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Russian Photographer Wins Leica Award for Series on Dagestan

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Russian photographer Damir Faizulin has won the 2026 Leica Oskar Barnack Award for a series documenting how tourism and development are reshaping life in the mountains of Dagestan. Faizulin first visited Dagestan as a tourist in 2020. Sensing that the region was on the brink of rapid change, he moved there in 2021 to document its transformation. His winning project, "Preserving Nature as Preserving Ourselves," captures the North Caucasus republic's natural beauty alongside threats to its landscapes and traditional livelihoods. "It's important to me that a photograph does not simplify reality, but rather helps us recognize its complexity," he said. The award, presented in Wetzlar, Germany, on Oct. 8, carries a prize of 40,000 euros and Leica camera equipment worth 10,000 euros. Established in 1980, it recognizes photographic series exploring the relationship between people and their environment.

Damir Faizulin / leica_camera / Instagram

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