

Press Release

Paris, 8 November 2019

Somfy Photography Award 2020 nominees announced

It has just been announced, during *De Donkere Kamer Parijs*, that the following nine photographers have been nominated for the Somfy Photography Award (SPA) 2020, with the theme 'Gimme Shelter': Roderik Henderson (NL), Géraldine Jeanjean (NL), Stephan Keppel (NL), Matthieu Litt (B), Antoinette Nausikaã (NL), Martine Stig (NL), Dustin Thierry (NL), Maarten Tromp (NL), and Jordi Ruiz Cirera (UK/Mex)

Over the coming months, these nominees will have the opportunity to compete for the SPA 2020 first and second place prizes by creating unique, new work based on the theme 'Gimme Shelter'. This new work will be exhibited in October 2020, when the winners will also be announced.

Somfy Photography Award SPA

The SPA is a biennial international photography award that allows professional photographers to create new work. Based on their work, a jury of international experts will choose the first and second place award winners. These awards are cash prizes of €15,000 and €5,000 respectively. All shortlisted photographers receive a budget of €2,000 to create new work.

With the Somfy Photography Award, the Somfy corporation, which operates on an international level, wants to express its contribution to the comfort and well-being of people in an inspiring and creative manner. As of this year, the Nederlands Fotomuseum has entered into a partnership with the Somfy Photography Award through which it wants to contribute to the development of photography in the Netherlands.

The selection

The members of the selection committee are Frits Gierstberg (curator at the Nederlands Fotomuseum), Huub Koene (founder of the SPA), and Joachim Naudts (curator FoMu, Antwerp). The committee has remarked:

“We’re very excited about the high standard of the many entries received, and the wide variety of ideas and proposals centred around this year’s theme. Based on the quality of the work and the project proposals, how they relate to the theme, and the photographers’ CVs, we have selected these nine nominees.

We believe that the SPA will offer these professional photographers the opportunity to focus on a new project and to take another step forward in their career.”

Announcing the winners

On 2 October 2020, a jury of international experts consisting of Frits Gierstberg (chairman), Dana Lixenberg (photographer), and Thomas Seelig (curator/head of the photo collection of Museum Folkwang in Essen, Germany) will announce the first and second prize winners. This will take place in Rotterdam’s Van Nelle Factory, where all of the nominees’ work will be on display in the ‘Somfy Photography Award 2020: Gimme Shelter’ exhibition.

About the theme ‘Gimme Shelter’

The theme of the Somfy Photography Award 2020 is ‘Gimme Shelter’: ‘Shelter’ is an overarching, all-embracing, basic need for people and animals: protection, shelter, safety, and comfort. ‘Shelter’ is not just manifested in factories, offices, schools, houses, and hospitals, but also in the cardboard box of a homeless person, in a lovers’ embrace, in the mother who cherishes her child. Comfort, well-being, and sustainability are the three most important qualities that Somfy contributes to buildings. These terms represent both ‘The Art of Somfy’ and the most important requirements in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

The partnership between Somfy Nederland and the Nederlands Fotomuseum

As of 2019, Somfy Nederland became a corporate partner of the Nederlands Fotomuseum. The Somfy Photography Award is the main expression of this partnership. The effects of light and how it can be used are the key points of interest for both the Nederlands Fotomuseum and Somfy Nederland. This is a telling illustration of their symbolic connection. The Nederlands Fotomuseum and Somfy are both committed to photography. Photographers are an essential part of society; through light, they capture the world we live in, stop time, and focus our attention.

“Somfy is working on innovative, technical products that operate everything related to natural light and light management in buildings, and thus contributes to the comfort and well-being of people even though the majority of them are unaware of it. And yet, people are at the heart of the development, production, and application of our

technology, which is also what we want to communicate with unique photographic images that showcase our technology to those who use it in an inspiring way. With the launch of the Somfy Photography Award, we've created an international photography platform and, thanks to our collaboration with the Nederlands Fotomuseum, we look forward to an optimal result.

- Sven van Witzenburg (CEO Somfy Nederland BV).

The nominees

Roderik Henderson portrays a single man in a remote and improvised house, just outside the desert town of Copiapo in northern Chile. Henderson creates 3D photographs and plays with the documentary character of his medium.

Géraldine Jeanjean addresses the physical and symbolic function of glass as something that creates a division between inside and outside, safe and unsafe.

Stephan Keppel focuses on a photographic and technical print study into shelters as they were structured during the Cold War, and what still remains of them in Amsterdam.

Matthieu Litt explores Ry-Ponet, a green space located around a stream running through the metropolitan area of the Belgian city of Liège. This green lung is a symbol of resistance and a place of refuge for both people and animals.

Antoinette Nausikaã has chosen the river Seine near Paris as her working space. She wants to visually evoke a sense of shelter and the connection with nature that the Seine once offered the city.

Martine Stig focuses on 'invisibility as a human right'. How do computers see us, do they read us? Are they prejudiced? Can we fool the machine?

Dustin Thierry photographs a large variety of people in the Netherlands and on the island of Curaçao, amongst whom are both 'millennials' and the following generation referred to as 'Generation Z'. He studies the divide between young people who fall through the cracks in society and those who are successful.



Maarten Tromp creates stylised portraits of primates in rescue centres in the Netherlands and Indonesia, emphasising the animals' expressions and attitudes. The series is a study of the photographic portrait.

Jordi Ruiz Cirera photographs the consequences of globalisation for local farming communities in different locations in South America. He shows how the economic and financial forces that control global food production can have devastating effects on a local level.

About Somfy

For over 50 years, Somfy has been producing smart solutions for the management of houses and buildings and, in the process, making the daily lives of millions of users around the world easier and more comfortable. These innovations are focused on the automation and interconnection of roller shutters, sun blinds, window decorations and curtains, gates and garage doors, heating, lighting, cameras, and alarm systems. Somfy focuses on the development of reliable and environmentally friendly solutions every single day, so that everyone can live more comfortably, safely, and sustainably, today as well as tomorrow.

About the Nederlands Fotomuseum

We safeguard the Netherlands' current and future photographic heritage and make it accessible to the public. In doing so, we collect and exhibit photography in a topical context that reflects the world we live in, enriching people's lives with visual stories that matter.

The Nederlands Fotomuseum is sponsored by:

Corporate partners:

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Wilhelminakade 332
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www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl

Opening hours
Tuesday to Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.



Note to the editors

For more information about the exhibition and visual content, please contact:

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Nederlands Fotomuseum: visual stories that matter

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