# Zed Nelson wins photographer of the year at 2025 Sony World Photography Awards



The winners of the 2025 Sony World Photography Awards have been announced, marking the 18th edition of this prestigious annual competition. The acclaimed British photographer Zed Nelson earned the coveted Photographer of the Year award for his compelling series titled The Anthropocene Illusion, which explores the complex relationship between humanity and the environment.

Monica Allende, chair of the 2025 professional jury, praised Nelson’s work, describing it as "striking" and commending the photographer’s "ability to translate complex environmental issues into striking visual narratives." Allende elaborated on the significance of the series, stating, "The Anthropocene Illusion illustrates a world where the real and the artificial blur, where the wild survives in controlled enclosures, and where human nostalgia for nature is expressed through spectacle rather than action."

The award-winning photographs, along with other remarkable entries, are currently on display at Somerset House in London. The exhibition features over 300 images and will run until 5 May, offering visitors a wide-ranging insight into contemporary photography.

Other notable winners from the competition include French photographer Olivier Unia, who secured the top prize in the Open Competition with a dramatic image captured during a traditional Moroccan tbourida, an equestrian performance known for its element of danger. Olivier hoped his photo would highlight the risks involved in such cultural events.

The Youth Photographer of the Year Award was claimed by Daniel Dian - Ji Wu from Taiwan, who captured a stunning image during the ‘golden hour’ at Venice Beach Skatepark in Los Angeles. The photograph evokes a "sense of passion and freedom," as described by the young artist.

Germany’s Toby Binder won the Documentary Projects category with a poignant image shot in Belfast. Binder remarked, "There is hardly any other country in Europe where a past conflict is still as present in daily life as it is in Northern Ireland." Through his project, he aims to document the daily lives of young people affected by this enduring history.

Italian photographer Chantal Pinzi received the Sport category award for her evocative series titled Shred the Patriarchy, showcasing female skateboarders in India. Her collection illustrates how these women challenge stereotypes and resist marginalisation through their sport.

In the Creative category, British photographer Rhiannon Adam won for a haunting image concerning the space industry. Adam had been slated to participate in a week-long lunar mission on SpaceX’s Starship, but the mission was abruptly cancelled in 2024.

Brazilian photographer Gui Christ earned the Portraiture award. His intimate photographs depict Afro-Brazilian communities confronting religious intolerance, aiming to both challenge prejudice and celebrate the spiritual traditions of these groups.

Canadian Ulana Switucha triumphed in the Architecture and Design category with her series of unconventional images showcasing toilets in Tokyo, Japan. Switucha’s project demonstrates how these functional structures are also “works of art.”

The Environment category was won by Peruvian photographer Nicolas Garrido Huguet, who captured artisanal women in Cusco, Peru, practising natural textile dyeing techniques—a powerful image that highlights traditional craftsmanship.

Japanese photographer Seido Kino received the Landscape award for a thought-provoking project that overlays archival photographs from the 1940s to 1960s with current-day images of the same locations. The series invites viewers to reflect on Japan’s development over time.

The Student Photographer of the Year title was awarded to Peruvian photographer Micaela Valdivia Medina. Her poignant photo, part of a larger series exploring the complexities of female prison spaces in Chile, provides a window into the lives and environments of incarcerated women.

Among Zed Nelson’s striking images is a powerful shot taken at the Shanghai Wild Animal Park in China. His series delves into the ways humans immerse themselves in carefully orchestrated and artificial environments, which serve to obscure their extensive impact on the natural world.

The Daily Mail is reporting that the Sony World Photography Awards continue to celebrate a diverse array of photographic talent from across the globe, with the exhibition at Somerset House providing a comprehensive showcase of the winners’ work through early May.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards/winners-galleries/2025/national-awards/winners/2025> - Corroborates the announcement of the 2025 Sony World Photography Awards winners and the global reach of the competition.
* <https://www.worldphoto.org/blogs/16-04-25/overall-winners-have-been-revealed> - Supports the revelation of overall winners and the prizes they receive, including cash, equipment, and exhibition inclusion.
* <https://www.dpreview.com/articles/4846224239/sony-world-photography-awards-2025-reveals-its-photographer-of-the-year> - Confirms Zed Nelson as the Photographer of the Year and highlights his series, The Anthropocene Illusion.
* <https://www.worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards/2025-winners-and-shortlist-galleries> - Provides access to galleries featuring winners and shortlisted entries, including an exhibition at Somerset House in London.
* <https://www.amateurphotographer.com/latest/photo-news/sony-world-photography-awards-2025-winners-announced/> - Supports the announcement of Olivier Unia as the Open Photographer of the Year and provides details on other winners like Zed Nelson and Daniel Dian-Ji Wu.