

PRESS RELEASE

STUDENT & YOUTH COMPETITIONS: SHORTLISTS ANNOUNCED

- The Sony World Photography Awards announces the shortlisted photographers of its 2025 Student and Youth competitions
- Ten students of photography from leading universities across the world are recognised in this year's shortlist, as well as 11 photographers aged 19 and under
- The *Student Photographer of the Year* and *Youth Photographer of the Year* to be announced at gala ceremony on 16 April

LONDON, 21 JANUARY 2025 – The Sony World Photography Awards announces today the shortlists in the 2025 Student and Youth competitions, honouring outstanding photographers at the earliest stages of their practices. The Student shortlist celebrates evocative series exploring the theme of new beginnings, while the Youth shortlist spotlights the best images by photographers aged 19 and under. Demonstrating the skill and ingenuity of young artists engaging with photography across the world, the shortlists offer a glimpse of the talent of tomorrow.

STUDENT COMPETITION SHORTLIST

For the 2025 competition, photography students were invited to respond to the brief *In the Beginning* through a series of five to 10 images. The shortlisted projects reflect a wide range of beginnings, from personal histories of the photographers' lives to surveys of societal change. Each shortlisted photographer brings a distinct style and perspective to their work, creating a compelling narrative through their images.

Journeys and passages are prominent themes across several shortlisted works. In *Where Roads Begin to Split*, **Xingyu Fan** (China Mainland, Nanjing University of the Arts) examines modernisation and migration in China, and the resulting separation between urban and

rural life. **Albert Słowiński's** (Poland, Academy of Art in Szczecin) work traces the history of the major railway in Mauritania through to its current use; transporting passengers and iron ore from the mine of Zouérat. In *Olga*, **Louna Pauly** (France, Ecole Nationale Supérieure Louis Lumière) blends archive imagery and staged photographs to piece together the stories of her two great-grandmothers, who survived forced labour camps in the 1940s and moved to France to start a new life.

Several shortlisted projects look closely at people's stories through the spaces they inhabit and their possessions. **Honorata Kornacka's** (Poland, The Maria Grzegorzewska University) series *Chaos* celebrates the collection of objects her grandmother has built over the years and the ways they have shaped her home, while **Ilana Grollman** (United States, Emerson College) explores her grief following the loss of her mother by visiting places of significance in the cities where she once lived. Elsewhere, in *The Last Day We Saw the Mountains and the Sea* **Micaela Valdivia Medina** (Peru, Instituto Profesional Arcos) documents women's prisons in Chile, illustrating the contours of the day-to-day life of the inmates. **Montenez Lowery** (USA, Georgia State University, Ernest G. Welch School of Art & Design) makes pinhole cameras with objects tied to Black identity contributed by participants, and accompanied by individual accounts.

Across the shortlist, photographers consider themes pertinent to the social context in which they work. **Peter Stougård Maunsbach** (Denmark, DMJX Danish School of Media and Journalism) addresses the growing trend of involuntary childlessness and the resulting fertility treatments in Denmark. In *Rebirth: The Ritual of Baptism* by **Thapelo Mahlangu** (South Africa, Stellenbosch Academy of Design and Photography), the photographer considers the ceremony of baptism in the traditional cultures in South Africa, focusing on rituals observed by the Xhosa people. **Joel Potter's** (New Zealand, Aut University) *Orange is the New Blueprint* depicts the first stages of Auckland's Future Rail Tāmaki Makaurau, an ambitious project set to reshape the cityscape, focusing on the role of construction workers in the development.

The winner of *Student Photographer of the Year* will be selected from the 10 students and announced at the Sony World Photography Awards 2025 ceremony in London on 16 April. The overall winning university will receive Sony digital imaging equipment worth €30,000.

This year's Student Competition shortlist was judged by author, journalist and critic **Charlotte Jansen**.

YOUTH COMPETITION SHORTLIST

The Youth competition shortlist comprises single images by 11 photographers aged 19 and under. This year the entrants were invited to share their best images through an Open Call.

Across the shortlist, photographers depict breathtaking scenes of the natural world, from mountainous landscapes to underwater life. **Matteo Botta** (Switzerland, 17 years



old) captures an aerial view of Schwarzberg mountain and the Maighels river, while **Claire Gonzalez's** (United States, 17 years old) image *Wanderer on Mars* shows the rare terrain of the Bentonite Hills, a remote hiking area in Utah. **Landon Chong Chung Yi** (Malaysia, 16 years old) photographs the hazy glow of sunrise in Cameron Highlands, Malaysia in his image *Golden Mistscape*, while **Tinnapat Netcharussaeng** (Thailand, 16 years old) depicts a paper nautilus, a species of pelagic octopus, 'surfing' by latching onto a leaf drifting in the depths.

Elsewhere, photographers capture vivid moments, both close to home and further afield. **Oliver Marks'** (United States, 17 years old) image *The Lifts* portrays busy ski lifts on the side of a mountain. In *DJ Broken Down* **Joshua Hasanoff** (Australia, 14 years old) highlights the striking resemblance of a person fixing their car to a DJ at their turntables. **Dian-Ji Wu's** (Taiwan, 16 years old) image *Eclipse of Motion* shows a skateboarder silhouetted against the warm sunset light in Venice Beach, LA. **Zachariah Levens'** (United Kingdom, 18 years old) photograph *Sing When You Win* captures a scene of team unity and celebration after Ampthill Rugby Club wins a game. **Ankit Ghosh** (India, 16 years old) turns his lens toward the festivities of Vijaya Dasami, showing a crowd of onlookers watching a man lighting a flame by spitting kerosene into the air. Meanwhile, **Chidima Ugwuedeh** (New Zealand, 15 years old) considers her Igbo and Māori identities through a portrait featuring traditional garments and accessories, and **Shayna Cuenca's** (United States, 16 years old) image *Parts of the Whole* suggests a personal reflection, by deconstructing and putting back together a self-portrait.

This year's *Youth Photographer of the Year*, selected from the shortlist by **Claudia Grimaldi Marks**, Senior Manager, New Creator Strategy at Getty Images, will receive a range of Sony digital imaging equipment to nurture their vision.

The overall winners in the Student, Youth, Open and Professional competitions of the Sony World Photography Awards 2025 will be announced on 16 April 2025. For more information about upcoming announcements and winners please visit worldphoto.org.



STUDENT COMPETITION SHORTLIST

Xingyu Fan, China Mainland
Nanjing University of the Arts, China Mainland

Ilana Grollman, United States
Emerson College, United States

Honorata Kornacka, Poland
The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland

Montenez Lowery, United States
Georgia State University, Ernest G. Welch School of Art & Design, United States

Thapelo Mahlangu, South Africa
Stellenbosch Academy of Design and Photography, South Africa

Louna Pauly, France
Ecole Nationale Supérieure Louis Lumière, France

Joel Potter, New Zealand
Aut University, New Zealand

Albert Słowiński, Poland
Academy of Art in Szczecin, Poland

Peter Stougård Maunsbach, Denmark
DMJX Danish School of Media and Journalism, Denmark

Micaela Valdivia Medina, Peru
Instituto Profesional Arcos, Chile

YOUTH COMPETITION SHORTLIST

Matteo Botta, Switzerland

Landon Chong Chung Yi, Malaysia

Shayna Cuenca, United States

Ankit Ghosh, India

Joshua Hasanoff, Australia

Claire Gonzalez, United States

Zachariah Levens, United Kingdom

Oliver Marks, United States

Tinnapat Netcharussaeng, Thailand

Chidima Ugwuedeh, New Zealand

Dian-Ji Wu, Taiwan

NOTES TO EDITORS

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A selection of images is available to download on press.creoarts.com.

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 18th 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; the acclaimed photographer Susan Meiselas is the 2025 recipient of this award, joining a distinguished list of iconic names including William Eggleston (2013), Mary Ellen Mark (2014), Martin Parr (2017), Graciela Iturbide (2021), Edward Burtynsky



(2022) and Sebastião Salgado (2024). The Awards showcase the works of winning and shortlisted photographers at a prestigious annual exhibition at Somerset House, London. worldphoto.org/exhibition

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, which initiates events and programming across three sectors: photography, film and contemporary art. worldphoto.org

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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 and Photo London. 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. creoarts.com

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*Kando is a Japanese word that roughly translates to the sense of awe and emotion you feel when experiencing something beautiful and amazing for the first time.

