

## ROYAL OBSERVATORY GREENWICH'S INSIGHT INVESTMENT ASTRONOMY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR – 2019 WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Hungarian photographer László Francsics wins the Royal Observatory Greenwich's title of *Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2019*. As well as securing the £10,000 top prize, his image takes pride of place in the exhibition of winning photographs opening at the National Maritime Museum on 13 September 2019.

Francsics with his 'Into the Shadow' image captivated and astounded the judges. Taken in Budapest, Hungary, the photograph depicts a creative and artistic composition of the 35 phases of the total lunar eclipse that occurred on January 21 2019. Competition judge Ed Robinson said: "For a single multiple-exposure image to capture this event with such positional precision, creative innovation and beauty is nothing short of masterful. The colours of our atmosphere projected onto the Moon's disc during the eclipse are not only artistically pleasing but also offer an understanding of such events that can reveal aspects of our own, thin, yet essential part of our atmosphere. In a year that celebrates 50 years since the first lunar landings it is fitting that this year's overall winning image captures such a dynamic and captivating view of our Moon. A worthy winner indeed". Judge Oana Sandu from the European Southern Observatory (ESO) added: "The original composition, the quality of the shots themselves, the chromatic and visual impact, all make for a photograph that will catch the viewer's eye and interest."

Winning images from other categories and special prizes include a remarkable panorama taken from the top of the mountain Offersøykammen, showcasing the Aurora Borealis over the Lofoten Islands in Norway, by Nicolai Brügger (Germany); an atmospheric image depicting the photographer, Ben Bush (UK), with his dog Floyd surrounded by Mars, Saturn and the galactic core of the Milky Way galaxy; and an extraordinary sequence of images of Mars, that follows the progress of the great global dust storm, by Andy Casely (Australia). In the *Young Astronomy Photographer of the Year* category, 11-year-old Davy van der Hoeven (Netherlands) is taking home the top prize for his remarkable deep sky image of the Rosette Nebula, a mesmerising flower-shaped nebula, located in the constellation Monoceros, that lies 5,000 light-years from Earth.

*BBC Sky at Night Magazine's* Art Editor, who is also a judge for the competition, Steve Marsh said of this year's contest: "Each year the competition attracts the most awe inspiring astrophotography taken from across the globe and this year was no exception. The imagination, patience and skill that clearly went into so many of the entries was astounding and wonderful to see. There was also a real drive by imagers to capture rare celestial objects and to push their equipment further than ever before. That Astronomy can inspire such passion and devotion is something we can all be very proud of."

Tom Kerss, astronomer at the Royal Observatory and judge for the competition, said: "Every year the standard rises, and entrants continue to find creative new ways to express their artistry. This year's selection contains so many unique approaches to astrophotography – real love letters to the art form, which stay with you long after you've seen them. I'm looking forward to the discussions these images will inspire about our shared sky, and the ever-expanding field of capturing and interpreting it. With such a beautiful collection to talk about, the competition really has become astrophotography's 'World Cup'."

*Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year* is run by the Royal Observatory Greenwich in association with Insight Investment and *BBC Sky at Night Magazine*. Now in its eleventh year, the competition received a record number of over 4,600 entries, taken from 90 countries across the globe. This year, for the first time since the launch of the *Special Prize: The Sir Patrick Moore prize for Best Newcomer category*, the judges have chosen two joint winners due to the high standard of images received.

These exceptional photographs – winners, runners-up or highly commended – are showcased alongside a remarkable selection of 68 shortlisted images, in the major special exhibition *Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year* exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, opening to the public from 13 September 2019.

This year's winners and shortlisted entries will also be published in the competition's official book by Collins, available exclusively at [Royal Museums Greenwich shops and online](#) from 13 September and on sale across all bookstores from 7 November, £25.

For the second year, admirers and enthusiasts of astrophotography can start voting, online and in the exhibition, for the Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year: People's Choice Awards 2019 and choose their favourite image, out of 24 preselected by the competition team. The winners will be announced in February 2020.

For information about entering next year's competition visit [www.rmg.co.uk/whats-on/astronomy-photographer-year/competition](http://www.rmg.co.uk/whats-on/astronomy-photographer-year/competition)

To see the all the winning images, visit [rmg.co.uk/astrophoto-winners-2019](http://rmg.co.uk/astrophoto-winners-2019).

***Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2019***, exhibition information for visitors:

<b>Venue:</b>	National Maritime Museum
<b>Dates:</b>	13 September 2019 – 26 April 2020
<b>Opening times:</b>	every day, 10.00 – 17.00 (closed 24-26 December)
<b>Visitor enquiries:</b>	020 8858 4422
<b>Admission:</b>	£10.00 Adult   £5.00 Child
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto">www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto</a>
<b>Twitter:</b>	@RMGreenwich #astrophoto2019
<b>Instagram:</b>	@royalmuseumsgreenwich #astrophoto2019
<b>Facebook:</b>	/royalmuseumsgreenwich

### **Notes to editors:**

1. Full details of 2019's winners:

#### **Our Moon**

- László Francsics (Hungary) with *Into the Shadow* (Winner and Overall Winner)
- Rafael Ruiz (Spain) with *Crescent Moon During the Day* (Runner Up)
- Yiming Li (China) with *Seven-colour Feather of the Moon* (Highly Commended)

#### **Aurorae**

- Nicolai Brügger (Germany) with *The Watcher* (Winner)
- James Stone (Australia) with *Aurora Australis from Beerbarrel Beach* (Runner Up)
- Ruslan Merzlyakov (Latvia) with *The Return of Green Lady* (Highly Commended)

#### **Galaxies**

- Rolf Wahl Olsen (Denmark) with *Shells of Elliptical Galaxy NGC 3923 in Hydra* (Winner)
- Ignacio Diaz Bobillo (Argentina) with *Hydrogen Sculptures in The Large Magellanic Cloud* (Runner Up)
- Raul Villaverde Fraile (Spain) with *Andromeda Galaxy* (Highly Commended)

#### **Our Sun**

- Alan Friedman (USA) with *A Little Fireworks* (Winner)

- Gabriel Corban (Romania) with *The Active Area AR12714* (Runner Up)
- Jason Guenzel (USA) with *The Sun – Atmospheric Detail* (Highly Commended)

### People and Space

- Ben Bush (UK) with *Ben, Floyd and the Core* (Winner)
- Sam King (UK) with *Above the Tower* (Runner Up)
- James Stone (Australia) with *Cosmic Plughole* (Highly Commended)

### Planets, Comets and Asteroids

- Andy Casely (Australia) with *Death of Opportunity* (Winner)
- Damian Peach (UK) with *Jupiter Unravelling* (Runner Up)
- Martin Lewis (UK) with *Black Saturn* (Highly Commended)

### Skyscapes

- Wang Zheng (China) with *Across the Sky of History* (Winner)
- Ruslan Merzlyakov (Latvia) with *Galactic Lighthouse* (Runner Up)
- Brandon Yoshizawa (USA) with *Flower Power* (Highly Commended)

### Stars and Nebulae

- Ignacio Diaz Bobillo (Argentina) with *Statue of Liberty Nebula* (Winner)
- Bob Franke (USA) with *A Horsehead Curtain Call* (Runner Up)
- Lluís Romero Ventura (Spain) with *The Elegant Elephant's Trunk* (Highly Commended)

### Young Astronomy Photographer of the Year

- Davy van der Hoeven (Netherlands – aged 11) with *Stellar Flower* (Winner)
- Matúš Motlo (Slovakia – aged 14) with *AR 12699 Sunspot* (Runner Up)
- Thea Hutchinson (UK – aged 12) with *Daytime Venus* (Highly Commended)
- Casper Kentish (UK – aged 9) with *Van Eyck's Moon* (Highly Commended)
- Tom Mogford (UK – aged 15) with *M31 Andromeda Galaxy* (Highly Commended)

### Special Prize: The Sir Patrick Moore prize for Best Newcomer

- Ross Clark (UK) with *The Jewels of Orion* (Joint Winner)
- Shuchang Dong (China) with *Sky and Ground, Stars and Sand* (Joint Winner)

### Special Prize: Robotic Scope

- László Francsics (Hungary) with *Infrared Saturn* (Winner)

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](http://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 and multi-asset.

[www.insightinvestment.com](http://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](http://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 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 year's 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](http://RoyalMuseumsGreenwich.com)

For further information or to request review copies please contact: Rachel Quin / [Rachel.quin@harpercollins.co.uk](mailto: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 further information or images, please contact:

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