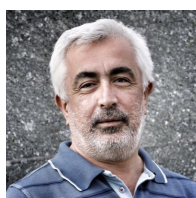


WORLD PRESS PHOTO 2024: AFP PHOTOGRAPHER ADEM ALTAN WINS THE EUROPE PRIZE

The Europe Prize rewards the photo of the earthquake in Turkey, which happened in February 2023. [Adem Altan](#) is also in the running for the global World Press, which will be announced on April 18th.



As a photographer based in Ankara, Adem Altan was working in front of a collapsed building in Kahramanmaraş, at the epicenter of the earthquake which resulted in over 53,000 fatalities in Turkey alone, when he noticed the man sitting among the rubble. With no rescue teams having arrived on site yet on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, the day after the disaster, residents were themselves attempting to clear the rubble to save their loved ones. Amidst the chaos, the man in the orange jacket remained motionless, unaffected by the rain and the cold. It was then that Adem Altan realised that the man, 60 meters away from him, was holding someone's hand.

He began to capture the scene: [the father](#) holding the hand of his deceased child without letting go, among the rubble and devastation. As he took photos, the man watched him closely. "Take photos of my child," he whispered to Adem, his voice braking and trembling. He briefly released the hand he was reluctant to let go of, just long enough to indicate to the photographer where his 15-year-old daughter lay. Before immediately grasping it again. "I was so moved at that moment. Tears welled up in my eyes. I kept thinking, 'My God, this is an unbearable pain,'" recounts the AFP photographer. Adem then asked for his name and the name of his child. "My daughter, Irmak," replied the father, Mesut Hancer. Adem immediately thought the image captured the pain of the earthquake's victims, without imagining the impact the image would have.

Featured on the front pages of newspapers worldwide, it was also shared hundreds of thousands of times on social media. “I believe it’s a photo that will be etched in people’s memory. Many have told me they will never forget this photo,” confides Adem Altan. Neither will he.

“Adem managed to capture the profound pain and anguish of a father amidst a country ravaged by the earthquake. This image will remain as the symbol of the catastrophe that struck Turkey,” said Éric Baradat, AFP’s Deputy News Director for Photo, Graphics, Data, Archives.

For the 2024 World Press Photo contest, the winners will be chosen by both regional and global juries. Regional juries first compile a selection of work from each region (Africa, Asia, Europe, North and Central America, South America, Southeast Asia, and Oceania). From this selection, a global jury consisting of the six presidents of the regional juries and the president of the global jury will then award the regional and global winners. The World Press Photo 2024 winners will be announced on April 18, 2024.

About AFP

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Press Contact: Coline Sallois – Tel. : +33 (0)1 40 41 45 60 – +33(0)6 63 48 80 04 – coline.sallois@afp.com