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Media Release Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

Deana Lawson wins the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2022

Deana Lawson has won the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2022. The artist was announced as the 2022 winner of the prestigious £30,000 prize at a special ceremony at The Photographers' Gallery (TPG), London, on Thursday, 12 May 2022.

The influential prize, which has been presented in partnership with Deutsche Börse Group since 2005, rewards artists and projects recognised as having made a significant contribution to international photography over the past 12 months.

Deana Lawson (*1979, Rochester, New York) was awarded the prize for her solo exhibition "**Centropy**" at Kunsthalle Basel (9 June – 11 October 2020).

Lawson presents a distinctive and provocative approach to image making, which, while drawing on art history as well as the wider traditions of photography, proposes a wholly original arena to reframe and reclaim the Black experience. Her interest lies in exploring the space held by communities and individuals and seeks to assert a position within an ever-shifting terrain of racial and ecological disorder for which she evokes a range of strategies.

Her subject matter is carefully choreographed and harnesses the tropes of family photographs to explore intergenerational relationships and their effects within Black culture. She frequently positions women as central protagonists, alongside the presence of elders, totemic male figures and symbolic or archetypal characters such as the celestial child. While her figures are often shown in apparently familiar domestic settings, the images contain unsettling elements which function as what the artist calls "portals" into other worlds or portray scenes of death or birth. She also harnesses natural phenomena such as waterfalls, galaxies and crystals to convey a realm beyond our present consciousness.

Though the majority of her subjects are strangers cast specifically for the works, there is an intimacy to her portraits and seeming familiarity between the characters, whom Lawson describes as a mythological extended family.

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The presentation at The Photographers' Gallery marks her first institutional show in the UK. Large-scale photographs spanning 2013 – 2020 are encased in mirrored frames to reflect and utilise light and presented alongside holograms and rough-hewn blocks of crystal.

The jury

The jury of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2022:

Yto Barrada, artist living in New York and Morocco; **Jessica Dimson**, The New York Times Deputy Director of Photography; **Yasufumi Nakamori**, Tate Modern's International Art (Photography) Senior Curator, London; **Anne-Marie Beckmann**, Director, Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation; and **Brett Rogers**, OBE, Director, The Photographers' Gallery, as voting chair.

Brett Rogers OBE, Director of The Photographers' Gallery and Chair of Jury said:

"Deana Lawson is a deserved winner of this year's prize not least for the sheer inventiveness and complexity of her approach to image making. Her work, which reframes and reclaims the Black experience, harnesses the traditional and the experimental and opens up a very unique connection between the everyday and the mystical. Her subject matter sits somewhere between the 'here and now' and the past, a person and a people, the staged and the naturalistic, in a manner which is not didactic or issue driven but genuinely radical.

The boldness of her vision and the empowered sensibility she brings to her protagonists is clearly the result of a carefully nuanced collaboration with her cast of 'family' members, which places her in a rare position of partner or narrator rather than auteur. Huge congratulations from myself and my fellow jurors. I also want to acknowledge the extraordinary work and talent of fellow shortlisted artists Anastasia Samoylova, Gilles Peress and Jo Ractliffe. Thank you for allowing us to present your work as part of this year's exhibition and prize."

Anne-Marie Beckmann, Director, Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation, said:

"I am delighted to announce Deana Lawson as this year's winner. While she is grounded in the traditions of photography and in many ways quite classical, her images offer up new possibilities for both the medium and its reception. Interrogating the position of the black body in visual culture and playing with tropes such as family portraiture, artifice and nature, she takes the personal and makes it political, forcing an often-unsettling contemplation of how and what we see.

I wish to extend further congratulations and enormous thanks to all of the shortlisted artists whose projects so powerfully exemplify the ability of photography to address such important issues as conflict, trauma, legacy and politics with so much focus and commitment."

The exhibition showcasing the four shortlisted artists for 2022 – **Deana Lawson, Gilles Peress, Jo Ractliffe and Anastasia Samoylova** – has been curated by TPG's Katrina Schwarz and remains on display at The Photographers' Gallery until 12 June 2022.

The exhibition will then tour to Deutsche Börse's headquarters in Eschborn/Frankfurt from 30 June 2022 onwards.

This leading Photography Prize celebrates ground-breaking artists at an international scale, highlighting unique creative developments and innovations within contemporary photography. In showcasing four finalists and awarding a winner amongst these each year, the prize has enabled extraordinary photography to be acknowledged and praised both within the industry and by the wider public, while capturing, reflecting upon and questioning the ever-evolving nature of the medium.

For more details visit: www.tpg.org.uk

Notes for editors:

You can find the image sheet with captions [here](#), please contact us directly for high-resolution press images.

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The Photographers' Gallery

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About Deana Lawson

Deana Lawson is professor of visual arts in the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University. She has exhibited internationally, including a major survey that premiered at ICA/Boston in fall 2021 and will travel to MoMA PS1 in New York and The High Museum in Atlanta. Lawson was the 2020 recipient of the Hugo Boss Prize, the first artist working in the medium of photography to be so honoured. The Guggenheim Museum, which administers the prize, presented Lawson's solo exhibition "Centropy" in spring 2021. She has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions at different institutions, including Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2020); Huis Marseille, Amsterdam (2019); The Underground Museum, Los Angeles (2018); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2018); Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2017); and Art Institute of Chicago (2015).

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize history

Founded in 1996 by The Photographers' Gallery, with the first award presented in 1997, the Prize has become one of the most prestigious international arts awards and has launched and established the careers of many photographers over the years. Previously known as the Citigroup Photography Prize, the Prize has been awarded in collaboration with Deutsche Börse Group since 2005. In 2016, the Prize was retitled as the "Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize" following the establishment of the foundation as a non-profit organisation dedicated to the collection, exhibition and promotion of contemporary photography. Past winners have included: Cao Fei, Mohamed Bourouissa, Susan Meiselas, Luke Willis Thompson, Dana Lixenberg, Trevor Paglen, Juergen Teller, Rineke Dijkstra, Richard Billingham, John Stezaker and Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin.

Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation is a non-profit organisation based in Frankfurt/Main that is dedicated to collecting, exhibiting and promoting contemporary photography. It is responsible for the further development and presentation of the Art Collection Deutsche Börse, which now comprises over 2,200 photographic works by around 150 artists from 30 nations. In its exhibition space in Eschborn near Frankfurt/Main, it shows several exhibitions a year that are open to the public. Supporting young artists is a particular concern of the foundation, which promotes them in many ways: with awards, scholarships or through participation in the talent programme of the Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam Foam. Together with the Photographers' Gallery in London, it awards the renowned Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize every year. Furthermore, the foundation supports exhibition projects of international museums and institutions as well as the development of platforms for academic dialogue and research on the medium of photography.

www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org

The Photographers' Gallery

The Photographers' Gallery opened in 1971 in Covent Garden, London, as the UK's first independent and publicly funded gallery devoted to photography. It was the first UK gallery to exhibit many key names in international photography, including Juergen Teller, Robert Capa, Sebastião Salgado and Andreas Gursky. The Gallery has also been instrumental in establishing contemporary British photographers, including Martin Parr and Corinne Day. In 2009, the Gallery relocated to a new multi-storey building in Ramillies Street, Soho and opened its doors to the public in 2012 after an ambitious redevelopment plan which provided the Gallery with three floors of state-of-the-art exhibition space as well as an education/events studio, a gallery for commercial sales, bookshop and cafe. The success of The Photographers' Gallery over the past four decades has helped to secure the medium's position as a vital and highly regarded art form, introducing new audiences to photography and championing its place at the heart of visual culture.

www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk

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