

## Press release

### ROYAL OBSERVATORY GREENWICH'S INSIGHT INVESTMENT ASTRONOMY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR – 2020 WINNERS ANNOUNCED

French photographer Nicolas Lefaudeux has beaten thousands of amateur and professional photographers from around the globe to win the Royal Observatory Greenwich's title of Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2020. 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 23 October 2020.

The judges were captivated by Lefaudeux's awe-inspiring image. Taken in Forges-les-Bains, Île-de-France, the photograph depicts a version of the Andromeda Galaxy seemingly at arm's length. Competition judge Ed Robinson said: "To most of us, our closest neighbouring galaxy Andromeda can also feel so distanced and out of reach, yet to create a photograph that gives us the impression that it is just within our physical reach is truly magical, and somewhat appropriate as we adjust after such socially distanced times".

Winning images of the other categories and special prizes include the breath-taking Aurora Borealis above Hamn i Senja, Skaland, in Norway by Nicholas Roemmelt (Germany); the image taken by Łukasz Sujka (Poland) showcases the alignment of our moon and Jupiter, framed by three of Jupiter's moons; a remarkable illustration of 'The Prison of Technology', the satellite trails between earth and the Albireo double star, which photographer Rafael Schmall (Hungary) managed to capture; and Best Newcomer Bence Toth's stunning image of the central region of the California Nebula.

The captivating *Dark River* by Julie F. Hill (UK) has been named as the inaugural winner of the Annie Maunder Prize for Image Innovation. Competition judge Melanie Vandenbrouck commented, "When two disciplines like art and science collide, they can bring fresh perspectives to familiar subjects. In giving sculptural form to our home galaxy, this artist helps us comprehend at a visceral level what might otherwise feel abstract."

After another phenomenal year of entries from our aspiring young astrophotographers in the Young Competition category, 10-year-old Alice Fock Hang (Réunion) takes home the top prize for her incredible image *The Four Planets and the Moon*, showing our moon, Venus, Mercury, the star Antares, Jupiter and Saturn over the Indian Ocean.

*BBC Sky at Night Magazine's* Art Editor Steve Marsh, who is also a judge for the competition, said of this year's contest: "Another year of incredible variety, ingenuity and show stopping talent has given us a real feast for the eyes in the 2020 competition. From vast aurora to fiery nebulae to an intimate look at our closest galactic neighbour, there really is something for everyone and the worldwide astrophotography community continues to impress and amaze us at every step."

Dr Emily Drabek-Maunder, Astronomer at Royal Museums Greenwich and judge for the competition, said: "The global situation made judging and shortlisting extremely challenging this year, particularly with judges spread across different countries! However, the photographs have exceeded our expectations and the innovation demonstrated by the entrants has been phenomenal."

*Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year* is run by Royal Observatory Greenwich in association with Insight Investment and *BBC Sky at Night Magazine*. Now in its twelfth year, the competition received over 5,000 entries from six continents. The best of these exceptional photographs – winners, runners-up, highly commended and shortlisted – are showcased in the *Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year* exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, opening to the public from 23 October 2020.

This year's winners, shortlisted entries and a selection of previous winners will be published by Collins in the competition's official book, available exclusively at Royal Museums Greenwich shops and online from 11 September and on sale across all bookstores from 17 September, £25.

To see the winning photographs and find out more about the exhibition visit [www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto](http://www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto)

For information about entering next year's competition visit [www.rmg.co.uk/astrocomp](http://www.rmg.co.uk/astrocomp)

***Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2020***, exhibition information for visitors:

<b>Venue:</b>	National Maritime Museum
<b>Dates:</b>	23 October 2020 – 8 August 2021
<b>Opening times:</b>	10.30 – 16.00
<b>Visitor enquiries:</b>	020 8858 4422
<b>Admission:</b>	£10.00 Adult   £6.65 Concession   £6.50 Child
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto">www.rmg.co.uk/astrophoto</a>
<b>Twitter:</b>	@RMGreenwich #astrophoto2020
<b>Instagram:</b>	@royalmuseumsgreenwich #astrophoto2020
<b>Facebook:</b>	@royalmuseumsgreenwich

### **Notes to editors:**

#### **1. Full details of 2020's winners:**

##### **Galaxies**

- Nicolas Lefauieux (France) with *Andromeda Galaxy at Arm's Length?* (Winner and Overall Winner)
- Mark Hanson (USA) with *NGC 3628 with 300,000 Light Year Long Tail* (Runner-Up)
- Juan-Carlos Munoz-Mateos (Spain) with *Attack on the Large Magellanic Cloud* (Highly Commended)

##### **Aurorae**

- Nicholas Roemmelt (Germany) with *The Green Lady* (Winner)
- Tom Archer (UK) with *Lone Tree under a Scandinavian Aurora* (Runner-Up)
- Kristina Makeeva (Russia) with *Iceland* (Highly Commended)

##### **Our Moon**

- Alain Paillou (France) with *Tycho Crater Region with Colours* (Winner)
- Ethan Roberts (UK) with *HDR Partial Lunar Eclipse with Clouds* (Runner-Up)
- Daniel Koszela (Poland) with *Moon Base* (Highly Commended)

##### **Our Sun**

- Alexandra Hart (UK) with *Liquid Sunshine* (Winner)
- Filip Ogorzelski Poland) with *145 Seconds of Darkness* (Runner-Up)
- Alan Friedman (USA) with *Ultraviolet* (Highly Commended)

##### **People and Space**

- Rafael Schmall (Hungary) with *The Prison of Technology* (Winner)
- Tian Li (China) with *Observe the Heart of the Galaxy* (Runner-Up)
- Yang Sutie (China) with *AZURE Vapor Tracers* (Highly Commended)

### **Planets, Comets and Asteroids**

- Łukasz Sujka (Poland) with *Space Between Us...* (Winner)
- Martin Lewis (UK) with *In the Outer Reaches* (Runner-Up)
- Robert Stephens (USA) with *The Ghost of Alnilam and a Near Earth Asteroid* (Highly Commended)

### **Skyscapes**

- Thomas Kast (Germany) with *Painting the Sky* (Winner)
- Stefan Liebermann (Germany) with *Desert Magic* (Runner-Up)
- Weijian Chen (China) with *Voice of the Universe* (Highly Commended)

### **Stars and Nebulae**

- Peter Ward (Australia) with *Cosmic Inferno* (Winner)
- Connor Matherne (USA) with *The Dolphin Jumping out of an Ocean of Gas* (Runner-Up)
- Min Xie (USA) with *The Misty Elephant's Trunk* (Highly Commended)

### **Young Category**

- Alice Fock Hang (Réunion – aged 10) with *The Four Planets and the Moon* (Winner)
- Thea Hutchinson (UK – aged 13) with *Detached Prominences* (Runner-Up)
- Logan Nicholson (Australia – aged 15) with *The Carina Region* (Highly Commended)
- Xiuquan Zhang (China – aged 12) with *Light Bridge in the Sky* (Highly Commended)
- Winslow Barnwood (USA – aged 15) with *Collision Course!* (Highly Commended)

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

- Bence Toth (Hungary) with *Waves* (Winner)

### **Special Prize: Annie Maunder Prize for Image Innovation**

- Julie F Hill (UK) with *Dark River* (Winner)

2. The winners of Royal Observatory's *Insight Investment Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2020* will be announced at an award ceremony on the 10 September 2020. The winning photographs will be exhibited in the National Maritime Museum from 23 October 2020. 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. **The Royal Observatory Greenwich** is home of Greenwich Mean Time and the Prime Meridian and 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 space, and visitors today can still stand on the historic Prime Meridian line. The Observatory galleries and Peter Harrison Planetarium help unravel the extraordinary phenomena of time, space and astronomy. In 2018 the Royal Observatory acquired the Annie Maunder Astrographic Telescope (AMAT), the first new telescope to be installed in Greenwich in over 60 years, marking a new era for the world-famous site and restoring its status as a working Observatory.

The Royal Observatory Greenwich is part of Royal Museums Greenwich which also incorporates the National Maritime Museum, the Queen's House and *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.

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 2020, Insight was awarded A+ ratings by the PRI for strategy and governance, and for the integration of responsible investment-related issues across fixed income business. Insight believe this reflects their ongoing commitment to integrating responsible investment practices across all aspects of business.

More information about Insight Investment can be found at: [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 17,385 copies a month. [skyatnightmagazine.com](http://skyatnightmagazine.com) has over 450,000 visits a month and reaches 70,000 social media followers through Facebook, 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.

Visit [www.skyatnightmagazine.com](http://www.skyatnightmagazine.com) for more information.

**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 135 breath-taking 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 / <https://shop.rmg.co.uk/products/insight-investment-astronomy-photographer-of-the-year-collection-2019>

For further information or to request review copies please contact:

Victoria Goodhew / [victoria.goodhew@harpercollins.co.uk](mailto:victoria.goodhew@harpercollins.co.uk) / DL: 0208 307 4291

-ends-

#### **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' and the origins of the universe.

#### **For further information or images, please contact:**

Georgina Sheehan, Royal Observatory Greenwich

Press Office Tel: 020 8312 6790/6667

Email: [gsheehan@rmg.co.uk](mailto:gsheehan@rmg.co.uk) or [press@rmg.co.uk](mailto:press@rmg.co.uk)

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