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[CJ Heyliger \(http://www.cjheylinger.com/index.html\)](http://www.cjheylinger.com/index.html) has won Paris Photo Los Angeles's inaugural INTRODUCING! Young California Photographer Award, co-sponsored by J.P. Morgan. One of the six finalists on display at the fair, all of whom are currently enrolled in California MFA programs, Heyliger was chosen by a jury including Paris Photo artistic director Christoph Wiesner, actress Jamie Lee Curtis, LACMA photography curator Britt Salvesen, collector Michael Hawley, and Wall Street Journal director of photography Jennifer Pastore. He will receive \$5,000 — as evidenced plainly by the giant Ed McMahon-style check he received at the presentation on Thursday night.

"We were so impressed with your sensitive use of the medium and your choice of scale," Salvesen said to Heyliger, noting the technical and emotional contrast between the two works he submitted (below).



Born in Colorado, Heyliger earned his BFA from the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University in 2006; he is set receive his MFA from the UCLA School of Art and Architecture this spring.

"It was very close," Hawley added, noting that the panel debated for at least 90 minutes discussing the other finalists. Below are two of our favorites: Arden Ellis Surdam and her scarf-obscured portraits and Shannon Forman's suite of five small slice-of-life works of with titles like "I don't know if I told you, I'm going for an insanity defense" (top left).