

VALÉRIE BELIN WINS 6TH PRIX PICTET

Awarded by Honorary President Kofi Annan at a Ceremony at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris



Valérie Belin, Still life with mask, 2014 © Prix Pictet Ltd

Valérie Belin was this evening [Thursday 12 November] announced as winner of the sixth Prix Pictet photography prize, selected from a shortlist of twelve. Valérie Belin was chosen for her series *Still life*, 2014. The prize, with a value of 100,000 Swiss Francs (USD100,000, GBP66,000, EUR92,500), is sponsored and led by Swiss wealth and asset managers, the Pictet Group.

Born 1964 in Boulogne-Billancourt, Valérie Belin trained at the École Nationale des Beaux-arts in Bourges and studied the philosophy of art at the Université Panthéon-Sorbonne in Paris. In 2015 she presented solo exhibitions at Centre Pompidou (Paris) and Edwynn Houk Gallery (New York). On her series *Still life*, 2014, she said, 'these still lifes offer a jarring commentary on the effects of our obsession with cheap objects, for not only is their material, plastic, emblematic of the wasteful use of raw materials, but it also represents a grotesque kind of immortality because of its non-biodegradable nature – an immortality that, one could say, is slowly killing the planet.'

Kofi Annan, Honorary President of Prix Pictet, announced the prize at a reception for the opening of *Prix Pictet 'Disorder'*, an exhibition of the work of the twelve shortlisted photographers at the **Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris**, which opens to the public on **Friday 13 November**.

The shortlist of twelve photographers is:

Ilit Azoulay, born Jaffa 1972, lives and works Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Israel

Valérie Belin, born Boulogne-Billancourt 1964, lives and works Paris, France

Matthew Brandt, born Los Angeles 1982, lives and works Los Angeles, USA

Maxim Dondyuk, born Slavuta 1983, lives and works Kiev, Ukraine

Alixandra Fazzina, born London 1974, lives and works London, UK

Ori Gersht, born Tel Aviv 1967, lives and works London, UK

John Gossage, born New York 1946, lives and works Washington DC, USA

Pieter Hugo, born Johannesburg 1976, lives and works Cape Town, South Africa

Gideon Mendel, born Johannesburg 1959, lives and works London, UK

Sophie Ristelhueber, born Paris 1949, lives and works Paris, France

Brent Stirton, born Durban 1969, lives and works New York, USA

Yang Yongliang, born Shanghai 1980, lives and works Shanghai, China

Kofi Annan, Honorary President of Prix Pictet, said, 'Our times are defined by Disorder – disorder, at the very moment in human history when we almost dared imagine that no problem was beyond our capacity to solve.

Remarkable advances in medicine have helped to eradicate scores of formerly fatal diseases. We are capable of breathtaking feats of engineering – raising mighty dams, flood defences and soaring earthquake-proof buildings. Our mastery over manifold aspects of life has deluded us into thinking that we have bent the planet to our will. Yet the fragility of that assumption is exposed with each new pandemic, earthquake, tsunami or drought. With each passing day our illusion of order is shattered.'

Speaking on behalf of the Jury, **Professor Sir David King**, Chair of the Judges, said, 'Disorder is a powerful and complex theme, for which over 700 photographers were nominated, many responding with clarity and brilliance. In fact the quality of the nominations made the Jury debate one of the toughest we have had. Any one of the twelve artists nominated would have been a worthy winner.'

Founded in 2008 by the Pictet Group in Switzerland, the Prix Pictet has gained global recognition for showcasing leading photographers' contributions to the debate about the most pressing social and environmental challenges of today. The five previous laureates were Benoît Aquin, Nadav Kander, Mitch Epstein, Luc Delahaye and Michael Schmidt.

To coincide with the opening of the exhibition in Paris, a book entitled *Disorder* will be published, including images by all twelve shortlisted photographers (and selected others), together with a foreword by Kofi Annan and essays by the British historian Simon Schama, Pakistani novelist Kamila Shamsie and Turkish author and academic, Elif Shafak.

After Paris, the exhibition of the shortlisted images will tour the world, beginning at MAXXI in Rome and then travelling to major international museums and galleries including the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum, Geneva; Westbau, Zurich; CAB (Contemporary Art Brussels), the Palau Robert, Barcelona and the Museum of Photographic Art, San Diego. Further venues will be announced shortly.

Prix Pictet 'Disorder'

13 November – 13 December 2015

Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris

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Notes to Editors

The members of the Jury for the sixth cycle of the Prix Pictet are:

Professor Sir David King, UK Foreign Secretary's Special Representative for Climate Change (SRCC) (Chair of the Jury)

Peter Aspden, arts writer, *Financial Times*

Martin Barnes, Senior Curator, Photographs, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Philippe Bertherat, Former Managing Partner, Pictet Group

Edward Burtynsky, photographer

Emmanuelle de L'Ecotais, Curator of Photography, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris

Nili Goren, Curator of Photography, Tel Aviv Museum of Art

Wang Shu, architect

Elisabeth Sussman, Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.