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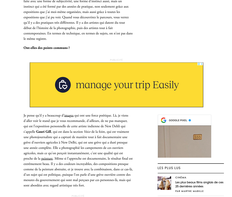
Devrim Bayar. © Jérôme Sarfati

Devrim Bayar succède cette année à **Raphaëlle Stopin** (directrice de Cannes Photo) et **Pierre-Ange Carlotti** (ancien directeur de la Mission du patrimoine photographique) à la tête du comité de sélection du parcours **Elles x Paris Photo**. Temps fort de la foire qui prend ce quartier chaque année, le parcours Elles x Paris Photo rassemble une sélection de 30 artistes. Le Grand Palais Éphémère accueille cette sélection exceptionnelle, dans le cadre du Grand Palais, jusqu'au 30 novembre, date à laquelle ouvrent les portes du salon. Cette sélection des artistes, dévoilée le mardi 28 octobre, a été réalisée par un comité de sélection composé de quatre personnalités du monde de la photographie, dont le rôle consiste à choisir les artistes qui seront présentés dans le cadre du parcours Elles x Paris Photo. Le comité de sélection a été composé de Devrim Bayar, directeur artistique de la Maison européenne de la photographie, Pierre-Ange Carlotti, ancien directeur de la Mission du patrimoine photographique, Raphaëlle Stopin, directrice de Cannes Photo et Sylvie Rantet, directrice de la photographie chez Vogue France.

Cette année, **Devrim Bayar** a choisi, tout de figurantes ou diversité qui présentent d'exploitant les relations, complexities, entre la figure féminine et le monde, et plus particulièrement, le rapport à la nature, à l'environnement, à l'intimisme, ou aspectual, selon les spécialités et le sujet représentés. Avec pourtant les 400 photographies sélectionnées pour cette sélection, il a choisi une cinquantaine de profils, parmi lesquels certaines grandes artistes comme **Julia Margaret Cameron**, et des artistes plus contemporaines comme **Hélène Amouzou**.



Hélène Amouzou, photographe et artiste française, a été sélectionnée pour le parcours Elles x Paris Photo 2025. © Hélène Amouzou, Courtesy Galerie Les Filles du Calvaire, photo Vincent Arbelet

● LIRE AUSSI

5 photographes à découvrir à la foire sur-mesure de Paris Photo 2025

Le parcours Elles x Paris Photo 2025 prend une dimension inédite cette année. Il rassemble 30 artistes dont la moitié de femmes et de femmes de couleur, de la foire sur-mesure de Paris Photo. Voici 5 photographes à découvrir absolument.

Vogue. Pour faire votre sélection de « parcours Elles x Paris Photo 2025», vous vous êtes basée guidée par vous-mêmes. Qu'est-ce qui vous frappe en premier, dans une photographie?

Devrim Bayar

Que cherchent-ils ou ne cherchent-ils pas? Ils cherchent, ils ne cherchent pas, ils ne cherchent pas, ils ne cherchent pas

2025 Les Publications Condé Nast

English translation:

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Elles x Paris Photo

exhibition route told by Devrim Bayar, its curator

Since 2018, the Elles x Paris Photo exhibition route has allowed the photography fair to highlight the talents of women (and gender minorities) in a medium long dominated by the male gaze. Devrim Bayar, the curator of this 2025 edition, tells us about what goes on behind the scenes.

BY LOLITA MANG

This year, Devrim Bayar succeeds Raphaëlle Stopin (director of the Rouen Normandy Photographic Center) as curator of the Elles x Paris Photo exhibition. A highlight of the fair, which takes place annually at the Grand Palais, the Belgian-Turkish curator, currently chief curator at KANAL–Centre Pompidou (scheduled to open in November 2026 in Brussels), immersed herself this summer in the task entrusted to her: selecting diverse and talented profiles of women photographers (or those from gender minorities) to offer an alternative perspective at Paris Photo, a project committed to promoting a more egalitarian art world. Initiated by the Ministry of Culture and now a key feature of the fair since its inception in 2018, the Elles x Paris Photo exhibition has doubled the number of female artists presented at the Grand Palais, increasing from 20% to 39%.

This year, Devrim Bayar has therefore sought to create a path that explores the complex relationships between the female figure and the environment surrounding her. This relationship can appear harmonious or oppressive, depending on the approaches and subjects represented. From the 800 submissions received for this edition, the curator had to choose around fifty profiles, including pioneering figures such as Julia Margaret Cameron and more contemporary talents like Hélène Amouzou.

Devrim Bayar: It's difficult to put into words! Organizing exhibitions is my profession, so I've been looking at works of art for a long time now. Of course, I'm not a photography expert; I've prepared exhibitions with different types of artists, including painters and photographers. I also selected several books this year; publishing interests me just as much! To answer your question, I would say that my selection was made with a degree of subjectivity, a kind of instinct as well, but an instinct that has been shaped by years of practice, not only through the exhibitions I myself have organized, but also through all the exhibitions I've seen. When you see the exhibition, you'll notice that there are very different approaches. There are artists from the very beginning of the history of photography, and then completely contemporary artists. In terms of technique and subject matter, they are not in the same category.

Do they have anything in common?

I think there are many images that possess a poetic force. I've just been to see a booth that I highly recommend you don't miss, which is the solo exhibition of this Indian artist from New Delhi named Gauri Gill, located in the Voice section of the fair. She's a photojournalist who has captured, in a completely documentary style, a strike by agricultural workers in New Delhi, a strike that lasted almost a full year. She photographed the encampments of these agricultural workers, but what you immediately perceive is a quality that is close to painting. Even though the approach is documentary, the final result is extremely beautiful. There are incredible colors, compositions almost like abstract paintings, and I find that the combination, in this case, of a political subject—since we're talking about a workers' strike against government measures that are perceived negatively by these people—is approached with a very strong artistic vision.

Do you have another example to share with us?

There's another solo exhibition, this time by a Turkish artist, still little known outside of Turkey, named Yildiz Moran. It's being presented by the Nev Gallery. Here, we see more classic black and white photography. Yildiz traveled to

Anatolia to meet people living in villages. She created both portraits and landscapes, thus offering a rather documentary perspective, but one that is also very aesthetic. Even if you're not interested in or don't understand the specific subject matter, you can appreciate her images for the beauty of their execution. This is also a wonderful discovery. I think that, generally speaking, the exhibition will take us across generations and geographies. That was important to me, and I think it's important for the selected artists to be part of such a diverse selection.

For example, this Saturday, November 15, 2025, you will be moderating a conversation between artists Liz Johnson Artur (61 years old) and Luna Mahoux (29 years old) at the Grand Palais.

I chose Liz Johnson Artur because this year she's publishing a book, *I Will Keep You in Good Company*, in which she presents a selection of pages from her photo notebooks. These are working tools, something she never shows in her exhibitions. It's also a very thick volume, which really allows you to delve into her practice and show how close it is to other techniques, such as collage, writing, or painting... Liz is also an established artist; she's been working for thirty years, in contrast to Luna, who is a very young artist whom I admire greatly. She comes from Belgium, but is of Ethiopian origin. She's not present at the fair because she doesn't yet have a gallery, but when Paris Photo asked me to propose a discussion, I suggested inviting Liz, who is more well-known, and proposing a cross-conversation with Luna, who is younger but shares some interests with Liz, such as African communities and their various diasporas around the world. There's also a strong interest in music and its visual world, through clubs and concerts.

As a Belgian, what was your relationship with Paris Photo?

I'd like to clarify that I am Belgian-Turkish. I insist on this because I have a particular attachment to Turkey, even though I grew up in Brussels and have spent my entire career there, notably at the Wiels Contemporary Art Centre, where I organized many exhibitions. For the past three years, I've been at KANAL–Centre Pompidou, so I obviously have many collaborations with the Centre Pompidou in Paris. I'm regularly in France, and I've noticed that the French art scene looks quite a bit towards Belgium and Brussels. It was Anna Planas, the artistic director of Paris Photo, who spotted me, thanks in particular to the major exhibition dedicated to Wolfgang Tillmans, which I curated four years ago in Brussels. She therefore saw that I already had a foot in the world of photography, even though I also think that what is very interesting about Wolfgang Tillmans' work is that it goes far beyond the simple framework of photography. He is someone who also makes videos, who makes music, and who has a curatorial practice with his Between Bridges project in Berlin.

Since you mentioned KANAL–Centre Pompidou, a museum that will open its doors in a year, we have to ask you for an update on the ongoing work…

We're already doing things! There have been preview exhibitions in the building we're going to occupy, which is a former Citroën garage dating back to 1930.

Before the renovation began, there were exhibitions in the building in its raw state. At the time, I wasn't yet part of the team, so I didn't participate in those projects. Since the building closed for renovations, we've been occupying a temporary building located right next to the main building, where we've organized a few exhibitions, but we mainly organize events, including a book fair, which I'm responsible for. We've organized performances, film screenings, conferences, symposiums… there's still a certain level of activity!

And then we're acquiring works of art, expanding the collection. This is an activity that takes place behind the scenes, but it's very important, especially for the local scene, because we mainly acquire works by Belgian artists or artists based in Belgium. And we are fortunate, of course, that Brussels is a capital city, although it's relatively small. It's very cosmopolitan, very international. So, we have a collection that reflects this international and multicultural character of the city.

So, would Belgian artists be more open to the world than French artists?

Yes, inevitably. Take large countries like France or Germany, or smaller countries like Switzerland: you find large systems of support for the arts, with, for example, grants, prizes, residencies… In Belgium, unfortunately, we don't benefit from as much support, which in a way forces artists to look elsewhere. And ultimately, that's not a bad thing. It's difficult to build a successful career in Belgium by staying solely in Belgium. Unlike, I think, in France, where, thanks

to the regional contemporary art funds (FRACs) that collect and exhibit art, it's possible to maintain a significant presence for many years while remaining in one's own country. In Belgium, it's more complicated. We're a small country with fewer opportunities. Therefore, if you want to develop your career, you inevitably have to look abroad.

How long did it take to prepare the Women x Paris Photo exhibition?

Anna Planas, whom we've already mentioned, contacted me in February 2025. Then, at the very beginning of July, I received a large part of the proposals made by the galleries participating in the fair, who submitted images and names of artists they proposed to present at the Grand Palais.

I made an initial selection. Then, at the end of the summer, in August, I received the second set of proposals, which allowed me to complete my selection, resulting in a final selection at the beginning of September, which was then communicated to the participating galleries. It was from this that the exhibition route was established and the catalog was created. This catalog is very well done. It is distributed free of charge.

Did you have any surprises during this process? Was it easier or more difficult than you had imagined? We're talking about 800 different proposals from the galleries...

Fortunately, in addition to the quantity, there is real quality in the proposals made by the galleries, since the fair is gigantic and very international. This allowed me a great deal of freedom; I wasn't limited in my choices at all.

You've already mentioned several artists during this interview. Is there one in particular that you included in this selection, and that you were particularly keen to highlight?

I'm thinking of Hélène Amouzou, whom I really like, who is based in Brussels and is also part of the KANAL collections. I think she has already been featured in a previous exhibition; her work is very touching. It's very personal work since it's self-portraiture. Through her self-portraits, what she highlights is the plight of people in exile like herself. She is someone who has had a difficult life, like many people who arrived from Africa, and who for years fought to regularize her status. Through photography, she has depicted her journey. I think it's important to give visibility to these experiences. I was happy to be able to include her in my selection again.