

## Preface

Dear friends of photography,  
There are quite a few facts concerning the Leica Oskar Barnack Award, one of the longest-running photo awards ever. Did you know it was set up in 1979, at a time when Leica Camera didn't exist as a company, but as a product brand of Ernst Leitz GmbH, Wetzlar? Or that one of the most highly regarded photographers today, Sebastião Salgado, has won it twice – at a time when he was still relatively unknown? Artistically speaking, there are even more important facts: the series should include twelve pictures that tell a story, showing the togetherness and interaction of human beings and their surroundings. The winning pictures will all be exhibited in Berlin after the award ceremony on 13 September, and then in Leica Galleries around the world – there are now 17 of them! All this shows the dedication of Leica, its employees and the owners to our claim: Leica, das Wesentliche! (Leica, the essential!) Please look at the pictures closely, maybe in the spirit of a jury, and enjoy the art of photography – photography that can be seen as a lighthouse in the ocean of snapshots taken every day! We at Leica are committed to showing and promoting photography as one of the leading art forms of the 21st century.

Yours,  
Andreas Kaufmann,  
Leica Camera AG

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