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Media Release Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

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Lena Bils receives HfG Fotoförderpreis 2021 of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation has given the HfG Fotoförderpreis 2021 to Lena Bils for her project “Siedlung Westhausen”. The prize is awarded annually to students of the Offenbach University of Art and Design, (Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (HfG)) who focus on the medium of photography. As part of its commitment to supporting young contemporary artists, the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation has been awarding the €2,500 prize since 2010, from this year the prize money will be increased to €3,000. The award ceremony took place during the traditional HfG tour in Offenbach. This year's jury members were photographer Barbara Klemm and Anne-Marie Beckmann, Director of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation.

In their statement, the jury wrote: For her series “Siedlung Westhausen”, Lena Bils visited the housing estate from the late 1920s, which, following the Bauhaus idea, consists of very uniform and simply designed houses. In Bils' works, however, their multi-coloured facades serve merely as a backdrop for the sculptures she creates from the bulky waste found there, which she captures in her photographs. At once playful and careful, she assembles discarded household objects such as drawers, parasols, or picture frames and gives new life to them in their new function as part of a work of art – if only for a brief moment. For as soon as Lena Bils has photographed her objects, each of them is returned to its place to be taken away by a new owner or disposed of. The sculptures in Bils' photographs thus not only tell of the inhabitants of the Westhausen estate, but also of the “cycle of life” of things and the transience of life. The individual photographs take their titles from those of the respective integrated books. With this poetic observation of everyday life as well as with the large-format work “Wo ist Emmi?” dedicated to her grandmother, Lena Bils convinced the jury.

Lena Bils was born in Würzburg in 1993. She is a trained media designer and has been studying art with a focus on photography at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (HfG) since 2017.

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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. The Art Collection Deutsche Börse now comprises more than 2,200 works by over 140 artists from 32 nations. The collection and a changing exhibition programme are open to the public. 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 Fotografiemuseumn Amsterdam. Other focal points include supporting exhibition projects of international museums and institutions, and the expansion of platforms for academic discussion about the medium.

www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org.