

## DEUTSCHE BÖRSE PHOTOGRAPHY FOUNDATION PRIZE 2025 SHORTLIST REVEALED: CRISTINA DE MIDDEL, RAHIM FORTUNE, TARRAH KRAJNAK, LINDOKUHLE SOBEKWA

The four international artists shortlisted for the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2025 are today revealed as **Cristina De Middel, Rahim Fortune, Tarrah Krajnak** and **Lindokuhle Sobekwa**.

This long-standing annual Prize, originally established in 1996, identifies and rewards artists for their projects that have made a significant contribution to photography over the previous 12 months. Over its 28-year history, the Prize has become renowned as one of the most important international awards for contemporary photographers, spotlighting outstanding, innovative and thought-provoking work.

The 2025 shortlisted projects feature documentary photography, constructed images, self-portraiture, performance and family archives. Themes of migration, community and belonging, intergenerational traditions and rituals, family memories and photographic histories are brought together in a powerful shortlist which highlights some of the influential work shown or published in Europe in the past year.

The annual exhibition of work from the shortlisted projects by the four artists will be on show at The Photographers' Gallery, London from **7 March to 15 June 2025**.

The winner of the £30,000 prize will be announced at an award ceremony at The Photographers' Gallery on 15 May 2025, with the other finalists each receiving £5,000. Full details of the Prize exhibition and award evening will be announced in early 2025.

### The 2025 shortlisted artists and projects are:

**Cristina De Middel** (b. 1975, Spain) is shortlisted for the exhibition *Journey to the Center* at Les Rencontres De La Photographie, Arles, France (1 July – 25 August 2024).

The exhibition presents the Central American migration route across Mexico as a heroic and daring journey, rather than a desperate escape. De Middel borrows the atmosphere and structure of the Jules Verne book, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*.

The journey begins in Tapachula on the southern border of Mexico with Guatemala, and ends in Felicity, a small town in California which officially claims the absurd title 'Center of the World'. The border fence is visible from Felicity which adds to the dystopic disappointment of the journey, where the final destination is no more than a roadside tourist attraction.

De Middel combines straight documentary photography with constructed images and archival material. She uses multi-layered narratives to reflect the complexity of human migration today; countering how it is often portrayed simplistically in the media and official reports.

**Rahim Fortune** (b. 1994, USA) is shortlisted for the book *Hardtack*, published by Loose Joints in 2024.

Hardtack is an unleavened bread made with flour, water and salt that was typical of the southern states of America during the Civil War era. Due to its extremely long shelf life,

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

+44(0)20 7087 9300  
info@tpg.org.uk  
tpg.org.uk

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hardtack is long associated with survivalism and land migration. Fortune draws on this as a metaphor for the enduring nature of Black culture and traditions. *Hardtack* uncovers the roots that tie Fortune's native landscape to the conflicts and nuances associated with the post-emancipation Americas.

Fortune borrows from the language of vernacular and archival photography to interrogate the historical relationship of his community to photography; rooted in the landscape. The subjects of his striking portraits of coming-of-age traditions – young bull-riders, praise dancers and pageant queens – all inherit and gracefully embrace these community rituals. Fortune pays tribute to the rigour, discipline and creative flair of these cultural performances, alongside the intergenerational conversation between young people and elders handing down these traditions. In *Hardtack*, Fortune weaves documentary and personal history in a sincere expression of love and passion to the region which has nourished him personally and creatively.

**Tarrah Krajnak** (b.1979, Peru) is shortlisted for the exhibition *Shadowings. A Catalogue of Attitudes for Estranged Daughters* at Huis Marseille, Amsterdam. (28 October 2023 – 3 March 2024)

The Peruvian-American artist bends time and blurs the lines between staged self-portraiture and performance, self and other, fact and fiction. The nominated exhibition brings together her most important work spanning twenty years. Krajnak consistently uses the camera as a research tool and takes a conceptual approach to the rematerialisation of photography.

Krajnak is deeply invested in the craft and processes of photography. She continues to print all of her own photographs, using methods including pigment prints from colour film, silver gelatin prints, cyanotypes and anthotypes (images made using plant-based light-sensitive materials).

Krajnak's own body appears often, and her production sites move between the studio, fieldwork and darkroom. Krajnak turns her lens to other photography, including work by the 'masters' of photography. She antagonises the received art historical canon by restaging these key works with her own bodily interventions.

**Lindokuhle Sobekwa** (b. 1995, South Africa) is shortlisted for the book *I carry Her photo with Me*, published by MACK in 2024.

The deeply personal project began when Sobekwa found a family portrait with his older sister Ziyanda's face cut out. It remains the only photograph he has of her. One day when the siblings were seven and thirteen, she chased him and he was hit by a car and badly injured. She disappeared hours later, only returning a decade later, ill. By this time Sobekwa had become a photographer. He tried to take her portrait, but stopped when she reacted angrily. Ziyanda died soon after.

*I carry Her photo with Me* combines photographs, handwritten notes and family snapshots. Through this scrapbook-like publication Sobekwa explores the memory of his sister and the wider implications of such disappearances – a troubling part of South Africa's history. The work is part of his wider practice on fragmentation, poverty and the long-reaching ramifications of apartheid and colonialism across all levels of South African society.

#### **The 2025 Jury and statements:**

This year's Jury are: **Anne-Marie Beckman** (Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation), **Gwen Lee** (Co-founder Singapore International Photography Festival & Director DECK Photography Art Centre), **Dana Lixenberg** (photographer and Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize shortlisted artist, 2017), **Aron Mörel** (publisher, Mörel Books) and **Shoair Mavlian** (The Photographers' Gallery) as voting chair.

#### **Shoair Mavlian, Director of The Photographers' Gallery, said:**

*"The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2025 shortlist highlights the strength of photography now, with most of the work made in the last decade. The shortlisted work has been exhibited and published in Europe in the past year, and reflects the quality, strength and diversity of the wider photography scene in Europe. We look forward to sharing their work with our visitors in 2025."*

**Anne-Marie Beckmann, Director of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation, said:** *“This year’s shortlisted artists and their projects show the versatility of contemporary photography. Through a mix of photobooks and exhibitions, these international artists have an individual take on conveying deeply personal yet universal narratives. Their work powerfully demonstrates the importance of telling stories through images. Many congratulations to them all!”*

#### **Press contacts**

For further press information and image requests please contact: Adam Farrell or Alex Finch at Margaret on robyn@margaretlondon.com / adam@margaretlondon.com / alex@margaretlondon.com

For general information and enquiries about The Photographers’ Gallery, including the archive, Print Sales Gallery or Bookshop contact: [press@tpg.org.uk](mailto:press@tpg.org.uk)

For further information about Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation please contact: Isabelle Hammer on [media.foundation@deutsche-boerse.com](mailto:media.foundation@deutsche-boerse.com) or +49 69 21117014.

#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **The Photographers’ Gallery**

The Photographers’ Gallery explores how photography is connecting, captivating and radically changing our world today. The Gallery’s programme and spaces – from exhibitions, talks, workshops and digital platforms, to the galleries, shop and cafe – all explore the beauty, complexity and future of photography. Right outside the Gallery, the very best of contemporary photography is shown for free, day and night, in Soho Photography Quarter.

[tpg.org.uk](http://tpg.org.uk)

##### **Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation**

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation is a non-profit organisation, based in Frankfurt/Main, dedicated to collecting, exhibiting and promoting contemporary photography. The Foundation is responsible for the development and presentation of the Art Collection Deutsche Börse, which celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024. The collection now comprises over 2,300 photographic works by around 160 artists from 35 nations. The Foundation shows several public exhibitions a year in its exhibition space in Eschborn near Frankfurt am Main. It supports young artists through awards, scholarships and the annual Talent programme of the Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam Foam. The Foundation also works on exhibitions with international museums and institutions, as well as creating platforms for academic dialogue and research on photography.

[www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org](http://www.deutscheboersephotographyfoundation.org)

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

Founded in 1996 by The Photographers’ Gallery, and now in its 29th 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 in collaboration with Deutsche Börse Group since 2005. In 2016 the Prize was retitled the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize, following the establishment of the Foundation as a non-profit organisation, dedicated to collecting, exhibiting and promoting contemporary photography. The 2024 Prize marked 20 years of partnership between Deutsche Börse and The Photographers’ Gallery. The winner of the 2024 Prize was Lebohang Kganye for the exhibition *Haufi nyana? I’ve come to take you home* at Foam, Amsterdam in 2023. Past winners include: Samuel Fosso, Deana Lawson, Cao Fei, Mohamed Bourouissa, Susan Meiselas, Luke Willis Thompson, Dana Lixenberg, Trevor Paglen, Juergen Teller, Rineke Dijkstra, and Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin.

#### **Visitor information**

##### **Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2025: 7 March – 15 June 2025**

Monday – Wednesday 10am – 6pm

Thursday & Friday 10am – 8pm (Friday free from 5pm)

Saturday 10am – 6pm

Sunday & Bank Holidays 11am – 6pm

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