

Press Release



2022

The 38th Higashikawa Awards

The Town of Photography
Culture Capital of Photography

Information

Higashikawa International Photography Festival Office

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HIGASHIKAWA, KAMIKAWA-GUN, HOKKAIDO

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The 38th Higashikawa Award Winners

◆The Overseas Photographer Award : Ha Dao (Vietnam)

For her works such as *“The Mirror”* (2016-2017), *“Forget Me Not”* (2017) and *“All Things Considered”* (2019) and her accomplishments as a photographer.

◆The Domestic Photographer Award : TAKANO Ryudai

For his photography essays *“Daily Photographs”* (Nanarokusha Publishing, 2019) and for his exhibition *“Daily Photographs”* (The National Museum of Art, Osaka 1999-2021)

◆The New Photographer Award : SASAOKA Keiko

For her booklet series, *“SHORELINE”* (KULA PHOTO GALLERY 2015~), and her photobook, *“Remembrance: Sanriku, Fukushima”* (Shashinkoenrin, 2021)

◆The Special Photographer Award : Elena TUTATCHIKOVA

For the artwork at Shiretoko peninsula, Hokkaido, including the two-person exhibition *“Land and Beyond”* (Pola Museum Annex, Tokyo, 2021)

◆The Hidano Kazuemon Award : MIYAZAKI Manabu

For his works based on Komagane, Nagano Prefecture such as the exhibition, *“Wild Animals of Today”* (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2021).

Commentary on the Selection of the 38th Higashikawa Photography Awards

UENO Osamu

Higashikawa Photography Award Jury Committee

Selection of the 38th Town of Photography Higashigawa Award was carried out on March 2, 2022. Those nominated this year include 62 photographers for the Domestic Photographer Award, 73 for the New Photographer Award, 25 for the Special Photographer Award, 38 for the Hidano Kazuemon Award, and 12 for the Overseas Photographer Award. As with previous years, the morning was spent carefully looking at photobooks and resources, while the winners of the five awards were selected in the afternoon by eight jurors from a total of 169 artists.

For the Domestic Photographer Award, it came down to five photographers at the final stage. It was a difficult decision as the styles were so different between the final candidates, but seeing the jurors struggle with their choice happens every year. After careful deliberation and repeated voting, TAKANO Ryudai was selected. His *“Daily Photographs”* (deriving from taking photos everyday) takes a simple act and develops it into a complicated criticism, making his work original and powerful. His first large-scale solo exhibition *“Daily Photographs 1999-2021”* and collection of photo-essays *“Daily Photographs”* were acclaimed for their questioning of a systemized gaze, presenting wide-ranging ideas concerning photography as a medium.

This year again saw a competitive and fierce battle for the New Photographer Award. After repeated discussion and voting, there was a close battle between KAN Mika, SASAOKA Keiko, and HAYASHI Noriko with SASAOKA Keiko coming out on top. She has been acclaimed for her intense works full of persuasive power unique to photography such as her sequentially published booklet series *“SHORELINE”*, which centers on the disaster areas of Sanriku and Fukushima from 2014, including the coastlines of various parts of Japan and various regionalities in the memory of the sea, as well as for *“Remembrance: Sanriku, Fukushima 2011-2014”*, in which she visited and photographed the Tohoku region from 2011 many times.

The Special Photographer Award was given to Elena TUTATCHIKOVA who, after participating in the Higashikawa International Photo Festival in August, 2014, she visited Shiretoko for the first time and returned and continued fieldwork in various forms. Her works such as in the two-person exhibition “*Land and Beyond*” embody a style that expands from a multi-layered process that explores relationships between body, ideas, and location with Hokkaido as a theme can be said to be fitting for the Special Photographer Award.

Hidano Kazuemon Award was given to MIYAZAKI Manabu who was born in Minakata village (presently Nakagawa village), Kamiina district, which is located at the foot of the Central Alps in Nagano prefecture. Born in an environment full of nature, MIYAZAKI created an original style of photographing wild animals. In his exhibition “*Wild Animals of Today*”, we can see traces of his artist activities as well as the social message in his works. I would like to celebrate the fact that the Hidano Kazuemon Award, which recognizes works that have photographed a region over a long period of time, has created a new dimension.

After explanation based on careful survey by SUGANUMA Hiroshi, judging of the Overseas Photographer Award took place and eventually the award was given to Ha DAO from Vietnam. She has been comprehensively recognized for her ambitious activities including as curator and for her series of works that uses photography to explore social and personally definitions of principles such as gender and identity, as well as changes of culture such as “*The Mirror*”, “*Forget Me Not*”, and “*All Things Considered*”.

Following last year’s edition which was held during a State of Emergency due to COVID-19, this year’s competition was held during quasi-emergency measures, so preventative measures such as wearing masks during judging was implemented. Higashikawa made the “Declaration of Town of Photography” in 1985, followed by the “Declaration as a Cultural Capital Town of Photography” in 2014, and it is due to the town’s strong position that cultural activities should not be considered as non-essential and non-urgent that this year’s competition could take place in the same fashion as last year despite the pandemic. The events and ceremonies are the climax of the Higashikawa International Photo Festival, and they are only made possible due to the daily endeavor and empathy of the people of Higashikawa town. We would like to express our deepest gratitude for their support.

The Jury Committee of the 38th Higashikawa Photography Awards

Anju <Photographer> -----36th –
UENO Osamu <Photo Critic>-----31st–
KAMIYAMA Ryoko <Curator, Japanese postwar art history >-----37th –
KITANO Ken <Photographer>-----33rd–
KURAISHI Shino <Photo Critic, Poet>-----35th –
SHIBASAKI Tomoka <Novelist>-----34th –
NIWA Harumi <Curator>-----33th –
HARA Koichi <Designer>-----34th –

The Overseas Photographer Award

Ha DAO

Lives in Hanoi, Vietnam



Born in Hanoi, Vietnam in 1995. Her photographic works examines concepts that define herself including gender, identity, and the changes in Vietnamese culture. She started out by taking photographs of her partner in her first work *"The Mirror"*. While documenting her relationship and inconsequential details in daily life, she has had heated discussion with her partner on what to keep private versus what to lay bare for the world to see. The lived experience as a queer woman continues to inform her later works.

Ha continues to navigate the complex interplay of gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic class through portraiture. She documented service girls in Siem Reap, Cambodia in *"Forget Me Not"*, young wrestlers in Kolkata, India in *"Hardboiled"*, and Vietnamese ethnic minorities in *"Red Dust"*. Her latest work *"All Things Considered"* explores how history is remembered and constructed through photography in modern Vietnam. Using a camera as a mechanical tool, she delves into a murder case from the perspective of the woman who killed her husband in self-defense, attempting to create a multi-layered and contemplative work visualizing the images we could not or did not see.

Her major group exhibitions include *"Asian Women Photographers' Showcase"* (Objectifs Centre for Photography & Film, Singapore, 2017), *"Second Opinion: New Photography from Hanoi"* (Manzi Art Space, Hanoi, Vietnam), *"Insight"* (Xie Zilong Museum, Changsha, China), and *"Beyond Destruction"* (VICAS Art Studio, Hanoi, Vietnam). Inspired by strange incidents in daily lives, she takes an imaginative approach to documentary, resulting in works made with careful observations and rich associations.

Since 2017, Ha has been working as managing editor and program coordinator at Matca, an independent initiative dedicated to photography in Vietnam. Their online journal hosts over 200 articles in both English and Vietnamese for photography practitioners, audiences, researchers and critics.

<Artist Statements>

I almost fell off my chair when hearing that I was chosen to receive the 38th Higashikawa Overseas Photographer award. Sheer joy followed the initial bafflement: the prestigious award went to a young, relatively unknown photographer from Vietnam, who started making art not so long ago and is still figuring out her own relationship with photography right this very moment.

I have long been a fan of photography that comes out of Japan, specifically female artists including Rinko Kawauchi, Lieko Shiga and Yurie Nagashima, who have also been recognized by the Higashikawa award. Their works have inspired me to revel in tenderness, center lived experiences of women, and most importantly, grasp the power of the camera to not just document but imagine – which is not easy in the largely male-dominated profession where stereotypes abound. Needless to say, I feel incredibly honored to stand together with them on the same platform.

Despite not having a formal art education, I would never label myself as a self-taught photographer. I'd like to take this wonderful opportunity to thank mentors and independent organizations who have tirelessly worked to uplift young voices like myself: Jamie Maxtone-Graham, Angkor Photo Festival, Zhuang Wubin, Manzi Art Space, Heritage Space, and last but not least, my wonderful colleagues at Matca. I owe it to the humble art community in Hanoi where I'm from and will continue to do what I can to pay it forward.

Ha Dao, April 4, 2022

The Domestic Photographer Award

TAKANO Ryudai

Lives in Tokyo Prefecture



Born in Fukui Prefecture in 1963. Graduated from the School of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University. Started taking photographs with the theme of sexuality in 1994.

Received the 31st Kimura Ihei Award in 2006 with the photography book *“IN MY ROOM”* (Sokyusha, 2005) in experimenting to visualize the vague dichotomy between male and female, homosexuality and heterosexuality. Decided to take photos daily and began the “Daily Photographs” project in 1998 which continues. Among them he called the uniquely Japanese chaotic sediment-like cityscape “kasuba”, he coined the term making it plural, and published the photography book *“Kasubaba”* (Daiwa Press, 2011). The Great East Japan Earthquake caused him to question cities, space, photography media and human vision with a new perspective. Produces various works with the theme of shadow using classical methods and movies.

Published his first essays with photographs *“Daily Photographs”* (NANAROKUSHA Publishing, 2019) with a wide variety of themes such as photography, sex and literature. Recent group exhibitions include *“Our Beloved World”* (Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015-16) and *“Scrolling Through Heisei Part synchronicity, autumn”* (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2017). Centered around the photos selected from *“Daily Photographs”* totaling around 100,000 photos, he held a large-scale solo exhibition, *“Daily Photographs 1999-2021”* (The National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2021), pursuing his track including gender and sexuality. A large-scale solo exhibition (Daily Photographs 1999-2021) was held at the national Museum of Art, Osaka in 2021, centering around his works selected from around 100,000 daily photos with the theme of gender and sexuality in mind as is consistent with his past works. The exhibition gained attention by posing the question to the audience what seeing is. Received the 72nd Minister of Education’s Art Encouragement Award in 2022.

Calling on photographers of the same generations, SUZUKI Risaku, MATSUE Taiji, and critics, KURAISHI Shino and SHIMIZU Joe Started “Photo-Secession”, he formed *“The Declaration of Photo-Secession Tokyo”* (SEIGENSHA, 2012). The book centers around the evolution of photography into the 21st century recorded through dialogue and exhibitions.

Examines daily the hierarchy of visual values and the characteristics of the photography as a medium from various angles.

<Artist Statements>

Actually I've been attending the Higashikawa International Photo Festival every year until several year ago. This was because I was involved as a juror for another category of this award. The first time was the year of the Great East Japan earthquake, and I clearly remember the warm welcome by the people of Higashikawa despite the various lingering confusion. There is a fond memory of having a rambling conversation with someone I don't normally have a chance to talk to on a summer evening. The location of this festival has a richness about it. From the rich soil, a continual questioning about "how photography should be" is I think what this award is about.

Currently, the boundaries of photography is rapidly becoming dissolved. But I think it is because of these circumstances that my modest activities has been recognized. Up to now, I have explored from a practical sense photography that can continually influence how people think. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to once again see the meaning and courage to consider photography.

TAKANO Ryudai

The New Photographer Award

SASAOKA Keiko

Lives in Tokyo Prefecture



Born and raised in Hiroshima city, 1978. Graduated from Tokyo Zokei University in 2002. Leaving the city enabled her to observe the historical town from the inside and outside. Many of her works are inspired by these experiences. Received VOCA Encouragement Award at VOCA 2008 for capturing the sealines which have experienced the rises and the changes which had occurred over many years along with the anglers.

Took pictures of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and its surroundings since 2001 and published the photography book *"PARK CITY"* in 2009, which went on to win the Newcomer's Award of the Photographic Society of Japan in 2010. Presented *"Difference 3.11"* alongside 7 other photographers at the consecutive exhibitions *"Remembrance 3.11"* (Ginza Nikon Salon, Osaka Nikon Salon, Japan in 2012) featuring the Great East Japan Earthquake. Won the Sagamihara Newcomer Award in 2021 for highlighting the varying levels of damage caused and the geographical differences between the locations with an intention of ensuring of people go on remembering. Compiled a series of photos of the disaster-stricken areas including Fukushima after the Great East Japan Earthquake into an infrequently published booklet named *"Remembrance"* (KULA, 2012-13, 41 issues total) which went on to win the 23rd Hayashi Tadahiko Award in 2014. Releases subsequent booklets named *"SHORELINE"* (KULA, 1-42 issues) photographing the Japanese shorelines and the areas which possess memories of ocean other than disaster-stricken Tohoku district and has been presenting them at exhibitions since 2015.

Involved in the independently managed gallery "photographer's gallery" from the beginning since 2001 and engages in a wide variety of activities such as organizing lectures, publishing bulletins and photography books as well as providing reviews. Responsible for the bulletin, *"photographer's gallery press"*, which features *"Photographs at Epicenter 1945 -1952"* verifying and examining the atomic bomb photographs in Hiroshima.

She faces the ongoing earthquake reconstruction sites by taking photographs and at the same time, takes an interest in the past and process of the earth with the terrain and surface such as sealines and volcanoes, which is her theme from the early days. She takes photographs of the ongoing reconstruction at the earthquake sites whilst also taking in interest in the past, the process of the earth's terrain and surface including its formations such as the shorelines, volcanos which is the theme from her early days.

<Artist Statements>

When I visited Higashikawa International Photo Festival in 2010, I took the chance to climb Mount Asahi for the first time. Since then I've been fascinated with the magnificence of Daisetsuzan and have visited several more times, as well as visiting other mountains in Japan. Due to the Great East Japan earthquake of the following year, I realized shorelines, which were the main subject of my field up to then, had another aspect to them. The frequent natural disasters that have occurred since then has made me realize just how fragile living on this archipelago is.

This year marks 10 years since the earthquake and I'm especially more moved to receive this New Photographer Award which has taught me about the difficulty and glory of being able to live with nature. At the same time, even if my photographs only partially capture the Japanese archipelago of these 10 years for future generations, I would be happy if they are useful even in the slightest way in the future.

SASAOKA Keiko

The Special Photographer Award

Elena TUTATCHIKOVA

Lives in Kyoto Prefecture



Born in Moscow, Russia, in 1984. After studying classical music at Central Music School of the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory, and Japanese literature at the Institute of Oriental Studies and Antiquity at Russian State University for the Humanities, Tutatchikova moved to Japan in 2012. She finished her master's and doctor's degrees in Fine Art at the Tokyo University of the Arts.

Tutatchikova focuses her interest on the connection between the imagination, walking, and storytelling, as well as on the relationship between nature and man throughout different regions. Her exhibited work comes in the form of installations using video, photography, text, drawing and sound.

She was awarded the Grand Prix at Akarenga Photo Audition at Higashikawa International Photo Festival in 2014.

In 2017, Tutatchikova started Shiretoko Walking Project, conducting walks across Shiretoko Peninsula for local residents and travelers, approaching paths made by human and animals as sources of knowledge. She practices walking as a way of thinking and as a way of learning about the history and nature of the region.

During many stays at Shiretoko since 2014, with the help of local residents, she has been working on her multimedia project and research, walking along the old and new paths of the peninsula. Observing the landscape of the sea and forests, listening to the voices of the plants, land and water, she creates works that dive deep into the layers of time and space. Tutatchikova was awarded the Special Photographer Award for her artwork at Shiretoko peninsula, which has been exhibited in numerous shows including *"Land and Beyond"* (Pola Museum Annex, Tokyo, Japan, 2021).

In 2016, she published her first artist book *"After an Apple Falls From the Tree, There is a Sound"* (torch press, Japan).

Her latest exhibitions include solo shows *"Days With the Wind"* (Takamatsu Artist-In-Residence, Megijima Island, Takamatsu, Japan, 2021), *"The Path Across the Peninsula"* (held at venues in the Shiretoko peninsula, Hokkaido, Japan, 2018), *"On Teto's Trail"* (Gallery Trax, Yamanashi, Japan 2017); group shows *"FACES"* (SCAI PIRAMIDE, Tokyo, Japan, 2021) and Kenpoku Art (Ibaraki, Japan, 2016).

<Artist Statements>

It has been eight years since I first travelled to Shiretoko peninsula. This journey has started after my first visit in Higashikawa - and in Hokkaido.

Why do I have to revisit the same place again and again? I think, every time I spend at Shiretoko, this land tells me something essential about life; it makes me realize that there is still something unknown and undiscovered in the world.

The encounters with people, animals, plants, water, forests and paths have found their ways into my photo and video works, drawings and words. For me, the poetry of the land can be discovered in the process of walking, thinking, feeling, experiencing and being involved with the environment and the others.

Shiretoko is the land, where, in this never-ending process, I can reconfirm how, as an artist and a human, I want to relate to the land and the people, and what can I do for the world we live in.

Looking for the answers to the great questions, working on the small everyday things, I want to keep planting seeds, thinking, walking and weaving the stories of the land.

Elena TUTATCHIKOVA

The Hidano Kazuemon Award

MIYAZAKI Manabu

Lives in Nagano Prefecture



Born in Nagano Prefecture in 1949. At the company he started working for after junior high school, he familiarized himself with cameras and lenses and was fascinated by Photography. Applied and was selected for the Asahi Camera Contest at the age of 17. Ever since then, by entering the competition many times, he taught himself photography.

Recognized by the Heibonsha Limited editor who came to launch a magazine “Anima” in 1972, he was signed for an exclusive contract. With a goal of taking photos of all 16 kinds of eagles and hawks inhabited in Japan, he traveled from Hokkaido to Okinawa. Over the course of 15 years, he succeeded in capturing them. Discovered a crested serpent eagle’s nesting site in Yaeyama Islands, Okinawa during this period. Compiled these photos into the photography book “Eagle and Hawk” (Heibonsha 1981) and received the Photographic Society of Japan Newcomer’s Award in 1982. Invented an original robot-camera with an infrared sensor, he captured the unknown world of the wild animals and published the photography book “*Animal Trail*” (Kyoritu Shuppan, 1979). Challenged with the task of taking pictures of nocturnal owls, said to be the most difficult to shoot. Studied the life patterns of the wild owls which normally don’t present themselves and updated the robot-camera to predict their behavior patterns.

Over the course of 10 years, he succeeded in capturing them and published the photography book “*Owls*” (Heibonsha, 1990). Received the 9th Domon Ken Award in 2019, the first time as a photographer whose theme was nature. Controversially he tackled the theme of death by focusing on the facts that there are as many lives as there are deaths, inspired by the Buddhist painting “*Kyusouzu*” which depicts a corpse returning to the earth, he published the photography book “Death” (Heibonsha, 1994) portraying the deaths of wild animals and received the Annual Photographic Society of Japan Award. Since 1994, his photographs have been featured in the magazine “*FRIDAY*” (Kodansha Ltd.) to flip the perspective of human society from the point of view of wild animals. With these photos, he published “*Animal Apocalypse*” (Kodansha Ltd. 1995) receiving the Kodansha Publishing Culture Award in 1995.

Has published more than 70 books. Many exhibitions include solo exhibitions at Nikon Salon, IZU PHOTO MUSEUM (2013) and group exhibitions at Cartier Museum of Contemporary Crafts in 2016. Held “*Wild Animals of Today*” at the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum in 2021 collecting the history of nearly half a century as a “*photojournalist in nature*”.

<Artist Statements>

I was very surprised to know I received the Hidano Kazuueemon Award. This is because I honestly didn't know about this photography award. After doing some research, I understood it is given to those who have pursued the same theme consistently over many years.

I live in the remote countryside in Nagano prefecture and have been taking photos with the theme of people and the natural environment, observing human society and life from the perspective of nature. In other words, I've made works about what I'm interested in at my own pace.

I live in the remote countryside in Nagano prefecture and have been taking photos with the theme of people and the natural environment, observing human society and life from the perspective of nature. In other words, I've made works about what I'm interested in at my own pace.

The fact that I have been awarded this prize no doubt must give courage and hope to the many professional and amateur photographers all over Japan who have continually pursued their subject matter. As I have had my 70th birthday, I think of this as an "award for persistence" and plan to push forward with my work and theme, polishing it from my perspective.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for all the jurors who made the effort to discover a person from the countryside such as myself.

Thank you very much.

MIYAZAKI Manabu

Higashikawa International Photography Festival Photo Fiesta 2022

Award Winners' Exhibition

Date: 30 July (Sat.) – 30 August (Tue.), 2022

Venue: Higashikawa Bunka Gallery

Time: 10:00 - 17:00

Admission: ¥100

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:

Ha DAO (The Overseas Photographer Award)

TAKANO Ryudai (The Domestic Photographer Award)

SASAKA Keiko (The New Photographer Award)

Elena TUTATCHIKOVA (The Special Photographer Award)

MIYAZAKI Manabu (The Hidano Kazuemon Award)

Event Schedule:

30 July (Sat.) 13:30-14:30 Award Ceremony

15:30-17:00 Opening Reception

31 July (Sun.) 13:00-17:30 Panel Discussion

Panelists: award winners, judges and guests

※There is a possibility that schedule may be modified related to the current coronavirus situation.

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.