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# Ursula Schulz-Dornburg and Farah Al Qasimi will be honored with the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize 2025

**For the third time, the state capital of Düsseldorf is awarding a main prize and a sponsorship prize for artistic photography**

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Ursula Schulz-Dornburg will be awarded the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize (main prize) of the state capital of Düsseldorf in 2025. The main prize is endowed with 15,000 euros. An international, independent jury decided this on Thursday, September 26, 2024. Farah Al Qasimi will receive the sponsorship prize, which is endowed with 5,000 euros.

Mayor Dr. Stephan Keller: "I am delighted that the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize is being awarded to two outstanding artists who have made a significant contribution to contemporary cultural issues through their artistic and

photographic work."

### **Jury statement**

**for the main prize:** "The international Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize 2025, endowed with 15,000 euros, goes to Ursula Schulz-Dornburg, born in 1938. Schulz-Dornburg belongs to a generation of photographers whose work has only been (re-)discovered in German-speaking countries in recent years. She has lived and worked in Düsseldorf since 1969. With her work, Schulz-Dornburg pursues a cultural-historical anthropological interest, which she describes as the "verticality of time": giving found and formerly animate things a conceptual and contemporary form, as well as keeping a lasting awareness of resources present - in a human as well as nature-related way.

The jury was convinced by Ursula Schulz-Dornburg's long-standing work and her artistic articulation in her documentary, political and poetic photographic works. Schulz-Dornburg studied photography and journalism in Munich from 1959 to 1960 and then developed an independent visual language that was self-taught and which has numerous parallels to the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher in the formal aspects of isolating image elements, reducing, typologizing and observing. She repeatedly travelled to countries such as Armenia, Kazakhstan, Yemen, Syria, Indonesia, Iraq, but also China, Nepal, Russia and Turkey, documenting landscape changes and the decline of a political system. Schulz-Dornburg has had international exhibitions in recent years, including at the Maison européenne de la photographie in Paris (2019/2020), the British Museum (2018), the Städel Museum in Frankfurt (2018) and the Tate Modern in London (2013 and 2014)."

**Promotional Prize :** "The international Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize 2025, endowed with 5,000 euros, will be awarded to the artist Farah Al Qasimi, born in Abu Dhabi in 1991. Al Qasimi works primarily with photography, video and performance and examines post-colonial structures of power, gender and taste in the Arab Gulf states.

Al Qasimi studied photography and music at Yale University in 2012 and received her MFA from the Yale School of Art in 2017. As she splits her time between Dubai and New York, social critique and observation of the multi-layered aspects of each place are indirectly integrated into her artistic

practice. Through her bold and vibrant photographs, she explores the unspoken social norms and values embedded in a place, a moment, or an object.

Farah Al Qasimi impressed the jury with her ability to create worlds that transcend borders and identities, questioning gender and globalization in our post-internet age. Her stunning, visually arresting work rethinks what is worth photographing; Al Qasimi turns her gaze to the mundane in life and infuses it with a contemporary aesthetic."

The award ceremony for the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize is expected to take place in May 2025. The state capital of Düsseldorf is also planning a supporting program with the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize Week, which will present the award-winning artistic positions to a broad public with exhibitions, film screenings, readings and talks.

### **The Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize**

In memory of the internationally renowned Düsseldorf photographer couple Bernd and Hilla Becher, the Photo Art Prize of the State Capital of Düsseldorf honors people who have made a special contribution to photography. The main and sponsorship prizes are awarded every two years by the State Capital of Düsseldorf and the Mayor on the recommendation of an independent, international jury of experts. The main prize is aimed at artists, theorists and curators who have distinguished themselves in the field of photography and related areas such as film, video and other image-generating media in the field of art. The sponsorship prize is aimed at artists who focus on photography, visual media and media art.

The Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize will be awarded for the third time next year. In 2022 and 2023, respectively, the photo artist Carrie Mae Weems was awarded the main prize and the photo artist Hannah Darabi was awarded the sponsorship prize. In 2020, the main prize went to the photo artist Evelyn Richter and the sponsorship prize went to the photo artist Theo Simpson.

### **International jury**

The award will be decided by an international jury. In addition to the Lord Mayor Dr. Stephan Keller, the Deputy Mayor for Culture and Integration Miriam Koch and representatives from politics and administration, the 2022-2025 jury includes the following expert jurors: Max Becher, artist and son of

Bernd and Hilla Becher, Dr. Felix Krämer, General Director of the Kunstpalast, Alona Pardo, Head of Programs at the Arts Council Collection, UK in London, Florian Ebner, Head of the Photography Department at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, and Ute Mahler, photographer and founder of the Ostkreuzschule in Berlin.

### **Background: Bernd and Hilla Becher**

The artist couple Bernd and Hilla Becher (born August 20, 1931, died June 22, 2007/born September 2, 1934, died October 10, 2015) supervised the first class for artistic photography at a German art college in Düsseldorf since 1976 and thus made an important contribution to the recognition of photography as a medium in the visual arts. The state capital's prize was named after Bernd and Hilla Becher in recognition of their artistic work and teaching.

Further information at

[www.duesseldorf.de/fotografie/bernd-und-hilla-becher-preis](http://www.duesseldorf.de/fotografie/bernd-und-hilla-becher-preis)  
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The winner of the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize 2025: Ursula Schulz-Dornburg  
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Ursula Schulz-Dornburg will be awarded the Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize of the State Capital of Düsseldorf 2025  
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Bernd and Hilla Becher Prize 2025: Farah Al Qasimi receives the award  
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