

Press Release

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SALLY MANN WINS 9TH PRIX PICTET: WORLD'S TOP PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE

Prize-winning series explores the devastating wildfires in the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia



**Downloadable press images available here: <https://bit.ly/3AhIGv2>
Images from Sally Mann's series available here: <https://bit.ly/3G07E9I>**

American artist Sally Mann was announced this evening (Wednesday 15 December 2021) as the winner of the 9th cycle of the Prix Pictet, the global award in photography and sustainability. The winner receives a cash prize of 100,000 Swiss Francs (£82,000, USD109,000).

The announcement, at a ceremony at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in London, marks the opening of a major exhibition showcasing the 12 photographic series shortlisted for the prize. Each of the shortlisted bodies of work explores the topical theme of 'Fire', the focus of this cycle of the award.

Sally Mann (b. 1951) is known for her photographs of intimate and familiar subjects rendered both sublime and disquieting. Her works explore family, social realities and the passage of time, capturing tensions between nature, history, and memory.

Mann's winning series *Blackwater* (2008-2012) is a multifaceted exploration of the devastating wildfires that enveloped the Great Dismal Swamp in southeastern Virginia, where the first slave ships docked in America. In this work, Mann draws a parallel between the all-consuming wildfires she encountered there with racial conflict in America, explaining "The fires in the Great Dismal Swamp seemed to epitomize the great fire of racial strife in America – the Civil War, emancipation, the Civil Rights Movement, in which my

family was involved, the racial unrest of the late 1960s and most recently the summer of 2020. Something about the deeply flawed American character seems to embrace the apocalyptic as solution.”

Born in Lexington, Virginia, Mann began studying photography in the late 1960s. Her first solo museum exhibition was at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, in 1977. From the late 1990s into the 2000s, Mann focused on the American South, taking photographs in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana for her series *Deep South* (2005), as well as Civil War battlefields for *Last Measure* (2000). *A Thousand Crossings*, Mann’s recent survey exhibition, explores the identity of the American South and Mann’s relationship with her place of origin. It debuted at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC in 2018 and travelled extensively. Mann is a Guggenheim fellow, three-time recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and was named “America’s Best Photographer” by TIME magazine in 2001.

In a statement issued today on behalf of the Prix Pictet Jury, Sir David King, Chairman of the Jury, said: “If ever there was a time for the Prix Pictet to take up the theme of *Fire*, that time is now. This past summer we were inundated with images of fire at its most frighteningly destructive... Of course, fire is a most capricious element, and its various faces were present in the group of shortlisted series. The jury considered an exceptional group of artists, each of whom demonstrated a highly distinctive approach to the theme, at times challenging our understanding of what photography can be. Sally Mann’s series in particular is a brilliant repurposing of historic photographic process to tell a chilling contemporary story. At the end of a rich debate, the jury were unanimous in their decision that she was a worthy winner of the 9th Prix Pictet.”

The free exhibition at the V&A of the work of the shortlisted photographers, listed below, is on show until 9 January 2022.

Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige (Lebanon)

Rinko Kawauchi (Japan)

Sally Mann (USA)

Christian Marclay (USA/ Switzerland)

Fabrice Monteiro (Belgium/Benin)

Lisa Oppenheim (USA)

Mak Remissa (Cambodia)

Carla Rippey (Mexico)

Mark Ruwedel (USA)

Brent Stirton (South Africa)

David Uzochukwu (Austria/Nigeria)

Daisuke Yokota (Japan)

The Prix Pictet was founded by the Pictet Group in 2008. Today, the award is recognised as the world’s leading prize for photography. On an approximately 18-month cycle, each theme aims to promote discussion and debate on critical issues of sustainability. The prize of 100,000 Swiss Francs is awarded for a body of work that speaks most powerfully to the theme of the award.

Each cycle of the Prix Pictet tours globally, with exhibitions in over a dozen locations, bringing the work of the shortlisted photographers to a wide international audience. The Prix Pictet award is accompanied by a full-colour book published by teNeues, covering in detail the work of the shortlisted photographers, together with selected images from the wider group of nominees, and essays on the theme of the prize by leading thinkers and writers.

The eight previous Prix Pictet winners are Benoit Aquin (Water), Nadav Kander (Earth), Mitch Epstein (Growth), Luc Delahaye (Power), Michael Schmidt (Consumption), Valérie Belin (Disorder), Richard Mosse (Space) and Joana Choumali (Hope).

The third series of the Prix Pictet podcast *A Lens on Sustainability*, released today, brings together global creators, thinkers and photographers to discuss photography and sustainability. Collaborators and guest speakers include Don McCullin, Hannah Starkey, Sebastião Salgado and Taryn Simon. The podcast is available via Spotify, Apple and the Prix Pictet website.

Prix Pictet: Fire

V&A

Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL

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Admission free

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www.vam.ac.uk

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Shortlisted Photographers

Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, born 1969 Beirut, based in France and Lebanon

Series: *Wonder Beirut*, 1998-2006

Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige are known for their long-term research projects based on personal or political documents, with a focus on secret histories, such as the disappearances during the Lebanese Civil War and a forgotten space project from the 1960s. Their artworks create thematic and formal links between photography, video, performance, installation and cinema. They are held in major private and public collections and have been presented in solo and group exhibitions in institutions around the world, such as Jeu de Paume (Paris), Guggenheim (New York), Haus der Kunst (Munich), Sharjah Art Foundation (UAE), MOMA (New York), Red Brick Art Museum (Beijing), Tate Modern (London). Together, they have directed numerous films shown in major international festivals.

Wonder Beirut is an ongoing project based on a series of postcards from the 1960s and 1970s which are still on sale in Lebanese bookshops today, even though the places they depict were destroyed or altered in the bombardments or in subsequent reconstruction programmes. The artists created a fictional character: photographer Abdallah Farah who supposedly took photographs that were used to produce these postcards – and then burned them himself to record the impact of street battles during the Lebanese civil wars.

Rinko Kawauchi, born 1972 Japan, based in Japan

Series: *Hanabi*, 2001

Rinko Kawauchi was born in 1972 in Shiga Prefecture, Japan, and now lives and works in Tokyo. In 2001, she simultaneously released a series of three photographic books published by Little More, and in 2002 she was awarded the prestigious 27th Kimura Ihei Award. Other awards include the eminent Infinity Award by the International Center of Photography in 2009, the 63rd Ministry of Cultural Affairs Newcomer of the Year award in 2012, and the 29th Shashin no Machi Higashigawa Native Japanese Artist Award in 2012. Kawauchi has exhibited in a multitude of group and solo exhibitions both within Japan and all over the world. Solo exhibitions include: Foundation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain, Paris (2005); The Photographers' Gallery, London (2006); Hasselblad Centre, Göteborg, Sweden (2007); Semear at Museu de Arte Moderna de Sao Paulo, Brazil (2007); and Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (2012).

Between 1997 and 2001, when Kawauchi was living alone in Tokyo and in the process of making her earliest works, she photographed fireworks every summer. *Hanabi* is a collection of photographs representing this body of work.

Sally Mann, born 1951 USA, based in USA

Series: *Blackwater*, 2008-2012

Sally Mann is known for her photographs of intimate and familiar subjects rendered both sublime and disquieting. Born in Lexington, Virginia, Mann began studying photography in the 1960s, attending Ansel Adams Gallery's workshops in Yosemite National Park, and Putney School and Bennington College, both in Vermont. She received a BA from Hollins College, Virginia, as well as an MA in creative writing. *A Thousand Crossings*, Mann's recent exhibition, explores the identity of the American South and Mann's relationship with her place of origin. It debuted at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC in 2018 and travelled extensively. In 2001, Mann was named "America's Best Photographer" by Time magazine. Mann's *Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs* (Little, Brown, 2015) received critical acclaim; it was named a finalist for the 2015 National Book Awards and won the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction.

For her series *Blackwater*, Mann explored the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia, documenting the vast fires and thick smoke that consumed the swamp during her visit and which seemed to epitomise the great fire of racial strife in America.

Christian Marclay, born 1955 USA, based in UK

Series: *Fire*, 2020

Christian Marclay studied at the Ecole Supérieure d'Art Visuel in Geneva from 1975–1977 and the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston from 1977–1980. Marclay's work has been shown in museums and galleries internationally, most recently in the major solo exhibition "Compositions" at Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (2019). Other exhibitions have been held at Kunsthau, Zurich (1997), the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2001), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2002), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2010), Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau (2015) and Sapporo Art Museum (2017). Marclay received the Golden Lion award for best artist at the 54th Venice Biennale for his 24-hour virtuosic video piece, *The Clock*, which was first shown at White Cube in London in 2010.

Fire is a series of photographic prints that began as small-scale collages featuring fragments from comic books, movie stills and images found on the internet. *Fire*, 2020, is a video animation made from paper cut-outs from comic book illustrations of fire. More than 1,500 photographs shown in rapid succession suggest a flip book, creating the illusion of a flickering fire.

Fabrice Monteiro, born 1972 Belgium, based in Senegal

Series: *The Prophecy*, 2013 - 2020

Fabrice Monteiro is an Agouda, the descendant of Brazilian slaves with Portuguese names. He was born in Belgium, grew up in Benin, and now lives and works in Dakar, Senegal. Monteiro worked as a model for around a decade before becoming a photographer in 2007. Fabrice Monteiro's images are at the intersection between photojournalism and fashion photography.

His series *The Prophecy* began in 2013 when Monteiro returned to Africa after several years and discovered that devastating pollution had overtaken the continent. The series was based on nine environmental problems in Senegal, including forest fires, plastic waste and oil spills, and was gradually expanded to address worldwide pollution. This theme is personified in the photos of various figures who were inspired by West African masquerades and animism. The beautiful and distressing figures were created in collaboration with the Senegalese fashion designer Doulsy, who devised couture-like costumes made of trash and natural materials.

Lisa Oppenheim, born 1975 USA, based in USA

Series: *Smoke*, 2021

Lisa Oppenheim received a BA in Art and Semiotics from Brown University in 1998 and an MFA in Film/Video from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College in 2002. Oppenheim's work has been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout Europe and the United States. Her work is held in major museum collections such as the Guggenheim Museum; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam; and the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, among others. In 2014, she won both the Shpilman International Prize for Excellence in Photography awarded by the Israel Museum and the The Aimia | AGO Photography Prize awarded by the Art Gallery of Ontario. Solo exhibitions have been held at MOCA Cleveland and the MCA Denver in 2017; The FRAC Champagne-Ardenne in Reims, France in 2015; the Kunstverein in Hamburg in 2014 and the Grazer Kunstverein in 2013.

In Oppenheim's series *Smoke*, the presence of fire is indicated by smoke even if it remains unseen. Using found images in newspapers or the internet, Oppenheim 'reprocesses' the photographs in the darkroom, using the light of a match to expose the negative.

Mak Remissa, born 1970 Cambodia, based in Phnom Penh

Series: *Left 3 Days*, 2014

Mak Remissa is regarded as one of the most successful Khmer photographers of his generation. In 1995, he graduated in Fine Art and Photography at the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh. He credits his first and third place awards in the 1997 National Photojournalism competition as a major catalyst in his career. Currently working as a photojournalist for the European Pressphoto Agency (EPA), his work is often seen on the international news wires. His 2005 fine art photography exhibition, titled "The fish eats the ant", was shown in Phnom Penh galleries, the Angkor Photo Festival in Kobe, Japan, in 2013, and GETXOPHOTO festival 2014 in Bilbao, Spain. Remissa has exhibited his fine art photography in Cambodia, France, Canada, US, Australia, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, China, Japan, Singapore, and Myanmar.

Left 3 Days recalls Remissa's memories from his childhood during the Cambodian genocide, particularly on 17 April 1975 when Khmer Rouge troops took control and occupied Phnom Penh.

Carla Rippey, born 1950 USA, based in Mexico City

Series: *Immolation*, 2009-2019

Carla Rippey is an American artist based in Mexico City. Her work seeks to expand the margins of drawing and graphics. She works extensively from her collection of archives (images from photographs, postcards, family albums, newspapers, magazines, books and internet sources), which she translates into drawings, artist's books and prints. She was educated in Nebraska, La Sorbonne in Paris, The State University of New York and the University of Chile in Santiago. Rippey's solo shows include the Museum of Modern Art, Mexico, The National University Museum "El Chopo", the National Print Museum, the galleries Arte Mexicano and Arróniz Arte Contemporáneo in Mexico City, as well as the Graphics Institute of Oaxaca, Seguela Gallery in Guangzhou, China, and the Mavi Museum in Santiago, Chile.

Her series *Immolation* began in 2010 with a series of artist's books made from images of fire collected in magazines, newspapers and the internet: juxtaposing images of volcanoes and people set on fire (lynchings in Mexico), throwing fire (Palestinians) or people setting themselves on fire in acts of desperation. To make the collages, Rippey transfers photocopies to Japanese papers using solvent and an etching press.

Mark Ruwedel, born 1954 USA, based in USA

Series: *LA Fires*, 2017-2020

Mark Ruwedel was born in Pennsylvania in 1954 and lives in Long Beach, California. He received his MFA from Concordia University in Montreal in 1983 and taught there from 1984 to 2001. He is currently Professor Emeritus at California State University. In 2014 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Scotiabank Photography Award, and was short-listed for the Deutsche Borse Photography Prize in 2019. Ruwedel is represented in museums throughout the world, including the J. Paul Getty Museum; Los Angeles County Art Museum; Metropolitan Museum, New York; Yale Art Gallery; National Gallery of Art, Washington; National Gallery of Canada; Stichting Foundation, Brussels; Maison européenne de la photographie, Paris; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Ruwedel's work was the subject of an Artists Room at Tate Modern in 2018. Recent solo exhibitions include: Large Glass, London, 2020-21; California Historical Society, San Francisco, 2019; Museum of Art and Culture of Marrakech, Morocco, 2018; and Gallery Luisotti, Santa Monica, CA, 2018.

LA Fires is a series of photographs selected from Ruwedel's four-part, in-progress project titled "Los Angeles: Landscapes of Four Ecologies". The photographs document the La Tuna fire in 2017, which is considered to be the largest in the history of the city.

Brent Stirton, born 1969 South Africa, based in USA

Series: *Burns Capital Of The World*, 2013

Brent Stirton is a special correspondent for Getty Images and regular contributor to National Geographic magazine. Stirton specialises in documentary work, generally photographing at the intersection of man and the environment. He regularly works for Human Rights Watch, The Environment Investigation

Agency and LAGA, as well as the Gates and Clinton Foundations and various UN groups. He has received many awards, including the Overseas Press Club, The National Magazine Awards, The Peabody awards, Pictures of the Year International as well multiple awards from the World Press Photo Foundation. His photos have appeared in the New York Times Magazine, Le Figaro and GQ amongst others.

Burns Capital Of The World documents young victims recovering from severe burns in India. Despite over six million people being burnt every year, India has very few burns facilities at clinics and hospitals and the best of these are very expensive.

David Uzochukwu, born 1998 Austria, based in Germany / Belgium

Series: *In The Wake*, 2015-2020

David Uzochukwu is an Austrian and Nigerian artist. Growing up in Luxembourg and Belgium, Uzochukwu delved into self-portraiture at age thirteen, and began developing a largely digital practice. This led to vivid collaborations with artists FKA twigs and Iris van Herpen, and a commission for the World Wildlife Fund. Their self-portrait series A FAMILIAR RUIN was included in group show Dey Your Lane! at Bozar (2016). Further exhibitions include Photo Vogue Festival (2018, 2019) and The New Black Vanguard at Rencontres d'Arles (2021). Uzochukwu was nominated for an ICP Infinity Award in 2019 and named 'One to Watch' by British Journal of Photography the following year. Uzochukwu's first short film, GÖTTERDAMMERUNG, premiered at Max-Ophuls-Preis in 2021.

In The Wake is a series of portraits set within a landscape on fire. With all historic and geographic markers removed from each image, the bodies in the photographs are submerged into the landscape and removed from the confines of their social reality.

Daisuke Yokota, born 1983 Japan, based in Japan

Series: *Matter / Burn Out*, 2016

Daisuke Yokota was born in Saitama prefecture in 1983. Awards include the Grand Prix at the 2nd "1_WALL" Photography Competition in 2010, the Foam Paul Huf Award in 2016 and the 45th Kimura Ihei Photography Award in 2019. He has published numerous photography collections including MATTER/BURN OUT, VERTIGO, and Tarachine. His major exhibitions include Site/Cloud at Foam photography museum (2014) and Shape of Light at Tate Modern (2018).

Matter / Burn Out documents the burning of Yokota's large-scale installation of photographic prints, titled 'Matter', at Aichi Triennial held in August 2016. This 'burn out' process was documented in 4,000 photographs, whereby the data was processed, manipulated and revived to form the new work titled *Matter / Burn Out*.

About the V&A

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity, spanning 5000 years of human creativity. It was established in 1852 to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, its purpose is to champion creative industry, inspire the next generation, and spark everyone's imagination.

About the Prix Pictet Podcast: A Lens on Sustainability

The third series of the Prix Pictet podcast, *A Lens on Sustainability*, consists of five episodes in which global creators, thinkers and photographers discuss photography and sustainability. The episodes are themed: Power, Oceans, Workspace, Food, and Regeneration. Each episode approaches its selected theme with a photographer, an on-location interview, and a panel discussion. The podcast is available via Spotify, Apple and the Prix Pictet website.

Episode 1: Power

In the 19th century, Thomas A. Edison said: "I'd put my money on the sun and solar energy" – but what does power mean for sustainability in the 21st century? Join acclaimed photographer, Taryn Simon, co-founder of the Eden Project, Sir Tim Smit, and leading economist, Baroness Minouche Shafik, as they discuss what power means to them and how we can wield it for good.

Episode 2: Oceans

Over 70% of the earth is covered in water, and 70% of global trade passes through the planet's five oceans. But can modern society learn to love, respect and nurture oceans or only destroy them? This episode features renowned author and historian, Professor David Abulafia, environmental journalist, Laura Trethewey, twice Prix Pictet-shortlisted photographer, Chris Jordan, and chief executive of Surfers Against Sewage, Hugo Tagholm.

Episode 3: Work

We spend about 10,000 days of our lives working. Over 3.3 billion people – more than half the world's population – are currently in paid employment. But what we do for a salary, how we do it and, crucially, where we do it is facing the biggest upheaval in a century. Guests include Professor Herminia Ibarra of the London Business School, the Prix Pictet-nominated photographer, Saskia Groneberg, and architect of the new Lambeth Palace Library, Clare Wright.

Episode 4: Food

The hungry human loves to look at food, relish its appearance. And while the process of food production is often depicted as wholesome, the reality is the food chain is something the end consumer knows little about. Is our relationship with food unhealthy? If so, what must change? Join leading authorities on the subject, Baroness Rosie Boycott and Wendell Steavenson, and the ground-breaking photographer, Mishka Henner, to help us answer those questions.

Episode 5: Regeneration

Regeneration is the process of renewal and restoration – something the world is in desperate need of right now. A restoration of hope, a renewal of our physical selves, a regeneration of art and artists. Can we still dream? Can we still imagine the future with optimism? In the last episode of the series, we are joined by the distinguished historian, Peter Frankopan, the twice Prix Pictet-shortlisted photographer Brent Stirton, and 92-year-old Ghanaian photojournalist, James Barnor.