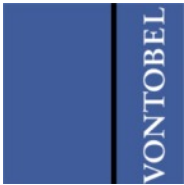


Press release / 15 March 2017



Vontobel presents prize to promote young contemporary photography for the first time

The Vontobel photography prize *A New Gaze* gives young artists the opportunity to produce their own creative work based on a pre-defined theme. The first winner of *A New Gaze* is the American photographer Eva O’Leary (born 1989). In her work ‘Concealer’, she explores the differing realities of contemporary western culture that are created for and by the Internet and the advertising industry. The photography prize includes CHF 15,000 of prize money. Vontobel is also supporting the realization of her work – from the design phase through to an exhibition with an accompanying catalogue.

On the initiative of Dr. Hans Vontobel (1916-2016), who was a patron of the arts, Vontobel has been building a diverse collection of Swiss and international art since the 1970s. Today, the collection is focused on contemporary photography. The Vontobel Art Committee, which was also established in 1970, decides on acquisitions for the collection. The Committee is composed of Vontobel employees with an interest in art and is chaired by Axel Schwarzer, Head of Vontobel Asset Management. Urs Stahel, Co-Founder and longstanding Director of the Fotomuseum Winterthur, acts as an advisor to the Vontobel Art Committee. He curates international photography exhibitions and is the publisher and author of a number of books on photographic artists.

With *A New Gaze*, Vontobel is expanding its cultural commitments: In addition to collecting contemporary photographs, it is now also placing a focus on promoting talented young artists who use photography as the medium for their work. The aim of the new photography prize *A New Gaze* is to take unusual views of today’s world as seen by young artists and to incorporate them into a corporate perspective and philosophy.

The theme of the first photography prize was Security/Insecurity – which is not only one of the factors driving the current transformation of the finance industry but is also an issue in a global and socio-political context. Ten young artists were invited to submit proposals for their projects. The American photographer Eva O’Leary impressed the Art Committee with her submission and received the commission to realize her project. “We consider her to be an exceptionally strong first winner of the photography prize due to the way in which she uses photography to take a new and distinctly contemporary look at western society,” stated Axel Schwarzer, Chairman of the Art Committee. “Eva O’Leary’s interpretation of the theme and her impressive and precise visual treatment of it are a reflection of a very promising young photographic artist,” Urs Stahel added.

In the context of *A New Gaze*, Eva O'Leary (born 1989, USA) created a work in three parts in which she used photography as an instrument to capture the differing realities in today's western society. The rhetoric of commercial photography, which constantly presents us with new, perfect realities and undermines our own perceptions and inner state of mind, is at the centre of her analytical work. On the one hand, she explores how young people – especially young women – create a public image of themselves that they present in social networks – and the role models they use in this process. O'Leary contrasts this individual image with a new type of photography of landscapes and people so that the contradictions between images shown publicly in advertising and the actual reality come together and contrast with one another.

Interested parties can also view Eva O'Leary's exceptional work in digital form on the website anewgaze.vontobel.com (from 23 March 2017) or in the accompanying catalogue.

Media tour

A media tour of the exhibition with the artist and Urs Stahel will take place on **Thursday, 23 March 2017 at 2.00 p.m. at Vontobel's head office** at Gotthardstrasse 43, 8002 Zurich. Media representatives who are interested in attending can register by sending an e-mail to: corporate.communications@vontobel.ch

Exhibition

25 March to 7 April 2017

Opening event on Saturday, 25 March at 11.30 a.m.

Opening event and discussion with the artist: Urs Stahel in dialogue with Eva O'Leary (in English). Followed by a drinks reception.

Venue

Bank Vontobel AG, Lobby, Gotthardstrasse 43, 8002 Zurich

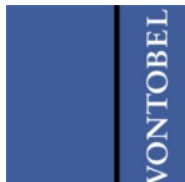
Opening times

Mon-Fri, 10.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.
Sat/Sun, 11.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

Guided tours will be held on 26 March and 2 April at 1.00 p.m. and on 6 April at 6.30 p.m.

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Vontobel

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