



PRESS RELEASE

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AFP WINS RORY PECK AWARD IN NEWS CATEGORY FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR

WILL VASSILOPOULOS, AFP STRINGER SINCE 2011, HAS WON THE PRESTIGIOUS RORY PECK AWARD WHICH EACH YEAR RECOGNISES THE WORK OF THE BEST FREELANCE VIDEO JOURNALISTS.

Will Vassilopoulos won the award for his coverage of the migrant crisis in Greece. Since 2015, the country has been one of the main entry points to Europe for hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war, poverty and persecution. [Will's footage shows desperate migrants and refugees arriving in the country from Turkey, having crossed the Aegean Sea in overcrowded, rickety boats and rubber dinghies -- and their rescue from open water in the middle of the night.](#)

Will's entry also includes a sequence from the island of Lesbos, which has seen the highest number of arrivals. He filmed the arrival of a boatload of refugees on Skala Sykamias beach on 31 October 2015. He followed them to the makeshift, sprawling Idomeni camp on Greece's northern border with Macedonia – which was evacuated last May. He depicts demonstrations by refugees at the border post, their catastrophic living conditions and the desperate attempt of several hundred to cross a river a few kilometres from the camp to get into Macedonia on 14 March 2016.

Will Vassilopoulos started his career in text for Japanese news agency Kyodo News before becoming a news anchor at Greece's state broadcaster ERT. In 2011, Agence France-Presse financed a training course for Will to learn how to film and he has freelanced for the Agency as a video journalist ever since, covering extensively topics such as Greece's economic crisis, political unrest in Egypt and Turkey and the conflict in Ukraine.

News category finalists also included Nabil Hassan, who has freelanced for AFP since 2015. Nabil was nominated for his coverage of the Battle for Aden in which Shiite Houthi rebels opposed pro-government forces.

Will Vassilopoulos succeeds Zein Al-Rifai, who won the news prize last year. Zein, who works regularly for AFP in Syria, covered the everyday lives of people in the rebel-held areas of Aleppo between 2014 and February 2015.

This is the third consecutive year that AFP has taken away the Rory Peck news award. In 2014, AFP stringer Pacôme Pabandji won for his coverage of the civil war in the Central African Republic.

The Rory Peck Awards were launched in 1995 by the Rory Peck Trust, set up in the memory of freelance journalist Rory Peck who was killed in Moscow in 1993. The awards recognise the best independent news cameramen, and the awards ceremony is one of the main events through which the Trust raises funds to assist freelance journalists.

About AFP:

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