

Prix Polyptyque:

Julia Gat, Andrea Graziosi, Jeanne et Moreau in the Drawing Room gallery

Three series, three worlds and three photographic approaches: Archaic hybrid creatures, one's own family, and insights into a work and life relationship. With the current presentation, the Drawing Room gallery is looking once again at contemporary photographic positions from France. Last summer, work by Jean-Louis Garnell was presented; this year it is possible to see three series by young photographers from the south of France.

On display are the winners of the Prix Polyptyque, the fifth edition of which went to Julia Gat, Andrea Graziosi, and the artist duo Lara Tabet and Randa Mirza, working under the name "Jeanne et Moreau". The Prix Polyptyque, awarded for the first time at the Centre Photographique Marseille (CPM) in 2018, highlights the quality of contemporary photography in Marseille and the South of France by giving the respective finalists an exhibition tour and thus a visibility extending well beyond the region.

Eleven photographers were selected by a preliminary jury and exhibited at CPM in summer 2022. Alexander Sairally and Esther Schulte were partners and jury members of the fifth edition of Prix Polyptyque, and they are now showing the prize winners at their Drawing Room gallery in Hamburg.

The three groups of works provide an exciting insight into the contemporary photography scene, as the authors' photos draw attention to very different themes, personal experiences and stories.

The series of "Animas" by Andrea Graziosi takes us into the archaic traditions of street carnival in small villages in Barbagia, Sardinia. The masked characters photographed against

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a dark background seem to combine the human and the animal. The images show typical figures such as “Su Boe” or “Su Merdùle”, representing the ox and its master or shepherd. But other traditional figures also appear, granting insights into the centuries-old rituals originating in ancient cults. The masks are elaborately carved and the full extravagant costumes evidently weigh heavily on the protagonists. Other figures such as “Filonzana”,



an old woman dressed in black with a spindle, or various animals appear in the series created in 2015. Far more than a documentation of historical disguises and masks, the series highlights the vividly intense relationship between man and untamed nature. Disturbing as the “Animas” may seem, their link to history and the desire for disguise as an escape from the present world are equally strong.

Andrea Graziosi was born in Loreto, Italy in 1977. He lives and works as a photographer and author in Marseille.



Photographer **Julia Gat** opens up her family archive with the series “Khamsa khamsa khamsa”. In addition to the private sphere that includes other people, five protagonists are the focus of her portrait series: her sisters Sara and Nina, her brothers Michael and Jonathan, and the photographer herself, the fifth sibling who is always present behind the camera. As a protective mantra, the word “khamsa”, the Arabic number five and a reference to the five fingers of the hand, is repeated three times in the title.

The photographer invokes community and tells stories of her childhood and youth, of growing up with no cares. The motifs were produced between 2012 and 2021; the photographer compiled them into a series at a time when the isolation caused by the

pandemic was defining life, so enabling her to continue to keep in touch with her childhood. “When I was 10 years old, I vowed never to forget how a child sees the world: everything is fresh and new, imagination blurs with reality, and the unknown is fascinating,” the photographer says.

Julia Gat was born in Israel in 1997; she lives in Marseille and Rotterdam.

The third photographic position also represents an intimate approach to one's own life. In a series entitled "Nothing is happening. Delete the Picture!", the two photographers Lara Tabet and Randa Mirza present a series addressing their experiences and everyday life from 2020 to 2022 and weaving them into a multidisciplinary art project. Their artistic collaboration under the name **Jeanne et Moreau** began in 2018, when the two were still living in a long-distance relationship between Marseille and Beirut. Their series plays with the boundaries between those fields divided into private and public.



One essential aspect is the history of Lebanon, marked by revolution, economic collapse, and the explosion in the port of Beirut in August 2020 that drove Lara Tabet from her flat and accelerated the two artists' process of moving in together in Marseille. Associatively, the series tells of loss and new beginnings, destruction, and closeness.

Both photographers were born in Lebanon, Randa Mirza in Beirut in 1978, Lara Tabet in Achkout in 1983. Today, they live in Marseille.

The joint presentation of the three series in the gallery room permits fascinating interrelations between the individual positions. The correlations between privacy and the public sphere, between concealment and display, as well as aspects of history and tradition are all questioned. Young photography from the South of France: a multi-layered, complex voyage of discovery into the visual worlds of contemporary photographic art.

(Ulrich Rüter / Translation: Lucinda Rennison)

Julia Gat, Andrea Graziosi, Jeanne et Moreau
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