



FELIX SCHOELLER

PRESS RELEASE

Osnabrück, 25. September 2025

Felix Schoeller Photo Award 2025 and German Peace Prize for Photography 2025 announced and honored

Exhibition opening at the Museumsquartier Osnabrück

Osnabrück. On Thursday evening, September 25, 2025, the winners of the two photography awards, the Felix Schoeller Photo Award and the German Peace Prize for Photography, were announced and honored in a festive ceremony. Photographer Maximilian Mann (Germany) received the winner's check for €10,000 for the "German Peace Prize for Photography 2025," awarded by the city of Osnabrück and local paper manufacturer Felix Schoeller, from Osnabrück's mayor Katharina Pötter. Maximilian Mann prevailed against high-caliber international competition from 88 countries with his work "Letzte Rettung Oberhausen" (Last Resort Oberhausen).

This year, the "Felix Schoeller Photo Award" was presented in two categories, each with prize money of €5,000. In the 'Sustainability' category, the prize was awarded to Axel Javier Sulzbacher. Sulzbacher is a German-Mexican photojournalist, born in Hanover in 1992, who impressed the jury with his series "Green Dystopia."

Promoting young talent in the spotlight at the Felix Schoeller Photo Award

On the occasion of the seventh Felix Schoeller Photo Award, Hans Christoph Gallenkamp, CEO of Felix Schoeller Holding GmbH & Co. KG, looked to the future and emphasized: "As pioneers in the manufacture of photographic paper, promoting talent is particularly important to us. As a sustainable company, we will continue to focus on providing young photographers worldwide with a platform through the Felix Schoeller Photo Award. Here, they can express their talent, imagination, and convictions through their photographic achievements and showcase their work." Gallenkamp also emphasized that sustainability is not only an important category in the competition: "Sustainable business practices, sustainable product development, and social sustainability in our dealings with employees, partners, and customers are part of the DNA of our family business."

The winning series and the works of the nominees for both awards will be presented in an exhibition at the Museumsquartier Osnabrück until February 22, 2026.



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Felix Schoeller Photo Award
Category winner: Sustainability

Axel Javier Sulzbacher: Green Dystopia

The avocado has triggered a hype rarely seen in recent decades. The burden of rising demand is particularly noticeable in the Mexican state of Michoacán. There, forests are being illegally cleared by slash-and-burn practices to make way for avocado plantations. High international demand has led to ever larger and more numerous plantations. Over 300,000 jobs depend directly or indirectly on the production and trade of avocados in the region, which generates annual sales of \$2.5 billion. In 2021, Michoacán alone produced around 1.8 million tons of the green fruit. In the ongoing drug war, the cartels have become aware of the revenue potential of the avocado trade. Protection rackets and the general presence of the cartels have put enormous pressure on what was until recently the only state in Mexico with an export license. In view of the escalating violence, the government had to call in the military to maintain order.

Axel Javier Sulzbacher, born in Hanover in 1992, is a German-Mexican photojournalist. He lives and works as a freelance photographer in Hanover and Berlin.

Sulzbacher's work has been published in numerous renowned magazines, including Stern, Geo, Das Magazin, Zenith, and The Washington Post. He has also been nominated for several international photography awards and has exhibited his work both in Germany and abroad.

Felix Schoeller Photo Award
Category winner "Young Talent"

Verdiana Albano: i ain't from no east coast

When you are constantly asked where you come from, you think about it more deeply. It was the time, it was the place. A couple in a Saxon bar, between the Cold War and civil war, between ethnicities and ethics, between plans and economics, between dreams and promises. I dismantled a dream with the wall: promises, norms, patterns.

And then – what next? The show is over. The dream remains. Let's go home. Experience generations. I find myself at the end of two cultures.

Not negative, neutral and without identity, in search of something new, something uncertain. "Using her parents' Stasi files and personal and institutional image archives, Verdiana Albano explores her own fragmented and mysterious Afro-European history." – Dr. Franziska Kunze.



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Verdiana Albano (1993) is an Afro-European artist who lives in Frankfurt and Berlin. She studied at the Offenbach University of Art and Design until 2021, specializing in photography and installation art. She is currently studying at the Ostkreuz School of Photography as part of the Master Class.

Albano's art and commitment have been recognized with numerous awards, including the Young Art and New Ways of Bayern Innovativ, the Neustart Kultur Scholarship 2022, and the Neustart Plus Scholarship 2023 from the Kunstfonds Foundation.

German Peace Prize for Photography awarded to Maximilian Mann

In his work "Letzte Rettung Oberhausen" (Last Resort Oberhausen), Maximilian Mann reports on a special place in the Ruhr region where the global crises and conflicts of this world take on a frightening proximity: the Peace Village Oberhausen. Here, the consequences of war and violence are manifested in faces marked by burn scars, injuries, and pain. These are the faces of children who are not yet teenagers and yet have already been through the worst. But this place is not one of resignation, but of new beginnings. Through medical care and the dedication of volunteer doctors, the children not only receive physical healing, but also a perspective – a moment of carefree laughter, a step back into life.

Maximilian Mann, born in 1992, is a German photographer with a master's degree in photography from Dortmund University of Applied Sciences. He specializes in documentary and portrait photography and focuses on stories that deal with social and environmental change as well as broader social issues. He was awarded the World Press Photo Award 2020. He is a founding member of the DOCKS collective, represented by the LAIF Agency, and an appointed member of the DGPh (German Society for Photography).

Image credits

© Maximilian Mann, winner of the German Peace Prize for Photography, "Letzte Rettung Oberhausen" (Last Rescue Oberhausen)

© Axel Javier Sulzbacher, winner of the Felix Schoeller Photo Award, Young Talent category, "Green Dystopia"

© Verdiana Albano, winner of the Felix Schoeller Photo Award, Young Talent category, "i ain't from no east coast"



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Further information, as well as all other winners and nominees, can be found at
www.felix-schoeller-photoaward.com

Museumsquartier Osnabrück
Lotter Straße 2, 49078 Osnabrück
www.museumsquartier-osnabrueck.de

Öffnungszeiten:
Di - Fr 11-18 Uhr, Sa/So 10-18 Uhr

About Felix Schoeller

Felix Schoeller harnesses the power of paper. The specialty paper manufacturer enables customers and partners to deliver solutions that make life better for people and the planet. Founded in 1895, the family-owned company with 14 locations in 9 countries offers proven paper solutions ranging from photographic and digital printing papers to decor papers for the furniture and wood-based panel industries, release liners for medical products and industrial applications, and sublimation papers for fashion, sportswear and home furnishings to flexible paper composites for packaging. In addition to proven paper solutions, Felix Schoeller enhances the use of paper in new applications and replaces limited resources with paper as a renewable raw material. True to its vision to make life better through paper, the company follows its central brand promise **PAPER MADE FOR LIFE**.

Since 2018, Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp has been the fifth generation to lead the family business with the headquarters in Osnabrück. felix-schoeller.com

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