

# GRUBER AWARD

## New DGPh Section Award Honors the Photographic Art Market

Cologne, May 11, 2026, On the occasion of its 25th anniversary, the Art, Market & Law Section of the German Photographic Society (DGPh) announces the launch of a new award: the Gruber Award.

With this award, the Section is, for the first time in the DGPh's 75-year history, placing a deliberate focus on an area that has been of central importance to the development of photography, yet has rarely stood at the center of public recognition: the photographic art market.

### Honoring Mediation, Commitment and Responsibility

The Gruber Award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to photography as a cultural asset – in particular gallery owners, collectors and patrons who act as mediators between artistic production, the market and institutions.

They create visibility, foster careers, preserve works and, in doing so, have a lasting impact on the perception and development of photography. The award acknowledges this often behind-the-scenes, yet essential work.

### In Memoriam Renate and L. Fritz Gruber

The award is named in honor of L. Fritz Gruber, co-founder of the DGPh in 1951 and long-standing board member, as well as his wife Renate Gruber, who together built one of the most important photographic collections of their time.

As co-initiator of Photokina, collector and cultural mediator, L. Fritz Gruber embodied the connection between photography, the market and the public sphere. Renate Gruber played a vital role in developing and maintaining the collection, which today is housed at the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, where it forms a central part of the museum's photographic holdings.

The Gruber Award consciously builds on their shared legacy and brings the tradition they shaped into the present.

**Geschäftsführender Vorstand:**  
Ruediger Glatz (Vorsitzender)  
Michael Kaune (stellvertretender Vorsitzender)  
Rainer Schlautmann – Stephan J. Schulz  
Frank Schumacher – Ira Stehmann

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## Launch During the Anniversary Year

The inaugural presentation of the Gruber Award will take place during Paris Photo Week in November 2026 as the central event of the anniversary celebrations of the DGPh Art, Market & Law Section. Members of the Section are invited to nominate candidates for the award.

The recipient will be selected by an independent jury chaired by art market expert Simone Klein and Section Chairman Thomas Gerwers. The jury will consist of representatives from the fields of photography, the art market, collecting and institutions.

“With the introduction of this award, the Section is making a conscious statement: photography unfolds its cultural impact through the interplay of artistic practice, the market, collecting and mediation,” says Thomas Gerwers, Chairman of the DGPh Art, Market & Law Section. “The Gruber Award makes this connection visible – and honors those who shape it in a significant way.”

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## Art, Market & Law Section

Founded in 2001, the Art, Market & Law Section of the German Photographic Society today counts more than 400 members and is one of the largest and most active sections within the DGPh. It understands photography not only as an artistic or documentary medium, but also as a cultural asset operating within the dynamic relationship between the market, institutions and legal frameworks.

Its work focuses on issues relating to the art market, galleries and auctions, the valuation and collecting of photographic works, as well as legal topics such as copyright and image rights. In the age of digitalization and artificial intelligence, these issues are becoming increasingly significant.

The Section brings together professionals from museums, galleries, collections, agencies, legal practice and photography itself. Its aim is to identify developments in the photography market at an early stage, critically accompany them and place them into a broader cultural context.

Through events, discussion formats and initiatives supporting contemporary positions, the Section sees itself as a platform for exchange, analysis and networking – and as a driving force for the future of photography within the context of the market and society.

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