Artist Duo Wins 2015 Deutsche Börse Photography Prize

Mikhael Subotzky and Patrick Waterhouse won for their series *Ponte City*

Mikhael Subotzky & Patrick Waterhouse, Courtesy Goodman Gallery
Ponte City from Yeoville Ridge, from the series *Ponte City*, 2008.

South African photographer Mikhael Subotzky and British artist Patrick Waterhouse won the prestigious Deutsche Börse Photography Prize.

The duo shared the prize of £30,000 (around $46,150) for their book, *Ponte City*, which documents the rise and fall of Africa's tallest residential skyscraper. The artists began photographing the iconic 54-story Johannesburg landmark in 2008. The building was originally conceived for the white elite under apartheid rule but gradually became a hub for gangs and violent crimes.

Subotzky and Waterhouse photographed the remaining residents "floor above floor and flat by flat," the artists wrote, "lives lived stacked together and on top of each other… [revealing] layers of history as well as individual fragments of interest."

"It took some time to keep going back to some apartments but every resident was amazingly helpful after we had explained to them what we were doing," Subotzky and Waterhouse told TIME last year.

"This long-term, creatively ambitious project, serves as a compelling metaphor for South African society as it transitioned from Apartheid to post-Apartheid era and importantly explores the wider issues relating to the global migration of peoples today," said the non-voting chair of the jury Brett Rogers, director of The Photographers' Gallery in London, where the award was revealed.

This year, the jury included Chris Boot, executive director of Aperture Foundation, Dutch artist Rineke Dijkstra, Peter Gorschlüter, deputy director of MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, and Anne Marie Beckmann, curator of the Art Collection Deutsche Börse.

The other shortlisted artists were Nikolai Bakharev, Zanele Muholi and Viviane Sassen.

Russian photographer **Nikolai Bakharev** was nominated for his exhibition at the 55th Biennale of Art in Venice. Trained as a mechanic, Bakharev went on to become a Communal Services Factory photographer during the Soviet era. His intimate yet spontaneous portraits of beach goers in Russia taken during the 80s, when photographs containing nudity were strictly forbidden, offer a glimpse into the everyday life under a repressive regime.

A self-titled visual activist, **Zanele Muholi** was named a finalist for her publication, *Faces and Phases 2006−2014.*Her black and white portraits of black lesbians in South Africa call to attention the homophobic violence in the post-Apartheid country.

Dutch artist **Viviane Sassen** was shortlisted for her exhibition *Umbra* at Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam. The project, titled after the Latin word for shadow, plays with light and dark contrast alongside vivid colors characteristic of Sassen's work, blurring the boundary between fiction and reality.

The annual Deutsche Börse Photography Prize was established by The Photographers' Gallery in London in 1996 and supports a wide range of photography genres including reportage, portraiture, fine art and multimedia. Past winners include Richard Mosse, Paul Graham, Rineke Dijkstra, Jürgen Teller and Richard Billingham.

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