

DEUTSCHE BÖRSE PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE 2006

The Photographers' Gallery
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Press Release

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Gallery Open:
Mon-Sat 11-6
Thurs 11-8
and Sun 12-6
Admission Free

Robert Adams is awarded the £30,000 Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2006



The photographer Robert Adams (b. 1937, USA) has been awarded the *Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2006*, a leading international arts award. The exhibition will continue at The Photographers' Gallery until 23 April and will then tour to Berlin and Frankfurt.

Considered one of the most important photographers working today, Robert Adams was awarded the Prize for his recent exhibition *Turning Back, A Photographic Journal of Re-exploration* at Haus der Kunst in Munich, Germany (29 June – 25 September 2005). For over 40 years Adams has, through his photographs, documented the impact industrial development has had on the landscape of the American West, an area where he grew up and still lives. Inspired by the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition between 1804 and 1806, *Turning Back* offers a personal and unsparing look at how a landscape has been scarred by de-forestation, industrial development and human habitation. The series of delicate silver-gelatin prints, taken between 1999 and 2003, are an exploration of the topography of the northwestern United States as it changes from the Pacific Coast to the open planes of eastern Oregon.

Brett Rogers, Chair of the Jury and Director of The Photographers' Gallery, said:

'The shortlisted photographers nominated for this year's Prize, which is now in its 10th year, were not only an exceptional selection but also reflective of the vitality and quality of work being produced by international artists today. Their decision to present the award to Robert Adams for his series *Turning Back* was in recognition of an artist who is now at the pinnacle of his practice and whose contribution to contemporary debate, both through his writing and photography cannot be underestimated. Adams's unique and powerful voice coupled with his ongoing contribution to the medium of photography is, without question, an inspiration for contemporary practitioners. Robert Adams's skill in tackling brutal topics, such as environmental destruction in the American West, presented in delicate monochrome prints enables him to comment in a restrained but powerful way on subjects of global significance.'

Robert Adams was chosen by the Jury which includes Thomas Demand, artist (Berlin), Emma Dexter, Curator, Tate Modern (London), Régis Durand, Director, Jeu de Paume (Paris) and Anne-Marie Beckmann, Curator, Art Collection Deutsche Börse (Frankfurt). Brett Rogers, Director of The Photographers' Gallery, chaired the Jury.

This year The Photographers' Gallery celebrates 10 years of the annual Photography Prize and continues its commitment to showcasing new talent and highlighting the best of international photography practice. With generous support from the title sponsors, Deutsche Börse Group, the Prize is firmly placed amongst the most prestigious international arts awards and ranks as one of the highlights of the Gallery's exhibition programme.

The *Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2006* aims to reward a living photographer, of any nationality, who has made the most significant contribution to the medium of photography in Europe between 1 November 2004 and 30 September 2005. The shortlisted photographers have been nominated by the Academy, a group of European photography experts invited by the Gallery. The nominations were for a significant exhibition or publication and the Jury announced the final shortlist in October 2005./cont'

The three runners-up, Yto Barrada, Phil Collins, and Alec Soth were shortlisted for the following contributions:

Yto Barrada (b. 1971, Morocco) was shortlisted for the exhibition *A Life Full of Holes – the Strait Project* at Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool and which was produced in collaboration with Autograph ABP, London (12 February – 2 April 2005). This photography project poetically explores issues of migration, Diaspora, access and exclusion. Over the last 15 years, the Strait of Gibraltar has become one of the main gateways for illegal immigration. Barrada's photographs, taken between 1998 and 2004, capture the temptations of leaving, and the unfulfilled hopes of escaping across the Strait into Europe. Living and working in both Paris and Tangier, Barrada's parallel experience of these cities informs her photographic practice, and also offers a challenging suggestion to the aesthetic fetishism that has long characterised representations of the Arab world.

Phil Collins (b.1970, UK) was shortlisted for his exhibition *yeah.....you, baby you* at Milton Keynes Gallery, UK (9 April – 29 May 2005). Collins's work has always involved various forms of creative expression, including photography, video, music, participatory events and orchestrated meetings. His projects are often the culmination of a prolonged period of contact between the artist and the individuals pictured in his work. While dealing with some of the most extreme human situations and experiences, there is also a strong element of humour and energy within Collins's work. Through choreographing seemingly playful scenarios, and inviting his subjects to actively participate in the creative process of representation, Collins's practice subtly challenges the documentary medium while retaining an incisive political and social dimension.

Alec Soth (b.1969, USA) has been shortlisted for his exhibition *Sleeping by the Mississippi* at Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool, UK (4 December 2004 – 5 February 2005). Between 1999 and 2004, Soth undertook several trips following the trail of the Mississippi River from Minnesota south to Louisiana. Photographing the people and landscapes he encountered resulted in a methodical as well as deeply personal and poetic photographic travelogue. The mythology of this river has inspired artists, writers and musicians for decades and Soth offers his own poignant and compelling view of this place and its inhabitants. Like a series of lyrical fragments all linked by the trail of the river, Soth carries on the tradition of the itinerant documentary photographer in a new and refreshing way.

NOTES:

Robert Adams has been awarded numerous prizes, including two Guggenheim and two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, and his work has been exhibited widely in Europe and the United States. His photographs also feature in major public and private collections, including the Yale University Art Gallery, which has acquired his photographic archive. He has a strong reputation as a writer on photography as well as numerous on his work published throughout his career.

Robert Adams has generously donated his prize money to the charity Human Rights Watch, a charity defending human rights worldwide. (www.hrw.org)

Sue Davies, Founding Director of The Photographers' Gallery, announced the £30,000 Prize during the evening ceremony at the Gallery.

Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2006 is at The Photographers' Gallery, London from 17 February – 23 April 2006 and will then tour to C/O Berlin (18 May – 16 July) and Neue Börse in Frankfurt (8 September - 22 October).

Deutsche Börse Group is the world's largest exchange organisation and a major sponsor of photographic art. Deutsche Börse Group owns an extensive art collection of contemporary photography that includes more than 500 works, most of them large-size, by over 40 international artists. In addition, Deutsche Börse organises exhibitions for young artists in the Group's global headquarters in Frankfurt and sponsors photographic exhibitions in Europe. Further information on Deutsche Börse Group and its photography collection can be found at www.deutsche-boerse.com/art.

Previous Photography Prize Winners are:

2005: Luc Delahaye (France) / 2004: Joel Sternfeld (USA) / 2003: Juergen Teller (Germany) / 2002: Shirana Shahbazi (Iran) / Boris Mikhailov (Ukraine) / 2000: Anna Gaskell (USA) / 1999: Rineke Dijkstra (The Netherlands) / 1998: Andreas Gursky (Germany) / 1997: Richard Billingham (UK).

The Prize was developed and founded in 1996 and first presented in 1997 at the Royal College of Art in association with The Photographers' Gallery. Since 1998 the exhibition and Prize has always been presented at The Photographers' Gallery. To find out more about the history of the Photography Prize, past nominees and winners please visit: www.photonet.org.uk.

For further information or press images please contact

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