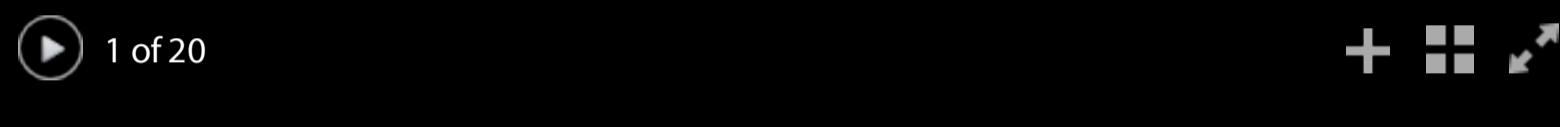


Touch Ground

Photographs and text by
Massimo Cristaldi



On August 27th, 2013, a boat arrives on the rocks of Fanusa (Siracusa) © Massimo Cristaldi.



In 2013 alone, over 40,000 migrants braved the Mediterranean Sea in an attempt to reach Italy (and Europe). Many of these migrants ended up in Sicily and the surrounding islands. The route was a familiar one, as thousands of these people have previously traveled this route in years past during previous attempts.

In "Touch Ground," I photographed beaches, harbors, cliffs—the places where, in recent years, migrants have first reached the shores of Europe from their original homes in North Africa. The photographs form an exploration of the idea of "Terra Firma," a coveted place, object of hopes, tragedies, happiness, disillusion, and sometimes, death.

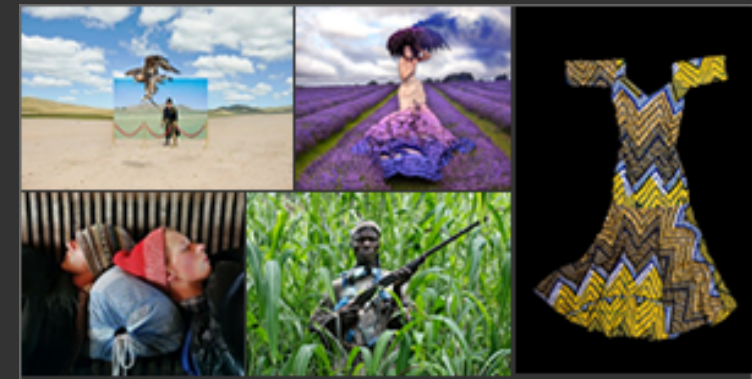
I chose to make my pictures at night, because it was at these times that the places appeared full of meaning. Within the absence of the darkness and the emptiness, I sensed an epic quality to the scale of these migrations and the individual emotions that each journey embodied.

These photos are, then, a work on the borders: the borders between land, sea and men. The seascapes depicted are epic and empty yet also "places of the present," places of contemporary history. They are, at once, the theaters of tragic, life-altering events and at the same time, simply the sea for the rest of us.

—Massimo Cristaldi

Discover more new, inspiring photography every day from cultures around the world at LensCulture.com, and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

[View Massimo Cristaldi's Profile](#)



Announcing the Best 25 Visual Storytellers for 2014

Discover the 25 photographers named LensCulture's Best Visual Storytellers of 2014 — Documentary, Personal Stories, Fictional Narratives, Photojournalism and more!

FEATURED ARTICLES:



Wilderness

Step into these rich, contemplative landscape photographs and feel yourself drawn away into the wordless beauty of the natural world.



Family from the Mist

Magic realism pervades this dream-like series of people from an ancient culture living in a remote mountain region, and happily continuing simple, music-filled lives while also embracing some modern conveniences like smartphones.



Welcome to Pyongyang

Promoted as a "tourist's guide" to North Korea, Charlie Crane's portraits, interiors and landscapes of Pyongyang, the capital city, are perfectly bleak and honest. The chatty caption text for each photo is verbatim propaganda as told by the city's official tourist guides. The combination provides a chilling look at how the nation wants to be seen by outsiders.



Beyond the Forest

Germany is phasing out nuclear power, but the approved fossil fuel alternative is destroying pristine forests, farmland and rural villages.