

Press Release

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ROYAL OBSERVATORY GREENWICH'S "*INSIGHT INVESTMENT ASTRONOMY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2020*": SHORTLISTED IMAGES SELECTED

- **WINNERS ANNOUNCED 10 September 2020**
- **EXHIBITION OPENS 23 October 2020**

The Milky Way glittering over Kynance Cove, Cornwall, star trails across the gnarled landscape of the Namib Desert and the astonishing Thor's Helmet Nebula; a vast cloud of gas and dust where new stars are being born. Once again, the Royal Observatory's *Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2020* has received thousands of outstanding images. The competition, run by the Royal Observatory Greenwich, sponsored by Insight Investment and in association with *BBC Sky at Night Magazine*, is now in its twelfth year and has broken the record number of entries once more, receiving over 5,200 entries from enthusiastic amateurs and professional photographers, taken from almost 70 countries across the globe.

Entrants have captured wonders from across our solar system, galaxy and the wider Universe; from the second largest planet in our solar system, Saturn, which is wreathed by a complex system of icy rings and surrounded by more than 60 moons; an 'Eruption' on our sun's surface, a prominence on one of the star's most active regions; to the Sculptor Galaxy that was discovered by Caroline Herschel in 1783 and known as a starburst galaxy for its intense star formation regions.

Shortlisted images from this year's entrants also include a Full Moon illuminating the jagged peak of The Shard, London, a mesmerising aurora over Stokksnes headland on the Icelandic coast and a remarkable scene of a total solar eclipse, the planet Venus and the star Betelgeuse, captured at ESO's La Silla ESO Observatory, in the Atacama Desert, Chile.

Competition judge and Royal Observatory Greenwich Astronomer, Dr Emily Drabek-Maunders said of the competition: "*Astronomy is one of the most accessible sciences and everyone has looked up at the night sky at one time or another and wondered what is out there in the cosmos. Astrophotography bridges the gap between art and science, highlighting the natural beauty of our Universe. The goal of the Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition is to use these powerful photographs of space to engage the public with the big questions science is trying to answer, from the inner workings of a galaxy to how our Solar System came to be.*"

The competition's judges also 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 10 September 2020. The winning images will be displayed in an exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, 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.

Website: www.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 2020**

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.

The Annie Maunder Prize for Image Innovation Photos produced using publically available images. Entrants must process and manipulate the raw data in order to create a new version of that image.

2. The winners of Royal Observatory's *Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2020* will be announced on 10 September 2020. The winning photographs, alongside a selection of shortlisted images, will be exhibited in the National Maritime Museum from October 2020.

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 and multi-asset.

Insight takes responsible investment seriously. It was a founding signatory to the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and has been integrating environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations into decision-making processes for more than a decade. Insight's approach is underpinned by the belief that ESG issues are important drivers of investment value. In 2019, Insight was awarded A+ ratings across most of the relevant categories in the PRI survey, a reflection of its ongoing commitment to integrating responsible investment practices across all aspects of its business.

More information about Insight Investment can be found at: 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 17,385 copies a month. skyatnightmagazine.com has 350,000 visits a month and reaches 57,000 social media followers through Facebook and Twitter and Instagram. 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 9*** on 17 September 2020. 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 2020 winning and shortlisted images. Photographs will be accompanied by full details including each photographer's information, location where photographs were taken and technical specifications.

Collection 9 can be pre-ordered via Royal Museums Greenwich online shop: <https://shop.rmg.co.uk/products/pre-order-insight-investment-astronomy-photographer-of-the-year-collection-9>

Last years' prize winning images are still available to buy: ***Astronomy Photographer of the Year, Collection 8*** / RRP £25.00 / Hardback / Published 7 November 2019 / [Royal Museums Greenwich online shop](#)

[For further information or to request review copies please contact: Victoria Goodhew / victoria.goodhew@harpercollins.co.uk / DL: 0208 307 4291](#)

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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.