

PORTFOLIO

Mahdi Barchian

VISUAL RESEARCHER | PHOTOGRAPHER

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ABOUT ME

MAHDI BARCHIAN

Every human dreams and strives to turn those dreams into reality. However, I was born in a region of the world where dreams often fade – the Middle East. I was born in Iran in 1984. In 2013, I decided to leave my job and pursue a career as a freelance photographer. In 2018, I joined NVPIimages (Canadian photo agency) . My work focuses on humanitarian issues, refugee crises, internal migrations, and climate change. I have traveled extensively around the Middle East and documented various situations, my greatest concern as a photographer has been the pains and distresses of humankind, as well as the environment and the relationship between the two. I aim to highlight the destructive effects of human beings on the environment and, ultimately, on life itself. My documentary work emphasizes the key role of education and art as means of hope. I am looking for signs of hope in people's lives in an extremely disappointing space, and my goal is to show hope as the most important part of every human's life , my projects focuses on people's ability to hold on to the little things that give them hope and meaning during difficult times.

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2013-2024

PORTOFOLIO



2013

HOW DOES IT ENDS?

2024

Over the past 10 years, I have documented climate change in Iran and its effects on human life. The project is composed of various small stories and projects, by traveling to different regions of Iran. I have witnessed the lives of the last survivors in semi-desolate villages on the shores of the dried Hamoon lake, I saw the effect of internal migration of more than 400,000 inhabitants due to drought and sandstorms, as well as the lives of more than 120,000 people in Iran's largest informal settlement on the outskirts of Chabahar. I have also documented environmental conflicts, such as flood and hunting and fire and their impact on people's lives.







I am currently photographing people in Iran who are forced by the government to leave their villages so that the government can build dams in waterlogged areas to provide water resources needed in drought-affected areas. By traveling to different parts of Iran, I will narrate the lives of the residents of villages that the government has tried to force to emigrate during the last 20 years by cutting off their access to basic facilities such as water, electricity, gas, health, education, and more.







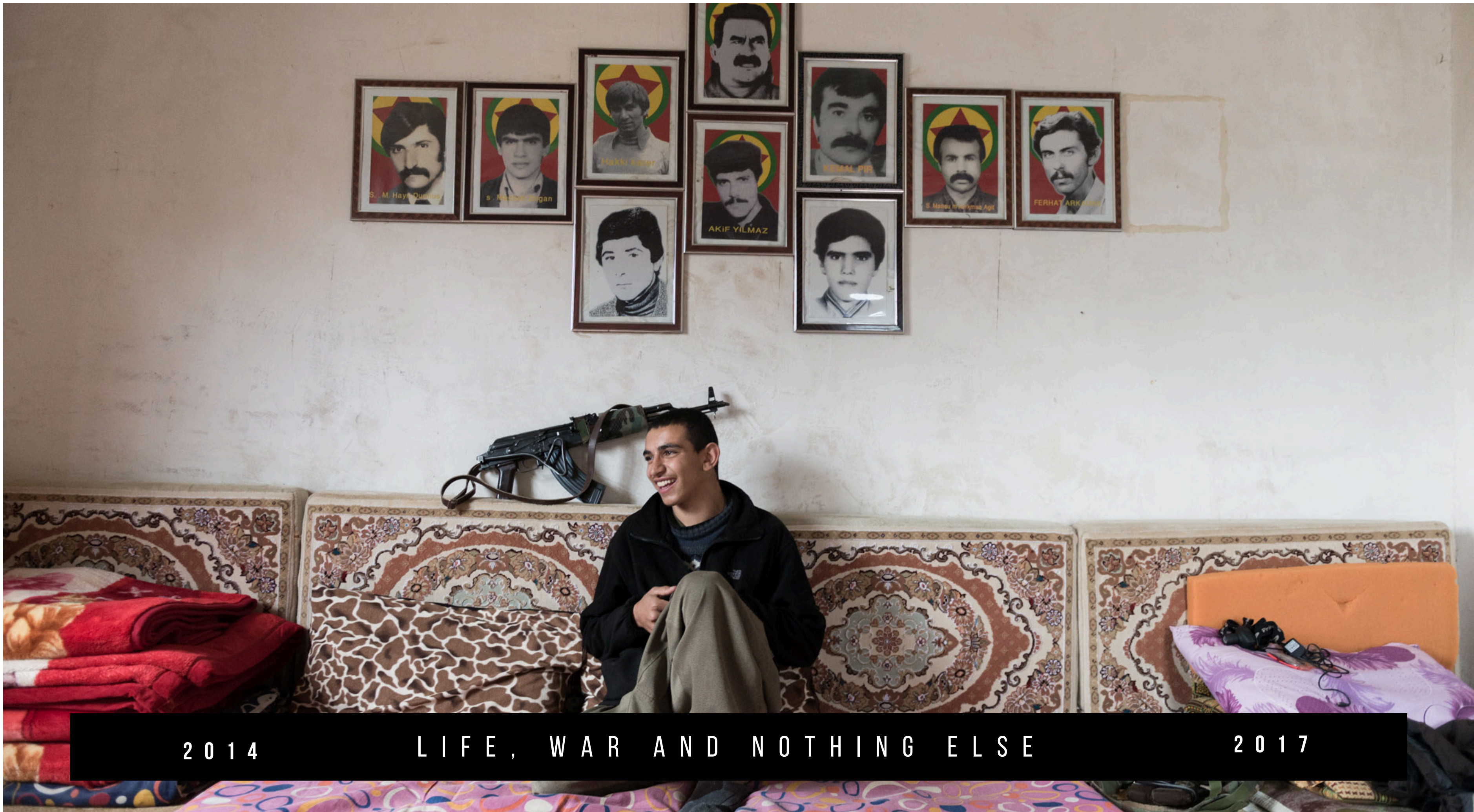
My project seeks to illustrate human life after the destruction of the environment, while also demonstrating the role of humans in the destruction of the environment. I believe that the environment and ecosystem are more powerful than humans, and eventually, we are doomed to be destroyed. However, for a moment, I imagined what the future of humans would be after environmental destruction and tried to portray it.

As a final part of my project, I intend to take a positive approach and focus on the lives of individuals who have been affected by climate change but are trying to find solutions and sometimes creating a new path for themselves, their families, and their communities by finding new ways to live.









2014

LIFE, WAR AND NOTHING ELSE

2017

The Kurds, numbering 50 million and spread across over 26 countries, are the largest ethnic group globally without a recognized nation-state. Their historical presence in Iran, Syria, Turkey, and Iraq has been marked by forced division and severe oppression, including denial of citizenship, displacement, and violent suppression of autonomy attempts, including genocide and chemical attacks. Despite these challenges, the Kurds have persevered and played a pivotal role in combating Daesh during recent Middle Eastern conflicts. The Kurdistan regional government, functioning quasi-independently for 14 years, faced resistance from Iraq due to its growing political and military influence, especially in oil-rich areas, culminating in a contentious autonomy referendum despite international opposition.







The broader Middle East remains a crucible of ethnic, linguistic, and religious tensions, where various groups strive for independence and self-determination. The Kurds' century-long struggle serves as a poignant example of these regional dynamics, offering insight into the aspirations and obstacles faced by ethnic minorities seeking autonomy. Their resilience amidst adversity underscores a universal quest for freedom and independence in a complex geopolitical landscape shaped by competing national interests and historical grievances.









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