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## Top 10 (+1)

### Photobooks of 2021

Selected by Alex Merola and Tim Clark

As the year draws to a close, an annual tribute to some of the exceptional photobook releases from 2021 – selected by Editor in Chief, Tim Clark, with words from Assistant Editor, Alex Merola.

10. [Alexis Cordesse, \*Talashi\*](#)  
[Atelier EXB](#)

The catalytic inquiry of Alexis Cordesse's subtle entry into the vernacular genre is this: how does one evoke a tragedy that is paradoxically made invisible through too many images? The tragedy in question is the Syrian civil war, an ongoing conflict that has displaced over half the country's population since 2011. Seeking an alternative to the sentimental dramatisations of war all too often circulated by mainstream media, Cordesse performs an act of collective remembrance by collating personal photographs belonging to those living in exile in Turkey, Germany and France; those who entrusted him enough to share the memories they hold dear. These artefacts have, like their owners, survived perilous journeys, for, if they had been seized as pieces of evidence at the borders, they might not have made it – and, indeed, many didn't. Such is the precarity of *Talashi*, whose title translates from Arabic to *Fragmentation*, *Erosion* or *Disappearance*. Slowly weaving what ultimately becomes an ever-vanishing tapestry of *home*, this book quakes with a quiet, mournful energy: a reminder that though all photographs are silent, some are more silent than others.

11-'Untitled' from Alexis Cordesse, *Talashi* (Atelier EXB, 2021). Courtesy the artist and Atelier EXB.



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