

## Brett Rogers, OBE, to step down as Director of The Photographers' Gallery

After 16 years of leadership, Brett Rogers, OBE, announces today she will be leaving her role as Director of The Photographers' Gallery – the UK's foremost centre for photography – at the end of 2022.

Following the success of The Photographers' Gallery's 50th anniversary programme in 2021 and the launch of Soho Photography Quarter - the Gallery's ambitious new free, permanent outdoor exhibition space, which opened last month, Rogers' planned departure marks the end of an extraordinary period of growth and creative evolution for the internationally acclaimed Gallery - founded in 1971 as the UK's first public gallery dedicated to photography.

From 2006 - 2022, Rogers' expansive vision and influential leadership at The Photographers' Gallery has led to a range of momentous cultural presentations and institutional developments, both in London and abroad, taking place through a period of huge social, technological, and artistic transition for the photographic medium. Brett plans to maintain a connection with the photography world in a reduced capacity following her departure.

Brett Rogers' key achievements have included, but are not limited to:

- **The re-location of The Photographers' Gallery in 2012**, taking the Gallery from its first home in Great Newport Street to its current, purpose-built 5-floor space, with a dedicated floor for learning designed by award winning Irish Architects O'Donnell + Tuomey, in a former textiles warehouse on Ramillies Street, in the heart of London's vibrant WestEnd.
- **The launch of Soho Photography Quarter**, a free and accessible public realm space in the streets surrounding the Gallery. Following 5 years of planning, the new space and bi-yearly programme of large-scale, public realm artworks and activities, including large-scale art friezes, cross-street banners and moving image projections, provides a unique opportunity for the Gallery to extend its programme outside, enabling wider audiences to experience some of the most innovative and dynamic artists working today.
- **Staging critically and publicly acclaimed exhibitions** such as solo presentations of Saul Leiter, Helen Levitt and Sunil Gupta, to thematic explorations including *Made you Look: Dandyism and Black Masculinity*, *Feast for the Eyes: The Story of Food in Photography*, *The Feminist Avant Garde of the 1970s* and *Easter Rising 1916*.
- **Securing the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize** as one of the most prestigious and long-standing prizes in the world of photography. Each year it

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- highlights significant trends within contemporary photography and showcases the works of artists shaping today's international photography scene, having first launched in 1996. Recent winners include **Deana Lawson** (2022), **Cao Fei** (2021), **Mohamed Bourouissa** (2020), **Susan Meiselas** (2019) and **Luke Willis Thompson** (2018).
- **Championing female photographers** like Sally Mann, Taryn Simon, Noemie Goudal, Shirley Baker, Helen Levitt, Alex Prager, Helen Cammock, Rinko Kawauchi, Katy Grannan and Zineb Sedira, in a well-documented role supporting women and families in the photography industry, both through the women featured in TPG's acclaimed exhibitions programme and as evidenced through her nurturing and supportive organisational environment.
- **Appointing the Gallery's first digital curator**, to explore the effects of the digital realm on photography and visual culture, within the context of technological developments. Most recently, the current three-floor exhibition, ***How to Win at Photography***, examines the relationship between photography and gaming culture.
- **Establishing a dynamic, multi-form artistic programme**, which has harnessed the different Gallery spaces to present diverse viewpoints, approaches and chronologies. Supporting both established and emergent talent - from Edward Burtynsky, Wim Wenders and Evgenia Arbugaeva, to Gregory Crewdson, Vivianne Sassen and Lorenzo Vitturi - Rogers' programme has given a platform to everything from vernacular photography to large scale studio production.
- **Examining the local and global nature of photography** and its presentation, bringing exhibitions as various as ***The World in London***, a major public art project initiated by Rogers to coincide with the **London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games**; to curating a major British survey exhibition of work by 37 photographers - ***Work Rest and Play: British Photography Since the 1960s*** - to four Chinese cities in 2015-6; to focusing on the unique communities of the Gallery's home in Soho, including 2020's ***Shot in Soho*** featuring William Klein, Anders Petersen and Corinne Day.
- **Placing education at the heart of the organisation**, with a dedicated learning and events space and ensuring platforms and support for young people's ideas and talent, including the free and low-cost Develop creative careers programme, public tours led by 14-19 year olds (Teen Tours), a new Extended Project Qualification in Photography for A-Level pupils and appointing the Gallery's first under-25 Trustee in 2018; championing visual literacy through photography, including the ten-year Touchstone single photo display, 'slow looking' events and dedicated programmes related to visual literacy; and encouraging discussion and debate on photography's role in society, through the Gallery's programme of hundreds of talks, workshops and courses during her tenure.
- **Setting up initiatives to identify, support and champion new photography talent**, including ***Fresh Faced & Wild Eyed*** and more recently, the biennial TPG New Talent award, exhibition, and mentoring programme, as well as supporting emerging photographers with first publications, ongoing, free networking events and portfolio review sessions.
- **Foregrounding TPG's Print Sales Gallery** - a dedicated 'discovery' space and the Gallery's commercial representation arm, which with its own exhibitions, is a leading international barometer for the buying and collecting of photography, the proceeds for which are reinvested into the Gallery's public programme.

A specially formed committee of trustees, led by TPG Chair of Trustees Matthew Stephenson and senior staff, has begun the considered process of looking for and appointing a new Director, with the aim of having Rogers' successor in place by December 2022. With a particular responsibility to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, The Photographers' Gallery has appointed global executive and board recruitment company,

Saxton Bampfylde - experts in finding exceptional, diverse leaders for major organisations - to support the recruitment process, which will officially commence on 18 July.

**Statement from Brett Rogers, OBE:**

*"Following 16 happy years as Director of The Photographers' Gallery, I have decided to step down this December. This has not been an easy decision for me, as the Gallery has been an essential part of my cultural life since I arrived in London as a post-graduate student in 1980. Over the past two decades, I have had the privilege of collaborating with a wide range of talented artists, photographers and curators, worked with inspiring colleagues both internally and externally and taken great pleasure in extending the impact of the Gallery's world-renowned programmes through developing new partnerships.*

*Why now? 2022 coincides with the tenth anniversary of our new gallery building and the completion of an ambitious new public realm project, Soho Photography Quarter. Both projects were integral to the original vision proposed when I joined in 2006 and have proved to be significant in moving the Gallery forward – delivering an ambitious and accessible programme which appeals to the widest possible audience and also expanding its profile nationally and internationally.*

*Over the past 3 decades the position of photography has evolved from the margins of institutional recognition to becoming one of the most ubiquitous and significant art forms. The Gallery has without doubt played a significant role in this transformation, and in galvanising attention to the pivotal role technology plays within our wider, image-laden culture. Critical to articulating our leading contribution to the debate around the future of photography was the appointment in 2011 of the first Curator of Digital & Networked Image within a UK photography institution.*

*I am extremely proud of the way that I have been able to build upon the rich legacy established by TPG's founding Director Sue Davies (Director from 1971 - 1991) in offering a diverse and dynamic education and exhibition programme which reflects the issues and interests of 21st century audiences, artists and photographers. Proud of every exhibition we have programmed over the past 16 years, I am especially pleased to have increased the inclusion of women photographers and seen the presence of women within the shortlist of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize grow year on year – with three out of the four nominees being women in 2022.*

*Our thematic shows (many presented in partnership with London and international galleries) have enabled us to address less visible themes within the history of the medium, from Under Cover: A Secret History of Cross-Dressers, to Home Truths: Photography and Motherhood, The Chinese Photobook, Double Take: Photography & Drawing and Blow Up; Fashion in the Mirror and Four Saints in Three Acts. Uniquely amongst public galleries and since its inception, our Print Sales Gallery has also been an essential element of our offer – and key to supporting the careers of many important artists during my tenure.*

*Fundamental to the success of engaging audiences more deeply is our education programme - established in the late 1980s and now expanded from its original talks remit to embrace a vast roster of youth programmes, free portfolio reviews, tours and courses. In ensuring the Gallery remained as Sue Davies had always conceived it to be - welcoming, accessible and inclusive - I have relied not only on a very talented pool of artists and guest curators, but a highly experienced and committed team of staff, who demonstrate every day their unflagging enthusiasm and commitment to ensuring the Gallery fulfils its mission to champion photography for all."*

**Matthew Stephenson, Chair of Trustees, The Photographers' Gallery, said:**

*"It all started with a photograph. In 2011, The Photographers' Gallery (TPG) held a charity auction to raise funds for the Gallery's new building. I fell in love with a photograph by Norman Parkinson of surrealist collector Edward James. Who should encourage me to buy it? Brett Rogers. Since then, I have admired Brett's passion, knowledge, energy and tireless championing of photography for everyone and her constant drive to broaden and build audiences for the medium. Having Chaired the Board of Trustees since 2017, I have had the immense pleasure of working closely with Brett, her team and Board to support her vision for the Gallery. TPG's community has grown and diversified under Brett's stewardship, elevating the Gallery's reputation internationally and making it one of the most dynamic, relevant and exciting places to engage with visual culture in London."*

-ENDS-

#### **Notes for Editors**

##### **Press Contacts**

For further press information, images of Brett Rogers and interview requests, please contact Emma Pettit or Grace Gabriele-Tighe at Margaret on [emma@margaretlondon.com](mailto:emma@margaretlondon.com) / [grace@margaretlondon.com](mailto:grace@margaretlondon.com)

For enquiries and expressions of interest regarding the Director position at TPG, please contact Connie Vincent at Saxton Bampfylde on [connie.vincent@saxbam.com](mailto:connie.vincent@saxbam.com). Please note the official advertisement for Director applications will be announced on 18 July 2022.

##### **Brett Rogers, OBE**

##### **b. 1954, Brisbane (Australia)**

Educated at the University of Sydney (Fine Arts) in Australia, Brett arrived in London in 1980 to undertake an MA at the Courtauld Institute, University of London. She worked as an Exhibitions Coordinator for the Australian Gallery Director's Council from 1976-1980, curating and managing a broad range of photography and art exhibitions which toured throughout public museums across Australia.

Since 2006, Brett Rogers OBE has been the Director of The Photographers' Gallery, London, the first publicly funded Gallery dedicated solely to photography in the UK. Founded in 1971, it established early on a reputation for its independent approach to curating and its promotion of photography in all its myriad forms.

Located in the heart of London's WestEnd, and now Soho Photography Quarter, the Gallery designed by O'Donnell & Tuomey, opened to the public in May 2012 to wide critical acclaim. Under Rogers' leadership for the past 16 years, the Gallery continues to be recognized internationally as an innovator within the field of photography and the wider image economy. Reflecting the change in how photography is understood, networked and distributed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, she was the first photography Director to acknowledge this shift by appointing a Curator of Digital Programmes in 2011.

Before joining the Gallery in 2006, Brett was Deputy Director of Visual Arts at the British Council, where she was responsible for establishing the British Council's Photography Collection and curating an ambitious programme of international touring exhibitions on British photography. Her role at the British Council also encompassed promoting contemporary visual arts, fashion and design. She worked closely with Anish Kapoor,

Cornelia Parker, Chris Ofili, Damien Hirst amongst others on key projects the Council organised abroad.

In 2013 her key role in contributing towards photography was recognized by University of the Arts London by appointing her a Visiting Fellow and in 2018 she was the recipient of the Royal Photographic Society's Outstanding Contribution to Photography Award. Brett Rogers was awarded an OBE for services to the Arts in the Queen's Birthday Honours in May 2014.

#### **The Photographers' Gallery**

The Photographers' Gallery opened in 1971 in Covent Garden, London, as the UK's first independent and publicly funded gallery devoted to photography. It was the first UK gallery to exhibit many key names in international photography, including Juergen Teller, Sally Mann, Gordon Parks, Rineke Dijkstra, Robert Capa, Roy de Carava, Sebastiao Salgado and Andreas Gursky. The Gallery has also been instrumental in establishing contemporary British photographers, including Martin Parr, Paul Graham and Corinne Day. In 2009 the Gallery relocated to a new multi-storey building in Ramillies Street, Soho and opened its doors to the public in 2012 after an ambitious redevelopment plan which provided the Gallery with three floors of state-of-the-art exhibition space as well as an education/events studio, a gallery for commercial sales, bookshop and cafe. The success of The Photographers' Gallery over the past four decades has helped to secure the medium's position as a vital and highly regarded 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)

#### **Soho Photography Quarter:**

Soho Photography Quarter (SPQ) is a permanent new outdoor cultural space, presenting the very best of contemporary photography, for free. It was launched by The Photographers' Gallery in June 2022, following the refurbishment of Ramillies Place, which has transformed a previously overlooked alley into a beautifully designed, pedestrianised space and offers an inspiring gateway to Soho. Extending The Photographers' Gallery's acclaimed exhibitions programme beyond the walls of the building, SPQ completes the development of its site in Soho as a centre of Photography, offering dynamic new ways to discover the photographic medium. SPQ's rotating, open-air programme of site-specific and interactive artworks will change twice a year, including art friezes, large-scale cross street banners, moving image projections, soundscapes and other interactive works depending on the project. Alongside the changing artworks, SPQ offers a rich and engaging programme of activities and resources, from live events, artist talks and presentations, to short films, sound installations and specially commissioned AR projects. Accessibility to the ideas and inspirations behind the projects are a key part of SPQ's offer.

#### **Saxton Bampfylde:**

Saxton Bampfylde is a leading cross-sector executive search firm, well known for its experience and specialism in the Arts and Creative Industries. It champions local, national and international leadership talent, always with a clear commitment to diversity and an inclusive approach to search and advisory work. Whether publicly-funded or commercially-backed, world-leading or just-emerging, Saxton Bampfylde is proud to have supported a huge array of organisations over the past 35 years. Appointments include Director of V&A, Director of V&A Dundee, Director of ArtAngel, Director of Tate Liverpool, Chief Curator of AvantArte and Chief Producer of ICA.

#### **Visitor Information**

##### **Opening times:**

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday: 10.00 – 18.00 Thursday &  
Friday (Late opening): 10.00 – 20.00

Saturday: 10.00 – 18.00

Sunday: 11.00 – 18.00

**General Admission:** £5/£2.50 Concessions  
Fridays 18.00 - 20.00 Free for everyone

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**Social media**

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Twitter: @TPGallery

Facebook: @ThePhotographersGalleryLDN

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