

ALL ABOUT PHOTO.COM
AWARDS 2026
The Mind's Eye

All About Photo Reveals the Winners of ALL ABOUT PHOTO AWARDS 2026

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All About Photo Unveils the **Winners of the 2026 All About Photo Awards – The Mind's Eye 11th Anniversary Edition** Judged by **Steve McCurry** Celebrates the Power of Global Visual Storytelling.

All About Photo proudly announces the winners of the 2026 All About Photo Awards – The Mind's Eye, marking the competition's 11th anniversary with legendary photographer Steve McCurry serving as juror.

This year's edition presents a compelling and deeply resonant selection of **45 winning images**, offering a powerful reflection of the beauty, complexity, and urgency shaping our world today. Representing **15 countries across four continents**, the winners embody an impressive breadth of perspectives and visual languages. Chosen by Steve McCurry, this group forms a vivid snapshot of contemporary photography—one that moves fluidly between documentary, conceptual, and poetic approaches.

From the United States to Spain, from India to Indonesia, and from China to France, these images cross borders while remaining deeply rooted in specific places and lived experiences. Whether capturing the quiet weight of history in *Window to the Past*, the introspective complexity of identity in *Obscura*, or the cultural rhythms of daily life in West Africa and Cuba, each photograph contributes to a broader, interconnected narrative.

Yet this diversity represents only part of the story. The competition attracted submissions from more than 500 photographers worldwide, spanning an even wider range of countries, cultures, and continents. The final selection is therefore both a distillation and a celebration—an edited constellation of voices that reflects the vast creative energy behind it.

Together, these works demonstrate how photography continues to evolve as a universal language—capable of documenting reality, questioning it, and transforming it—while connecting stories across continents through shared human experience.

Notably, **three women photographers rank among the top five winners**, underscoring the strong and growing presence of female voices in contemporary photography.

A Global Portrait Beyond Borders

The 2026 winners form a richly layered portrait of contemporary photography—one that resists categorization and embraces the full expressive range of the medium.

From the historic streets of Williamsburg in the United States to the borderlands of West Africa, from the vast grasslands of Tibet to the dense urban rhythms of Mumbai, Havana, and Beijing, the awarded images map a world defined not by geography alone, but by human presence, cultural memory, and lived experience.

Yet beyond geography, the diversity lies in perspective.

First Place, awarded to **Matt McClain** for *Window to the Past*, captures a quiet, cinematic meditation on time. Seen through a misted window in Colonial Williamsburg, past and present dissolve into one another, creating a haunting reflection on history and legacy.



© Matt McClain- 1st Place Winner, Photographer of the Year 2026

In contrast, **Second Place**, *Obscura* by **Brooke Shaden**, turns inward—exploring identity in the digital age through conceptual self-portraiture that blurs the line between authenticity and performance.

Third Place, *Celestial Ladies* by **France Leclerc**, presents a striking cultural tableau, balancing form, ritual, and coincidence in a moment of quiet harmony.

Fourth Place, by **Javier Arcenillas**, captures an intimate scene aboard a Tunisian train, where light, color, and composition converge to reveal solitude within motion—an unguarded fragment of everyday life.

Fifth Place, *Bringing Home the Birds* by **Beamie Young**, evokes timeless themes of childhood and freedom through a poetic black-and-white composition set in Cuba, where tradition continues to shape modern life.



© Brooke Shaden - 2nd Place Winner 2026

A Spectrum of Stories

Across the Merit Award Gallery, the narrative expands even further.

Some photographers confront urgent global realities—documenting the toll of labor, the fragility of communities facing climate change, or the tension of political unrest. Others turn toward **tradition, spirituality, and ritual**, capturing moments where culture and faith remain deeply intertwined.

At the same time, many works embrace the poetic and ephemeral: a cyclist reflected in a drop of dew, a diver suspended among whales, or a fleeting beam of light illuminating a remote chapel. These images invite contemplation, revealing the extraordinary hidden within the everyday.

Together, they reflect the evolving nature of photography—where **documentary truth, conceptual exploration, and artistic interpretation coexist**.



© France Leclerc - 3rd Place Winner 2026

A Vision Curated by Steve McCurry

In selecting this year's winners, Steve McCurry has not imposed a singular vision, but rather revealed a spectrum of photographic languages. His selection highlights images that are both immediate and timeless—works that capture fleeting moments while resonating on a universal level.

The result is more than a competition. It is a **collective narrative of our world—seen, felt, and interpreted through the lens of today's most compelling photographers.**



© Javier Arcenillas - 4th Place Winner 2026



© Beamie Young - 5th Place Winner 2026



© Cesare Simioni - Merit Award 2026



© Gavin Libotte - Merit Award 2026

Global Recognition and Opportunity

Open to photographers worldwide and across all genres, the All About Photo Awards - The Mind's Eye continue to champion visual storytelling, emotional depth, and originality. The 2026 winners receive **\$5,000 in cash prizes**, along with international exposure through **AAP Magazine**, online exhibitions, and global media distribution.

As photography continues to evolve, *The Mind's Eye* remains a vital platform—one that challenges perception, celebrates diversity, and amplifies voices from around the world.

© Marco Di Marco - Merit Award 2026



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© Takeshi Yamamoto - Merit Award 2026



© Tittu Shaji Thomas - Merit Award 2026

The other winning photographers are:

Tittu Shaji Thomas (India), **Wahyu Budiyo** (Indonesia), **Buck Holzemer** (United States), **Max Chu** (China), **Thaddäus Biberauer** (Austria), **Florian Wurzing** (Austria), **Khaichuin Sim** (Malaysia), **Jordi Cohen** (Spain), **Shrikanth Poojari** (India), **Gavin Libotte** (UK/Australia), **Chris Yan** (China), **Zhang Lintao** (China), **Thibault Gerbaldi** (France/United States), **Jiri Kostal** (Czech Republic), **Takeshi Yamamoto** (Japan), **Andrew Newey** (United Kingdom), **Md Tanveer Rohan** (United States), **Eric Seidner** (United States), **Marco Di Marco** (Italy), **Prescott Lassman** (United States), **Gabi Steiner** (Austria), **Tommi Viitala** (Finland), **Cesare Simioni** (Italy), **Asako Naruto** (Japan), **Kerry Faulkner** (Australia), **Archie Cludven** (China), **Fenqiang Liu** (United States), **Robert Lie** (Indonesia), **Hervé Boutrouille** (France), **Marie Kent** (France), **Seppo Tuomaala** (Finland) and **Tebani Slade** (Australia).

© Tebani Slade - Merit Award 2026



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About All About Photo Awards – *The Mind's Eye*

The All About Photo Awards – The Mind's Eye is an annual international photography competition dedicated to celebrating powerful visual storytelling. Open to photographers of all levels and styles, the awards recognize images that are not only artistically compelling but also socially, culturally, and environmentally meaningful.

Founded in 2015, the competition has grown into a respected global platform for both emerging and established photographers. Each year, an international jury selects a body of work that reflects the richness, complexity, and beauty of our world through diverse perspectives and visual approaches. The 2026 edition, judged exclusively by Steve McCurry, continues this tradition by highlighting images that resonate across cultures and disciplines.

The title The Mind's Eye draws inspiration from Henri Cartier-Bresson, who described photography as the alignment of “one's head, one's eye, and one's heart.” This philosophy lies at the core of the awards, emphasizing a thoughtful and intuitive approach to image-making—where observation, emotion, and composition come together to create meaningful work.