

Press Release

The 2024 Photography Network Award Winners were announced at *In Relation: Photography's Communities*, PN's fourth annual symposium. Convened in the Sonoran Desert Borderlands city of Tucson, this year's symposium was organized in partnership with the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona.

Jurors Raquel Villar Pérez, George Mashashe and Heather Diack singled out not one, but three book prize award-winners for their innovation in photography scholarship, expression, and distribution: Kimberly Juanita Brown's *Mortevivum: Photography and the Politics of the Visual* (MIT Press), Siobhan Angus' *Camera Geologica: An Elemental History of Photography* (Duke University Press), *Portrait and Place: Photography in Senegal 1840–1960* (Princeton University Press) by Giulia Paoletti.

PN Citations

1. "Siobhan Angus' *Camera Geologica: An Elemental History of Photography* makes an urgent ecological turn to the material histories of the medium. "A riveting read that could enrich school curriculums about the extractive preconditions of photography"

About: In *Camera Geologica*, Siobhan Angus tells the history of photography through the minerals upon which the medium depends. Challenging the emphasis on immateriality in discourses on photography, Angus focuses on the inextricable links between image-making and resource extraction, revealing how the mining of bitumen, silver, platinum, iron, uranium, and rare earth elements is a precondition of photography. She places nineteenth-century photography in dialogue with digital photography and its own entangled economies of extraction, demonstrating the importance of understanding photography's complicity in the economic, geopolitical, and social systems that order the world.

2. "*Portrait and Place: Photography in Senegal 1840–1960* by Giulia Paoletti is a deep visual trove of art and cultural histories of photography in Africa". "An intricate effort at reading Senegalese historic visual cultures through African language and philosophy."

About: When the daguerreotype first arrived in sub-Saharan Africa in the early nineteenth century, local kingdoms still held power in Senegal and the French presence was limited to trading outposts along the coast. The pioneers of photography in Senegal worked within, across, and beyond the borders of colonial empire, expanding the medium's possibilities and contributing to a global visual language. *Portrait and Place* explores these unique encounters, providing an in-depth and nuanced look at the images made at the intersection of Black Atlantic, Islamic, and African cultures. Giulia Paoletti takes readers on a visual journey from the 1840s, when the oldest-surviving daguerreotype from West Africa was made, to the 1960s, when photography became the most popular medium as Senegal achieved its independence. She discusses some of Africa's most celebrated modernists, such as Mama Casset, and also offers insights into lesser-known photographers like Oumar Ka and once-anonymous figures such as Macky Kane. Paoletti examines both professional and amateur artists in genres ranging from portraiture to landscape and across media such as glass painting and lithography. Featuring a wealth of breathtaking images published here for the first time, *Portrait and Place* brings to life the important histories of photography on the African continent.

3. "Reading Kimberly Juanita Brown's *Mortevivum: Photography and the Politics of the Visual* is as transformative and intimate an act as reading poetry". "It's figuring of a black world in photography is reparative in its mindful choreography of encounters with transnational visual stories and their necessity both to be seen and to be in relation".

About: Since photography's invention, black life has been presented as fraught, short, agonizingly filled with violence, and indifferent to intervention: living death—mortevivum—in a series of still frames that refuse a complex humanity. In *Mortevivum*, Kimberly Juanita Brown shows us how the visual logic of documentary photography and the cultural legacy of empire have come together to produce the understanding that blackness and suffering—and death—are inextricable. Brown traces this idea from the earliest images of the enslaved to the latest newspaper photographs of black bodies, from the United States and South Africa to Haiti and Rwanda, documenting the enduring, pernicious connection between photography and a global history of antiblackness. Photography's history, inextricably linked to colonialism and white supremacy, is a catalog of othering, surveillance, and the violence of objectification. In the genocide in Rwanda, for instance, photographs after the fact tell viewers that blackness comes with a corresponding violence that no human intervention can abate. In Haiti, the first black republic in the Western Hemisphere, photographic "evidence" of its sovereign failure suggests that the formerly enslaved cannot overthrow their masters and survive to tell the tale. And in South Africa and the United States, a loop of racial violence reminds black subjects of their lower-class status mandated

via the state. Illustrating the global nature of antiblackness that pervades photographic archives of the present and the past, *Mortevivum* reveals how we live in a repetition of imagery signaling who lives and who dies on a gelatin silver print—on a page in a book, on the cover of newspaper, and in the memory of millions.

PN annual project grant

Along with book prizes, the Network also awarded its annual project grant, designed to help emerging scholars, curators, and artists with funds needed to complete a work in progress to the following:

1. Dr JENNIFER ORPANA
Assistant Professor (Teaching Stream), Faculty of Information, University of Toronto
@jenniferorpana
jorpana@gmail.com

*Care Work and the Camera:
Photography at the Women's College Hospital
School of Nursing, Toronto*

This project considers the relationship between photography, gender, and care work in the Women's College Hospital's School of Nursing collections held at the Miss Margaret Robins Archives in Toronto. Orpana will be presenting this research as part of the "Art and the Politics of Care" panel, chaired by Dr. Sarah Bassnett at the Universities Art Association of Canada Conference in London, Ontario (October 2024).

2. Dr FRANCESCA STROBINO
Photographic Historian
IG [@franc.momo](https://www.instagram.com/franc.momo) // X [@Fr_Strobino](https://twitter.com/Fr_Strobino)
francescastrobino.mu@gmail.com

*Experimental Metallic Surfaces and Absent Images:
On the Materiality of William Henry Fox Talbot's Photomechanical Practice*

Image reproductions forthcoming next year in Francesca Strobino's article *Experimental Metallic Surfaces and Absent Images: On the Materiality of William Henry Fox Talbot's Photomechanical Practice* in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* (2025) special issue guest edited by Prof Steffen Siegel and Prof Elizabeth Otto. The special issue collects selected contributions from the convening "Archival Absences: An Incomplete History of Photography" (Rome, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Max Planck Institute for Art History, March 20–24, 2023). Metal plates are held in the William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–1877) collection in Oxford's Bodleian Libraries.

3. Dr. EMILY DOUCET
Photographic Historian
emilydoucet.net/
emily.g.doucet@gmail.com

Inventing Nadar: A History of Photographic Firsts

Image reproductions forthcoming in Doucet's monograph debut, *Inventing Nadar: A History of Photographic Firsts* forthcoming from Duke University Press in Spring 2026. Taking advantage of the unusually broad range of Nadar's claims to priority, *Inventing Nadar* follows Nadar's firsts, tracking how they entered into the historical record via photography and other media.

Links/Contact Info

Jurors:

George Mahashe
Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town

george.mahashe@uct.ac.za

Raquel Villar-Pérez
University of Edinburgh
raquelvilpe@gmail.co

Heather Diack
History of Art, Photography and Visual Culture at Toronto Metropolitan University
hdiack@torontomu.ca

[Call for submissions and juror biographies:](#)

<https://www.photographynetwork.net/news/call-for-submissions-pn-awards>

About Photography Network (PN):

<https://www.photographynetwork.net/mission>

Josie Johnson josiejohnson@mac.com PN Conference & Symposium Liaison
Candice Jansen jansendonnah@gmail.com PN Chair of Jury/ Awards Coordinator
Kat Kieman katkiemanphotography@gmail.com PN Social Media Coordinator

IG: pnphotographynetwork

X: @pnphotognetwork

Photography Network fosters discussion, research, and new approaches to the study and practice of photography in its relation to art, culture, society, and history. It serves the interest of members through sponsored sessions at the College Art Association annual conference (among other fora), research conferences and/or professional convenings (regional, national, and/or international), a listserv, publication(s), a website, and social media. Photography Network cultivates a spirit of community and exchange through these programs as well as more informal gatherings, with the aim of advancing innovation in the field.