

PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL & REGIONAL AWARDS: WINNERS ANNOUNCED

- The Sony World Photography Awards announce the winning and shortlisted photographers of the 2026 National and Regional Awards
- 2026 exhibition opens at Somerset House, London from 17 April – 4 May 2026
- The 2026 Awards additionally sees the introduction of the European Student Award and the India National Award

LONDON, 17 MARCH 2026 – The Sony World Photography Awards announce today the 2026 National and Regional Award winners and shortlists, recognising remarkable photographic talent from across the globe selected from the Awards' competitions.

The National & Regional Awards programme is an initiative set up by Sony and Creo under its photography strand, the World Photography Organisation, to support local photographic communities around the world. Across this year's competitions, over 430,000 images from over 200 countries and territories were submitted.

National and Regional Award winners were chosen from the Open, Professional and Student competitions this year highlighting global talent across a span of career stages. All single country National Award winners and 1st Place Regional Award winners are featured in the exhibition and receive Sony Digital Imaging equipment. The Professional Award winners and European Student Award shortlist are invited to participate in dedicated workshop days in London.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETITION

The Professional competition includes the Latin America Professional Award, the Japan National Award, and new to 2026, the India National Award.

The **Latin America Professional Award** celebrates dynamic and inspiring photographic work currently created within the region. This year **Citlali Fabian** (Mexico) is awarded 1st Place for *Bilha, Stories of my Sisters*, which blends portraits and digital illustrations to bring to life the stories of inspiring women in southern Mexico, collaborating with activists and artists from Indigenous communities in the region. **María Fernanda García Freire** (Ecuador) is awarded 2nd Place for *Study on Flying*, a deeply personal project born from the photographer's observations of her son's admiration for birds. **André Tezza** (Brazil) is awarded 3rd Place for *Everyday Structures*, shining a light on the modest architecture of neighbourhood grocery stores in southern Brazil.

The shortlisted photographers for the Latin America Professional Award are:

- Sebastian Di Domenico (Colombia)
- Sergio Meléndez Cava (Peru)
- Yris Pablo (Venezuela)
- Manuel Seoane (Bolivia)
- Bienvenido Velasco (Panama)
- Benjamin Villela (Chile)
- Irina Werning (Argentina)

The **India National Award** recognises outstanding series by Indian photographers entering the Professional Competition. The inaugural winner is **Avijit Ghosh** for the series *Keepers of Mangroves*, which captures the conservation efforts of 'tiger widows' in Dayapur, India, where women who have lost their husbands to tiger attacks are helping to restore the tigers' mangrove ecosystems, to try to alleviate conflict with the animals.

The 2026 winner of the **Japan National Award** is **Hayate Kurisu**, for the series *Living Photographs*, which documents the experience of the photographer and his wife following the loss of a child to stillbirth, and the days spent together as a family before the cremation, exploring photography's relationship to time and grief. With series ranging from explorations of local traditional costumes, to still lifes inspired by the structure of haiku poetry, and the stillness of the Antarctic landscape, the shortlisted photographers for the Japan National Award are:

- Mitsuaki Fujiwara
- Hajime Hirano
- Keiichiro Muramatsu



STUDENT COMPETITION

New to the 2026 Awards, the **European Student Award** recognises outstanding student projects, spotlighting the best emerging voices from across Europe from the Student competition. **Teresa Halbreiter** (Germany, University of Applied Sciences Hamburg) is the winner of the inaugural European Student Award for her series *Stillgestanden* ('Attention!'), which explores the search for femininity and individuality in the male-dominated institution of the German Armed Forces, underlining the tension between obedience and self-assertion, toughness and vulnerability.

From the aftermath of an environmental disaster, to stories of friendship and building community, the shortlisted photographers each weave compelling narratives of our time:

- Bennet Böckstiegel (Germany, Ostkreuzschule für Fotografie)
- Laurie Broughton (UK, University of West England)
- Laura Anna Rossa (Belgium, LUCA School of Arts Sint Lukas Brussels)
- Albert Słowiński (Poland, Academy of Art in Szczecin)

OPEN COMPETITION

National and Regional Award Winners were chosen from a span of over 30 countries from across the Open competition, which celebrates the best single images from 2025. From sweeping landscapes, to tender portraits, and striking images of the natural world, the winners of the National and Regional Awards from the Open competition exemplify the ability of an individual image to tell a story.

The overall winners in the Student, Youth, Open and Professional competitions of the Sony World Photography Awards 2026 will be announced on 16 April and will go on display as part of the exhibition at Somerset House, London (17 April – 4 May 2026). For more information about upcoming announcements and winners please visit worldphoto.org.

This year's National & Regional Award winners are:

OPEN COMPETITION

Bangladesh – Pinu Rahman
Cambodia – Sam Ang Ourng
Egypt – Yousef Naser
Indonesia – R. Eko Hardiyanto
Kazakhstan – Nelya Rachkova
Kuwait – Meshaal Alawadhi
Malaysia – Eng Tong Tan
Mongolia – Jargalsaikhan Bayarkhand
Myanmar – Kyaw Zayar Lin
Nepal – Ajay Maharjan

Qatar – Mohamed Nageeb
Republic of Korea – Heun Jung Kim (Winner)
Republic of Korea – Hanhoon Lee (2nd Place)
Republic of Korea – Nakheon Choi (3rd Place)
Saudi Arabia – Khalid Alsabt
Singapore – Chung Cheong Wong
South Africa – Greg du Toit
Sri Lanka – Lahiru Iddamalgoda
Taiwan – Wei-Cheng Tsai
Thailand – Pattarin Tridboonkrong



Nigeria – Obaroh Oghenemairo
Pakistan – Muhammad Asmar Hussain
Philippines – Rafael Salvador Ybañez

United Arab Emirates – Salem Alsawafi
Uzbekistan – Boris Nedosekov
Vietnam – Hieu Linh Nguyen

LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL AWARD SHORTLIST (OPEN COMPETITION)

Juan Jacobo Castillo Barrera (Colombia) – Winner
Lívier Miroslava Ultreras (Mexico) – 2nd Place
Nicolas Aguiar (Uruguay) – 3rd Place
Camila Belén González Camarero (Argentina)
Fabiana Fregonesi (Brazil)
Camila Gattamelati (Chile)
Alvaro Cubero Vega (Costa Rica)
Johan Garrido Rivera (Ecuador)
María Candelaria Rivera (Nicaragua)
Sergio Vila (Peru)

PROFESSIONAL COMPETITION

LATIN AMERICA PROFESSIONAL AWARD SHORTLIST

Citlali Fabian (Mexico) – Winner
María Fernanda García Freire (Ecuador) – 2nd Place
André Tezza (Brazil) – 3rd Place
Irina Werning (Argentina)
Manuel Seoane (Bolivia)
Benjamin Villela (Chile)
Sebastian Di Domenico (Colombia)
Bienvenido Velasco (Panama)
Sergio Meléndez Cava (Peru)
Yris Pablo (Venezuela)

JAPAN NATIONAL AWARD SHORTLIST

Hayate Kurisu – Winner
Hajime Hirano
Keiichiro Muramatsu
Mitsuaki Fujiwara

INDIA NATIONAL AWARD WINNER

Avijit Ghosh

STUDENT COMPETITION

EUROPEAN STUDENT AWARD SHORTLIST

Teresa Halbreiter (Germany, University of Applied Sciences Hamburg) – Winner
Albert Słowiński (Poland, Academy of Art in Szczecin)
Bennet Böckstiegel (Germany, Ostkreuzschule für Fotografie)
Laura Anna Rossa (Belgium, LUCA School of Arts Sint Lukas Brussels)
Laurie Broughton (UK, University of West England)



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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.*

