



ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD 2014: Industry 4.0 reflected in photography

Award ceremony and official opening of the "Portraying Visions" exhibition at the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory

The night is upon us, the valley lies in darkness, the city lights are glittering. A cherry tree is in full blossom as the blackness sets in. There's no time to spare, the petals are already flying through the air, drifting aimlessly – fleeting, shimmering pulses of light against a backdrop of obscurity. **Sascha Weidner (*1976)** is the winner of the first **ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD** photography competition with the pictures in his "Hanami 4.0" cycle (Japanese for "flower viewing"). The award ceremony and launch of the "Portraying Visions" exhibition took place during the official opening of the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory on **May 23, 2014**. A selection of the photographs submitted for the competition will be on show in Igersheim-Harthausen from **June 2014** (please phone +49 (0)7931/493-10463 or send an e-mail to veranstaltung@wittenstein.de to arrange an appointment).

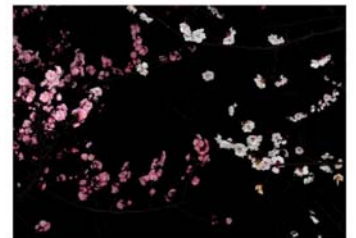
The **ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD** was initiated by Dr. Manfred Wittenstein, the leading entrepreneur, in cooperation with *immagis*, the Würzburg photo agency. As an art prize, it represents a new dimension in entrepreneurial activity. It is not only production processes that will change as a result of the 4th Industrial Revolution; society as a whole will be faced with many daunting challenges. "Industry 4.0 affects us all. That's why it's important to be aware of how artists perceive us entrepreneurs." Dr. Wittenstein's aim is to make networked industrial production a part of these social changes, and he is calling on the arts to make a contribution. Photography is the ideal medium for this purpose: the starting point for any photographic work is invariably something that already exists, which the photographer can then modify – or place in a new context – with his continually expanding technical possibilities.

Future responsibility of business organizations

The **ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD** is designed to promote a broad, interdisciplinary debate regarding the role of business organizations among the general public. Dr. Manfred Wittenstein, Chairman of the WITTENSTEIN AG Supervisory Board, hopes this photography

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Sascha Weidner's "Hanami 4.0" cycle of pictures was overall winner in the **ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD 2014**

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competition will set a change in motion in a way that is still far from commonplace in the art world. Although there are many other photographic awards already organized by industrial companies, their objectives tend to be purely static. Such initiatives are much more exciting if as many people as possible are invited to take an interest and collaborate – the stated goal of this particular event. Moreover, it is Wittenstein's intention in the long-term that other business organizations should gradually share the responsibility for the ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD and steer it in new, alternative directions with their own ideas and their own interpretations of entrepreneurship. Eventually, a worldwide network of exhibition spaces could become available for photographic art in business enterprises, leading to a personal dialogue between the participating photographers and the host company.

"If we can succeed in illuminating, penetrating and comprehending this topic on the broadest possible basis, we will be able to play an active part in shaping the future rather than simply enduring it as our fate", said Dr. Manfred Wittenstein.

Art produces knowledge

As far as WITTENSTEIN is concerned, this dialogue has spawned many outstanding contributions from international photographers, a selection of which are now on show in the newly opened WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory – which provides an unconventional yet extremely effective setting for the competition theme. Sascha Weidner, best of the best in the inaugural event, commented very fittingly on his winning "Hanami 4.0" cycle: "And the way nature constantly reconstructs and renews itself, adapting to the most various situations, can also be exemplary of industry; recreating itself in groupings and connections, blossoming in all its glory and withering away, paying tribute to new conditions, the cycle of natural evolution thus going hand in hand with industrial processes".

And in his work "Circle I" Bastian Gehbauer, winner in the students category, explores the correlation between the archaic nature of humanity throughout all eras and man's continual drive toward technical advancement and globalization. "How we love, reproduce ourselves, feed ourselves and die reveals who we are, where we are and when we are."

The competition, award winners and exhibition

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Thirty international photographers were hand-picked by Katia Reich (Curator of Berlin's 'European Month of Photography' festival), Dr. Anja Osswald (cultural scientist and Creative Director at TRIAD Berlin, the leading exhibition creator) and Dr. Matthias Harder (Curator of the Helmut Newton Foundation in Berlin) to take part in the competition. They were each tasked with finding a suitable means to express Industry 4.0. The works submitted give a good impression of the vast scope covered by photographers in the early twenty-first century.

The five jury members – chaired by Italian photographer Oliviero Toscani, who caused a stir some years ago with his controversial Benetton campaigns – finally chose the images in Sascha Weidner's cycle because they "bear witness to working without a safety net and demonstrate a great willingness to take risks in his personal quest for pictures – and in such a competition it is artistic autonomy that should be rewarded".

In addition to the thirty professionals, twelve next-generation artists from the Ostkreuz School of Photography were also asked to submit works, with three talented newcomers being selected as winners.

With his novel perspective on waning the era of traditional production, **Bastian Gehbauer** (*1985) creates an aesthetic which rids the deserted rooms in his photographs of their usefulness and transforms them into poetic constructs.

With her photography installations, **Mara Ploscaru** (*1987) depicts reality in a new, changed context.

The documentary photography by **Julia Runge** (*1990), who also won the audience prize, tells the story of Chido Govera, a Zimbabwean woman whose idea of cultivating edible mushrooms on agricultural waste earned her enough money to feed her family.

All in all, around fifty photographs by ten different photographers can be admired in the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory. In addition to the award winning submissions they also include works by Michael Najjar (*1966), Erwin Olaf (*1959), Claus Goedicke (*1966), Niko Luoma (*1970), Tyyne Claudia Pollmann (*1959) and Daniel & Geo Fuchs (*1966 and *1969).

The award ceremony for all winners took place during the official opening of the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory. The competition was endowed with prizes worth a total of 23,000 euros. A comprehensive catalogue containing the works of all artists nominated for the ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD and including their accompanying statements was published to coincide with the exhibition launch.

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CVs of the winners:

Sascha Weidner (*1976): Graduated in Photography, Fine Arts and Communication Design at Braunschweig University of Art, where he was a master-class student under Professor Dörte Eißfeldt.

Selected awards: Artist Residency COFA, Sydney, Australia (2012), Alison & Peter Klein Foundation advancement award "Stiftungspreis für Fotokunst" (2011), shortlisted for the Mannheim Academy of Art and Design's International Welde Art Award for Photography (2010), solo exhibitions in Sydney, Innsbruck, Berlin, Braunschweig, Mannheim, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Wolfsburg, etc..

Selected collections: Mönchehaus Museum of Modern Art, Goslar; NBank Collection, Hanover; Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Museum of German History); DZ Bank Collection, Frankfurt am Main; Huis Marseille, Museum of Photography, Amsterdam; City of Wolfsburg, Museum Kunstwerk, Nußdorf; IBB Collection, Berlin

Bastian Gehbauer (*1985): Attended school in Rimbach, then studied Regional Studies (Africa and Asia) as well as Political Sciences in Berlin, student at the Ostkreuz School of Photography and Design since 2010

Mara Ploscaru (*1987): Attended Victor Brauner Art Highschool in Piatra Neamt (Romania), then studied Graphic Arts / Design in Bucharest, student at the Ostkreuz School of Photography and Design from 2013 to 2014.

Awards:

1st prize in the Student Festival Photography, Timisoara (Romania)

Julia Runge (*1990): Freelance photographer since 2010, including a period spent in Namibia, student at the Ostkreuz School of Photography and Design since 2012

More information on

- www.unternehmer4punkt0.de
- www.wittenstein.de

Photos:

1. Sascha Weidner, winner of the ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD 2014
2. Three photos from the award winning "Hanami 4.0" cycle: these works by Sascha Weidner were selected by the jury of the ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD 2014
3. View of the "Portraying Visions" exhibition at the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory

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4. Group photo of the award ceremony at the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory
5. Impressions of the official opening of the "Portraying Visions" exhibition: the artists, curator and speaker at the award ceremony in the WITTENSTEIN Innovation Factory on May 23, 2014

Texts and photographs in printable quality can be downloaded from <http://www.wittenstein.de/presse.html>.

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