

PRESS RELEASE | 24 NOVEMBER 2021

## EDWARD BURTYNSKY

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2022

EXHIBITION: 15 APRIL – 2 MAY 2022 | SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON



© Edward Burtynsky, *Phosphor Tailings Pond #4, Near Lakeland, Florida, USA, 2012*. Courtesy Flowers Gallery, London / Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto

The World Photography Organisation is delighted to announce the renowned Canadian photographer **Edward Burtynsky** as the *Outstanding Contribution to Photography* recipient of the Sony World Photography Awards 2022. Widely regarded as one of the world's most accomplished contemporary photographers, Burtynsky is best known for his sweeping images of industrial landscapes and the wider environmental crisis.

Over a dozen large-scale photographs will be presented as part of the Sony World Photography Awards 2022 exhibition at Somerset House, London from 15 April – 2 May 2022. The selection, made by the artist, highlights key bodies of work and themes over his 40 year career. These include epic scenes from *Anthropocene* (2018); taking its name from the proposed name for our present geological epoch, this series offers an examination of human activity and the profound influence it has on the Earth and its systems.

Also included are images from Burtynsky's seminal work *Oil* (2009), a 12-year chronicle of the complex oil cycle – from extraction to distribution and everyday use – and our dependence on this finite resource. Additionally, presented in the UK for the first time will be images from Burtynsky's forthcoming series *Africa* (2022), a look at both the natural African landscape as well as areas that have been transformed through resource extraction. Other projects represented in the exhibition include *Salt Pans* (2016), *Water* (2013) and *Railcuts* (1985).

Burtynsky was born in 1955 of Ukrainian heritage in St. Catharines, Ontario and received his BAA in Photography / Media Studies from Ryerson University in 1982. Growing up watching cargo ships passing through his hometown, and exposed to his father's work at the General Motors plant where he later worked himself, Burtynsky's imagination was captured by the profound scale of human production, influencing the development of his own photographic style.

His imagery explores the collective impact we as a species are having on the surface of the planet. In striking depictions of vast human-altered landscapes Burtynsky lays bare the awesome scale of infrastructure and destruction fuelled by systems of capitalism and consumption. Taken predominantly from a bird's-eye view, vistas of scarred mountain ranges, desiccated bodies of water, quarries, mines, agriculture and sprawling urbanism are distilled into painterly abstractions of colour and form. Both wondrous and terrifying, Burtynsky's meticulously executed compositions lure viewers with their aesthetic beauty and keep them transfixed as unsettling details begin to emerge, revealing the scope of the devastation captured.

Commenting on his work and acceptance of the award, Edward Burtynsky says: *'I am very excited to accept this award. My work over the last 40 years has given me the privilege to see the world, understand the problems that we are facing, and bear witness to it all with my camera. The different photographs in this exhibition are best viewed as one body of work; together they are a lament to the loss of nature. There is a dynamism to each image - they allow the viewer to go up close and unpack things, to understand the scale, and really dig in.'*

The *Outstanding Contribution to Photography* honours a person or group of people that have made a significant impact on the photographic medium. As its 15th recipient Edward Burtynsky joins a distinguished list of iconic names including **William Eggleston** (2013), **Mary Ellen Mark** (2014), **Martin Parr** (2017), **Candida Höfer** (2018), **Nadav Kander** (2019), **Gerhard Steidl** (2020) and **Graciela Iturbide** (2021) to name a few.

The overall winners in the Student, Youth, Open and Professional competition of the Sony World Photography Awards 2022 will be announced on 14 April 2022. For more information about upcoming announcement and winners please visit [www.worldphoto.org](http://www.worldphoto.org)

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**IMAGES AVAILABLE AT [WORLDPHOTO.ORG/PRESS](http://WORLDPHOTO.ORG/PRESS)**

## **PRESS CONTACTS**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **ABOUT SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS**

Produced by the World Photography Organisation, the internationally acclaimed Sony World Photography Awards is one of the most important fixtures in the global photographic calendar. Now in its 15th year, the free-to-enter Awards are a global voice for photography and provide a vital insight into contemporary photography today. For both established and emerging artists, the Awards offer world-class opportunities for exposure of their work. The Awards additionally recognise the world's most influential artists working in the medium through the Outstanding Contribution to Photography Awards; previous recipients include Martin Parr, William Eggleston, Candida Hofer, Nadav Kander, Gerhard Steidl and Graciela Iturbide. The Awards showcase the works of winning and shortlisted photographers at a prestigious annual exhibition at Somerset House, London. [worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards-exhibition](http://worldphoto.org/sony-world-photography-awards-exhibition)

## **ABOUT WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY ORGANISATION**

The World Photography Organisation is a global platform for photography initiatives. Working across up to 220 countries, our aim is to raise the level of conversation around photography by celebrating the best imagery and photographers on the planet. We pride ourselves on building lasting relationships with both individual photographers as well as our industry-leading partners around the globe. The World Photography Organisation hosts a year-round portfolio of events including the Sony World Photography Awards, one of the world's leading photography competitions, and PHOTOFAIRS, leading international art fairs dedicated to photography. For more details see [worldphoto.org](http://worldphoto.org). Follow the World Photography Organisation on Instagram ([@worldphotoorg](https://www.instagram.com/worldphotoorg)), Twitter ([@WorldPhotoOrg](https://twitter.com/WorldPhotoOrg)) and LinkedIn/Facebook ([World Photography Organisation](https://www.facebook.com/WorldPhotographyOrganisation)). Our hashtags to follow are #sonyworldphotographyawards #swpa #swpanews.

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## **EDWARD BURTYNSKY**

Edward Burtynsky's photographs are included in the collections of over 60 major museums around the world, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, the Tate Modern in London, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in California. Burtynsky's distinctions include the TED Prize, the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts, The Outreach award at the Rencontres d'Arles, the Roloff Beny Book award, and the Rogers Best Canadian Film Award. He sits on the board of directors for CONTACT: Toronto's International Photography Festival, and The Ryerson Image Centre. In 2006 he was awarded the title of Officer of the Order of Canada and in 2008 he was awarded the ICP Infinity Award for Art. In 2018 Burtynsky was named Photo London's Master of Photography and the Mosaic Institute's Peace Patron. In 2019 he was the recipient of the Arts & Letters Award at the Canadian Association of New York's annual Maple Leaf Ball and the 2019 Lucie Award for Achievement in Documentary Photography. Most recently he was awarded a Royal Photographic Society Honorary Fellowship (2020). He currently holds eight honorary doctorate degrees and is an active lecturer on photographic art. [www.edwardburtynsky.com](http://www.edwardburtynsky.com)