

Press Information
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Culture Award 2021 of the German Photography Society goes to the collector and founder of *The Walther Collection* art foundation, Artur Walther

The Culture Award 2021 of the German Photography Society (DGPh) goes to the art collector Artur Walther, who since the 1990s has been collecting works by photographers from Africa and Asia and, through this, rendering a considerable contribution towards getting their works known in the USA and Europe.

Having grown up in Burlafingen, a district of Neu-Ulm, the German-American chose that location to open *The Walther Collection* campus in June 2010. Here, in two repurposed typical suburban architectures and a new development comprising a subterranean exhibition space, the collection presents its extensive holdings of modern and contemporary African photography and video art, recent Chinese and Japanese photography and media art, along with historical photography of the 19th century from Europe and Africa and quotidian photography worldwide. In addition, in dynamic interplay with the parent establishment, *Project Space* (which opened in New York in 2011) presented individual aspects and new areas of interest of the collection until 2020. A temporary exhibition in Arles in 2014 displayed topically associated photographs from all sections of the collection for the first time; since then, *The Walther Collection* has been able to present fifteen such international temporary exhibitions globally.

The collection encompasses works by relevant photographers of different cultures and periods, including Ai Weiwei, Richard Avedon, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Samuel Fosso, David Goldblatt, Huang Yan, Seydou Keïta, Sabelo Mlangeni, Santu Mofokeng, Daido Moriyama, Zanele Muholi, Jo Ractliffe, Rong Rong, August Sander, Malick Sidibé, Guy Tillim and Yang Fudong. Frequently, they use their works in order to query the sociocultural stereotypes that form around concepts of race, gender, sexuality, class and nationality. One of the central human questions, that concerning identity and its societal construction, is investigated by *The Walther Collection* through its focus on portrait photography and self-depictions in particular. A further focus lies on specific aspects of the Anthropocene, primarily those within landscape and the urban and public space, which serve as a foundation for collective action and individuality.

The collector and patron Artur Walther can be associated with one concern: “Artur not only collects our pictures, he brings us all together,” pronounces South African photographer and activist Zanele Muholi. Through this, the collector renders an

Geschäftsführender Vorstand:
Ditmar Schädel - Hanns-Peter Frentz
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important contribution towards broadening the West's perspective by making photographic positions from Africa and Asia visible, and equally towards building up global networks of photography and the people associated with it.

Jointly with Steidl, *The Walther Collection* additionally runs a comprehensive publication programme, which presents in-depth research by important theoreticians, critics and art historians in exhibition catalogues and artist's monographs. Significant reference works have been published, including two monographs on Samuel Fosso, the *Black Photo Album* by Santu Mofokeng, as well as books on Zanele Muholi and Jo Ractliffe. *Imagining Everyday Life*, a comprehensive stock-take comprising scientific essays on amateur and quotidian photography, was distinguished with the Paris Photo / Aperture Photobook Award "Catalogue of the Year" in 2020. 17 publications in total have come out so far.

The handing over of the Culture Award to Artur Walther will take place in Düsseldorf in April 2022. Further information to follow.

The Culture Award has been handed over since 1959 and is the most important award of the German Photography Society. It has been generously sponsored by WhiteWall since 2020. With it, the DGPh distinguishes living personalities for major achievements in the field of photography. Recipients of the DGPh Culture Award include Ute Eskildsen, Sarah Moon, Helga Paris, Gottfried Jäger, Klaus Honnef, Stephen Shore, Wolfgang Tillmans, Stephen Sasson, Wim Wenders, F.C. Gundlach, Daido Moriyama, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Man Ray.

You can obtain press images along with a download of the Press Release via the DGPh website ([Aktuelles/Presse/Kulturpreis 2021](#)) or alternatively via the DGPh office.

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