



## Ingrid Pollard 2024 Hasselblad Award Laureate

Press Release  
Gothenburg  
March 8, 2024  
Victor Hasselblad's  
birthday

The Hasselblad Foundation is delighted to announce that Ingrid Pollard is the 2024 Hasselblad Award laureate and receives a gold medal and the sum of SEK 2,000,000. The award also includes a Hasselblad camera by the Gothenburg-based company Hasselblad. The award ceremony will take place in Gothenburg, Sweden on 11th of October 2024. That same day, an exhibition of Ingrid Pollard's work will open at the Hasselblad Center and a new publication about the artist will be released. In conjunction with Ingrid Pollard's visit to Gothenburg, a seminar will take place in collaboration with the County Administrative Board, and a concert will be held with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Sweden's national orchestra.

### **The Hasselblad Foundation's citation regarding the Hasselblad Award laureate 2024, Ingrid Pollard:**

*In her four decades of practice Ingrid Pollard uses photography to question deeply engrained social and cultural constructs behind race, identity, community, and gender. Her work reveals subtle and starkly evident injustices through her engagement with the British landscape, iconography, and identity, as well as challenging the medium of photography and its history. Formally her work combines portraiture, found archival material, objects and text to produce complex installations. Born in Guyana and raised in Britain, she has consistently engaged with colonial history and how it continues to impact society, both in her artistic practice and as an educator in photography. Ingrid Pollard has a profound impact on younger generations of artists and thinkers.*

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### **The Hasselblad Award Jury 2024**

The jury which submitted its proposal to the Hasselblad Foundation's Board of Directors this year consisted of:

#### **John Fleetwood, Jury Chair**

Director of Photo., South Africa,  
Co-Head of Photography,  
Royal Academy of Art, the Hague,  
Netherlands

#### **Shoair Mavlian**

Director, Photographers' Gallery, UK

#### **Francesco Zanot**

Independent Curator, Italy

#### **Yves Chatap**

Independent Curator, France

#### **Karolina Ziębińska-Lewandowska**

Director, Museum of Warsaw, Poland

#### **Joan Fontcuberta**

Hasselblad Award Laureate  
2013, Spain



**Ingrid Pollard:** “Receiving the Hasselblad Award is a great honour. It comes at a point in my life when I’m quite mature and it gives me an opportunity to support younger photographers and researchers, which I intend to do. I wish for the award to extend beyond myself.”

**Kalle Sanner, CEO of the Hasselblad Foundation:** “Ingrid Pollard’s extensive body of work addresses some of the most pressing issues of our time. We are delighted and honoured that she is the 44th Hasselblad Award winner and to present her work to a large audience in Scandinavia.”

### **About Ingrid Pollard**

Ingrid Pollard is a leading British contemporary photographer and artist. She was born in 1953 in Georgetown, Guyana and grew up in London. She currently lives and works in Northumberland, Northeast England.

Pollard’s work interrogates and explores aspects of race and colonialism, often based on her own experiences and research. She is particularly interested in how these issues are manifested in both urban spaces and landscapes. Central to her work is a fundamental interest in photography, its technical aspects, materiality, and potentials, as well as its historical use in the exercise of control and power.

Ingrid Pollard’s photographic career began in the early 1980s. It was during that time she worked at the Lenthall Road Workshop in East London which offered courses in screen-printing and photography. The organization catered to members of the local community as well as political activists in feminist, anti-racist and LGBTQI circles, among others. It became an important creative hub where disregarded people could make their voices heard. Ingrid Pollard described the photographic work in the organization as political craft. Her experiences at the Lenthall Road Workshop and her teaching at various ad-hoc groups and universities laid the foundation for an exploration of the history of photography and experimental image-making. Her artistic method combines autobiographical narratives with images and texts, history and theory, in works that delve into the contemporary world.

### **Landscape and Identity**

Ingrid Pollard’s interest in landscape is prevalent throughout her oeuvre. It is a symbolic exploration of how historical events are manifested – more or less subtly – in the landscape. One of her earliest and most notable works is the *Pastoral Interlude* series from 1987, which addresses notions of ‘Englishness’ in relation to the Black body. The hand-tinted images depict Black people in the English countryside. The romantic and idyllic scenes are combined with poetic texts that highlight overlooked perspectives on the British Empire, colonialism, issues of class and the tensions that questions of belonging and ownership can raise. The images were taken during the artist’s travels and excursions and the portraits are of her friends. In



*Seaside Series* from 1989, we instead see the artist herself with text that explores the language of tourism and storytelling. The self-portraits and texts are combined with souvenirs from the British seaside town of Hastings – the site of the Norman invasion of England in 1066. The work was created during Margaret Thatcher's time as Prime Minister, a period of xenophobia. By depicting herself – a Black woman born in Guyana who emigrated to England as a child – at this historically significant site, Pollard suggests that migration and invasion are concepts often confused in racist rhetoric. In the same year, 1989, the work *Oceans Apart* was produced, also set by the sea. Here, the artist again draws on herself and her family history. She explores the interconnectedness, and the repeated criss-crossing between English and European shores and those of the Caribbean and the Americas. These are sites of decisive arrivals and departures – forced as well as voluntary. Pollard's father emigrated from Guyana to the UK in the mid-1950s and the rest of the family arrived a few years later. This work sensitively addresses a family's experience of the Atlantic journey, of separation, longing, and loss, while placing their personal history in a wider, historically political context. Ingrid Pollard elevates the stories and lives of the migrant over the voice of the State.

Similar themes are addressed in the sculpture *Flotilla of Fragility* (2008). Here we see fifty boats, that rise and float across the blue platform floor. They appear to be folded in paper but are cast in porcelain. A flotilla, which usually symbolizes power and strength, is described here as something childishly playful and fragile in paper form. They stand in stark contrast to the dangerous conditions that prevailed during any oceanic voyage and crossing of the Atlantic in the time of the triangle slave trade. The series *The Boy Who Watches Ships Go By* from 2002 is one of many works in which Ingrid Pollard recalls the neglected history of the British Empire. It depicts the landscape and stories of Sunderland Point – today a quiet coastal town in England, but once a major trading port. The title refers to an enslaved boy called Sambo. Although no evidence exists, but according to many varied tales, he was brought to Britain on board a ship from the Caribbean, as the captain's servant. After falling ill, he was left behind and died there in 1739. His unconsecrated grave, in a field on the coast, is a reminder that the history of slavery is embedded in the very soil of the British landscape.

### **Photography and Power**

The importance of photography in the colonial project and archival photographic collections are explored in the 2017 series *The Valentine Days*, based on images of the British colony of Jamaica from the late 19th century. These collections were produced by the Scottish Valentine brothers to showcase the lush abundance of the colony, including the inhabitants as potential natural resources. Ingrid Pollard is interested in the Black figures, who exclusively inhabit the scenes of the photographs. They are all involved in work which marks them as the main characters of the story. By hand-tinting the images she not only highlights the people as individuals



with agency, but also marks their place in history. She challenges the narratives that relegate the Black experience to mere footnotes in human history, when these images reflect their impactful presence.

The more subtle but nonetheless poignant and important power relations and hierarchies of colonialism are explored in *Bow Down and Very Low – 123*, from 2021. The work consists of three kinetic sculptures – made in collaboration with artist Oliver Smart – constructed of found objects such as metal saws, ropes, chairs, and baseball bats. Their motorised movements can be perceived in different ways, both as respectful gestures or, seen from another angle, as collapsing, or even threatening to attack. The bowing and kneeling of the sculptures could refer to gestures of status that maintain hierarchies and social role play. They are in dialogue with stills from the propaganda film *Springtime in an English Village* (1944), produced by the British Colonial Film Unit. The film shows a Black girl being honoured as a May Queen – a British tradition that welcomes spring. This recruiting film had a targeted audience of the Black population of the British colonies. Pollard draws attention to an important signalling element of the film, namely that the girl must bow to her peers, even though she is a queen. As the kinetic figures repeat their gestures again and again, the young girl also continually repeats her bowing movements through the lenticular images.

### **Representation, Memory and Forgetting**

The work *Self Evident* from 1992 consists partly of a series of light boxes, depicting people in colourful and iconic British, summery landscapes. The adult figures close their eyes or look away from the camera. They carry objects that suggest the everyday; financial newspaper, flowers, food – which also more broadly, suggests historic colonialism, exploitation, and the movement of natural resources and wealth from the global south to the global north. The second part of the series consists of black and white portraits of children. They look straight into the camera and confront us with their gaze. Unlike the adults, the children seem to possess a natural self-confidence. They are photographed in what looks like a studio setting, against a neutral background which further emphasises that they are individuals, yet unaffected by the potential of historic injustices and limitations. The two parts of the series are installed opposite each other, creating a binary tension between these two visual expressions, which the audience is caught between.

Exploring the representation of Black people in urban landscapes in the 2019 series *Seventeen of Sixty Eight*, Ingrid Pollard's research entailed visits to many pubs and streets in the UK whose names and architecture can appear to be rooted in racism, embodied with the representation of the African and the name of 'Black Boy'. This is yet another example of how Britain's colonial legacy has been neutralised and become part of everyday life. In this installation, photographs, texts, signs, and objects become a testimony that factually records a contemporary visual pattern and makes visible a history, hiding in plain sight.



Pollard's interest in landscape and geology takes a very concrete form in her 2001 series *Landscape Trauma*. The abstract images depict rock formations. When viewed from a distance, they look like topographies of mountain ranges, alien planets, or the interiors of bodies. Ingrid Pollard has described the works as focusing on fundamental processes in nature, where minerals are combined in ongoing chemical mechanisms that are not visible to the naked eye. The work also entails the artist's interest in early photography – where potassium, magnesium, silver, platinum, and gold are central to the history of the medium, and all come from the body of the earth. The images are large in scale – up to three by two metres – and emphasise both the inherent power and composition of nature, shaped over millions of years, and the comparatively short existence of humans on the planet.

### **Biography**

Ingrid Pollard received a BA degree from the London College of Printing in 1988, an MA degree in Photography from the University of Derby in 1995, and a PhD from the University of Westminster in 2016. Her work is included in many collections, including the Tate, Victoria & Albert Museum, and the UK Arts Council Collection. She has received the BALTIC Artists' Award and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award, both in 2019. MK Gallery and Ingrid Pollard were recipients of the Freeland's Award in 2020, which enabled the first survey exhibition of her work two years later. In 2022, she was nominated for the prestigious Turner Prize and in 2023 she was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to Art. She has taught photography at Newcastle University, Kingston University, University of Hertfordshire, Croydon College of Art and the University of Wales, Newport, among others.

The exhibition at the Hasselblad Center will be the laureate's first solo exhibition in Sweden.

### **About the Hasselblad Foundation**

The Hasselblad Foundation was established in 1979 under the terms of the last will and testament of Erna and Victor Hasselblad. The purpose of the Foundation is to promote scientific education and research in photography and the natural sciences. The Foundation's annual international award for outstanding achievements in photography is considered one of the most prestigious photography awards worldwide.

The Foundation holds a photography collection focusing on Hasselblad Award Winners and Nordic photographers. The Hasselblad Center is the Foundation's exhibition space, situated in the Gothenburg Museum of Art. Stipends for photographic advancement are awarded each year and the Foundation itself is engaged in the field of academic and artistic research through the publication of books, symposiums, and collaborations with Swedish and international universities.

**Hasselblad Award Laureates****2024 Ingrid Pollard**

2023 Carrie Mae Weems

2022 Dayanita Singh

2021 No prize awarded

2020 Alfredo Jaar

2019 Daido Moriyama

2018 Oscar Muñoz

2017 Rineke Dijkstra

2016 Stan Douglas

2015 Wolfgang Tillmans

2014 Ishiuchi Miyako

2013 Joan Fontcuberta

2012 Paul Graham

2011 Walid Raad

2010 Sophie Calle

2009 Robert Adams

2008 Graciela Iturbide

2007 Nan Goldin

2006 David Goldblatt

2005 Lee Friedlander

2004 Bernd &amp; Hilla Becher

2003 Malick Sidibé

2002 Jeff Wall

2001 Hiroshi Sugimoto

2000 Boris Mikhailov

1999 Cindy Sherman

1998 William Eggleston

1997 Christer Strömholm

1996 Robert Frank

1995 Robert Häusser

1994 Susan Meiselas

1993 Sune Jonsson

1992 Josef Koudelka

1991 Richard Avedon

1990 William Klein

1989 Sebastião Salgado

1988 Edouard Boubat

1987 Hiroshi Hamaya

1986 Ernst Haas

1985 Irving Penn

1984 Manuel Alvarez Bravo

1983 No prize awarded

1982 Henri Cartier-Bresson

1981 Ansel Adams

1980 Lennart Nilsson



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