

PRESS RELEASE – THIRD DRAFT

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Kraszna-Krausz Book Awards 2008 – new histories of Victorian and Modernist photography and British film and video art share £10,000

- **Winner: Best Moving Image Book – David Curtis, *A History of Artists' Film and Video in Britain, 1897-2004* (BFI)**
A groundbreaking work which puts the recent achievements of famous artists like Douglas Gordon and Gillian Wearing into their long-term historical context
- **Co-Winner: Best Photography Book – Matthew S. Witkovsky, *Foto: Modernity in Central Europe, 1918-1945* (Thames and Hudson)**
A beautifully illustrated monograph describing the cultural background of such 20th century masters as Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and André Kertesz and which casts light on the wider historical context of Andor Kraszna-Krausz, publishing pioneer and originator of the Kraszna-Krausz Awards
- **Co-Winner: Best Photography Book – Roger Taylor, *Impressed By Light: British Photographs from Paper Negatives, 1840-1860* (Yale University Press)**
The culmination of decades of research by a distinguished photohistorian, this lavishly illustrated volume definitively documents the aesthetic and technical development of early Victorian paper negatives and prints

The Kraszna-Krausz Book Awards, the UK's leading prize for books on photography and the moving image, were today announced at the London Book Fair. For more than twenty years these awards have been given to outstanding books in the fields of photography and the moving image, which are sure to make original and lasting contributions to their respective disciplines. The Kraszna-Krausz Foundation also offers grants to assist in the development and completion of new or unfinished projects, works or literature in the fields of photography and the moving image.

This year, three books share a prize fund of £10,000. Two photography titles receive £2,500 each, being joint photography books of the year. *Foto: Modernity in Central Europe, 1918-1945* and *Impressed by Light: British Photographs from Paper Negatives, 1840-1860*, based on landmark exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, are beautifully produced and illustrated studies of their subjects. *Impressed by Light* is a landmark study of the early years of British photography, a crucial period in establishing the visual vocabulary as well as the technical possibilities of the medium. The rich artistic legacy of interwar central Europe is the subject of *Foto*, a lavish document of an under-researched but vitally important region and period.

The winner of the best moving image book, receiving £5000, is the first-ever comprehensive history of film and video as used by artists in Britain. Written by a practising artist, curator and academic, David Curtis's *A History of Artists' Film and Video in Britain, 1897-2004* puts the Turner Prize-winning work of such contemporary visual artists as Gillian Wearing, Douglas Gordon and Mark Wallinger in the context of more than a century of artists' film and video in the UK.

Judges' and Trustees' Comments on the Winning Books:

Colin Ford CBE, Chair of Trustees of the Kraszna-Krausz Foundation, said:

“These three titles demonstrate that the state of publishing on photography, film, video and digital media is very healthy. Our distinguished judges had to make very tough choices but have, I believe, come up with three books that offer vital insights, in their different ways, into the progress of the arts of photography and film from their very beginnings to today.”

Nick James, Editor of *Sight & Sound* and chair of judges for the moving image category, said:
“After considerable debate, we unanimously decided that *A History of Artists’ Film and Video in Britain* should win. Curtis’ knowledge of his subject is as close to complete as can be imagined, yet he has the knack of conveying this erudition with such an infectious enthusiasm – tracing and describing the lesser-known currents of British film with such a sense of fun and experiment – that you wish you had been there at every stage. The book is superbly and accessibly illustrated and designed and is a real achievement on every level.”

Sarah Jackson, freelance picture editor and photography category judge, continued:
“The two winners of the Kraszna-Krausz award for photography books explore very different areas of the history of photography with passionate engagement and considerable depth of understanding. Both are models of scholarship, combining fascinating and readable narratives with a superb and inspiring selection of illustrations.

“Roger Taylor’s *Impressed by Light* brings to life the story of British paper-to-paper photography – the invention of William Henry Fox Talbot – through the 1840s and 1850s, revealing remarkable aesthetic as well as technical achievements. Matthew Witkovsky’s *Foto* ably demonstrates the enormous social and political upheavals in European history. These two books are filled with ideas and imagery that provide considerable and ever relevant intellectual and visual stimulation.”

www.kraszna-krausz.org.uk

For more information please contact Philip Abraham or Truda Spruyt at Colman Getty Consultancy on 020 7631 2666, philip@colmangetty.co.uk or truda@colmangetty.co.uk.

Notes to editors:

The shortlisted titles for the Kraszna-Krausz Moving Image Book Award were:

- Michael Chanan, *The Politics of Documentary* (BFI)
- David Curtis, *A History of Artists' Film and Video in Britain, 1897-2004* (BFI)
- Hamid Dabashi, *Dreams of a Nation: On Palestinian Cinema* (Verso)
- Neal Gabler, *Walt Disney: The Biography* (Aurum)
- Irving Singer, *Ingmar Bergman, Cinematic Philosopher: Reflections on His Creativity* (MIT Press)
- James Naremore, *On Kubrick* (BFI)

The shortlisted titles for the Kraszna-Krausz Photography Book Award were

- Sarah Greenough and Diane Waggoner (ed.), *The Art of the American Snapshot, 1888-1978* (Princeton University Press)
- Mark Haworth-Booth, *The Art of Lee Miller* (V&A)
- Ken Jacobson, *Odalisques and Arabesques: Orientalist Photography, 1839-1925* (Quaritch)
- Stephen Shore, *The Nature of Photographs* (Phaidon)
- Roger Taylor, *Impressed By Light: British Photographs from Paper Negatives, 1840-1860* (Yale University Press)
- Matthew S. Witkovsky, *Foto: Modernity in Central Europe 1918-1945* (Thames and Hudson)

The judges for the 2008 photography awards were:

- **Philippe Garner** is the International Head of Photographs and 20th Century Decorative Art & Design at Christies. He has been professionally involved with photographs since 1971 when, he co-coordinated the historic first auction of the modern photographic market. Since then, he has remained an innovator in the field as curator, critic and historian, with exhibitions in London (including the V&A and The Photographers' Gallery), Paris and Tokyo. He has published books on Cecil Beaton and John Cowan, and many essays on aspects of photohistory.
- **Sarah Jackson** has been in publishing for over thirty years. Having run the Picture Research Department at Orbis Publishing, she is now an independent consultant specialising in photographic books, developing illustrated book projects with prospective authors for publishers including Harper Collins, Orion and the Random House Group. Her most recent books include 'Eye of War', and 'Modern France'.
- **Michael Rand**, Art Director of the Sunday Times Magazine during its most influential thirty years, was responsible for introducing the work of photographers such as Diane Arbus, Don McCullin and Eve Arnold. He was also art director of Mirabella magazine, launched in the USA in 1989. His many awards include one in 1989 for design from the International Centre of Photography in New York. He is the UK Chairman of the World Press Foundation and has edited and designed many books with photographers as diverse as Arnold Newman and Sebastiao Salgado.

The judges for the 2008 moving image awards are:

- **Nick James** has been editor of *Sight & Sound*, the world's leading English language film magazine, since 1996. Having trained in Fine Art at Walthamstow and St. Martin's Schools of Art, his freelance career as a critic of film, literature and art led to contributions to such publications as *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, *The Independent*,

Vogue, *Time Out*, *The London Review of Books* and *The Literary Review*, as well as the BBC documentary *British Cinema: The End of the Affair* (2002).

- **Lynda Myles** has been Head of Fiction Direction at the National Film and Television School since 2004. She was Director of the Edinburgh International Film Festival for eight years, followed by two years as Director and Curator of Film at the Pacific Film Archive, University of California, Berkeley. She went on to have an impressive career as an independent film producer, producing such films as *Defence of the Realm* (1985), Alan Parker's multi-BAFTA-winning *The Commitments* (1991), Stephen Frears's *The Van* (1996) and Chen Kaige's *Killing Me Softly* (2002)..
- **Jonathan Powell** has produced some of the most significant programmes in British television history, and held major posts in both the BBC and commercial television. As a producer, he was responsible for many award-winning and ground-breaking dramas, including the BBC's version of John Le Carré's *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, with Alec Guinness. He was Head of Drama at BBC1 before becoming Controller. After leaving the BBC, he was Head of Drama at Carlton TV. He currently holds the position of Professor of Media Studies at Royal Holloway, University of London.