

PRESS RELEASE

Cologne, 20 August 2026

We Celebrate Photography. 75 Years of the DGPh

DGPh Photography Awards on October 24, 2026, in Cologne

Under the theme “We Celebrate Photography,” the German Photographic Society (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie e. V., DGPh) is celebrating its 75th anniversary with a year-long participatory program. The program began on April 18 with the *Moment of Exposure* photo campaign and continues with the open call *Tomorrow Will Be Yesterday* (submissions accepted until August 21, 2026, via pictor.com). On September 19, curated works from all submissions will be presented in the Ballroom at Fotografiska Berlin—location and collaboration partner of the DGPh—on a large-format LED wall accompanied by live music, coinciding with the final weekend of the Anton Corbijn exhibition. The selection will be made by an international jury comprising Kathy Ryan, recipient of the 2025 Dr. Erich Salomon Award, Claire Ducresson-Boët, Wolfgang Zurborn, Thomas Gerwers, and Ralph Baiker.

On the same day, the symposium *Photobook 2026* at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Unter den Linden will explore the current state and possibilities of the photobook as a medium from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Speakers include publisher Gerhard Steidl, Markus Schaden (The PhotoBookMuseum), book designer and artist Helmut Völter, and photographer Nikita Teryoshin. The symposium will conclude with a panel discussion featuring Gerhard Steidl, Thomas Gust, Nicola von Velsen (Hatje Cantz), Helmut Völter, Markus Schaden, and Manfred Heiting. Participation can be booked via the booking link.

On October 24, 2026, the DGPh will celebrate the culture of photography by presenting four of its prestigious awards at the Museum für Angewandte Kunst Köln (MAKK): the Cultural Award, the Dr. Erich Salomon Award, the DGPh Manfred Heiting Medal of Curatorial Excellence in Photography, and the Otto Steinert Prize. DGPh Photography Fellowship Award.

With the DGPh Photography Awards, the society, founded in 1951, emphasizes the social and cultural relevance of photography and related media. The DGPh is active

Geschäftsführender Vorstand:
Ruediger Glatz (Vorsitzender)
Michael Kaune (stellvertretender Vorsitzender)
Rainer Schlautmann – Stephan J. Schulz
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across the diverse fields of application of photography in art, science, education, publishing, business, and politics.

“We are proud to be able to look back on this 75-year history, on what our members have created—and at the same time, we see it as an inspiration to meet our responsibilities anew in these times of change, which also encompass the medium of photography, and to realign our society accordingly,” says Ruediger Glatz, Chair of the DGPh Executive Board.

Four Awards in One Day

Cultural Award to Photographer, Journalist, and University Professor Timm Rautert

With its Cultural Award, the DGPh’s highest distinction, the society honors the life’s work of Timm Rautert, which combines documentary precision with conceptual depth. For decades, Rautert has played a decisive role in shaping German photography through his photographic work, his journalistic practice, and his teaching as a professor of photography. The DGPh’s partner for the award is WhiteWall Media GmbH, which is supporting the prize with a generous sponsorship contribution.

Dr. Erich Salomon Award to Photographer Jane Evelyn Atwood

With the Dr. Erich Salomon Award, the DGPh honors French-American photographer Jane Evelyn Atwood. She has consistently expanded the possibilities of the documentary image; for decades, her work has focused on people on the margins of society and stands as an exemplary form of committed and ethically reflective photography. The DGPh’s partner for this award is Leica Camera AG, which is supporting the distinction by presenting the award recipient with a Leica camera.

DGPh Manfred Heiting Medal of Curatorial Excellence in Photography to Curator Sarah Greenough and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The award goes to the National Gallery of Art, which, through the establishment of its own Department of Photographs in 1990, established photography as an equal collecting discipline alongside painting, sculpture, and prints. It also honors the department’s founding curator, Sarah Greenough, whose dedication and outstanding curatorial achievements played a decisive role in shaping this development.

Otto Steinert Prize to Samuel Solazzo

The Otto Steinert Prize. DGPh Photography Grant provides a platform for deserving project ideas. At the Photography Awards in Cologne, this year’s award recipient, Samuel Solazzo, will be introduced. For his project *A Collection of Valuable Copies*, the photographer, who lives in Leipzig, will receive a fellowship of €5,000.

Recognition awards go to Clarita Maria for the photographic project *Xola n’abantu* and Elliott Kreyenberg for his project proposal *War Flowers*. More information here.

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- Cultural Award 2026 – [Download via DGPh website](#)
- DGPh Manfred Heiting Medal of Curatorial Excellence in Photography 2026 – [Download via DGPh website](#)
- Dr. Erich Salomon Award 2026 – [Download via DGPh website](#)
- Otto Steinert Prize 2026 – [Download via DGPh website](#)
- 75 Years of the DGPh – The Society Celebrates Photography

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2026—a milestone closely connected to the history of photokina. Its origins are closely associated with L. Fritz Gruber, who, as curator of the first photokina in Cologne in 1950, gave the trade fair a cultural dimension from the outset and transformed it into an international meeting place through the *World Exhibition of Photography*. At a time of cultural isolation, Cologne thus became a center for photographic exchange. It was from this combination of industry, exhibition practice, and artistic and scholarly aspirations that the DGPh emerged in 1951.

At the founding meeting on May 15, 1951, at Cologne City Hall, August Sander, Ernst Leitz, Herbert List, Otto Steinert, Adolf Lazi, and Liselotte Strelow, among others, were appointed full members. Edward Steichen, then head of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, became a corresponding member. This gave the young society international standing from the very beginning. To this day, the DGPh sees itself as an open forum for everyone who understands photography as an art form, cultural asset, and medium of society.

Information on the Awards

Since 1959, the **Cultural Award** has honored living individuals for significant achievements in the field of photography. The award consists of a certificate and a gold-framed optical lens designed by Prof. Ewald Mataré (1887–1965) and is presented annually as the highest distinction of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie. Recipients of the Cultural Award include Ann and Jürgen Wilde (2025), Gerhard Steidl (2024), Ute Mahler and Werner Mahler (2023), Hans-Michael Koetzle, Ute Eskildsen, Helga Paris, Sarah Moon, Gottfried Jäger, Klaus Honnef, Stephen Shore, Wolfgang Tillmans, Wim Wenders, F. C. Gundlach, Daido Moriyama, Irving Penn, William Klein, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Man Ray.

The **DGPh Manfred Heiting Medal of Curatorial Excellence in Photography** was initiated by internationally renowned photography expert Manfred Heiting (DGPh) and is supported by him. It was presented for the first time in 2025 to Dutch curator Mattie Boom and the Rijksmuseum. The award recognizes an institution as well as the

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outstanding achievements of an internationally distinguished individual who has built a high-quality collection there and made it accessible to an interested public through additional research, exhibitions, and publications.

The **Dr. Erich Salomon Award** of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie has been presented since 1971 for an “exemplary application of photography in journalism.” It also commemorates the great photographer of the Weimar Republic, Dr. Erich Salomon, whose work provided important impetus for modern photojournalism. The award consists of a certificate and a Leica camera and is presented annually. Recipients have included print media, organizations, and television professionals, as well as, since 1985, individuals who have made outstanding contributions to photography in journalism or have achieved exceptional accomplishments in photojournalism. They include STERN (1971), Robert Frank (1985), Barbara Klemm (1989), Mary Ellen Mark (1994), Reporters sans Frontières (2002), Martin Parr (2006), Letizia Battaglia (2007), Paolo Pellegrin (2013), Josef Koudelka (2015), Stephanie Sinclair (2019), Chris Killip (2020), Hans-Jürgen Burkard (2021), Susan Meiselas (2022), Rafał Milach (2023), Andrea Diefenbach (2024), and Kathy Ryan (2025).

The **Otto Steinert Prize** is presented by the DGPh's Bild section and supports outstanding emerging positions in professional photography. Announced every two years, it is intended for photographic projects yet to be realized; there are no stylistic or thematic restrictions. The prize carries a total endowment of €6,000: a €5,000 fellowship and two recognition awards of €500 each. First presented in 1979, it was announced for the 23rd time in 2026. The award is named after Otto Steinert (1915–1978), physician, photographer, and professor of photography, who is regarded as one of the most influential teachers and advocates of photography in Germany.

In 1947, Steinert opened his first studio for fine-art photography in Saarbrücken. The following year, he took over the photography class at the Staatliche Saarländische Schule für Kunst und Handwerk, becoming its director in 1952. In 1959, he began teaching at the Folkwang School of Design in Essen, having already been appointed professor in Saarbrücken in 1954.

About the DGPh

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie (DGPh) is a registered association with approximately 1,200 members throughout Germany and is based in Cologne. The DGPh is committed to promoting photography as a cultural asset and thereby strengthening its social and cultural significance. Its activities focus on communicating photographic topics to professional audiences and society at large, as well as on reflecting upon current developments such as digitization, artificial intelligence, and new image media.

Its work encompasses the diverse fields of application of photography in art, science, education, publishing, business, and politics. As a central institution for communicating groundbreaking achievements in photography, the DGPh presents several prestigious awards each year, including the Cultural Award, the Dr. Erich

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Salomon Award, and the DGPh Manfred Heiting Medal of Curatorial Excellence in Photography.

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