



## THE TBILISI PHOTO FESTIVAL 2015

### PRESS RELEASE

The Tbilisi Photo Festival, the premier showcase for regional and international photography in the Caucasus, is back with its most provocative and diverse programme yet.

From Antoine D'Agata's outdoor exhibition of Tbilisi strip-dancers in "Eclipse", to intimate portraits of Germans separated from their parents during WWII in "Wolf Children", the week-long festival of shows, events and talks again breaks new ground in subjects, styles and ways of seeing.

On their first ever visit to the Caucasus, the #Dysturb group of international photographers will "occupy" the Georgian capital's historic old city with giant images from the refugee crisis and other major news stories. In a year of renewed tension between Georgia and Russia, Alex Majoli presents "At The Top Of My Voice", his travels on both sides of the frontline after the 2008 Russia-Georgia War. How are women changing photography? A panel of award-winning women photographers will discuss.

Now in its sixth year, the Tbilisi Photo Festival has cemented its place as a must-stop meeting-point for photography and photographers from across Asia, the Middle East and Europe. And this year for the first time, there will be a Photo Book Salon selling the work of festival photographers and others.

The central theme of the 2015 festival is WWII, recognising not only the 70th anniversary of the war's end but also the profound influence it still has on today's world.

## EXHIBITIONS

### Post-War Stories

by Claudia Heinermann, Michal Iwanowski and Indrė Šerpytytė



© Claudia Heinermann / Mihal Iwanowski/Indrė Šerpytytė

The 2015 Tbilisi Photo Festival leads off with WWII and the work of Claudia Heinemann, Michal Iwanowski and Indrė Šerpytytė, three photographers from Germany, Poland and Lithuania, and their very different perspectives on the war's legacy.

#### Wolf Children

In "Wolf Children", Heinemann documents the lives of Germans living in East Prussia who were separated from their parents in 1944 and grew up under Soviet rule in Lithuania. After decades of silence, and with their numbers dwindling each year, they have been recounting their memories of numbing loss, captivity and solitude.

#### Clear of People

Michal Iwanowski retraces his grandfather and great uncle's epic 1945 escape from a Russian prisoner-of-war camp in "Clear of People", followed by their 2000 km walk to Poland to try to find their family.

#### Forest Brothers: Former NKVD-MVD-MGB-KGB Buildings

Indrė Šerpytytė has spent years focusing on the physical impact of the Cold War on her own country Lithuania as well as on her own family to produce "Forest Brothers - Former NKVD-MVD-MGB-KGB Buildings" in this subtle and moving collection.

#### Eclipse. Georgia 2009 by Antoine D'Agata (Magnum Photos)



© Antoine D'Agata

"Everyone looks for pleasure to fill the void inside themselves," says Liza, a Tbilisi strip-show dancer who is one of the subjects of Magnum photographer Antoine D'Agata's bold and seductive new exhibition "Eclipse" which premieres at this year's Tbilisi Photo Festival.

D'Agata, dubbed the "enfant terrible" of contemporary photography for his often

dark and introspective creations, has been exploring this human void for years. For his much-anticipated "Eclipse", the French photographer unveils an outdoor show of around 100 life-size images of Tbilisi prostitutes and sex-club workers who posed for him in 2009. The blur of movement as they dance naked for his lens creates an ethereal beauty which challenges common perceptions of women working in the sex industry. It's one of the week's highlights and the festival will also be publishing a book with the same title which will be released in November during Paris Photo.

### At The Top Of My Voice: Georgia 2008-2009 by Alex Majoli (Magnum Photos)



© Alex Majoli (Magnum Photos)

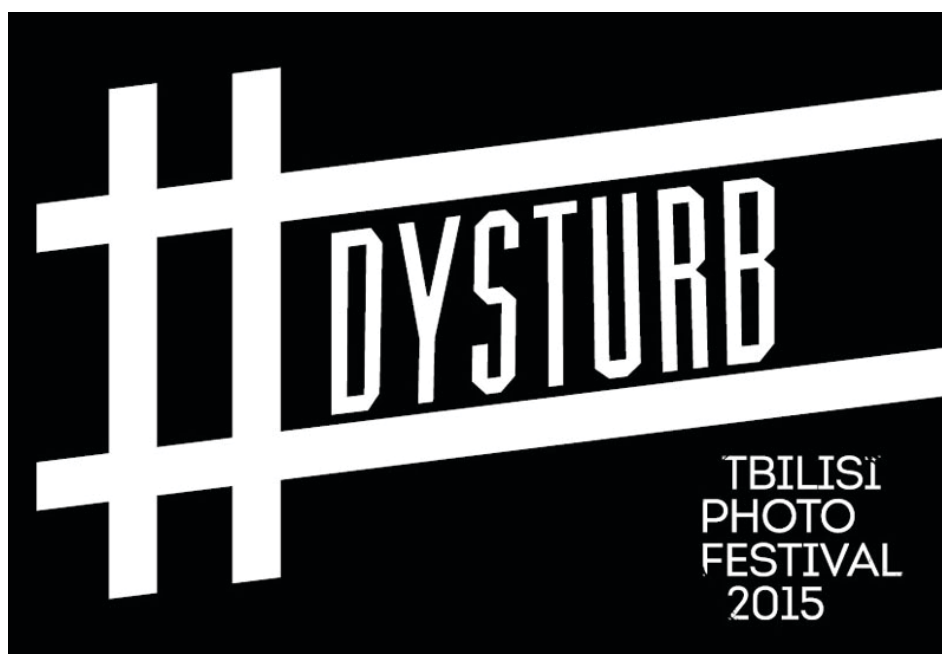
"My verse will reach you across the peaks of ages/ over the heads of governments and poets"

Seven years after the Russia-Georgia war, the conflict remains frozen and unresolved, the outcome unclear. And Magnum photographer Alex Majoli has chosen the Georgian-born Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky's unfinished masterpiece "At The Top Of My Voice" to introduce his haunting studies from the frontlines. Majoli finds Russian soldiers seemingly as disoriented and exhausted by the conflict as the Georgians they have vanquished. He originally took the photographs as part of a Magnum project to document the aftermath of the war and now brings them together in this special exhibition for the Tbilisi Photo Festival. It will be on show in the city's historic Writer's House, a place itself emblematic of Georgia's tortured relationship with Russia. This was the gathering place for writers approved by the Soviet authorities, and where some of them met the celebrated Magnum photographer Robert Capa and author John Steinbeck in 1947 during their journey across the USSR. Mayakovsky was controversial too, his work approved by Stalin. But speaking of his struggle against uncomprehending adversaries, the poem casts a poignant backdrop to Majoli's sombre images.



© Vytautas Stanionis

## TPF EVENTS



Come to the storied streets of Old Tbilisi for a new kind of story-telling during the 2015 Tbilisi Photo Festival. #Dysturb ([www.dysturb.com](http://www.dysturb.com)) will be in town for their first visit to the Caucasus. They are a group of international photographers using street-art techniques to reach a new and wider audience for the stories of our times.

They first tried their approach in France, including at this year's photojournalism festival in Perpignan. Now they will "occupy" Tbilisi's old city, pasting giant photographs nearly 4m high on busy streets and courtyards on 26 September, showing refugees arriving in Europe and other crises shaking the world. It's social media old and new, creating a buzz in the street and with their hashtag #Dysturb.



Night of Photography  
Saturday 26 September 20:00 to 01:00



© Julien Daniel

Since it was first held in 2010, the Night of Photography has become the highlight of the Tbilisi Photo Festival, with at least 10,000 people coming each year to see some of the best images from across the globe.

It happens on the second night of the festival, just after #Dysturb, with 10 large media screens set up in the streets of Old Tbilisi between the baths of Abanotubani and Gudiashvili Square featuring the work of 111 photographers from 15 different countries.

Names from across the Caucasus, as well as Iran, Ukraine, Russia, Afghanistan, Egypt, and Turkey will be represented. The streets hum with life as people react to the visual feast around them.

The TPF Round Table: Are Women Changing Photography?



© Newsha Tavakolian (Magnum Photos)

Six award-winning women photojournalists from Poland, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Iran come together for this special panel discussion, followed by a slideshow of some of their work.

Justyna Mielnikiewicz (Getty Reportage)

Rena Effendi (Institut)

Nazik Armenakyan (4 Plus)

Anahit Hayrapetyan (4 Plus)

Anka Gujabidze

Newsha Tavakolian (Magnum Photos)

Moderator: Natalia Antelava, founder of CodaStory

## Public Talk: Photographs for Books - Tom Mrazauskas

Tom Mrazauskas is an award - winning photo book designer

## Public Talk and Slideshow - Antoine D'Agata

The photographer behind the "Eclipse" out in the open

# TBILISI PHOTO BOOK

For the first time, there will be a festival bookstore selling the work of photographers with exhibitions and many others, inside the historic Writer's House in Old Tbilisi.

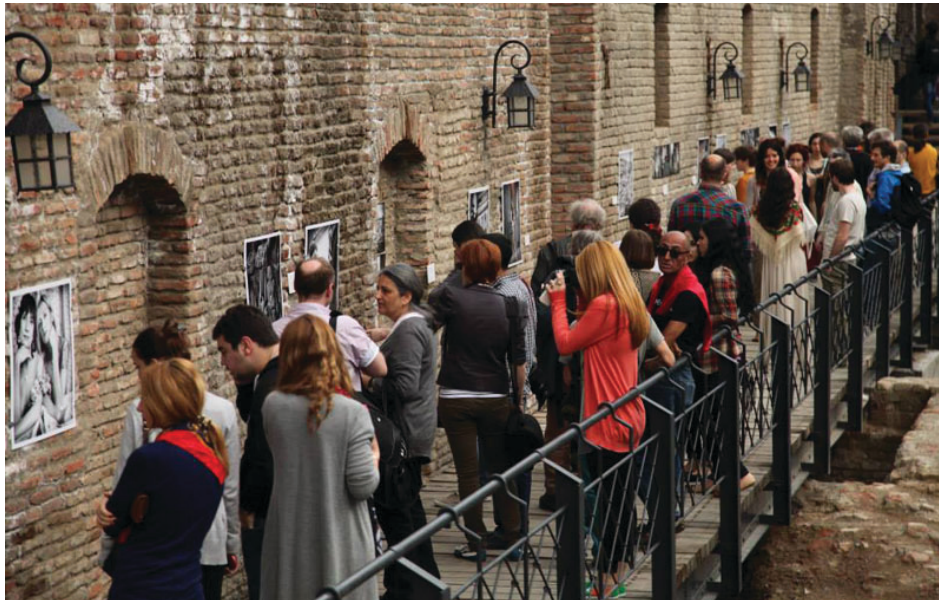
## BEYOND THE FESTIVAL

### Artist in residence program

Tbilisi Photo Festival is offering bursaries for the first time for photographers and photography curators from Europe and Iran to work on projects in Georgia. Full details on our website

### Master-classes and Scholarships

Building on its reputation for encouraging new photographers, the Tbilisi Photo Festival is setting up its first Master Class program taught by renowned photographers. The series begins with Klaudij Sluban and Antoine D'Agata and we are also offering one scholarship per master class for photographers from Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Ukraine, Russia, Belorussia and Iran.



At this old crossroads between East and West, the Tbilisi Photo Festival has become a new destination for the world's photographers, bringing together the best images of the region and much further beyond. We can't wait to see you.

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