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The best Swiss press photos

For the past ten years, the Swiss Press Photo competition has regularly awarded prizes to the best Swiss press photos. In 2012, 213 photographers based in Switzerland submitted 2,586 photos to the jury. To be eligible for the competition, photos must have already been published in the media. The overall winner this year is Mark Henley, a British photographer who has been living in Switzerland for the past five years. His series of black-and-white photos on the subject of Swiss banks is particularly topical. The pictures could become icons for the way banks and banking confidentiality are evolving in Switzerland.



The winner of the 2012 Swiss Press Photo award was the picture of a banker running across Zurich's Paradeplatz to escape a downpour (photo above). This snapshot, as well as Mark Henley's photo of a banker lost in thought or perhaps in despair, belongs to the series "Bank on us".



For centuries, the "Silvestercläuse" have been going from house to house in Urnäsch on 13 January dressed in elaborate traditional costumes, yodelling and creating a cacophony to ward off evil spirits. There are three different costumes: "Schöni" (beautiful), "Ueshti" (ugly), and "Schwüeshti" (beautiful-ugly). Simon Tanner was awarded first prize in the "Art and Culture" category for his reportage from Urnäsch.



"He opened the door bare-chested and invited me in with a friendly smile. His twins were playing in the dressing room. It was all very simple." This is how photographer Sabine Papilloud (second prize in the "Art and Culture" category) describes her meeting with Ricky Martin at the Montreux Jazz Festival.



The winner in the "Portrait" category, taken by Adrian Moser, shows Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga as a forlorn woman standing in the Federal Palace under a Swiss cross. The photo was taken ahead of an official photo shoot while the photographer and the Federal Councillor's advisor were discussing the ideal location.



Libya in August 2011: Dictator Muammer al Gadhafi, in power for 42 years, is killed after a nine-month popular uprising and civil war. The people in Tripoli celebrate and plunder the Gadhafi clan's luxury villas. Geneva-based photographer Olivier Vogelsanger won the "Abroad" category with his "Tripolis libérée" series.



Sister Theresia Raberger has been a member of the Franciscan Order since 1978 and lives in the Rigi-Felsentor Centre in Vitznau (Lucerne). She likens motorcycling to meditation and dreams of riding a Harley-Davidson. Photographer Pius Amrein won third prize in the "Portrait" category for this photo.