

Press Release



2018

The 34th Higashikawa Awards

The Town of Photography
Culture Capital of Photography

Information

Higashikawa International Photography Festival Office

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The 34th Higashikawa Award Winners

◆The Overseas Photographer Award: Marian Penner Bancroft
(Canada)

For photographic achievements, including her series, “*Radial Systems*”(2017)

◆The Domestic Photographer Award: USHIODA Tokuko

For her series of presentations regarding “*Views of the Books / BIBLIOTHECA Series*” (USHIMAODA / Genki-Shobo, 2016-17)

◆The New Photographer Award: YOSHINO Erika

For her photobook “*NEROLI*”(AKAACA Art Publishing, 2016) and her works exhibited at “*Photographs of Innocence and of Experience: Contemporary Japanese Photography vol.14*” (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2017-18)

◆The Special Photographer Award: OHASHI Eiji

For his series “*Roadside Lights*”(2010-) and “*Being there*”(2008-)

◆The Hidano Kazuemon Award: TOMIOKA Keiso

For his activities with continued fixed point photography of Tokyo, including the photobook, “*Record of a Transforming City*” (Hakuyosha, 2017)

Commentary on the Selection of the 34th Higashikawa Photography Awards

UENO Osamu

Higashikawa Photography Award Jury Committee

Judging of the 34th Higashikawa Photography Awards was held on February 27th, 2018. The nominees this year included 50 for Domestic Photographer Award, 59 for New Photographer Award, 24 for Special Photographer Award, 34 for the Hidano Kazuemon Award, and 20 for the Overseas Photographer Award. As we wanted more people to nominate artists, we have promoted to expand our list of nominators. These past few years, we have come to choose winners for five awards out of a total of some 160-170 artists. The number of photographs to judge from was in the hundreds, and, as every year, the eight judges spent the morning carefully examining photobooks and portfolios, while judging took place in the afternoon.

This year, the category that spurred the most debate was the Domestic Photographer Award. From the last remaining candidates, we finally broke the deadlock and chose USHIODA Tokuko. The persuasiveness of her “*Views of the Books / BIBLIOTHECA Series*”, which she has continued shooting for some 20 years, and which was condensed into her recently published three books, “*Images Nostalgiques De L’editeur <Misuzu>/ Nostalgic Pictures of the Former Misuzu Shobo Publishing Office Building*”, “*Views of The Books*”, “*My Teacher’s Atelier*” and their publication exhibition, lies in her polished monochrome expression. By photographing the paper medium of books by the paper medium of photography, time and space are interwoven like a labyrinth and an everlasting attraction is brought forth.

For the New Photographer Award, the artists who made it to the final stage of judging were ISHIKAWA Ryuichi, KATAYAMA Mari, KANAGAWA Shingo, HOSOKURA Mayumi, and YOSHINO Erika. The eventual winner was YOSHINO Erika for her photobook, “*NEROLI*”, which was a finalist for last year’s award, and the exhibition of that with her new work, “*MARBLE*” added. The fact that she received more attention even after a year is not only due to the “newness” of her work but also evidence of fascination in her work. While physically embodying orthodox snapshot techniques and yet trying to be as free as possible from them, Yoshino’s gaze is strong, fleeting, and supple, putting a moment and light together and illuminating a unique world.

The Special Photographer Award went to OHASHI Eiji, a native of Hokkaido who has photographed scenes of vending machines. Vending machines are everywhere in our daily lives, but we don't usually consciously look at them. But making them the subject of works of art, Ohashi gives us a fresh view of vending machines. The image of a vending machine in the snow is especially impressive, and it seems it is the kind of motif that only Ohashi could have found, who was from Hokkaido. Compiled in his photobooks, "*Roadside Lights*" and "*Being there*", these images of vending machines are somehow nostalgic and are narratives of Japanese society and culture.

The Hidano Kazuemon Award, which was established in 2010, saw a sudden increase in nominees and competition has become fierce as the award becomes better known. Although it's a new award and we debate the quality of the award each year, the award this year went to TOMIOKA Keiso, who has used fixed point photography to shoot Tokyo since its post-war devastation. Fixed point photography, which has been continued by the second generation TOMIOKA Keiso and TOMIOKA Michiko and the third generation of TOMIOKA Keiso and UZAWA Tamami, is an astonishing work with the process of recording which has been increasing in depth and breadth. It also embodies the spirit of this award as it is "For those who continued photographing a region's people, nature, culture, and so on over many years, and were recognized to have contributed to the region."

With explanations based on the careful survey of juror KUSUMOTO Aki provided, the Overseas Photographer Award was given to Marian Penner Bancroft from Vancouver, Canada, the country targeted this year. Bancroft has a unique form of expression originating from personal experience and family history as she explores the meaning of immigration history in Canada as well as sacred areas and territories of First Nations in her photographic series. Recently, she has taken a close-up of familiar but originally non-native plants in her series, "*radial systems*".

This year, as with last, the awards were decided not by unanimous consent or a large majority of ballots but by sitting around a round table and repeating the voting while exchanging opinions from various perspectives and debating. Last year saw three new judges and this year there were two, making a total of five new judges out of eight in the last two years. Although there was not always consensus, this Higashikawa Award judging style of

traditionally deciding through healthy debate has properly continued. During the 30 some odd years since the 1985 “Town of Photography Declaration,” I feel this framework for judging has progressed step-by-step through the support and efforts of the people of Higashikawa and always have a deep appreciation for this. Appropriate to the “Capital of Photography Culture,” we can be proud that the judging has managed to choose wonderful artists. Along with the awarded artists and the people of Higashikawa, we would like to take even one more step forward.

The Jury Committee of the 34th Higashikawa Awards

UENO Osamu <Photo Critic>-----31st-
KITANO Ken <Photographer>-----33rd-
KUSUMOTO Aki <Photo Critic, Curator>-----25th -
SHIBASAKI Tomoka <Novelist>-----34th -
NAKAMURA Ikuo <Photographer> -----33rd -
NIWA Harumi <Curator>-----33rd -
HARA Koichi <Designer>-----34th -
MITSUDA Yuri <Art Critic>-----27th -

The Overseas Photographer Award

Marian Penner Bancroft

Lives in Vancouver, Canada



Photo by Colin Browne

Born in Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada, Bancroft studied at the University of British Columbia, the Vancouver School of Art (now Emily Carr University of Art+Design) and Ryerson Polytechnical Institute (Now Ryerson University) in Toronto. She taught at the Emily Carr University of Art+Design from 1981 to 2013 and has made efforts to foster younger artists. She has held numerous exhibitions both nationally and internationally including at the Vancouver Art Gallery and the National Gallery of Canada.

Starting before 1970, Bancroft made documentary style works focusing on the relationship between photographer and subject, including a well-known series of black and white photographs of both her brother-in-law, as he battled leukemia, and her younger sister, as she supported him in his struggle. Since 1980, she has worked both independently and alongside the members of the so-called Vancouver School which produced internationally important photographers in the context of post-conceptual photography.

From the 1980s to the 90s, Bancroft made a wide range of sculptural installations using large scale photographs with text, sound and drawings, dealing with landscape, memory and history, examining the formation of identity while focusing on her family history and her early education as a colonial girl with European and Scottish roots.

Since 2000 Bancroft has worked in colour, continuing her exploration of issues related to immigration and the complex interactions of European settlers with Canadian indigenous people. In recent years, such as in the series “radial systems”, she has focused on natural forms, both local and non-native, with reference to their humanly-caused migrations around the planet.

The Domestic Photographer Award

USHIODA Tokuko

Lives in Tokyo



Born in Tokyo in 1940. Graduated from Kuwasawa Design School in 1963. Worked for KDS and Tokyo Zokei University as a lecturer from 1966 to 1978. Started working as a freelance photographer in 1975.

While shooting daily lives, she turned her eyes to the refrigerator which emitted a pronounced presence. Since 1981, she has been shooting series “Refrigerator” in which one can see the diverse lifestyles of various families which are not readily apparent. Other than that, she has “hats” series which could be seen as soft sculptures and she also has a series in which she documented the common people in China with photos and essays with her photographer husband Shimao Shinzo.

Has been shooting the books and their environment as a main theme since 1995. Made a trilogy with the documentary photo “*Images Nostalgiques De L'editeur <Misuzu>/ Nostalgic Pictures of the Former Misuzu Shobo Publishing Office Building*” (Genki shobo, 2016) recording the old building and people working there, “*My Teacher's Atelier*” (USHIMAODA, 2017) capturing her respected late former teacher Otsuji Kiyoji and “*Views of the Books / BIBLIOTHECA Series*” (Ibid., 2017) shooting the distinct characteristics of aged books stored in libraries and personal residences. She Won the 37th Domon Ken Award and Photographic Society of Japan Awards in 2018

The New Photographer Award

YOSHINO Erika

Lives in Saitama



Was born in Honjo city, Saitama in 1970. Started photography in 1989. Graduated from Tokyo College of Photography in 1994.

She has presented monochromes using tense framing shooting people in close-up who gathered and passed by since the mid-1990s. Published “*MOLE UNIT No. 7 (It's A New day)*” (MOLE, 1999) and had solo exhibition and group exhibition abroad.

Started shooting color prints in 2010. Photographs taken in her neighborhood capture fleeting moments and lights in daily lives. Published photography book “*Just Like On The Radio*” (Osiris, 2011) with unique texture which evokes bodily memories such as wind and scent which are hard to verbalize and “*NEROLI*” (AKAACA Art Publishing, 2016) which captured condensed image which are like the fragrance of neroli distilled from the flowers of the bitter orange.

Main solo exhibitions include “*NEROLI*” (Taka Ishii Gallery photographer / film, 2016) and “*MARBLE*” (Ibid., 2018), and group exhibitions “*Photographs of Innocence and of Experience: Contemporary Japanese Photography vol.14*” (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2017-18) where she also exhibited “*NEROLI*” and her latest series “*MARBLE*”.

The Special Photographer Award

OHASHI Eiji

Lives in Sapporo, Hokkaido



Was born in Wakkanai city, Hokkaido in 1955. Made documentary works shooting vast wildernesses in Nepal, Pakistan, Tibet and the western region of China and their ethnic minorities with the theme “What is happiness for people”.

Becoming a freelancer in 2010, while shooting commercial photography, he started shooting his “*Roadside Lights*” series regarding vending machines as symbolizing the most common feature of Japanese landscapes. Vending machines, omnipresent all over Japan in ordinary streets as well as in mountainous regions and the farthest capes with almost no people walking by, epitomize Japanese society.

Main publications include “*MERCY*” (Madosha, 2015), monochrome photographs of airy scenes mixed with vending machines emitting bright light and soft snow lit by them and monochrome “*Being There*” (Case Publishing, 2017) and color photographs “*Roadside Lights*” (Zen Foto Gallery, 2017 / Photo-eyes Best Books Award). Main exhibitions are “*Roadside Lights*” (Zen Foto Gallery, 2017), “*Existence of*” (Epson Imaging Gallery epSITE, 2017) and “*Eiji Ohashi-Being There, Roadside Lights*” (Case Rotterdam, 2018). Has gained increased recognition overseas in recent years.

The Hidano Kazuemon Award

TOMIOKA Keiso

Lives in Kanagawa



Photo by Noboru Sonehara
(provided by Nippon Camera)

Was born in Mie prefecture in 1926. Was a suicide corps pilot when the war finished. After working at the Tokai District Transport Bureau of the Ministry of Transport, and The Nikkan Sports News, He has worked for the National Personnel Authority, public relations, since 1951.

Compelled by the urge to keep a record of the burnt-out ruins and how Japan would move forward, he started taking documentary photographs beside his work. He came up with the idea of shooting at a fixed point hoping that if he kept shooting the same objects, at the same place, using the same camera, he would learn various things if he saw the photos all together later. Shot the same spots at main station fronts, intersections, squares, roadways of the metropolitan areas and captured Tokyo's transfiguration during its high economic growth.

Won the first Newcomer's Award of the Photographic Society of Japan in 1958 with "1000 days of mother and child" recording the growth record of a family. Keeps shooting his family at the same intersection of Ginza 4-chome, it is a record of a family as well as the town scenery and the changes of the passers-by.

Main Photography books include "*When the cars were treasured- Tomioka Keiso Documentary Photography*" (NIPPON CAMERA, 2003) and "*Tomioka Keiso eye-witness series - Record of a Transforming City*" (Hakuyosha Publishing Co., Ltd., 2017). Even now, he is regularly featured in a magazine "NIPPON CAMERA" with Tomioka Keiso's "*Daily record - my photographic memoirs*". His daughter Tomioka Michiko and his granddaughter, Uzawa Tamami have followed in his footsteps by taking photos of the same places and they also curate his more than 400,000 photographs.

Higashikawa International Photography Festival
Photo Fiesta 2018

Award Winners' Exhibition

Date: 4 August (Sat.) – 29 August (Wed.), 2018

Venue: Higashikawa Bunka Gallery

Time: 10:00 - 17:00

Admission: ¥200 (¥100 for residents)

Organize: The Town of Photography: Higashikawa

Address: 1-19-8 Higashi-machi, Higashikawa-cho, Kamikawa-gun, 071-1423 Hokkaido

Tel: (+81)-(0)166-82-4700 Fax: (+81)-(0)166-82-4704

Artists:

Marian Penner Bancroft (The Overseas Photographer Award)

USHIODA Tokuko (The Domestic Photographer Award)

YOSHINO Erika (The New Photographer Award)

OHASHI Eiji (The Special Photographer Award)

TOMIOKA Keiso (The Hidano Kazuemon Award)

Event Schedule:

4 August (Sat.) 14:00-14:30 Award Ceremony

15:30-17:00 Opening Reception

5 August (Sun.) 13:00-17:30 Panel Discussion

Panelists: award winners, judges and guests

Higashikawa Awards

[Purpose]

With the idea of contributing to and fostering photographic culture as well as raising the cultural consciousness of Higashikawa residents, starting this year, 1985, we will annually be awarding prizes accompanied by monetary gifts to the photographer for his / her works.

[Awards]

The Overseas Photographer Award

*1,000,000 yen to a overseas photographer

The Domestic Photographer Award

*1,000,000 yen to a Japanese photographer

The New Photographer Award

*500,000 yen to a Japanese photographer

The Special Photographer Award

*500,000 yen to a photographer from Hokkaido

The Hidano Kazuemon Award

*500,000 yen to a photographer who contributed to society through photography

[Conditions]

The Overseas Photographer Award is presented to a photographer in a specific country or region chosen each year. He / She must be either living or born in that country or region.

The Domestic and the New Photographer Awards are presented to photographers whose work has been taken within the past three years that has significance either in the history of photography or as some unique expression of the art of photography.

The Special Photographer Award is presented to a photographer living or born in Hokkaido or whose theme and / or object concerns this island.

The Hidano Kazuemon Award is presented to a photographer in acknowledgement of his longtime contributions in taking photographs of local people, nature and culture. (The prize is open to both professional and amateur photographers.)

Of all the prizes, no specific restrictions are applied concerning the year it was

taken for the Overseas Prize, the Special Prize and the Hidano Kazuemon Prize.

[Selection]

The works selected by nominators charged by the executive committee are judged by the Jury Committee of the Higashikawa Award. The awards ceremony is held each year during the period of the Photo Fiesta in Higashikawa Town and is accompanied by commemorative symposiums and other events.

[Other Stipulations]

The monetary gift presented with the Higashikawa Awards is meant to purchase the original prints of the awarded photographs. Each awardee is requested to voluntarily submit original print(s) of his / her choice from among the awarded works to the residents of Higashikawa town.

The residents of the town shall be responsible for storing the photographs with care and for exhibiting them to visitors to Higashikawa, the Town of Photography.

These awarded photographs are exhibited at the Higashikawa Photography Museum in order to contribute to promoting a friendship and cultural development of the Town of Higashikawa.

We may present other awards to the photographs of outstanding works in order to contribute to photographic culture as well as to development of the Higashikawa Awards. For this reason, awards from other committees and sponsors are negotiable.

The Town of Photography

Culture Capital of Photography: Higashikawa

Higashikawa Town is located in central Hokkaido, northernmost of Japan, and is a part of Japan's largest national park "Daisetsuzan National Park" with Higashikawa's eastern part forming a large-scale forest. Blessed with natural beauty, lots of places in Higashikawa have been the subjects of many photographs.

Higashikawa, firstly cultivated by a group of settlers in 1895, has a shorter history compared to that of photography invented in 1839. Higashikawa declared the "Town of Photography" in 1985 aiming to create a town of "being a good subject to be photographed" co-existing with beautiful nature inhabited by many species of animals and plants.

Higashikawa established the Higashikawa Awards in the same year and started the annual summer festival of photography with the idea of contributing to and fostering photographic culture as well as raising the cultural consciousness of Higashikawa residents. With a history of more than a quarter of a century, it has been the nation's prestigious photography awards and the longest-running photography festival.

Higashikawa awards can also be noted in that it has rewarded overseas outstanding photographers such as Joel Sternfeld, Lewis Baltz and Jan Saudek as well as domestic photographers and introduced them to Japan. Through this, we meet people from abroad and exchange with them. By doing so, we believe we can entrust prayer for peace and our dreams to the future generation.

Since the declaration of the Town of Photography, Higashikawa has been a platform of meeting people, photography culture and nature over the last 30 years. Celebrating 120 years of resource development of the land, we declared the Culture Capital of Photography in May 2014, keeping in mind our motto "Take a picture, Save the picture, Share it with others" and with the determination to link photography and people across the world.