SIENA AWARDS

The photograph signed by Gilad Topaz has clinched the top spot in the most prestigious international competition dedicated to aerial photography.

'DRIFTING IN SPACE,' A STUNNING CAPTURE OF THE BALTIC SEA, TAKES TOP PRIZE AT DRONE PHOTO AWARDS 2024

Siena. The Drone Photo Awards, the leading international competition for aerial photography and a highlight of the Siena Awards, has named Israeli photographer **Gilad Topaz** as the grand prize winner. Topaz's stunning image, **'Drifting in Space,'** captures a breathtaking moment from an icebreaker expedition in the frigid Baltic Sea, Sweden.

The photograph showcases an extraordinary experience where Topaz and his fellow adventurers, aboard the icebreaker, plunged into the icy waters after the ship created a temporary 'pool' amidst the frozen sea. Donning specialized rubber suits to shield against the cold, they floated in this surreal setting, evoking the sensation of astronauts drifting in the vastness of space.

'Drifting in Space' was selected from a competitive pool of 4,000 entries submitted by over 2,000 photographers from 113 countries. The winning image, along with other awarded photos from the Drone Photo Awards, will be featured in the exhibition **'Above Us Only Sky,'** which will be on display throughout the Siena Awards Festival at the **Museo di Storia Naturale.**

Gilad Topaz | Drone Photo Awards - Photographer of The Year 2024

Winners of the Drone Photo Awards 2024: Russian photographer **Yuriy Stolypin** has captured the top prize in the **Urban** category with 'Rocket,' a majestic shot of Europe's tallest skyscraper from an unprecedented altitude. This image, a result of meticulous planning and perfect weather conditions, offers a breathtaking perspective of St. Petersburg's skyline. In the **Wildlife** category, **Toby Nicol** from England delivers a powerful narrative with his photograph 'Ocean Clean Up.' This compelling image, taken in Perth, Australia, portrays a giant sperm whale that became stranded on the coast before falling prey to a tiger shark, capturing a poignant moment in the cycle of life and death.

Azerbaijan's **Alex Berasategi** has made his mark in the **Sport** category with 'Minimalist Action,' a dynamic portrayal of a skate park in his hometown of Azpeitia. Created to celebrate the park's first anniversary, this photo elegantly highlights the design and energy of the skate ramp. The **People** category saw an emotionally impactful winner with **Carol Guzy**'s 'Bucha, City of Death.' This powerful image from Bucha, Ukraine, depicts body bags of victims from a mass grave, offering a stark reminder of the war crimes committed in April 2022 and the ongoing struggle for justice.

Chinese photographer **Xiaoying Shi** has excelled in the **Nature** category with 'Ground Vein,' an evocative image of the unique geological formations in Utah's Factory Butte. Shi's use of drone technology captures the warm, textured beauty of this remote landscape, emphasizing nature's artistry. In the **Abstract** category, Italian photographer **Isabella Tabacchi** presents 'Tree of Life,' an aerial view of Iceland's highlands where natural patterns resemble a tree. This image vividly illustrates the creative force of nature against the dramatic Icelandic scenery.

Polish photographer **Joanna Zdancewicz** has enchanted with 'Love from Above,' winning the **Wedding** category. This heartwarming photograph shows a Volkswagen Beetle setting a romantic stage as the newlyweds share a tender moment, captured from above.

The awards also honor **Paul McKenzie** of Ireland for 'Realm of the Flamingo' in the **Storyboard** category, and **Vlad Vasylkevych** from Ukraine for '1 Million Bombs Before' in the **Video** category.

Category Winners:
Urban: Yuriy Stolypin, Russia
Runner Up Xu Zhang, China

Wildlife: Toby Nicol, United Kingdom
Runner Up Paul Mckenzie, Ireland

Sport: Alex Berasategi, Azerbaijan
Runner Up Daniel Koszela, Poland

People: Carol Guzy, USA
Runner Up Ivo Danchev, Bulgaria

Nature: Xiaoying Shi, China
Runner Up Miki Spitzer, China

Abstract: Isabella Tabacchi, Italy
Runner Up Ignacio Medem, Spain

Wedding: Joanna Zdancewicz, Poland
Runner Up: Tim Demski, Poland

Storyboard: Paul Mckenzie, Ireland
Runner Up Zhang Xiangsheng, China

Video: General: Vlad Vasylkevych, Ukraine
Runner Up Alen Tkalcec, Croatia | Muhamad Abu Shakra, Germany | Florian Ledoux, France

Explore the Drone Photo Awards 2024 winning photographs here:
https://droneawards.photo/gallery/

Info and social. All Siena Awards exhibitions will be open from September 28 to November 24, with visiting hours on **Fridays** from 3 PM to 7 PM, and on **Saturdays**, **Sundays**, and **holidays** from 10 AM to 7 PM. Siena Awards is organized by the cultural association Art Photo Travel, in collaboration with the Municipality of Siena and Sovicille, and under the patronage of the Ministry of Culture, the Tuscany Region, the University of Siena, and the Siena-Arezzo Chamber of Commerce. **Main partners** include Carrefour Market, Etruria Retail, and Gabetti Lab, alongside additional **partners** including Estra SpA, Iren SpA, Sienambiente, Safety&Privacy, Terrecablate, and Rete IVO. For more information, please visit www.sienawards.com and follow the festival on social media: Facebook, sienawards; Instagram, @sienawards; Twitter, Siena Awards and YouTube Siena Awards.

Note to Editors
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