ROYAL OBSERVATORY GREENWICH’s “INSIGHT INVESTMENT ASTRONOMY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2019”:
SHORTLISTED IMAGES TO THIS YEAR’S COMPETITION SELECTED

- WINNERS ANNOUNCED 12 September 2019
- EXHIBITION OPENS 13 September 2019

The spectacular Milky Way over the picturesque Bavarian mountain, Herzogstand, a colourful explosion of the Southern Lights at the east coast of Tasmania, the remarkable Horsehead Nebula and the Flame Nebula, a vast cloud of gas and dust where new stars are being born; the Royal Observatory's Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2019 has once more received thousands of outstanding images. The competition, which is run by the Royal Observatory Greenwich, sponsored by Insight Investment and in association with BBC Sky at Night Magazine, is now in its eleventh year and has broken the record number of entries once more, receiving over 4,600 entries from enthusiastic amateurs and professional photographers, taken from 90 countries across the globe.

Shortlisted images from this year's entrants include an Aurora shaped like a bird spreading its wings and flying over a destroyed military hydroelectric station in Murmansk, a bright display of noctilucent clouds as seen from Thurso Beach in the north of Scotland and the remnants of an 1860s pier illuminated by the majestic purple hues of our galaxy.

Photographers have also captured sights from across our Solar System, galaxy and the wider universe; from the planetary nebula located in the constellation of Aquarius, the Helix Nebula that lies more than 650 light-years away; the Sculptor galaxy that was discovered by Caroline Herschel in 1783 and known as a starburst galaxy for its intense star formation regions; to the second largest planet in our solar system, Saturn, which is wreathed by a complex system of icy rings and surrounded by more than sixty moons.

The competition's judges include renowned comedian and keen amateur astronomer, Jon Culshaw; Art Editor of BBC Sky at Night Magazine Steve Marsh and a host of experts from the worlds of art and astronomy. The winners of the competition's nine categories and two special prizes will be announced on Thursday 12 September at a special award ceremony at the National Maritime Museum. The winning images will be displayed in an exhibition at the National Maritime Museum from Friday 13 September, alongside a selection of exceptional shortlisted images. Winners and
shortlisted entries will also be published in the competition’s official book, available in September from bookstores and online. The awards ceremony can be followed live on Twitter #astrophoto2019.

Website: rmg.co.uk/shortlist
Twitter: @RMGreenwich
Instagram: @royalmuseumsgreenwich
Facebook: Royal Museums Greenwich
Astrophotography Facebook Group: facebook.com/groups/astrophotos

Notes to editors:

1. Competition Categories:

Overall winner – **Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2019**

**Skyscapes:** Landscape and cityscape images of twilight and the night sky featuring the Milky Way, star trails, meteor showers, comets, conjunctions, constellation rises, halos and noctilucent clouds alongside elements of earthly scenery.

**Aurorae:** Photographs featuring auroral activity.

**People and Space:** Photographs of the night sky including people or a human interest element.

**Our Sun:** Solar images including solar eclipses and transits.

**Our Moon:** Lunar images including lunar eclipses and occultation of planets.

**Planets, Comets and Asteroids:** Everything else in our solar system, including planets and their satellites, comets, asteroids and other forms of zodiacal debris.

**Stars and Nebulae:** Deep space objects within the Milky Way galaxy, including stars, star clusters, supernova remnants, nebulae and other intergalactic phenomena.

**Galaxies:** Deep space objects beyond the Milky Way galaxy, including galaxies, galaxy clusters, and stellar associations.

**Young Astronomy Photographer of the Year:** Pictures taken by budding astronomers under the age of 16 years old.

The judges will also award two special prizes:

**The Sir Patrick Moore prize for Best Newcomer:** Photos taken by people who have taken up the hobby in the last year and have not entered an image into the competition before. The judges will give special consideration to those using simple and inexpensive start-out kits.

**Robotic Scope Image of the Year:** Photos taken using one of the increasing number of computer-controlled telescopes at prime observing sites around the world which can be accessed over the internet by members of the public.

2. The winners of Royal Observatory’s **Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2019** will be announced at an award ceremony at the National Maritime Museum on 12 September 2019. The winning photographs, alongside a selection of shortlisted images, will be exhibited in the National Maritime Museum from 13 September 2019. General admission will be £10.
3. The overall winner will receive £10,000. Winners of all other categories and the Young Astronomy Photographer of the Year will receive £1,500. There are also prizes for runners-up (£500) and highly commended (£250) entries. The Special Prize winners will receive £750. All of the winning entries will receive a one year subscription to BBC Sky at Night Magazine.

4. Royal Observatory Greenwich is home of the Prime Meridian and Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and is one of the most important historic scientific sites in the world. Since its founding in 1675, Greenwich has been at the centre of the measurement of time and astronomy. Today visitors can stand on the historic Prime Meridian line, while the Observatory galleries and Peter Harrison Planetarium help unravel the extraordinary phenomena of time, space and astronomy.

The Royal Observatory is part of Royal Museums Greenwich which also incorporates the National Maritime Museum, the 17th-century Queen's House and clipper ship Cutty Sark. This unique collection of museums and heritage buildings, which form a key part of the Maritime Greenwich UNESCO World Heritage Site, welcomes over two and a half million British and international visitors a year and is also a major centre of education and research. The mission of Royal Museums Greenwich is to enrich people's understanding of the sea, the exploration of space, and Britain's role in world history. For more information, visit www.rmg.co.uk.

5. About Insight Investment
Insight Investment is a leading global investment manager, founded in 2002 and headquartered in London. Insight primarily manages money for pension schemes by providing liability-driven investment strategies and investing in fixed income and currency, multi-asset and farmland.

www.insightinvestment.com

6. About BBC Sky at Night Magazine
BBC Sky at Night Magazine is Britain's best-selling astronomy magazine, with a circulation of 20,700 copies a month. skyatnightmagazine.com has 36,000 visits a month and reaches 50,000 social media followers through Facebook and Twitter. The magazine is available on Apple Newsstand, Google Play and Zinio as well as in print, and is media partner of the annual Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition run by the Royal Observatory Greenwich. With writing from the world's leading astronomers and science communicators, BBC Sky at Night Magazine complements one of the world's longest running TV programmes, BBC Four's The Sky at Night, and is published by Immediate Media Co under licence from BBC Worldwide.

7. The Royal Observatory, Greenwich, in partnership with Collins, will be publishing Astronomy Photographer of the Year, Collection 8 in September 2019. It is the official publication for the Insight Investment Astronomy Photography of the Year competition and will showcase over 140 breathtaking images of space and the night sky, including all 2019 winning and shortlisted images. Photographs will be accompanied by full details including each photographer's information, location where photographs were taken and technical specifications.

Last years' prize winning images are still available to buy: Astronomy Photographer of the Year, Collection 7 / RRP £25.00 / Hardback / Published 24 October 2018 / Royal Museums Greenwich online shop

For further information or to request review copies please contact: Rachel Quin / Rachel.quin@harpercollins.co.uk / DL: 0208 307 4085

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Media interviews:
The Royal Observatory Greenwich’s Modern Astronomy team is dedicated to the Public Understanding of Science and its experts are available to give radio and TV interviews on astronomy - at the historic Observatory site or in the studio.

The Observatory offers a short notice service to media stations looking for comment / interviews on any aspect of modern astronomy - discussing new discoveries and space missions, telling people what to look for in this month's night sky, or talking about old favourites like black holes, is there ‘life’ on other planets and the origins of the universe.

For studio quality and interviews at short notice an ISDN line is available.

For further information or images, please contact:
Antonia Mavromatidou, Royal Observatory Greenwich Press Office Tel: 020 8312 6545 | 07983 512 841 or Email: amavromatidou@rmg.co.uk or press@rmg.co.uk

All images must be credited to the relevant photographer and used only in reference to the competition/exhibition