

**PRESS RELEASE****Frida Orupabo receives the *SPECTRUM Internationaler Preis für Fotografie 2025 der Stiftung Niedersachsen*****Exhibition by the award winner from April 5 to July 20, 2025 at the Sprengel Museum Hannover**

**Hannover/Germany, April 12, 2024** | Stiftung Niedersachsen honours the Norwegian artist Frida Orupabo with the prestigious *SPECTRUM Internationaler Preis für Fotografie* in 2025. The prize is endowed with 15,000 euros, a major exhibition of her work at the Sprengel Museum Hannover and a publication. The Norwegian artist receives the prize for her impressive photographic collages, in which she explores questions of identity, race, gender and the sexualised exploitation and objectification of black bodies. Frida Orupabo creates new narratives through artistic manipulation and emancipates her predominantly female figures.

From the jury's statement: "*Frida Orupabo plays a very special role in contemporary photography in her examination of the painful flaws of visual traditions and her complex pictorial inventions aimed at enlightenment, in which the violence of traditional visual regimes is visualised. The jury's decision in favour of Frida Orupabo expands the spectrum of previous SPECTRUM prizewinners by another extremely striking, artistically outstanding position.*"

The sociologist and artist Frida Orupabo was born in 1986 and grew up in a small Norwegian town. She now lives and works in Oslo. Her works are represented in renowned collections and are presented internationally in exhibitions. The Sprengel Museum Hannover will present the artist from April 5 to July 20, 2025 with the *SPECTRUM* exhibition that is part of the prize. The award ceremony will take place as part of the exhibition opening on April 4, 2025 at 19:00.

The jury for the *SPECTRUM Prize 2025* consisted of **Lavinia Francke** (Stiftung Niedersachsen), **Gabriele Schor** (SAMMLUNG VERBUND, Vienna), **Inka Schube** (Sprengel Museum Hannover), Christoph Wiesner (Director of the photo festival "Les Rencontres Internationales de la photographie d'Arles") and **Franciska Zólyom** (Director of the Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst (GfZK), Leipzig).

The *SPECTRUM Internationaler Preis für Fotografie* is awarded every two years by the Stiftung Niedersachsen to outstanding contemporary photographic artists. Adrian Sauer (2023), Zanele Muholi (2021), Fiona Tan (2019), Rineke Dijkstra (2017), Hannah Collins (2015), Boris Mikhailov (2013), Bahman Jalali (2011), Helen Levitt (2008), Martha Rosler (2005), Sophie Calle (2002), John Baldessari (1999), Thomas Struth (1997) and Robert Adams (1994) have been honoured to date. The name *SPECTRUM* refers to the photo

gallery SPECTRUM (1972-1991) based in Hanover, one of the first photo galleries in Europe and the origin of the photo department of the Sprengel Museum Hannover.

As a state cultural foundation, the Stiftung Niedersachsen strengthens the diversity of culture in Lower Saxony by supporting non-profit projects and helps to enhance the profile as a cultural centre. Each year, the foundation supports around 200 projects and is active in operations itself.

Frida Orupabo is represented by Gallery Nordenhake (Berlin, Stockholm, Mexico City). Further information on the artist can be found on her website at <https://fridaorupabo.com/>.

At <https://www.stnds.de/presse> you will find press images of the artist.

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## Jury Statement

### ***SPECTRUM Internationaler Preis für Fotografie 2025 der Stiftung Niedersachsen*** **Frida Orupabo**

In 2024, the jury of the *SPECTRUM Internationaler Preis für Fotografie der Stiftung Niedersachsen* unanimously decided in favour of the artist Frida Orupabo. With her large-format photographic collages, sculptures and installations, she deals with colonial and sexual violence, racism, identity and the power of the gaze.

Her interest in the depiction of mostly black female bodies stems from her own early experiences. As the child of a Norwegian white mother and a Nigerian black father, she grew up in the 1990s near Oslo in a predominantly white society that gave her the feeling of being "different". In order to better understand this "otherness", the trained sociologist turned to family photographs in 2013 and uploaded them to her Instagram feed "@nemiepeba". Soon after, Orupabo delved into the vastness of the digital network, combining photographs from archives from the colonial era and apartheid as well as from film, painting and fashion, most of which show black female bodies. She brings the colonial gaze closer to a Europe that proclaims inclusivity despite deeply rooted racial discrimination.

In 2017, the self-taught artist was invited by the artist Arthur Jafa to show her works in his own exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery in London. Two years later, her collages were on show at the Biennale di Venezia.

In the found photographs that Frida Orupabo uses, people are often catalogued and stored as nameless objects. She dismembers, dissects and sticks body parts together like prostheses and makes the bodies look like distorted dolls. Pain, anger and discomfort are expressed. Resistance, says the artist, is expressed in the way her collages throw back the gaze.

Orupabo brings the repressed archival material to the surface and scrutinises the inherent power of the images. It is often the suppressed gazes of slaves that now stare back at the viewer. In her works, a transformation from object status to subject status takes place. In this sense, her parallel video works can be read as focussing re-readings of existing images. *"I want people to immerse themselves in themselves and recognise their own position,"* explains the artist. *"I think that is the essence of my work."*

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decision in favour of Frida Orupabo expands the spectrum of previous SPECTRUM prize-winners by another extremely striking, artistically outstanding position.

**For the jury: Gabriele Schor and Inka Schube**