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Media Release Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2023 shortlist: Bieke Depoorter, Samuel Fosso, Arthur Jafa, Frida Orupabo

The four international artists shortlisted for the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2023 are: **Bieke Depoorter, Samuel Fosso, Arthur Jafa and Frida Orupabo.**

Originally established in 1996 and organised in partnership with the Photographers' Gallery in London, since 2016, this long-standing and influential annual Prize identifies and rewards artists and their projects considered to have made the most significant contribution to photography over the previous 12 months.

Over its 26-year history, the Prize has become renowned as one of the most important international awards for photographers, as well as a barometer of photographic development, foregrounding outstanding, innovative and thought-provoking work. From blurring the relationship between photographer and subject and unpicking the ethics of being a photographer, to exploring gender and sexuality, violence, injustice and the Black experience, this year's shortlisted artists all push the boundaries of photography and exemplify its resonance and relevance as a cultural force today.

The annual exhibition of shortlisted projects will be on show at The Photographers' Gallery, London, from 3 March – 11 June 2023.

The winner of the £30,000 Prize will be announced at an award ceremony held at The Photographers' Gallery on 11 May 2023, with the other finalists each receiving £5,000. Full details on the Prize exhibition and award evening will be announced in early 2023.

The 2023 shortlisted artists and projects are:

Bieke Depoorter – for her exhibition **“A Chance Encounter”** at C/O Berlin (30 April – 7 September 2022).

In an exhibition of installations, projections, film and photography, Bieke Depoorter (b. 1986, Kortrijk, Belgium) blurs the traditional relationship between photographer and subject. The exhibition presents two unfolding, ongoing, bodies of work, “Agata” and



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“Michael”. Here, a chance encounter develops into an enduring personal relationship and, thereafter, into an interrogation of the medium.

In “Michael”, Depoorter examines the life and the disappearance of a man she met on the streets of Portland, Oregon, in 2015. Gifted three suitcases of Michael's personal items, sketchbooks and essays, Michael's subsequent disappearance turns Depoorter detective. The exhibition documents Depoorter's immersive, perhaps obsessive, quest to find Michael and to understand his life.

In “Agata”, both as an exhibition and a self-published book, a first meeting in a Parisian strip-club in 2017 evolves with complex tension into an exercise in collaboration. Here the images and words of Agata Kay are in taut dialogue with Depoorter's images and letters. They offer not conclusions or endings but a living visual changing narrative that explores concepts of authentic versus performative identity; the potential impossibility of truth in representation; artistic authorship; photographic ethics; the responsibilities of the photographer; personal boundaries; and the limits of a creative friendship.

Samuel Fosso – for his exhibition “**Samuel Fosso**” at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris (10 November 2021 – 13 March 2022).

Since the mid-1970s, Samuel Fosso (b. 1962, Kumba, Cameroon) has dedicated his artistic practice to self-portraits and performative photography. Fosso's retrospective exhibition traces a career of almost 50 years and comprises more than 300 prints. The exhibition brings together iconic series, lesser-known works, as well as archival material and previously unpublished images, displayed principally in large-scale ensembles.

Born in Kumba, Cameroon, and raised in Nigeria, Fosso fled the Biafran War as a young boy, and in 1972 was taken in by an uncle in Bangui in the Central African Republic. In 1975, at the age of thirteen, Fosso opened his Studio Photo Nationale. Alongside commercial work, Fosso immediately began a series of self-portraits – a mode of representation he has never abandoned. Playing the role of key historical figures and social archetypes in front of the camera, Fosso embodies a powerful way of existing in the world, and a vivid demonstration of photography's role in the construction of myths.

Arthur Jafa – for his exhibition “**Live Evil**” at Luma, Arles (14 April – 13 November 2022).

Arthur Jafa (b. 1960, Tupelo, USA) is an artist and filmmaker. Nominated for the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of his work to date, Jafa draws upon a substantial archive of film and still images, creating visceral, dynamic films and room-sized installations.

In the gallery space and on the screen, Jafa derives power from astute juxtaposition and lyrical, syncopated editing. Here the role of his personal archive and his instinct as a collector of images comes to the fore. Since the 1980s, Jafa has been accumulating and assembling pictures from books and magazines, arranging this imagery in new constellations within notebooks and latterly within dynamic artworks. For ready-made moving images, YouTube remains a favourite resource, alongside news footage and home video.

It is by placing one resonant cultural artefact next to another that Jafa references and questions the universal and specific articulations of Black experience. Eschewing a linear narrative, Jafa organises his material through formal and affective associations, linking his images through visual resemblance or thematic resonance. In this way, Jafa aspires to an art that harnesses “the power, beauty, and alienation of Black music.”

Frida Orupabo – for her exhibition “**I have seen a million pictures of my face and still I have no idea**”, at Fotomuseum Winterthur (26 February – 29 May 2022).

The sculptural collages and digital works of Frida Orupabo (b. 1986, Sarpsborg, Norway) are multi-layered formations, exploring questions of race, sexuality and identity. Orupabo, a Norwegian Nigerian artist and sociologist, grounds her inquiry in her own experience of cultural belonging.

Utilising visual material circulating online, spanning colonial-era photographs and ethnographic relics to contemporary imagery, Orupabo’s hand-wrought works re-arrange and re-make the archive. The resulting images take the shape of fragmented Black, mostly female-bodied, figures. These figures, first dislocated, are reassembled layer by layer in a complex and poetic manoeuvre that simultaneously denounces one-dimensional depictions of Black lives. Orupabo bestows complexity, ambivalence and contradiction. Her collaged cut-outs hold our gaze and invite various readings of the stories and lives of the people depicted, many of whom are entirely absent from the archives. In this way Orupabo invites a consideration of how photography significantly contributes to the formation and perpetuation of colonial power relations and violence.

The 2023 Jury and statements:

This year’s Jury are: **Thyago Nogueira**, Head of Contemporary Photography at Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo; **Natalie Herschdorfer**, Director of Photo Elysee, Lausanne; **Mahtab Hussain**, artist; **Anne-Marie Beckmann**, Director of Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation, Frankfurt/Main, and **Brett Rogers**, OBE, Director of The Photographers’ Gallery, London, as voting chair.

Brett Rogers, Director of The Photographers' Gallery and voting Chair:

“Our shortlist for the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2023 exemplifies photography’s resounding power and resonance right now. Each artist addresses subjects which drive forward debate about the nature of the medium and the role it plays in history and society. Bieke Depoorter explores the ethical implications of the relationship between the photographer and their subject; Samuel Fosso exploits the versatility of the medium to construct disparate personal identities; Frida Orupabo throws fresh light on the Black female body through her extraordinary multi-layered collages and Arthur Jafa uncompromisingly articulates Black experience, drawing upon his rich archive of historical images, film and music.”

Anne-Marie Beckmann, Director of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation:

“As always, it has been a privilege to be part of the jury for this year’s Prize. With the rest of the jury, I was deeply impressed by the exceptional quality and range of submissions this year. Once again, the submissions sparked animated debate and reinforced the urgent role and ongoing relevance of contemporary photography. Together, this shortlisted group of extraordinary artists shows us new and challenging ways to look at the world around us, addressing both personal and universal perspectives. This annual Prize is a key foundation of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation’s mission to create a diverse cultural landscape in which international artists can flourish. Alongside other projects, we intend to achieve this goal through our long-standing partnership with the Photographer’s Gallery.”

Notes for the editors:

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

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The Photographers' Gallery

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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 32 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 Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize History

Founded in 1996 by The Photographers' Gallery, and now in its twenty-seventh 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 in collaboration with Deutsche Börse Group since 2005. In 2016 the Prize was retitled 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. The winner of the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2022 was Deana Lawson for her exhibition "Centropy". 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.

The Photographers' Gallery

The Photographers' Gallery (TPG) champions photography for everyone. Located in the heart of central London and home to an international community of photographers, the Gallery explores photography in all its forms, with a diverse and critically acclaimed programme of exhibitions, events and courses. The UK's first independent gallery devoted to photography, TPG was first to exhibit many key names in international photography, including Juergen Teller, Helen Levitt, Rinko Kawauchi, Gordon Parks, Sebastião Salgado and Andreas Gursky. The Gallery has also been instrumental in establishing contemporary British photographers, including Martin Parr and Corinne Day. Over the past five decades TPG has helped to establish photography as a recognised art form, introducing new audiences to photography and celebrating its place at the heart of visual culture. Right outside TPG, Soho Photography Quarter (SPQ) is an exciting new permanent outdoor cultural space, presenting the very best of contemporary photography for free.

tpg.org.uk