



**Matthias Bruggmann,  
winner of the second edition of the Prix Elysée,  
with the support of Parmigiani Fleurier**

**Elysée Lausanne**

**The Musée de l'Elysée is pleased to announce the winner of the second edition of the Prix Elysée: the Swiss photographer Matthias Bruggmann. Chosen by an international jury of experts among eight nominees, his identity was revealed to the public at the Nuit des images, Saturday, June 24, 2017. Matthias Bruggmann says about his work that it "attempts to bring to Western viewers, a visceral comprehension of the intangible violence that underlies conflict."**

The Musée de l'Elysée and Parmigiani Fleurier would like to congratulate the Swiss photographer born in Aix-en-Provence (France) in 1978, winner of the second edition of the Prix Elysée, for his project entitled *A haunted world where it never shows*. Building on the framework of his prior work on contemporary conflicts, Matthias Bruggmann proposed, for the Prix Elysée, to continue a long-term photographic project launched in 2012 documenting the conflict in Syria. He receives the sum of CHF 80,000, to be divided between the completion of the proposed project and the publication of the accompanying book in June 2018.

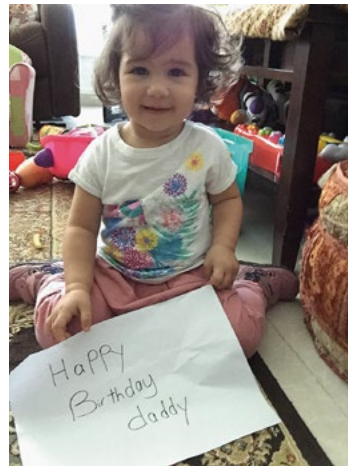
#### **Politically engaged photography, between art and documentary**

*"Matthias Bruggmann's project leaves no one indifferent. The Musée de l'Elysée was built with photojournalism and has since then followed its evolution and was witness to its changing codes. Matthias Bruggmann questions them and reappropriates them in a committed work of wide-ranging scope",* emphasizes Tatyana Franck, director of the Musée de l'Elysée. Respecting the numerous constraints inherent to photojournalism, his work, which contributes to the body of images that already exist, aims at challenging our own moral assumptions and increasing our understanding of the violence that underlies the conflict in Syria. Andrew Sanigar, one of the members of the jury, points out that *"Matthias Bruggmann's project presented us with insights into the complexities and the lives on the line in the Syrian crisis. His work is brave, startling, compelling, raw and sometimes bizarre. We see images of the war in Syria in our news media everyday, but the direct yet layered and intricate nature of Matthias's ways of working clearly has the potential to come together as a book that will, in some way, allow us to understand why Syria and its people have ended up in such a desperate situation."*

#### **Matthias Bruggmann speaks about his project**

*"Formally, my previous work put viewers in a position where they were asked to decide the nature of the work itself. A scientifically questionable analogy of this mechanism would be the observer effect in quantum physics, where the act of observing changes the nature of what is being observed. My Syrian work builds on this framework.*

*From a documentation perspective, it is, thus far and to the best of my knowledge, unique as the work, inside Syria, of a single Western photographer, in large part thanks to the assistance and hard work of some of the best independent experts on the conflict. Because of the nature of this conflict, I believe it is necessary to expand the geographical scope of the work.*



*At its core is an attempt at generating a sense of moral ambiguity. The design of this is to make viewers uneasy by challenging their own moral assumptions and, thus, attempt to bring, to Western viewers, a visceral comprehension of the intangible violence that underlies conflict. One of the means is by perverting the codes normally used in documentary photography to enhance identification with the subject. While perfectly conforming to accepted documentary norms, part of the work aims at eroding the viewer's implicit faith in my own trustworthiness as a witness, and attempts to force a further reflection on the nature of what is presented."*

#### **A word about Matthias Bruggmann**

A graduate of the Vevey School of Photography, Matthias Bruggmann lives and works on his laptop. His work, which respects the arbitrary norms of photojournalism, tends towards the deconstruction of the norms of representation in the photography of the real through the representation of complicated situations and places.

He has, in particular, worked on and in Egypt, Haiti, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Libya. He was part of the curatorial team for *We Are All Photographers Now!* for the Musée de l'Elysée, and is one of the cofounders of the contemporary art space Standard/Deluxe in Lausanne. He was also one of the photographers featured in the *reGeneration*<sup>1</sup> exhibition presented by the Musée de l'Elysée in 2005. His work is part of the public collections of the Frac Midi-Pyrénées and the Musée de l'Elysée, as well as a number of private collections.

#### **A unanimous decision of the jury**

The unanimous jury was composed of **Mimi Chun**, Founder and Director of the Blindspot Gallery (Hong Kong), **Andrew Sanigar**, Commissioning Editor of Thames & Hudson (London), **Salvador Nadas**, Curator of Collections Department and Head of Institutional Relations of the Museo Reina Sofia (Madrid), **Astrid Ullens de Schooten**, Founder and President of the A. Stichting Foundation (Brussels), and the founding partners, **Tatyana Franck**, Director of the Musée de l'Elysée (Lausanne), **Michel Parmigiani**, Founder of Parmigiani Fleurier (Fleurier) and **Marina Vatchnadze**, Manager of Cultural Patronage of the Sandoz Family Foundation (Pully). The jury also acknowledges the seven nominees, **Isabelle Blanc and Olivier Hilaire**, **Elina Brotherus**, **David Jiménez**, **Sofie Knijff**, **Jim Naughten**, **Emeka Okereke** and **Robert Zhao Renhui**, for their invaluable contributions, particularly within the framework of the Nominees' Book, published in partnership with Editions Photosynthèses.

Find the biography, portfolio, project description and video of the winner of the Prix Elysée at [www.prixelysee.ch](http://www.prixelysee.ch)



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**Press contact**

Julie Maillard  
+41 21 316 99 27  
julie.maillard@vd.ch

#PrixElysee  
@ElyseeMuseum



Matthias Bruggmann, \_V6C7689, Syrie, 2014 © Matthias Bruggmann / Agence Contact Press Images / Prix Elysée



Matthias Bruggmann, \_Z6A2521, Irak, from the series *A haunted world where it never shows*, 2016 © Matthias Bruggmann / Agence Contact Press Images / Prix Elysée



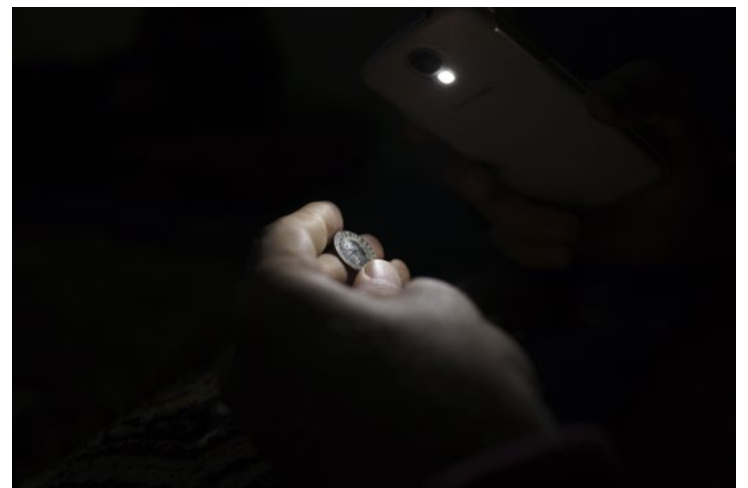
Matthias Bruggmann, \_Z6A4432, Irak, from the series *A haunted world where it never shows*, 2016 © Matthias Bruggmann / Agence Contact Press Images / Prix Elysée



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