



Artist Statement

More than one million immigrants from Africa officially reside in Italy, as well as an unknown number of undocumented migrants, many of whom have made a perilous and often life-threatening journey to get there. A 2016 study by the International Organization of Migrants pointed to insecurity, conflict, and discrimination as the main drivers of migration, not solely economic and work reasons. Discrimination on the basis of social group, religion, or sexual orientation was mentioned by almost half of the study group. In October 2020, the Italian government adopted a decree overturning many of the anti-immigration policies introduced by the previous interior minister Matteo Salvini, leader of the right-wing Lega Nord (Northern League).



'The migrant's journey is a long one, night after night, inching toward the horizon like constellations. Not just typical stars, they are high-velocity stars, ejected at hyper speed by black holes, sprinkled across the cosmos by the force of their propulsion. And these scattered stars, in their crossing, are like the migrants that I met in Italy who had come from Nigeria, The Gambia, and Ivory Coast, across Europe, seeking El Dorado.' 'In the choral testimony of the voices I collected, the celestial constellation is one of young Africans from different countries, of different genders and with different traits, a testament to the individuality and diversity that they each embody. Some young migrants aimed to reach Libya from southern countries, often finding a dead end in prison. Others aimed at Europe's El Dorado; many found it, despite sacrifices, its promise intact. Others met a dreadful reality - the dream they had long harbored, treasured on those endless nights of travel, shattered.'

The project was continued in the Normandy coast of France, where I worked with the immigrants from Rwanda, Congo, Senegal, Nigeria, Mali, Sierra Leone and Guinea.



Artist Bio

Alisa Martynova [b. 1994, Russia] is a documentary photographer based in Florence, Italy, since 2015. After finishing her studies in Foreign Philology in her native country, in 2019 she graduates from a professional photography three year program at Fondazione Studio Marangoni in Florence, Italy.

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