

FOREWORD

Is life at a turning point? Things that seemed unthinkable last year have long become part of our present day. The media is dominated by news about war, flight, displacement, and the unfathomable suffering of millions of people. Every year, the Leica Oskar Barnack Award covers dramatic upheavals around the globe, albeit always with a one-year delay. The consequences of climate change and the experience of a global pandemic are already weighing heavily on our view of the future! It is hardly surprising, then, that the LOBA shortlist this year turned out to have a particularly serious tone. Yet, even so, we have the pleasure of presenting here committed photographic series, which give us cause for hope: they encourage us to not look away; to shake things up; to admonish, and demand change. Once again, the deeply humanistic and socio-political aspirations that have defined the LOBA, since its inception, brought to light. The large number of young photographers involved also indicates the tireless efforts made to confront the issues and challenges of our world.

We would like to congratulate the winners, Kiana Hayeri and Valentin Goppel, who each have very different approaches to dealing with themes of our times. Furthermore, this catalogue also presents the ten additional and wonderful series that made it onto this year's LOBA shortlist.

My thanks go to all those who make up our far-flung Leica family; and to all the staff, the nominators and the jury, as well as to the team who have worked to produce the catalogue and the exhibition. In particular, I would like to thank all the photographers, whose work seems more necessary now than ever before. We consider ourselves very fortunate that the LOBA is able to provide a lively forum for photography. Discover the 42nd LOBA year in this catalogue – you are sure to gain great insight.

Karin Rehn-Kaufmann
Leica Camera AG

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