

**PRESS RELEASE****Zanele Muholi awarded Stiftung Niedersachsen's SPECTRUM – International Prize for Photography in 2021**

**Hanover/Germany, 18 March 2020** | Stiftung Niedersachsen is commending the South African artist, photographer and activist Zanele Muholi with the SPECTRUM – International Prize for Photography in 2021. Muholi uses their works to campaign against homophobic violence in South Africa and describes themselves as a “visual activist”. The artist’s special focus is on the rights of LGBTQI+ people in their home country and beyond. The internationally acclaimed SPECTRUM prize is endowed with EUR 15,000. In addition, the prize-winner is being honoured with a comprehensive exhibition of their work at the Sprengel Museum Hannover and an artist publication. The prize will be presented at the opening of the exhibition in March 2021.

**From the jury’s statement:**

*“Muholi succeeds in pushing clichéd conceptions of the exotic to extremes by adopting unusual accessories and hairstyles and satirising stereotypes. Subtle humour and profound earnest come together in the power of formal compositions. In this way, Muholi’s photographs lend foreign attributions and staged self-assertion a force and beauty rarely encountered in contemporary photography.”*

**Jury** | **Tine Colstrup** (Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen), **Yilmaz Dziewior** (Museum Ludwig, Cologne), **Lavinia Francke** (Stiftung Niedersachsen), **Beral Madra** (BM Contemporary Art Center, Istanbul), **Inka Schube** (Sprengel Museum Hannover)

The SPECTRUM – International Prize for Photography has been awarded to outstanding contemporary photographic artists since 1994. Previous prize-winners have been 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).

Stiftung Niedersachsen has been promoting art, culture, science and education throughout the Lower Saxony region since 1987. It strengthens the diversity of culture in Lower Saxony by supporting non-profit projects and contributes to the profile of the cultural location. Every year, the foundation supports around 200 projects and is itself operationally active.

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*\*Note to Editors: Muholi's pronouns are they, them, their*