



Press information

Leica Camera AG honours the winners of the Leica Oskar Barnack Award in the course of a formal gala event

Wetzlar, 14 September 2017. Yesterday evening, the two photographers, Terje Abusdal and Sergey Melnitchenko, were honoured with the prestigious Leica Oskar Barnack Award (LOBA) and Leica Oskar Barnack Award Newcomer before an audience of around 300 guests in Berlin's Saint Elisabeth church. The international jury of experts had chosen a total of twelve finalists from the 2,700 portfolios of photographs submitted for the competition. This year, the long-established, international award was presented for the 37th time – the formal gala event was hosted by Till Brönner, the acclaimed jazz trumpeter and an accomplished Leica photographer.

In the main category, this year's award went to Norwegian photographer Terje Abusdal, with his series titled 'Slash & Burn'. Between fact and fiction, he creates a mystical and expressive portrait of the Forest Finns, an in the meantime officially recognised ethnic minority in Norway. The winner in the main category, Terje Abusdal, was presented with a cash prize of 25,000 euros and Leica M-System equipment (a camera and lens) valued at an additional 10,000 euros.

Ukrainian photographer Sergey Melnitchenko was honoured with the Newcomer Award for up-and-coming professional photographers up to the age of 25 for his portfolio titled 'Behind the Scenes', a series of images captured behind the scenes in a Chinese nightclub. He delivers rare insights into the world of show business and benefits from his own experiences as a dancer. The winner of the Newcomer Award was presented with a cash prize of 10,000 euros and also received a Leica rangefinder camera and lens.

In addition to the two award winners, the remaining ten finalists all attended the

presentation of the awards and presented their portfolios to the audience. Each of these ten finalists was honoured with a cash prize of 2,500 euros.

'The legendary photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson once said: "Photography is putting one's head, one's eye and one's heart on the same axis." With their work, the winners and the ten finalists have proved that they possess this talent. By remaining detached and simultaneously getting close to their subjects, they capture people and places that would possibly otherwise remain hidden to us forever', said Karin Rehn-Kaufmann, Director General of Leica Galerien International and a permanent member of the jury, congratulating the winners and finalists at the award ceremony in the evening in Germany's capital city.

The portfolios of the winners and finalists can be seen from 14 September to 15 October 2017 in a major exhibition in the 'Neue Schule für Fotografie', Brunnenstrasse 188-190, 10119 Berlin. The LOBA Catalogue 2017 has been published to accompany the exhibition and presents the winners and finalists in detail with interviews and a comprehensive gallery of their images.

In addition, the work of the two winners will be exhibited in the Grand Palais at Paris Photo, the largest international fair for art photography, from 9 to 12 November. After this, the winning portfolios of the LOBA and the portfolios of the other ten finalists will travel to the Photolux Festival in Lucca, Italy, where they can be seen from 18 November to 10. December. Exhibitions in the Leica Galleries will follow.

Further details can be found at www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com