



Press Information

Leica Oskar Barnack Award

Leica Camera will once again be presenting the prestigious Leica Oskar Barnack Award this year. The selection process has just begun and involves around 100 nominators.

Wetzlar, 2nd March 2021. Last year, the Leica Oskar Barnack Award celebrated its 40th anniversary. The comprehensive jubilee exhibition, which was opened at the Leitz Museum on the occasion of the 2020 LOBA award ceremony, remains on display until March 28, 2021. Even so, preparations for the next edition of LOBA are already underway. As was the case last year, international photography experts have been invited to submit their nomination proposals for LOBA 2021. The number of nominators has been increased to over 100 experts from 43 countries; and includes curators, gallery managers, art directors and photographers from six continents. Among them are Christoph Wiesner (Director of the Rencontres d'Arles and ParisPhoto), Olga Sviblova (Director of the Multimedia Art Museum in Moscow), Michael Benson (Director of the Prix Pictet and founder of Photo London), Andrew Katz (Deputy Director of Photography at TIME) and JR (French photographer and creator of street art). Based upon their own personal expertise and experience, each member of the nominating team will select up to three photo series. The only requirements for a nomination are that the photographic work be of a documentary or conceptual-artistic nature, and that it deals with the relationship between people and their environment. This humanistic constant has defined the Leica Oskar Barnack Award, since its inception in 1979. That was the year in which the competition's namesake, and builder of the original Ur Leica, would have been 100 years old. In addition to the candidates for the main award, each nominator can name one additional photographer, under 30 years of age, for the LOBA Newcomer Award.

“It is precisely during difficult times that the fostering of engaged photography becomes an even more heartfelt matter for us. It will be fascinating to see what traces our current global

challenges will have left on the photographers' work." Karin Rehn-Kaufmann, Art Director & Chief Representative of Leica Galleries International, and the person responsible for LOBA, comments: "I am sure that this year's LOBA will also reveal the wealth and diversity of photo-journalism, as it constantly evolves to new heights. As always, I'm really excited to see the outcome."

Renowned LOBA winners

The first photographer who was honoured with the LOBA, in 1980, was Floris Bergkamp from the Netherlands. He was followed by such renowned photographers as Sebastião Salgado, Gianni Berengo Gardin, Jane Evelyn Atwood, David C. Turnley and Luca Locatelli, who was the 2020 LOBA winner. The LOBA has long been considered one of the most prestigious photography competitions in the world. The Newcomer Award, introduced in 2009, has also established itself as an increasingly important stepping stone for young photographers.

This year, the list of nominators also includes many former LOBA winners. Among them are Guy Tillim, Jan Grarup, Lucia Nimcova and Julio Bittencourt; also included are Newcomers, such as Dominic Nahr, Alejandro Cegarro and Gonçalo Fonseca, who won in 2020.

How the LOBA 2021 process will unfold

In May, the five person jury will meet at Leica Camera AG headquarters in Wetzlar. They will choose the 2021 LOBA winner of the main award from a shortlist of up to twelve series, and the Newcomer Award winner from a shortlist of six. In summer, all of the series produced by the shortlisted candidates will be presented on the LOBA website. The announcement and award ceremony, celebrating the 2021 winners in both categories, will take place in October. The prize money, which was increased significantly in 2020, will remain the same in 2021: the winner of the LOBA will receive 40,000 euros and Leica camera equipment valued at 10,000 euros; the Newcomer winner will receive 10,000 euros and a Leica Q2. The winning series, which will first be presented in Wetzlar on the occasion of the award ceremony in October, will also be part of a touring exhibition that will be displayed in Leica Galleries and selected Photo Festivals around the world. An accompanying catalogue of the winners and shortlisted candidates will be available.

Further information can be found at: www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com/en/

The list of all LOBA 2021 nominators can be found at: www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com/en/loba-2021/the-nominators.html