

# DEUTSCHE BÖRSE PHOTOGRAPHY FOUNDATION PRIZE 2019

**PRESS RELEASE**

## DEUTSCHE BÖRSE PHOTOGRAPHY FOUNDATION PRIZE 2019 EXHIBITION AND TOURING DETAILS ANNOUNCED 8 MARCH - 2 JUNE 2019

30 January 2019

The 2019 Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize Exhibition opens at The Photographers' Gallery from 8 March until 2 June 2019.

Following that, as part of a wide programme to marking the 20th anniversary of the Art Collection Deutsche Börse, the exhibition will tour to the Deutsche Börse headquarters, The Cube in Eschborn, Frankfurt (14 June – 23 August 2019).

Curated by The Photographers' Gallery's Anna Dannemann, this year's exhibition of the 2019 shortlisted artists: **Laia Abril**, **Susan Meiselas**, **Arwed Messmer** and **Mark Ruwedel** surveys the diverse and innovative nature of their photographic practices, which both celebrate the medium's development while challenging its boundaries.

Presented across the 4th and 5th floors of the Gallery, the exhibition features a searing visual investigation by Laia Abril into the history of abortion and the challenges to women's reproductive rights; a sensitive on-the-ground reportage and collaborative history of Kurdistan by Susan Meiselas; a consideration of the photographic evidence found in State Archives that proposes a new reading of the beginnings of the Red Army Faction (RAF) researched, collected and edited by Arwed Messmer and a timeless photographic exploration of how geological, historical and political events have left their imprints on the North American landscape by Mark Ruwedel.

The **winner of the £30,000 prize will be announced** during the exhibition run at an evening award ceremony held at the Gallery on **16<sup>th</sup> May 2019**.

The DBPFP19 exhibition aims both to highlight and give platform to four very diverse artistic practices, which simultaneously display innovative, committed and engaged approaches to photography. While each project uses the medium differently - from a focus on appropriated or collaboratively gathered material (Abril and Messmer) to social and environmental investigations (Meiselas and Ruwedel) - they are united by a high level of personal engagement using extensive research processes as a way of addressing urgent environmental, social and historical themes.

Nominated for the publication *On Abortion*, Laia Abril's uncompromising, meticulously researched, visual investigation will be displayed on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Gallery. *On Abortion* is the first chapter of Abril's ongoing series, *A History of Misogyny* and offers a visual history of abortion as well as documenting the repercussions women endure when they do not have legal, safe or free access to the procedures. Within this exhibition, Laia will present intimate portraits, photos of early contraceptive devices alongside incendiary, hate-filled quotes from outspoken opposers to abortion rights. Featuring individuals forced to illegally abort, to those pressured into carrying pregnancies full term against their will, the project unpacks the rigid systems of power that exert control over the female body, and those fighting to protect it. The project addresses the marginalised position of women in past and contemporary societies, whilst exposing the many social triggers, stigmas and taboos that still persist around abortion and female health. Acclaimed journalist and Deputy Editor at the *New Statesman*, **Helen Lewis** has contributed an essay on this body of work for the exhibition catalogue.

The Photographers' Gallery  
16–18 Ramillies Street  
London W1F 7LW

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Also presented on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor are Mark Ruwedel's thought-provoking photographic creations, which each explore how geological, historic and political events leave their mark upon the landscape. Over the past four decades, Ruwedel has explored and documented the shifting nature of the North American terrain. For his presentation at The Photographers' Gallery, Ruwedel will display work from *Dusk*, a series showing empty desert homes under the twilight sky; *Pictures from Hell*, depicting awe-inspiring landscapes which generations of settlers evocatively named Helltown, Devils Gardens, Hells Hollow or Devils Land; alongside nuclear test sites depicted in *Crater* and his homage to the artist Ed Ruscha in *We All Loved Ruscha*. Merging documentary and conceptual methods of image making, Ruwedel's practice echoes historical photographic processes. His interest in the craft of photographic printing and the photograph-as-object is further evidenced by his hand-made artist's books, which form a central part of the installation. **John O'Brian**, Art Historian, professor, writer and curator, has written an essay on Ruwedel's work for the exhibition publication.

Arwed Messmer's nominated project *RAF – No Evidence / Kein Beweis* is shown on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. This comprehensive body of work reflects the historic trajectory of the far-left extremist organisation, the Red Army Faction (RAF) often referred to as the Baader-Meinhof Group. Formed in the 1960-70s, the group engaged in a series of violent terrorist attacks in Germany over the course of three decades. Messmer's project repurposes images, documents and other source materials commonly used in police investigations and crime-scene reconstructions that he researched in German state and police archives. Messmer's new and surprising 'narrative' examines how images once used as evidence in criminal cases can now provide a unique insight into our understanding of history. The installation highlights the early period between 1967 to 1977, showcasing images from the student protests in 1968, police re-enactments and an extensive collection of investigative, forensic and documentary photographs ranging from the mundane to the surreal. The celebrated writer and philosopher **Nina Power** has responded to the work in the accompanying catalogue.

Also showing on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor is work from the highly regarded artist Susan Meiselas nominated for her first European retrospective *Mediations (Jeu de Paume, Paris 2018)*. From this vast body of work, Meiselas selected the long-term project *Kurdistan/akaKurdistan* to represent her here. The series offers a layered, lived history of Kurdistan, driven by the momentum of its contributors. In the 1990s, after seeing the exhumation of mass graves in northern Iraq, the result of Saddam Hussein's genocidal campaign against the Kurds in 1987-88, Meiselas began an outstanding body of work, documenting the graves, archeological excavations and individual survivors. She continues to work with the community to gather visual evidence - documents, family photos, maps, personal stories - to build a public archive, which has developed into the website [akaKurdistan.com](http://akaKurdistan.com). This deeply affecting project exemplifies Meiselas' artistic approach and outstanding merit as an image-maker, whilst highlighting the collaborative nature of her documentary work. A dedicated workshop during the exhibition run will invite the Kurdish community in the UK to contribute their own memories to the project in order to create a new chapter of the storybook, which will then be displayed in the exhibition. **Elizabeth Edwards** anthropologist, photography curator and professor has contributed an essay on this project for the catalogue.

The Photographers' Gallery will also present a rich programme of talks and events to accompany and illuminate the exhibition, including talks with all the shortlisted artists. For more details visit: [www.tpg.org.uk](http://www.tpg.org.uk)

-ENDS-

#### Press Contacts

##### For further press information and image requests please contact:

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##### For General information and enquiries about The Photographers' Gallery, including their archive, Print Sales Gallery or Bookshop contact:

Celia Graham-Dixon on + 44 (0) 207 087 9346 or email [celia.g.dixon@tpg.org.uk](mailto:celia.g.dixon@tpg.org.uk)

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### **Notes for Editors**

**Artist Biogs available on request.**

### **The Photographers' Gallery**

The Photographers' Gallery opened in 1971 in Great Newport Street, London, as the UK's first independent gallery devoted to photography. It was the first public gallery in the UK to exhibit many key names in international photography, including Juergen Teller, Robert Capa, Sebastiano Salgado and Andreas Gursky. The Gallery has also been instrumental in establishing contemporary British photographers, including Martin Parr and Corinne Day. In 2009, the Gallery moved to 16 – 18 Ramillies Street in Soho, the first stage in its plan to create a 21st century home for photography. Following an eighteen months long redevelopment project, the Gallery reopened to the public in 2012. The success of The Photographers' Gallery over the past four decades has helped to establish photography as a recognised art form, introducing new audiences to photography and championing its place at the heart of visual culture. [www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk](http://www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk)

### **Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation**

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation is a Frankfurt-based non-profit organisation. The foundation activities focus on collecting, exhibiting and promoting contemporary photography. Deutsche Börse began to build up its collection of contemporary photography in 1999. Art Collection Deutsche Börse now comprises more than 1,800 works by over 120 international artists. Expanding the Art Collection Deutsche Börse is one of the key aims of the foundation. The collection and a changing exhibition programme are open to the public. Together with The Photographers' Gallery in London, the foundation awards the renowned Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize each year. The promotion of young artists is a special concern of the foundation. It supports them in the form of awards, scholarships, exhibitions and cooperations with other institutions, such as the Foam Talents Programme of the Foam Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam. Other focal points include supporting exhibition projects of international museums and institutions, and the expansion of platforms for academic discussion about the medium. [www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org](http://www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org)

### **The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize History**

Founded in 1997 by The Photographers' Gallery, and now in its twenty-second year, the Prize has become one of the most prestigious international arts awards and has launched and established the careers of many photographers over the years. Previously known as the Citigroup Photography Prize, the Gallery has been collaborating with Deutsche Börse Group as title sponsor since 2005. In 2016 the Prize was retitled as the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize following the establishment of the foundation as a non-profit organisation dedicated to the collection, exhibition and promotion of contemporary photography.

Winner of the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2018 was Luke Willis Thompson for his film installation *Autoportrait*. Past winners include Dana Lixenberg, Trevor Paglen, Paul Graham, Juergen Teller, Rineke Dijkstra, Richard Billingham, John Stezaker and Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin.

### **Visitor Information**

Opening times: Mon – Sat, 10:00 - 18:00; Thu, 10:00 - 20:00; Sun, 11:00 - 18:00

Admission: free until noon (Mon - Sun) and then £5 / £2.5 concessions

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DEUTSCHE BÖRSE  
PHOTOGRAPHY FOUNDATION

THE  
PHOTOGRAPHERS'  
GALLERY



Supported using public funding by  
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ENGLAND

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Image 1

Arwed Messmer  
RAF No Evidence/Kein Beweis, 2017  
© Arwed Messmer: research, concept and editing;  
source: Berlin Police Historical Collection, 2018



Image 2

Arwed Messmer  
RAF No Evidence/Kein Beweis, 2017  
© Arwed Messmer: research, concept and editing; source:  
German Federal Archives, 2018



Image 3

Arwed Messmer  
RAF No Evidence/Kein Beweis, 2017  
© Arwed Messmer: Compilation design and editing of  
the photographic material. Source:  
AM\_PHS\_SCHUPO\_FILM 1933\_19A\_20A Berlin Police  
Historical Collection Kurfürstendamm, Berlin, 12.04.1968

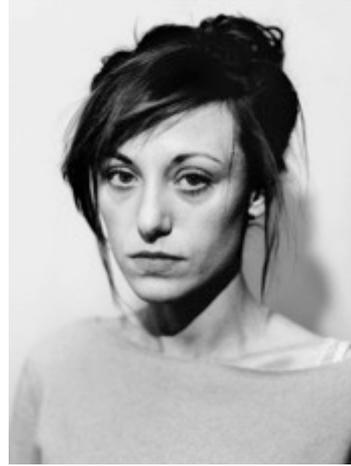


Image 4

Arwed Messmer  
RAF No Evidence/Kein Beweis, 2017  
© Arwed Messmer: Compilation design and editing of the  
photographic material. Source: BArch\_B362-Bild-3085-239-  
01 Federal Archives of Germany Inheidener Str. 69,  
Frankfurt, 16.06.1972



**Image 5**  
Laia Abril  
*Illegal Instrument Kit*, 2018  
© Laia Abril, 2018



**Image 6**  
Laia Abril  
*Portrait of Marta*, 29, Poland. "On January 2, 2015, I travelled to Slovakia to have an abortion. [In Poland, abortion is illegal except in cases of sexual assault, serious fetal deformation, or threat to the mother's life] I was too scared to take DIY abortion pills alone. What if something went wrong? So I decided to get a surgical abortion in a clinic abroad. I felt upset about borrowing money for the procedure, and lonely and frustrated because I couldn't tell anyone what was happening. The hardest part was facing my boyfriend, who opposes abortion. All the same, I felt stronger and more mature afterwards."  
© Laia Abril, 2018



**Image 7**  
Laia Abril  
*Abortion Stories: Magda 008*, 2018  
© Laia Abril, 2018



**Image 8**  
Laia Abril  
*Hippocratic Betrayal*  
"In February 2015, a 19-year-old woman took abortion pills in Sao Bernardo do Campo, Brazil, then went to hospital with abdominal pain. After treatment, her doctor called the police, who handcuffed her to the bed and forced her to confess. In Brazil, abortion is illegal under most circumstances and doctors are known to break their confidentiality code in order to denounce women who try it. Patients accused of attempting abortion have been detained in hospitals for weeks and even months."  
© Laia Abril, 2018



**Image 9**  
Mark Ruwedel  
*Antelope Valley 1438*, 2008  
© Mark Ruwedel, 2018



**Image 10**  
Mark Ruwedel  
*Columbia & Western #8*, 1999  
© Mark Ruwedel, 2018

**PRESS IMAGES**



**Image 11**  
Mark Ruwedel  
*Hells Canyon*, 1999  
© Mark Ruwedel, 2018



**Image 12**  
Mark Ruwedel  
*"Typical American House"*, Nevada Test Site, Yucca Flat, Apple II Test Site, 1995  
© Mark Ruwedel, 2018



**Image 13**  
Susan Meiselas  
*Villagers watch exhumation at a former Iraqi military headquarters outside Sulaymaniyah, Northern Iraq*, 1991  
© Susan Meiselas



**Image 14**  
Susan Meiselas  
*Taymour Abdullah, 15, the only survivor of village execution, shows his bullet wound, Arbil, Northern Iraq*, December, 1991  
© Susan Meiselas



**Image 15**  
Susan Meiselas  
*Photographs of 20-year-old Kamaran Abdullah Saber are held by his family at Saiwan Hill cemetery. He was killed in July 1991 during a student demonstration against Saddam Hussein, Kurdistan, Northern Iraq, 1991*  
© Susan Meiselas



**Image 16**  
Susan Meiselas  
*Destroyed village along the Hamilton Road, Northern Iraq, 1991*  
© Susan Meiselas

### **Press information**

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