

## Press release

# Prix Pictet – the world’s photography award for environmental sustainability – announces 2009 shortlist

A shortlist of twelve outstanding international photographers, from which one will be selected later this year to receive the Prix Pictet, the world’s photography prize for environmental sustainability, was announced on 9 July at Europe’s leading photography festival, *Les Rencontres d’Arles* in France.

The prize is supported by Swiss bank Pictet & Cie. Photographers shortlisted for the £60,000 (CHF100,000) first prize are:

**Darren Almond**, UK; **Christopher Anderson**, Canada; **Sammy Baloji**, Congo; **Edward Burtynsky**, Canada; **Andreas Gursky**, Germany; **Naoya Hatakeyama**, Japan; **Nadav Kander**, South Africa; **Ed Kashi**, USA; **Abbas Kowsari**, Iran; **Yao Lu**, China; **Edgar Martins**, Portugal; and **Chris Steele-Perkins**, UK.

The Prix Pictet is an annual search for photographs that communicate powerful messages of global environmental significance under a broad theme. This year the theme is ‘earth’. A Mexican garbage dump where people forage to sustain a pitiful existence; the changing landscape and displaced communities of China’s Yangtze River; the devastating impact of oil production in the Niger Delta; and the annual pilgrimage to the desert fronts of the Iran-Iraq war are among the subjects that feature in the work of this year’s shortlisted artists.

The submissions speak of the harmful and often irreversible effects of exploiting the earth’s resources and reflect on the immediate and long-term impact of unsustainable development on communities across the globe.

The shortlisted works will be previewed at *Purdy Hicks Gallery* in London from 5 to 7 October, in Geneva from 24 to 29 September and at *Passage de Retz* gallery in Paris from 23 October to 24 November 2009.

‘**Earth**’, a book cataloguing the work of both the shortlisted photographers and powerful images produced by a number of other Prix Pictet nominees will accompany this year’s prize. Published by teNeues, the book launches on 6 October at *Purdy Hicks Gallery*.

The winner will be announced by Kofi Annan, honorary president of the Prix Pictet, on 22 October 2009 at the *Passage de Retz* gallery. A further award, in the form of a commission for one of the shortlisted photographers to visit a region where Pictet & Cie are currently supporting a sustainability project, will be announced at the same time.

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Prix Pictet is part of the VIP programmes of **FIAC** (22 - 25 October), Paris' major international contemporary and modern art fair, and of **Paris Photo**, the world's leading event for photography (19 - 22 November).

The Prix Pictet will tour to further international venues from late 2009 to early 2010. Venues confirmed for the tour include: the Thessaloniki Museum of Photography, The Empty Quarter Gallery in Dubai and the Eindhoven University of Technology. The Prix Pictet Secretariat are currently reviewing proposals from several major international galleries.

An independent jury of seven leading figures from the worlds of the visual arts and the environment, chaired by the Financial Times photography critic, Francis Hodgson, made the selection from over 300 nominations put forward by the seventy Prix Pictet nominators – a group that includes leading critics, practitioners and curators.

**Francis Hodgson, chair of the judges** said 'The artistic and technical quality of the entries from photographers around the world has been quite exceptional and the power of the messages the photographers have been able to communicate is extraordinary. The brief - to communicate sustainability issues through photography, with particular reference to this year's theme of 'earth' - has been interpreted with tremendous variety and vigour. Whether reporting in detail on development or aiming more broadly to stimulate thought, the photographers have achieved a very high level of impact. I and the other members of the panel look forward with keen anticipation to selecting the winner of this exciting and prestigious prize.'

**Nicolas Pictet, Partner of Pictet & Cie**, said 'The calibre of the shortlisted work for this second year of the Prix Pictet illustrates how the issue of sustainability resonates throughout the artistic community. We strongly believe that by bringing these images to the attention of the world, Prix Pictet will further highlight the devastating effect climate change is having on our planet and ensure sustainability remains at the heart of global policy making.'

**Michael Benson, Prix Pictet Secretariat** said 'Over the past forty years, Les Rencontres d'Arles has played a major part in celebrating photography in all of its forms. It has been an important showcase for the work of established and emerging artists and, like the Prix Pictet, is as at home with fine art photography as it is with photojournalism. We have chosen to announce the shortlist here because the festival demonstrates a concern for global issues and a confidence in the ability of photography to communicate powerful messages that is shared by the Prix Pictet.'

Awarding the inaugural Prix Pictet to Canadian photographer Benoit Aquin last October, **Kofi Annan** said: 'It is my hope that the Prix Pictet will help to deepen understanding of the changes taking place in our world and raise public awareness about the urgency of taking preventative action.'

**'Press contact information**

**Prix Pictet, France**

**[www.prixpictet.com](http://www.prixpictet.com)**

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## **Visitor information for Prix Pictet 2009 exhibitions**

### **'Prix Pictet 2009: Earth'**

**Purdy Hicks Gallery** | 65 Hopton Street | Bankside | London SE1 9GZ

5 to 7 October 2009: 10am - 6pm

+44 (0) 20 7401 9229 | [contact@purdyhicks.com](mailto:contact@purdyhicks.com) | [www.purdyhicks.com](http://www.purdyhicks.com) | [www.prixpictet.com](http://www.prixpictet.com)

### **'Prix Pictet 2009: Earth'**

**Passage de Retz** | 9 rue Charlot | 75003 Paris

23 October to 24 November 2009

Monday - Friday: 10am - 7pm | Saturday & Sunday: 10am - 8pm

+33 (0) 1 48 04 37 99 | [passagederetz@wanadoo.fr](mailto:passagederetz@wanadoo.fr) | [www.passagederetz.com](http://www.passagederetz.com) | [www.prixpictet.com](http://www.prixpictet.com)

**For details of 2010 international touring venues visit [www.prixpictet.com](http://www.prixpictet.com)**

## **Press events**

6 October 'Earth' book launch at Purdy Hicks Gallery, London

22 October Prix Pictet prize announcement, Passage de Retz, Paris

***To express an interest in attending either of these events, please contact Theresa Simon & Partners.***

## **Fairs and festivals**

**Les Rencontres d'Arles** | [www.rencontres-arles.com](http://www.rencontres-arles.com) | Opening week: 8-13 July & continuing to September 2009

**FIAC** | [www.fiac.com](http://www.fiac.com) | 22 to 25 October 2009

**Paris Photo** | [www.parisphoto.fr](http://www.parisphoto.fr) | 19 to 22 November 2009

### **The 2009 Prix Pictet Short list**

#### **Darren Almond (UK, 1971)**

*Nominated for Fullmoon, 2008–09*



Almond uses the moon as his only source of light and an extensive exposure time of 15 minutes or more, to turn night into day. He creates meditative landscapes that have a unique and mysterious quality and often depicts remote geographical locations. For this series, he was especially drawn to the Yellow Mountain range, known as Xihai or Huang Shan in the Anhui province of China. The region has magnificent peaks and canyons, as well as extraordinary natural sites of Chinese spiritualism. Almond is a London-based international artist who was nominated for The Turner Prize in 2005 and is represented by the White Cube, London.

#### **Christopher Anderson (Canada, 1970)**

*Nominated for Capitolio, 2008*



Anderson explores the cycle of consumption, destruction, violence and political turmoil that ebbs and flows with the price of oil in Venezuela where the entire economy is built around the ever-expanding exploitation of the earth's resources. However, there is little local food available to most of the population and while a few get rich the majority are desperately poor. Anderson began his career as a war photographer. His work appears in publications as diverse as

National Geographic and the fashion magazine, V. Anderson has won a Robert Capa Gold Medal and received a Pulitzer Prize nomination. He joined Magnum Photos in 2005 and is based in New York.

#### **Sammy Baloji (Democratic Republic of Congo, 1978)**

*Nominated for Memory, 2006*

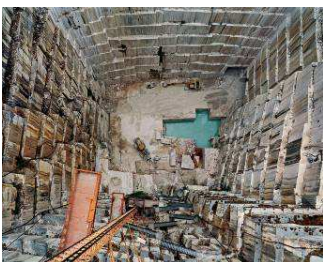


Baloji superimposes colonial black and white archive photos, from the once Belgian run mines of Katanga in Congo, with his own colour images of today's mines and neglected infrastructure. The work references the lucrative industrial past of the area that benefited the Belgian colonizers, while its people were forced into slavery. Merging past and present Baloji exposes the cruelty of the colonial years as well as current abuses both of power and of the

earth's natural resources. In 2008, Baloji participated in PICHA! (meaning 'image' in Swahili), a project that facilitated local communities' understanding of their history through archive images and contemporary photos.

#### **Edward Burtynsky (Canada, 1955)**

*Nominated for Quarries, 1991-2006*



Burtynsky looks at landscape as architecture in a series of active and abandoned quarries across America, Europe and India. We are surrounded by consumer goods, and yet we are profoundly detached from their sources. Our lifestyles are made possible by industries all around the world that we take for granted and that become merely background to our existence. Burtynsky aims to show those places that are normally outside our experience but very much a part of our everyday lives. Edward Burtynsky is one of Canada's most distinguished photographers. His remarkable depictions of global industrial landscapes are in the collections of over fifty major museums.

**Andreas Gursky (Germany, 1955)**

*Nominated for Untitled XIII, 2002*



Gursky confronts the viewer with an apparently infinite landscape of garbage. From a distance this work appears abstract and colourful recalling a Jackson Pollock drip painting. Closer inspection reveals small figures desperately searching a dump in Chimalhuacán, Mexico City. Gursky often concentrates on sites of commerce and tourism, making work that draws attention to today's burgeoning high-tech industry and global markets. His subject matter ranges from the vast, anonymous architecture of modern day hotel lobbies, apartment buildings and warehouses to stock exchanges and parliaments across the globe. In contrast the people in these images eek out a living from their finds in order to survive each day. Andreas Gursky is a major artist of international standing.

**Naoya Hatakeyama (Japan, 1958)**

*Nominated for three series: Blast, River and Tunnel*



Hatakeyama's submission for Prix Pictet features underground waterways in Paris and Tokyo and a Japanese lime works. He examines the city, its past, present and future, in order to reflect on the relationship between people and their environment. In many of the works he shows hidden city spaces that are alien to most city-dwellers. By capturing the symmetry of angular reflections in dirty water, he makes the waterways beneath and on the edge of the city seem beautiful. Hatakeyama, a student of Kiyoji Otsuji, graduated from Tsukuba University in 1984. As well as participating in numerous solo and group exhibitions, Hatakeyama's photographs are found in public collections from the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo to the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

**Nadav Kander (Israel, 1961)**

*Nominated for Yangtze, The Long River Series, 2006-07*



Kandar has documented the rapidly changing landscape and communities of China's Yangtze River, from its mouth to source. More people live on the river's 6500km of banks than in America. However, China's current programme of development is also destroying the country's heritage and displacing many of its people. Kander is a regular contributor to many international publications, including The New York Times Magazine, for whom he recently documented 'Obama's People'. His many international awards and nominations include most recently the Silver Photographer of the Year Award at the Lianzhou International Photo Festival 08 in China.

**Ed Kashi (USA, 1957)**

*Nominated for Curse of the Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta, 2004-06*



Kashi presents a graphic look at the profound cost of oil exploitation in West Africa. His work traces the fifty-year impact of Nigeria's relationship to oil and the resulting environmental degradation and community conflicts that have plagued the region. Kashi is a photojournalist, filmmaker and educator dedicated to documenting the social and political issues that define our times. Kashi's complex imagery has been recognized for its compelling rendering of the human condition, revealing his sensitive eye and an intimate relationship to his subjects.

**Abbas Kowsari (Iran, 1970)**

*Nominated for Shade of Earth, 2007-08*



Kowsari documents the annual New Year (Noruz) pilgrimage of hundreds of thousands of Iranians to the fronts of the eight-year long Iran-Iraq war. The pilgrims, often family members of the half a million soldiers who died, travel by bus from all over the country to where the fighting was the heaviest, a journey known as Rahian-e Noor or Caravan of Light. Kowsari is the senior photo editor for E'temad newspaper in Tehran. He has worked for over ten Iranian leading newspapers since graduating. Most have been closed down by the authorities and banned from publishing again. His work has appeared in several international publications including Paris Match and Der Spiegel and he has

exhibited in Tehran and the French Embassy in Damascus.

**Yao Lu (China, 1967)**

*Nominated for Mountain and Water, 2006-07*



Lu's images of lush mountainous vistas swamped in mist and surrounded by sea are not what they seem. The peaks rising from the water that dwarf the tiny speck-sized boats are in fact gargantuan piles of rubbish and construction waste, by-products of China's building development, shrouded in miles of green netting. Lu uses photography to both distort the truth and represent reality while also taking the viewer back in time to when the landscape was a fertile and untouched area. Lu studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing and received a Masters of Visual Arts in photography at Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia in 2000.

**Edgar Martins (Portugal, 1977)**

*Nominated for The Diminishing Present, 2005 & 2008*



In this series of photographs, Martins captures the progress of advancing forest fires in Portugal. The beautiful, painterly images show the vivid greens of vegetation about to be consumed by flames and the charred land left in their wake. The fires of 2005 and 2008 followed an extended period of drought and extreme heat that many believed to be a result of global climate change. They were also considered evidence of environmental mismanagement; much of the forest was eucalyptus, a fast-growing but extremely flammable tree that is frequently planted in reforestation projects. Martins studied photography and fine art at the Royal College of Art. He has exhibited extensively throughout Asia, America and Europe and received

awards for photography and writing.

**Chris Steele-Perkins (Burma, 1947)**

*Nominated for Mount Fuji, 2000-01*



Perkins has spent much of the decade documenting Mount Fuji, an iconic symbol of Japan that has inspired many Japanese artists, most notably Utagawa Hiroshige, for his iconic series of woodblocks, *36 Views of Mount Fuji*. Mount Fuji is a national park but the surrounding area is now dominated by golf courses, resorts and scrap yards and has been used as a military testing ground. The work can be seen as a commentary on modern Japan and the erosion of natural beauty in the name of progress. Steele-Perkins is a documentary photographer who has worked in the developing world and in Britain for nearly 40 years, focusing on areas of urban poverty or sub-culture.

## **Notes to Editors : Thank you to take out this and to replace it by : Résumé**

### **1. Prix Pictet - History**

Established in 2008 by Swiss private bank **Pictet & Cie**, the Prix Pictet is run by an independent company, Prix Pictet Ltd. The 2008 award generated entries from over 200 photographers from 43 countries. Prix Pictet's honorary president **Kofi Annan**, presented photographer, **Benoit Aquin**, with a prize of £60,000 in October 2008 for his series of photographs on desertification in China. **Munem Wasif** was awarded a commission to document an area of Bangladesh in which Prix Pictet's supported charity for 2008, **WaterAid**, is working. This work was shown first in London in March 2009. Exhibitions of selected works from the 2008 shortlist have taken place in Dubai, Thessaloniki, Hong Kong, Eindhoven, Dresden, Geneva and Bonn. The book, 'Water', is available from the Prix Pictet website and other outlets – [www.prixpictet.com](http://www.prixpictet.com)

### **2. Prix Pictet 2009 – Earth**

The theme of the 2009 Prix Pictet is 'earth'. 'Earth' refers to the planet and the soil beneath our feet, and to the marks that man makes on the face of the land - either directly through the creation mines, toxic waste, broken urban waste lands, vast refuse dumps and blasted desert landscapes; or indirectly, through the scars left by fire, flood or famine and the impact of natural disasters: earthquakes, landslides and volcanoes or the migration of displaced people. The theme of the prize in 2008 was 'water'.

### **3. Prix Pictet 2009 – Executive and Secretariat**

The Prix Pictet Secretariat is Stephen Barber, Group Managing Director, Pictet & Cie and Director, Prix Pictet and Michael Benson, Director, Candlestar – Prize Administration and Company Secretary Prix Pictet Ltd. The London based cultural consultancy **Candlestar Ltd** is the Secretariat for the Prix Pictet and the Prix Pictet Ltd. Candlestar manages all of the administrative, artistic, logistical and production aspects of the Prix Pictet award and the global exhibition tour. [www.candlestar.co.uk](http://www.candlestar.co.uk).

### **4. Prix Pictet 2009 – Jury**

**Benoit Aquin**, photographer and winner of the Prix Pictet 2008

**Jan Dalley**, Financial Times, Arts Editor

**Loa Haagen Pictet**, Danish art historian and curator of the Pictet & Cie collection of Swiss art.

**Zaha Hadid**, Founding Partner of Zaha Hadid Architects

**Francis Hodgson**, Photography Critic, Financial Times and former Head of Photography, Sotheby's

**Sir David King**, former Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government and Director of the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, Oxford University

**Fumio Nanjo**, Director, The Mori Art Museum

### **5. Prix Pictet 2009 – Nominators**

Over 70 leading experts in the visual arts from six continents, from directors and curators of major museums and galleries to journalists and critics, proposed a maximum of ten photographers each, from which the jury selected the shortlist and will identify the winner of Prix Pictet 2009.

#### **North America**

Joerg Colberg, Founder and editor of "Conscientious"

W M Hunt, Owner, Hasted Hunt Gallery

Anne Kennedy, Partner, Art and Commerce

Stephen Mayes, Managing Director, VII Photo

David Pratt, Editor, The Globe and Mail

#### **South America**

Alejandro Castellotte, Photography Curator

Oscar Guardiola-Rivera, Writer, Art Critic and Philosopher

Hollman Morris, Journalist

John Mraz, Professor, Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades

#### **Australasia**

Sandra Byron, Director, Sandra Byron Gallery

Naomi Cass, Director of the Centre for Contemporary Photography

Isobel Crombie, Senior Curator of Photography, The National Gallery of Victoria

John Elliott, Photographer/Highlife magazine

Linda Groom, Curator of the National Library of Australia's Pictures Collection

Gael Newton, Senior Curator of photography, National Gallery of Australia

Russell Storer, Curator Sydney Museum of Contemporary art  
John B. Turner, Senior Lecturer, Elam School of Fine Arts

### **Europe**

Regina Maria Anzenberger, Founder and Director Anzenberger Agency  
Gerry Badger, Photographer and photography critic  
Maria Baibakova, Collector and curator  
Simon Bainbridge, Editor, British Journal of Photography  
Sheyi Bankale, Editor, Next Level  
Ami Barak, Curator and critic  
Christine Barthe, Scientific Director, Musée du quai Branly  
Enrico Bossan, Director, Colors Magazine and Fabrica  
Chiara Capodici, Curator, Extrapazio  
Zelda Cheatle, Portfolio manager, WMG Photography Fund  
William Ewing, Director, Musée d'Elysee Lausanne  
Jean-Paul Felley, Director, Centre culturel suisse de Paris  
Valerie Fougeirol, Director, Magnum Gallery  
Vangelis Ioakimidis, Director, Thessaloniki Museum of Photography  
Olivier Kaeser, Centre culturel suisse de Paris  
Olga Korsunova, Curator  
Antonin Kratochvil, Photo journalist  
Vicky Long, Project Director, Cape Farewell  
Tim Marlow, Head of Exhibitions, White Cube  
Philippa Neave, Art consultant  
Michael Neff, Photographer  
Sylvia Ospina, Director, Flowers East  
November Paynter, Director, Artist Pension Trust and Independent Curator  
Angelica Pediconi, Director Art and Ethics  
Timothy Persons, Director, Taik Gallery  
Jocelyn Phillips, Deputy Director of Photographs at Sotheby's  
Maarten Pieterse, Director of the Arts and Culture, University of Technology Eindhoven  
Farah Rahim Ismail, Specialist in Modern & Contemporary Indian Art, Christie's  
Julian Rodriguez, Dean of the School of Media, London College of Communication  
Mario Rotllant, Collector  
Olivia Maria Rubio, Director, Fabrica  
Eugen Viehof, Collector  
Brigitte von Ribbentrop-Trotha, Consultant and Writer  
Marc-Olivier Wahler, Director, Palais de Tokyo  
Jean Wainwright, Art historian and critic  
Jeni Walwin, independent curator, writer and public art consultant

### **Africa**

François Bambou, Editor in Chief Delegate, La Nouvelle Expression  
Diomansi Bomboté, Journalist  
Richard Duebel, Photographer and a film cameraman  
Jeany Lungembo, Assistant Editor, Magazine d'Enquetes Okapi  
Simon Njami, Curator and Editor, Revue Noire  
Sylvia Smith, Freelance Journalist  
Guy Tillim, Photographer

### **Asia Pacific**

Shahidul Alam, Photography critic and professor  
Joselina Cruz, Independent Curator  
Salima Hashmi, Dean of Visual Arts, Beaconhouse National University  
Michiko Kasahara, Chief curator, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography  
Nicolette Kwok, Founder and Director of the Red Mansion Foundation  
Jiyeon Lee, Independent curator, writer and advisor  
Szewan Leung, Co-founder and Artistic Director of MOCA China  
Mathew Ngui, Curator  
Magnus Renfrew, Director, Hong Kong Art Fair  
Mehreen Rizvi-Khursheed, Consultant Modern Indian and Pakistani Art

Farah Siddiqui, Founder and Director, Farah Siddiqui Contemporary Art  
Mariko Takeuchi, Photography critic and curator

**Middle East**

Elie Domit, Creative Director, The Empty Quarter  
Ali Khadra, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Mixed Media Publishing  
Alireza Samiazar, Architect and art critic  
Suha Shoman, Founder, Darat Al Funun  
Eli Zagury, Director, Arad Collection