

PRESS RELEASE

STUDENT & YOUTH COMPETITIONS: SHORTLISTS ANNOUNCED

- The Sony World Photography Awards announces photographers shortlisted in the 2026 Student and Youth competitions
- The shortlists recognise 10 photography students from leading universities across the world, and 10 photographers aged 19 and under
- *The Student Photographer of the Year* and *Youth Photographer of the Year* to be announced on 16 April at prestigious gala ceremony in London

LONDON, 27 JANUARY 2026 – The Sony World Photography Awards announce today the shortlists of the 2026 Student and Youth competitions, honouring outstanding photographers at the earliest stages of their careers. The Student shortlist celebrates poignant series exploring the theme *Together*, while the Youth shortlist spotlights the best single images by photographers aged 19 and under. Showcasing the skill and ingenuity of young practitioners exploring and experimenting with the medium, the shortlists offer a glimpse of the photography trailblazers of tomorrow.

STUDENT COMPETITION SHORTLIST

The 19th edition of the Sony World Photography Awards received more than 430,000 entries from over 200 countries and territories around the world. For the 2026 Student competition, photography students were invited to respond to the brief *Together* through a series of five to 10 images. The shortlisted series offer a range of interpretations of togetherness, from intimate explorations into the photographers' communities to the everyday spaces where connections are fostered. Each shortlisted photographer creates a compelling visual narrative in their series, demonstrating their distinctive approach and perspective.

Above all, *Together* evokes interpretations centred around human connection. Taking an autobiographical approach, **Julian Cabral's** (Argentina, Universidad Nacional de San Martín) project *Triplets* tells the story of the photographer and his two brothers, reflecting their close familial bond. **Jubair Ahmed Arnob's** (Bangladesh, Counter Foto – A Center for Visual Arts) series *The Place Where I Used To Play* is imbued with a sense of nostalgia, charting the rapidly changing landscape in the Green Model Town in Dhaka, Bangladesh. On the other side of the globe, **Ci Song** (China Mainland, Drexel University, USA) photographs communities in West Philadelphia, as their neighbourhoods are transformed by gentrification. Elsewhere, **Aakash Gulzar** (India, MERC, University of Kashmir) invites viewers into the intimate world of pigeon keepers, highlighting the special connection between humans and these gentle birds.

Several shortlisted projects address the theme *Together* by spotlighting the shared experiences that bind communities. **Teresa Halbreiter's** (Germany, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences) series *Stillgestanden* ('Attention!') opens a dialogue around femininity and individuality in the male-dominated institution of the German Armed Forces. **Yulai Xu** (China Mainland, University of the Arts London, UK) explores the intricacies of family relationships in the series *Fish Tail*; **Matte Dixon's** (Australia, Griffith University) *Suspiria de Profundis* series aims to explore how unease can invite reflection on the human condition and turn audiences towards a shared understanding.

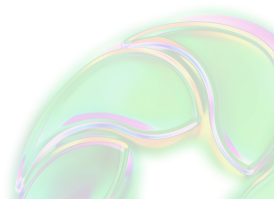
The shortlisted projects also dive into the hearts of communities through the spaces they share. **Laura Anna Rossa** (Belgium, LUCA School of Arts Sint Lukas, Brussels) befriends Patrick, a resident at De Valleï, a long-term psychiatric ward in the Belgian countryside, and documents their time together. **Chanel Grobler** (South Africa, Open Window Institute) looks at the shared places which hold quiet traces of human presence. **Zifan Zhang's** (China Mainland, Danish School of Media and Journalism (DJMX), Denmark) series documents the everyday lives of young Latvians, as they come of age, taking on various roles to reshape their country's future.

The winner of *Student Photographer of the Year* will be selected from the 10 students and announced at the Sony World Photography Awards 2026 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 Tess Raimbeau, Photo Editor, Libération (France).

YOUTH COMPETITION SHORTLIST

The Youth competition shortlist comprises single images by 10 photographers aged 19 and under. This year the entrants were invited to share their best images through an Open Call.



Across the shortlist, photographers capture serene images of the natural world, from mountainous landscapes to underwater scenes. **Riley Shickle** (United Kingdom, 19 years old) photographed Mount Fuji, framed by bright red autumn leaves near Lake Kawaguchi, Japan. **Abdallah Islam's** (Egypt, 19 years old) photograph of a triangular sculpture as it frames the Great Pyramid in Egypt, shows the harmony between the stark lines of the contemporary sculpture and ancient architecture. Similarly, **Doğa Ergün** (Türkiye, 15 years old) depicts a moment of symmetry as a horse and rider enter the sea, showing above and below the waterline in a single frame. Other photographers on the shortlist turned their cameras to inhabitants of the natural world; **Jeirin Anton** (Sri Lanka, 16 years old) captures the regal aura of the peacock as it dominates a glowing golden landscape, while **Victor Reichert** (France, 19 years old) portrays a tender moment between a family of monkeys. Elsewhere, **Keira Pereira** (Canada, 17 years old) encountered a red-eyed tree frog in the Costa Rican rainforest, perched motionless along a narrow leaf.

The shortlisted photographers also focused on the art of depicting motion and stillness. **Ayden Feagle** (United States, 16 years old) captured teamwork in action during a soccer match in Lake Wales, United States. Similarly, **Philip Kangas** (Sweden, 16 years old) photographed a moment of collaboration between two firefighters as they carried an artwork out of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm during a fire. **Jane Mozzi** (Argentina, 15 years old) captures the split second moment a BMX rider performing a backflip overlaps with an airplane flying past in the background. In contrast, turning the lens towards a moment of stillness and reflection, **Ruohan Wang's** (China Mainland, 19 years old) portrait creatively uses shadow to obscure the sitter's face, drawing the viewer's gaze to their eyes.

This year's *Youth Photographer of the Year*, selected from the shortlist by Ruby Rees-Sheridan, Assistant Curator, Photography, National Portrait Gallery (UK), will receive a range of Sony Digital Imaging equipment to continue to nurture their vision.

The overall winners in the Student, Youth, Open and Professional competitions of the Sony World Photography Awards 2026 will be announced on 16 April 2026. For more information about upcoming announcements and winners please visit worldphoto.org.

STUDENT COMPETITION SHORTLIST

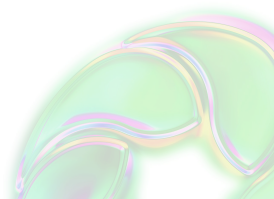
Jubair Ahmed Arnob, Bangladesh
Counter Foto – A Center for Visual Arts, Bangladesh

Teresa Halbreiter, Germany
Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany

YOUTH COMPETITION SHORTLIST

Ruohan Wang, China Mainland

Jeirin Anton, Sri Lanka



Laura Anna Rossa, Belgium
LUCA School of Arts Sint Lukas Brussels, Belgium

Philip Kangas, Sweden

Chanel Grobler, South Africa
Open Window Institute, South Africa

Ayden Feagle, United States

Ci Song, China Mainland
Drexel University, United States

Riley Shickle, United Kingdom

Matte Dixon, Australia
Griffith University, Australia

Jane Mozzi, Argentina

Julian Cabral, Argentina
Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Argentina

Abdallah Islam, Egypt

Zifan Zhang, China Mainland
Danish School of Media and Journalism (DJMX), Denmark

Victor Reichert, France

Aakash Gulzar, India
MERC, University of Kashmir, India

Doğa Ergün, Türkiye

Yulai Xu, China Mainland
University of the Arts London, United Kingdom

Keira Pereira, Canada

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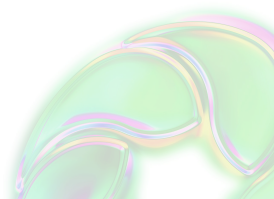
A selection of press images is available to download on press.creoarts.com.

SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

Produced by Creo under its photography strand the World Photography Organisation, the internationally acclaimed Sony World Photography Awards are one of the most important fixtures in the global photographic calendar. Now in its 19th 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 Joel Meyerowitz is the 2026 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), Sebastião Salgado (2024) and Susan Meiselas (2025). 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 the 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 (AMA), 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.*

