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Media Release Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2019 shortlist announced

Finalists are Laia Abril, Susan Meiselas, Arwed Messmer and Mark Ruwedel

The four artists shortlisted for the *Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2019* are **Laia Abril, Susan Meiselas, Arwed Messmer and Mark Ruwedel.**

Now in its twenty-second year, this highly regarded annual prize, originated by The Photographers' Gallery and subsequently awarded in collaboration with the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation, recognises artists and projects deemed to have made a significant contribution to photography over the previous 12 months in Europe.

This year's nominees survey a vast range of topical issues through the lens and language of photography. Collectively their projects explore state and gender politics, social injustice, human rights and conceptual approaches to image making. An exhibition of the shortlisted projects will be on show at The Photographers' Gallery from 8 March to 2 June 2019, before touring to Deutsche Börse's headquarters in Eschborn/Frankfurt.

The winner of the £30,000 prize will be announced at a special award ceremony held at The Photographers' Gallery on 16 May 2019.

The Shortlisted Artists and Projects:

Laia Abril (b. 1986, Spain) has been nominated for the publication *On Abortion* (Dewi Lewis Publishing, November 2017).

On Abortion is a visual research project that draws on the past, present and current history of abortion to highlight the continuing erosion of women's reproductive rights. For centuries, people have searched for ways to terminate unsafe or unwanted pregnancies. Despite the fact that today safe and efficient means of abortion exist, many women are still forced to resort to ancient, illegal or risky home methods resulting in approximately 47,000 deaths due to failed procedures each year. In this meticulously researched project, Abril documents the physical and psychological dangers caused by the continued lack of legal, safe and free access to abortion. Her collection of visual, audio and textual evidence graphically represents the consequences of unsafe procedures. It raises complex questions around the ethics and morality involved in any

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consideration of this subject, while exposing the myriad social triggers, stigmas and taboos that still persist around abortion and female health. *On Abortion* is the first chapter of Abril's long-term project, *A History of Misogyny*.

Susan Meiselas (b. 1948, USA) has been nominated for the exhibition *Mediations* (Jeu de Paume, Paris, 6 February – 30 May 2018)

Susan Meiselas is a leading documentary photographer, widely acknowledged for her work in conflict zones of Central America (1978–1983), and in particular for her powerful photographs of the Nicaraguan revolution. Favouring an immersive approach, she often collaborates with her subjects over long periods of time, and has focused on a wide range of challenging issues from ethnic and religious conflicts, human rights issues and the sex industry. Meiselas often adopts different methodologies in her process, incorporating photographic essays, installations, audio, film and the printed page. *Mediations* is the most comprehensive European retrospective of Meiselas' work, bringing together series' from the 1970s to the present day. The exhibition reveals her unique approach as an artist who has constantly questioned the status of the image in relation to the context in which it appears.

Arwed Messmer (b. 1964, Germany) has been nominated for his exhibition *RAF – No Evidence / Kein Beweis* (ZEPHYR|Raum für Fotografie, Mannheim, 9 September – 5 November 2017)

This comprehensive body of work reflects on the trajectory of the Red Army Faction (RAF). A far-left extremist organisation, it was formed in 1970 and engaged in a series of violent terrorist attacks in Germany over the course of three decades. Focusing on the period 1967 to 1977, Messmer set out to chart and consider the group's involvement in such events as the student protests of 1968 to the violent 'German Autumn' of 1977. The resulting project draws on a diversity of source materials from various state archives, including an extensive collection of investigative, forensic and documentary photographs ranging from the mundane to the surreal. By repurposing and recontextualising the tools and materials commonly used in police investigations and crime-scene reconstructions, Messmer's 'narrative' examines how images once used to collect evidence in criminal cases can now provide a different insight into our understanding of history.

Mark Ruwedel (b. 1955, USA) is nominated for the exhibition *Artist and Society: Mark Ruwedel* (16 Feb - – 16 Dec 2018 at Tate Modern, London)

Having spent many years photographing across North America, Mark Ruwedel's work explores how geological, historical and political events leave their marks on the landscape. The works in this exhibition date between 1995 – 2012 and showcase his interest in the history of photography and conceptual art practices of the 1960s and 70s. Merging documentary and conceptual methods of image-making, often repeatedly photographing the same subject matter, Ruwedel also finds influence in land art echoed in his expansive images of abandoned railways, nuclear testing sites and empty desert

homes. His work echoes historical photographic processes exemplified through his use of obsolete photographic papers, traditional darkroom techniques and application of handwritten captions. His interest in the craft of photographic printing and the photograph-as-object is further evidenced by his hand-made artist's books which are a central part of his practice.

The 2019 Jury and statements

The members of the **Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2019 jury** are: **Sunil Gupta**, artist, writer, activist and curator; **Diane Dufour**, Director of Le Bal, Paris; **Felix Hoffmann**, Chief Curator at C/O Berlin; **Anne-Marie Beckmann**, Director, Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation, Frankfurt. **Brett Rogers**, Director, The Photographers' Gallery, London, continues as the non-voting chair.

Brett Rogers, Director, The Photographers' Gallery: *"The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize was established over 20 years ago to recognise and reward photographic talent and remains a significant barometer of innovation, originality and quality. Each year the artists selected for the prize are those perceived to uniquely address and expand the fluency and capabilities of the medium. The 2019 shortlist continues this legacy, exemplifying the myriad ways that photographic images engage with the world around us. Whether drawing on documentary or conceptual approaches to the medium (Ruwedel, Meiselas, Abril) or by appropriating archival materials (Messmer), all four artists show a serious level of personal engagement and an undiluted awareness of, and reference to, past and present history.*

Anne-Marie Beckmann, Director, Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation: *"We are delighted to announce the four finalists of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2019. This year's shortlist refers in an impressive way to the diversity of the medium of photography as an artistic form of expression as well as to its relevance in today's world. The nominated projects include classic black-and-white photographs, archive-based positions as well as reflecting highly topical issues alongside strategies for understanding the past. We are very much looking forward to presenting the exhibition at our premises in 2019 as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Art Collection Deutsche Börse."*

Notes for Editors:

Please find enclosed an image sheet with captions, please contact us directly for high-res press images.

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The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation is a Frankfurt-based non-profit organisation. The foundation activities focus on collecting, exhibiting and promoting contemporary photography. Deutsche Börse began to build up its collection of contemporary photography in 1999. Art Collection Deutsche Börse now comprises more than 1,800 works by over 120 international artists. Expanding the Art Collection Deutsche Börse is one of the key aims of the foundation. The collection and a changing exhibition programme are open to the public. 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the Art Collection Deutsche Börse, which will be celebrated with a special programme throughout the year. Together with The Photographers' Gallery in London, the foundation awards the renowned Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize each year. The promotion of young artists is a special concern of the foundation. It supports them in the form of awards, scholarships, exhibitions and cooperations with other institutions, such as the Foam Talents Programme of the Foam Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam. Other focal points include supporting exhibition projects of international museums and institutions, and the expansion of platforms for academic discussion about the medium.

Further information is available at www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org.

The Photographers' Gallery

The Photographers' Gallery opened in 1971 in Great Newport Street, London, as the UK's first independent gallery devoted to photography. It was the first public gallery in the UK to exhibit many key names in international photography, including Juergen Teller, Robert Capa, Sebastiano 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 moved to 16 – 18 Ramillies Street in Soho, the first stage in its plan to create a 21st century home for photography. Following an eighteen months long redevelopment project, the Gallery reopened to the public in 2012. The success of The Photographers' Gallery over the past four decades has helped to establish photography as a recognised art form, introducing new audiences to photography and championing its place at the heart of visual culture.
www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize History

Founded in 1997 by The Photographers' Gallery, and now in its twenty-second year, 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 Gallery has been collaborating with Deutsche Börse

Group as title sponsors 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. Winner of the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2018 was Luke Willis Thompson for his his film installation Autoportrait. Past winners include Dana Lixenberg, Trevor Paglen, Paul Graham, Juergen Teller, Rineke Dijkstra, Richard Billingham, John Stezaker and Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin.