



World Photography  
Organisation



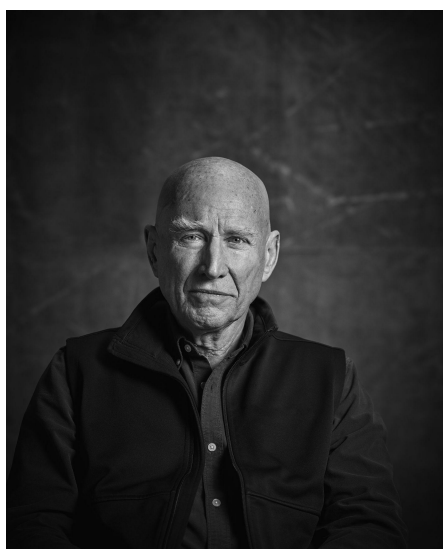
Sony  
World  
Photography  
Awards

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## SEBASTIÃO SALGADO

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2024

EXHIBITION: 19 APRIL – 6 MAY 2024 | SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON



Portrait of Sebastião Salgado, 2019. © Renato Amoroso; Kuwait, 1991. © Sebastião Salgado

The World Photography Organisation is delighted to announce the acclaimed Brazilian photographer **Sebastião Salgado** as the *Outstanding Contribution to Photography* recipient of the Sony World Photography Awards 2024. One of the most accomplished and globally celebrated photographers working today, Sebastião Salgado has achieved international renown for his remarkable black-and-white compositions captured over a career spanning more than 50 years.

Ranging from poignant portraits of indigenous communities and industrial workers, to surveys of migration and striking panoramas of the natural world, Salgado's distinctive photographic style has resonated with global audiences. His images, exhibited across leading cultural institutions and featured in major publications around the world, have become emblematic of contemporary photographic journalism.

Dozens of photographs by Salgado will be on view as part of the Sony World Photography Awards 2024 exhibition, which returns to Somerset House, London from **19 April – 6 May 2024**. The selection, made by the photographer, highlights the key themes and milestones over the last five decades of

his career. Featuring works from his early projects such as *Gold* (1986) and *Workers* (1993), and more recent series like *Genesis* (2011) and *Amazônia* (2019), the exhibition explores the universal complexities and nuances of life on our planet, revealing its anguishes and hardships, as well as its extraordinary beauty.

Born in 1944 in Aimorés, Brazil, Sebastião Salgado trained and practised as an economist before embarking on a full-time career in photography in 1973, going on to work with leading photographic agencies Sygma, Gamma and Magnum. His indelible photographic style is deeply rooted in his heritage: his childhood in rural Brazil, surrounded by the great expanse of nature and the open skies, was an important aesthetic touchpoint, guiding his lens and informing his approach to light, contrast and proportionality.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Sebastião Salgado travelled around the world to pursue his projects, producing a number of acclaimed series, which continue to influence visual culture today. Works from several of these projects will be on view at Somerset House as part of the Sony World Photography Awards 2024 exhibition, including *Gold* (1986), which documents the harsh conditions on the steep cliffs of the Serra Pelada gold mine in northern Brazil, and *Workers* (1993) which examines the challenges and demands of heavy manual labour in the oil, construction, agricultural and mining industries. Also featured in the exhibition are photographs from the series *Exodus* (2000), a long-term project tracing the global movement of people, in contexts of economic migration and forced displacement.

After bearing witness to the atrocities of conflict in the Congo and Rwanda in the mid-1990s, Salgado turned away from photography for a time, to focus on ecological work. With his wife Lélia, he established the Instituto Terra, an initiative to reforest and rebuild biodiversity in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest. Seeing nature's prodigious capacity for renewal, Salgado was inspired to return to photography, creating two major bodies of work, *Genesis* (2011) and *Amazônia* (2019), which will be represented in the exhibition. *Genesis* explores remote and remarkable corners of the planet where wildlife and humans coexist harmoniously, while *Amazônia* depicts Brazil's Amazonian Forest and the indigenous communities inhabiting it, highlighting its beauty whilst shedding light on the threats it faces.

Commenting on his acceptance of the award, Sebastião Salgado says: *"I am honoured to receive this award, and to know that my work is reaching audiences. Photography is my way of life, it is my language, and throughout my career I have always been interested in capturing the historical moment in which we are living, and telling the stories of our species and our planet. A photographer photographs with his heritage, and in my work I seek to explore our shared human experience."*

The *Outstanding Contribution to Photography* honours a person or group of people that have made a significant impact on the photographic medium. As its 17th recipient, Sebastião Salgado joins a distinguished list of iconic names including William Klein (2012), William Eggleston (2013), Elliott Erwitt (2015), Martin Parr (2017), Candida Höfer (2018), Graciela Iturbide (2021), Edward Burtynsky (2022) and Rinko Kawauchi (2023) to name a few.

The overall winners in the Student, Youth, Open and Professional competitions of the Sony World Photography Awards 2024 will be announced on 18 April 2024. For more information about upcoming announcements and winners please visit [www.worldphoto.org](https://www.worldphoto.org).

## PRESS CONTACTS

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Polly Brock / Vanda Ivančić on [media@creoarts.com](mailto:media@creoarts.com)

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### SEBASTIÃO SALGADO

Sebastião Salgado was born in 1944 in Aimorés, Brazil. Following his studies, he began his career as an economist before starting to work as a freelance photographer in 1973. Today, Salgado's photographs are included in the collections of numerous major museums and institutions around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, the National Museum of Modern art in Tokyo, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in California. Salgado's distinctions include the Eugene Smith Award for Humanitarian Photography, the World Press Photo Award, the Photojournalist of the Year Award, and the Erich Salomon Prize. In 2015, Salgado was named the Photo London Master of Photography, in 2016 he was named Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in France and became a member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts of the Institut de France. In 2019, he was elected Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2022 he received the ICP Lifetime Achievement Infinity Award. Salgado holds four honorary doctorates, including at Harvard University and at the New School. With his wife Lélia Wanick Salgado, he is the founder of the Instituto Terra, dedicated to the recovery of the Atlantic Forest in Brazil. He is based between France and Brazil.

### ABOUT SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

Produced by the World Photography Organisation, the internationally acclaimed Sony World Photography Awards is one of the most important fixtures in the global photographic calendar. Now in its 17th year, the free-to-enter Awards are a global voice for photography and provide a vital insight into contemporary photography today. For both established and emerging artists, the Awards offer world-class opportunities for exposure of their work. The Awards additionally recognise the world's most influential artists working in the medium through the *Outstanding Contribution to Photography* award; previous recipients include William Eggleston (2013), Mary Ellen Mark (2014), Martin Parr (2017), Candida Höfer (2018), Nadav Kander (2019), Gerhard Steidl (2020), Graciela Iturbide (2021), Edward Burtynsky (2022) and Rinko Kawauchi (2023). The Awards showcase the works of winning and shortlisted photographers at a prestigious annual exhibition at Somerset House, London. Our hashtags to follow are #SonyWorldPhotographyAwards and #SWPA2024. [worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards-exhibition](https://worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards-exhibition)

### ABOUT WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY ORGANISATION

World Photography Organisation is a leading global platform dedicated to the development and advancement of photographic culture. Its programming and competition initiatives provide valuable opportunities for artists working in photography and help broaden the conversation around their work. The Sony World Photography Awards is World Photography Organisation's principal programme. Established in 2007, it is one of the world's biggest and most prestigious photography competitions; celebrating the work of leading and emerging practitioners and attracting tens of thousands of visitors annually to its exhibitions worldwide. World Photography Organisation is the photography strand of Creo, responsible for delivering initiatives and programming across three sectors: photography, film and contemporary art. Follow the World Photography Organisation on Instagram ([@worldphotoorg](https://www.instagram.com/worldphotoorg)), X ([@WorldPhotoOrg](https://twitter.com/WorldPhotoOrg)) and LinkedIn/Facebook ([World Photography Organisation](https://www.facebook.com/WorldPhotographyOrganisation)).

### CREO

Creo initiates and organises events and programming across three key strands: photography, film and contemporary art. Established in 2007 as World Photography Organisation, Creo has since grown in scope, furthering its mission of developing meaningful opportunities for creatives and expanding the reach of its cultural activities. Today, its flagship projects include the Sony World Photography Awards, Sony Future Filmmaker Awards, PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai, Photo London and PHOTOFAIRS New York. Working in partnership with Angus Montgomery Arts, Creo helps deliver the group's ventures, comprising some of the world's leading art fairs.

Taking its name from the Latin for 'I create', it is in this spirit that Creo sets out to empower and give agency to creative voices. [www.creoarts.com](http://www.creoarts.com)

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