artist.

On September 28, Indian photographer Gauri Gill was named winner of the Prix Pictet photography and sustainability award for her black-and-white portrait series *Notes from the Desert* (1999–), receiving a prize of CHF 100,000 (USD 109,000). The award ceremony for Prix Pictet’s tenth edition was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in London, where 12 shortlisted photographers presented their works under the theme “Human,” accompanied by an eponymous book featuring wider selected works from the nominated artists, published by Hatje Cantz.

Born in urban Chandigarh in 1970, Gill explores the cultures and landscapes across Northern India, western Rajasthan, and Maharashtra states, focusing on underprivileged rural communities. She began her winning series by photographing village schools but expanded her topic of interest upon visiting the Rajasthani countryside, where she “witnessed a complex reality [she] knew nothing about as a city dweller.” For decades, Gill returned to the same communities to document their travails, from natural disasters, epidemics, and political upheaval, to intimate moments such as weddings, births, and candid daily life. As Gill prefaced the series: “To live poor and landless in the desert amounts to an inescapable reliance on oneself, on each other, and on nature. The stakes are high, the elements close, and life is as cheap as the jokes are rampant.”

Gill studied at Delhi College of Art, Parsons School of Design, New York, and Stanford University, California. Her photographic practice has been featured at major international festivals including the 2016 Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Documenta 14 in 2017, and the 59th Venice Biennale in 2019. A survey of her work toured from the

<https://artasiapacific.com/news/gauri-gill-wins-leading-european-photo-award>

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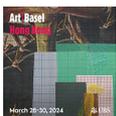
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Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt in 2022 to the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebak, Denmark, in January 2023.

The Pictet Group, a Geneva-based investment bank, founded Prix Pictet in 2008 to harness photography's resonance across global audiences and highlight different facets of sustainability. This year, Prix Pictet announced that it will launch the People's Choice Award of CHF 10,000 (USD 10,880), allowing the public to vote for shortlisted photographers until the exhibition closes on October 22. After the V&A, the exhibition will tour across museums in Zurich, Nassau, Istanbul, Dublin, Bangkok, Munich, San Diego, Singapore, and Stockholm.

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