Travel Photographer of the Year arrives in the Park of Pena including the Portuguese award winning photographer Ana Abrão

- TPOTY begins on 2 June in the Park of Pena Manège
- This is the leading international travel photography competition
- Portuguese photographer winner of the first prize in the “Celebrating Humanity” category
- 15th edition received over 20,000 photos submitted from 129 different countries

Sintra, 17 May 2018 – For the first time, the Park of Pena Manège is hosting the photography exhibition for the international Travel Photographer of the Year (TPOTY) competition. In the premiere of this exhibition in Portugal, put on by Parques de Sintra, there is a Portuguese winner: Ana Abrão, who won the best individual portfolio photograph in the “Celebration of Humanity” category with her portrait of a woman holding an instant photo with another self-portrait. This is the 15th edition of TPOTY, the world’s leading competition and exhibition of travel photography, launched in the United Kingdom in 2003, which that this year received over 20,000 images from 129 countries, to celebrate humanity, the landscape, the environment and wildlife on the planet. From 2 June to 26 August, 39 of the winning photographs, including those of Ana Abrão, may be seen in the open skies against the romantic and mysterious scenic backdrop of the Park of Pena.

In addition to Ana Abrão, two other Portuguese entrants received distinctions in this competition. Joel Santos, who was the overall 2016 winner of the international Travel Photographer of the Year award, this year received two special mentions in the “Earth & Climate” category while a photograph by Enrico Villa attracted an honourable mention in the “Primary Colours” category. The award winning photographs were announced in December 2017 and go on display throughout 2018 in different international exhibitions.
Aged 52, the Portuguese-Brazilian Ana Abrão has also had a particular desire to travel and photograph, ingredients that earned her this distinction from TPOTY. «I left Portugal with a one-way ticket to India, without any plans or defined program, and with total freedom to allow the flow of events to dictate my route. And, thus, I fell in love with Asia and what was supposed to be a trip around the world ended up as a tour of Asia», explained the Portuguese born in Brazil photographer. Throughout, one year, one month and one week, Ana made her way through nine countries – India, Nepal, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia – and two Asian regions – Borneo and Sulawesi – but it was in India, in a fairly remote location near the Pakistan border, in the north of Gujarat State, where she was able to capture her winning image. Through her lens, she told a little of the history of the women of the Patel ethnic group. «This lady saw me passing by the door of her house and invited me to enter. What caught my attention was how she was entirely dressed in traditional Patel clothing in addition to the bangles along the length of her arm. She told me that she had received them from her husband some fifty years ago as a wedding present. They are permanent bangles, soldered together after being placed on the arm. She was also wearing silver anklets, made to measure and equally permanent, given her in conjunction with the bangles. Together, they weigh one a half kilos. In Indian culture, they are symbols of resignation and respect».

Ana entitled this image “The weight of tradition” and tells of having felt the human warmth of a genuine Asia, away from the tourism routes, where she encountered what shall probably be the final cultural remains of various ethnic minorities. «For example, women in the Patel ethnic group change their clothing from the moment that they marry. Some pieces of clothing and the accessories bear specific meanings. It would appear that they dress in red on reaching the age of 50. Furthermore, before this, they wear black. The lady portrayed is the last in the family to maintain the Patel clothing tradition. The generations below are no longer interested and prefer to adopt the western style».

The photograph by Ana Abrão, winner in the Best Single Image in the “Celebration of Humanity” category, thus joins the other 38 photographs taken within the context of travelling during the year of 2017. The Belgian Alain Schroeder was the overall winner of the Travel Photographer of the Year international award, distinguished for his photographic accounts of kushti, the traditional Indian free-wrestling style and the
rituals associated with death in Toraja, in Indonesia, with a portfolio of eight photographs in total.

Also on display in the Park of Pena Manège are the award winning photographs from the categories of “Earth & Climate”, “Tales of Adventure”, “Flavours of the World”, “Smart Shot / iTravelled” and “Primary Colours”. Submissions to the 16th annual TPOTY are already open (www.tpoty.com).

Useful information:
Access to the exhibition requires the purchase of a ticket for the Park and National Palace of Pena, open daily from 9.30am to 7pm.
For further information, please go to www.parquesdesintra.pt

About Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua
Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A. (PSML) is an entirely state owned company founded in 2000 in order to meet the challenges arising out of the UNESCO classification of the Sintra Cultural Landscape as a World Heritage site. The entity does not resort to the State Budget and the restoration and maintenance of the heritage in its care are ensured by the revenues resulting from sales at its ticket offices, stores, cafeterias and the rental of facilities for the hosting of events. In 2016, the sites managed by PSML (the Park and National Palace of Pena, the National Palaces of Sintra and Queluz, the Chalet of the Countess of Edla, the Moorish Castle, the Palace and Gardens of Monserrate, the Convent of the Capuchos and the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art) welcomed 2,625,011 visits, around 83% of whom were international in origin. In 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, PSML was distinguished with the World Travel Award for the “World’s Leading Conservation Company”.
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