

**Press Release
November 2020**

DGPh Presents the Culture Award 2020 to Ute Eskildsen

Curator and photography historian Ute Eskildsen is the recipient of the Culture Award 2020 of the German Photographic Society (DGPh). As a pioneer of the photography scene, she rendered a significant contribution towards the medium's establishment and consolidation in the German and international art landscape: Eskildsen curated exhibitions that are part of photography history today, built up one of Europe's pre-eminent museum photography collections, and campaigned for the promotion of young photographers and curators.

Early in her 33 years' activity for the Museum Folkwang in Essen, qualified photographer and photography historian Ute Eskildsen devised and continuously developed a photograph collection that is exemplary for Germany and Europe. On the basis of the study collection of her teacher Otto Steinert, which the latter had been building up since 1958 for the photography course at the Folkwangschule in Essen, with an exacting eye for photographic quality, tenacity and enormous energy she rendered a crucial contribution towards the medium's institutionalisation and collection, research, preservation and communication and achieved high renown nationally and internationally as a result.

Ute Eskildsen examined, researched and presented photography in history and the present day with a host of major exhibitions. Her ground-breaking, richly faceted programme includes exhibitions such as the reconstruction "Film und Foto der 20er Jahre. Eine Betrachtung der Internationalen Werkbundaustellung 'Film und Foto', 1929" (1979), "Reste des Authentischen. Deutsche Fotobilder der 80er Jahre" (1986), "Fotografieren hieß teilnehmen. Fotografinnen der Weimarer Republik" (1994), "Robert Frank. Hold Still Keep Going" (2000) or her farewell exhibition "Der Mensch und seine Objekte" (2012).

Furthermore, she dedicated major monographic exhibitions to photographers such as Helmar Lerski (1983), Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (1996), Rineke Dijkstra (1998), Roni Horn (2004) or Paul Graham (2009) - and to this year's Dr. Erich Salomon Award winner Chris Killip (2012).

In addition, Eskildsen devised crucial funding structures for young colleagues, such as, for instance, the fellowship programmes "Zeitgenössische deutsche Fotografie" and "Museumskuratoren für Fotografie" of the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung (since 1982 and 1999, respectively). These fellowships and awards were also exemplary for the international photography scene.

Geschäftsführender Vorstand:

Ditmar Schädel - Dr. Angela Matyssek - Rainer Danne -
Gabriele Conrath-Scholl - Michael Ebert - Anna Gripp - Simone Klein

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Ute Eskildsen was born in Itzehoe in 1947. She studied at the Folkwang Schule für Gestaltung in Essen and subsequently worked as a freelance photographer and assistant to Otto Steinert. Following stops at the George Eastman House in Rochester (USA), the Busch-Reisiger Museum in Cambridge (USA), the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles (USA) and the founding of a photography gallery together with students in 1973, she received the commission to build up the Photography department at the Museum Folkwang in 1978. A visiting professorship took her to the University of Wales in Newport, United Kingdom, from 2012 until 2015. The numerous international honours that have been bestowed upon her include the Josef Sudek Medal 1989 (Prague), acceptance into the order of the "Chevaliers des Arts et des Lettres" 1991 (Paris), or the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, presented to her in 2009. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia awarded her the title of Professor in 2000.

Ute Eskildsen has been a member of the DGPh since 1974 and was active on its board between 1984 and 1994.

The Culture Award has been presented since 1959 and is the German Photographic Association's most important award. It has been receiving the generous support of WhiteWall since 2020. With it, the DGPh distinguishes living personalities for significant achievements in the field of photography. Winners of the DGPh Culture Award have included Sarah Moon, Helga Paris, Gottfried Jäger, Klaus Honnef, Stephen Shore, Wolfgang Tillmans, Stephen Sasson, Wim Wenders, F.C. Gundlach, Daido Moriyama, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Man Ray.

Ditmar Schädel, Chairman of the DGPh, comments: "The Culture Award has an impressive list of renowned award-winners and is therefore synonymous with photography's development after 1945. With Ute Eskildsen, this series of names is enriched by a significant and influential position on the German photography scene."

Owing to the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, location and time of the award ceremony will be announced at a later date.

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Information on the Culture Award at:

<https://www.dgph.de/preise/kulturpreis>

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