

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Wednesday 19 October

**LON
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ART
FAIR**

Artists announced for
Photo50 at London Art Fair 2017:
'Gravitas' curated by Christiane Monarchi

18-22 January 2017

(VIP and Press Preview 17 January)

Business Design Centre, Islington, N1

www.londonartfair.co.uk | #LAF17

MADISON BLACKWOOD / BRONTË CORDES / SIAN DAVEY / SOPHIE GREEN / FRANCES KEARNEY / BAPTISTE LIGNEL / ANTHONY LUVERA / MELANIE MANCHOT / WENDY MCMURDO / YVETTE MONAHAN / SPENCER MURPHY / JEREMY SUTTON-HIBBERT / ABBIE TRAYLER-SMITH

Thirteen photographic and lens-based artists have been selected for Photo50 at London Art Fair 2017. Entitled 'Gravitas', this year's edition is curated by Christiane Monarchi, founding editor of the online magazine *Photomonitor*. The annual, guest-curated exhibition provides a critical showcase of some of the most innovative and distinctive elements of contemporary photographic practice.



Photo50 - Wendy McMurdo, 'Young Girl (iii)'

'Gravitas' is inspired by the Latin word denoting 'depth of character' or 'solemnity', and associated with the transition of the ancient Roman youth from boyhood to adult life. The 50 works presented in Photo50 provide a window into the worlds of adults-in-waiting, framing fleeting moments in their development between childhood and maturity with lived experience and memory. Potential narratives encompass a vast range of themes including identity formation, play, mental health, obesity, LGBT* culture, masculinity and femininity, role models, as well as looking at subcultures and the impact of the connected world on teenage experience.

Inclusivity and acceptance is a central theme. Sophie Green, Spencer Murphy and Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert investigate youth subcultures through the 'boy racer', biking and Scottish Common Riding festival scenes, respectively. Anthony Luvera collaborated with lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans* people in Brighton to explore contemporary attitudes and representations of queer communities.

Melanie Manchot and Sian Davey each trace the development of a single girl over time – a total of eight years from ages 11-18 in Manchot's moving image installation. Meanwhile Yvette Monahan's rural Irish landscapes form the portrait of a boy whose DNA connects the Bronze Age to the contemporary world. Other projects – including Brontë Cordes' 21 and Madison Blackwood's *Dobe* – are intensely personal reflections on growing-up from the perspective of young, recently graduated artists.

A photobook highlighted in the exhibition, Baptiste Lignel's *Pop Pills* (published by Dewi Lewis), charts the development of nine American teenagers with an array of psychological pathologies through candid interviews over several years. Also reflecting on the link between inner worlds and outer appearances, Abbie Trayler-Smith demonstrates the complex, nuanced nature of obesity by documenting the experiences of teenagers in her ongoing project *The Big O*.

The influence of the virtual world pervades much of the work in the exhibition, too, with Wendy McMurdo examining the impact that the computer and digital culture have had on the lives of primary school children through digitally modified school portraits. Conversely, Frances Kearney presents scenes in which girls explore post-industrial landscapes, seemingly free from any of the restraints of a digital existence.

As diverse in form as they are in subject, portraits feature heavily alongside landscape and group shots, with video installation, wallpaper, drawings and diptych prints also included. The majority of these works are being exhibited for the first time in London, and there are a number of UK and world exclusives.

Christiane Monarchi says: 'It is fascinating to consider the many forces shaping the interior world of children and adolescents as they enter the adult world today, as portrayed by this selection of lens-based artists. I'm interested in the simultaneous endeavour of older photographers looking in on adolescence from the outside, while other younger artists are reflecting on this formative period in life having recently emerged from it.'

London Art Fair's **Photography Focus Day** takes place on Wednesday 18 January 2017 including talks by Photo50 artists and Christiane Monarchi, panel discussions given by Photoworks and The Photographers' Gallery and tours from art historian and photography critic Jean Wainwright. The programme will explore themes of participatory methods of working, the importance of materiality in photography and current trends and opportunities for collecting photography.

Alongside Photo50, contemporary photography is exhibited widely throughout the Fair by galleries including ARTITLEDcontemporary, Purdy Hicks Gallery, Galerija Fotografija, Noorforart Contemporary, Crane Kalman Brighton, Flowers Gallery and Pi Artworks Istanbul/ London.

'Gravitas' is supported by [Genesis Imaging](#) and will be located within London Art Fair on Gallery Level 2



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Tickets

London Art Fair tickets are now on sale, starting at £11.50 for a Thursday Late Ticket and £15 for a Day Ticket (plus £1.50 booking fee) in advance. Day Tickets on the door are £22.

Tickets are available from www.londonartfair.co.uk

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For further press information please contact

Rosie Beaumont-Thomas / James Douglas at Four Colman Getty

020 3697 4330 / 020 3697 4267

rosie.beaumont-thomas@fourcolmangetty.com / james.douglas@fourcolmangetty.com

About Christiane Monarchi

Christiane Monarchi is the founding editor of the online magazine Photomonitor, dedicated to photography and lens-based media in the UK and Ireland. She also writes on photography for other publications, conducts portfolio reviews, judges art prizes, organises artist talks and serves on the board of Photofusion, London. She holds an MA in Contemporary Art History from Sotheby's Institute and an MBA from Columbia University. www.photomonitor.co.uk