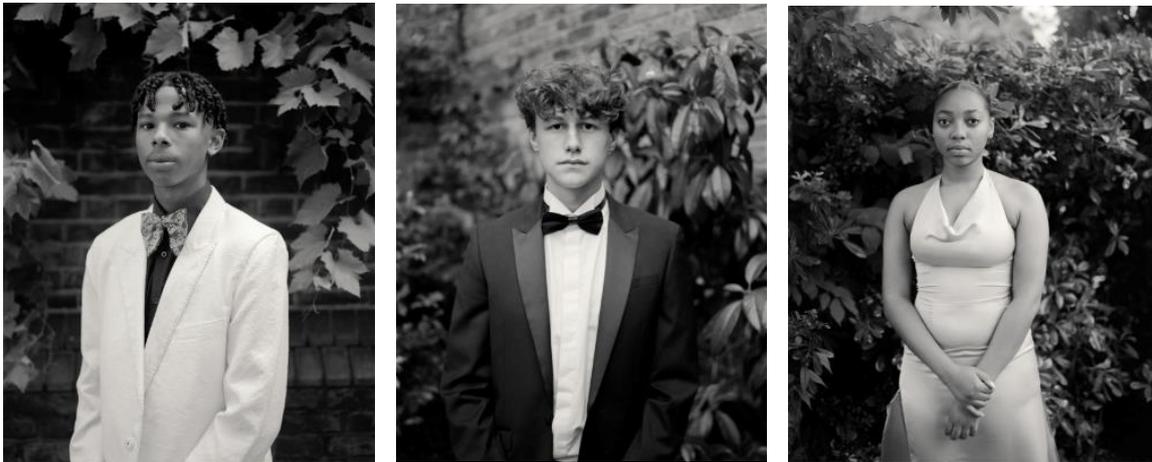


## News Release

Tuesday 24 November 2020

### **Alys Tomlinson's Portraits of School Leavers' Lost Summer win the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2020**

*Winning portraits go on display in new online exhibition*



L-R: Samuel, Jack and Jameela from the series *Lost Summer* by Alys Tomlinson © Alys Tomlinson.

**Alys Tomlinson** has won first prize in the prestigious *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2020* for *Lost Summer*, her series of black and white portraits of London school leavers dressed up for their proms, which were cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The winner of the £15,000 first prize was announced today, Tuesday 24 November, on the National Portrait Gallery's social media channels. Second prize was awarded to **Lydia Goldblatt** for *Eden* a portrait of her young daughter alone in her garden during lockdown. **Yolanda Y. Liou** was awarded third prize for her portrait of model, plus size advocate and Instagram influencer, *Enam Ewura Adjoa Asiama*.

The winning portraits are now on display in a new [online exhibition](#) on the National Portrait Gallery's website, featuring 54 portraits from 37 different artists selected for display by a panel of judges including Edward Enninful, Editor-in-chief of British Vogue, photographer Mark Neville and Penny Martin, Editor-in-Chief of The Gentlewoman. This is the first time in the history of the award that all the prize-winning photographers are women.

**£15,000 First Prize: Alys Tomlinson for *Samuel, Jack and Jameela* from the series *Lost Summer***

Born in 1975 in Brighton, **Alys Tomlinson** lives and works in London. She studied photography at Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design. Alys was selected for the *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize* exhibition in 2017 and won the *Sony World Photographer of the Year Award* in 2018. Her book *Ex-Voto*, the culmination of a five-year photographic journey to Catholic pilgrimage sites in Ireland, Poland, and France, was published in 2019.

Alys' series ***Lost Summer*** was born out of her frustration at not being able to travel for work. She decided to photograph local teenagers whose proms were cancelled, dressed up in what they would have worn, but captured in their gardens, backyards or local parks. Reflecting on the works Alys says: I feel that there is a vulnerability and sadness to the portraits, but also a resilience. The school year ended abruptly, with no opportunity to say goodbye to friends and nothing to mark the occasion of leaving school. I wanted to photograph each teenager framed by nature, merging their inner and outer worlds. There is a quietness to the images and they represent a loss and longing, but also celebrate each teenager as an individual, navigating this extraordinary time."

*The judges felt that Alys Tomlinson's portraits were very simple, but powerful images with a beautiful clarity. Without being heavy handed, they spoke to the events of 2020, including lockdown, and the generation most affected by them.*

**£3,000 Second Prize: Lydia Goldblatt for *Eden***



Eden by Lydia Goldblatt © Lydia Goldblatt.

**Lydia Goldblatt** was born in 1978 in London where she continues to live and work. She studied for a Masters Degree in Photography at London College of Communication. Her work has been exhibited and published internationally with group and solo shows in the UK, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, Greece, China and Malaysia. This is the first time she has been selected for the *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize* exhibition.

Lydia's portrait *Eden* is part of a larger series made during 2020, titled *Fugue*. Created with four people within a 50 metre radius of her home, the work draws on mothering and family life as a central theme, and is driven by her need to explore and respond to the fundamental themes of

intimacy and distance, brought to the fore through lockdown and Covid-19. As Lydia explains: “In such close, sometimes blissful, sometimes painful proximity to my children, I am aware of all that remains unknown. We are fused and separate, elusive. The child protected but alone in her den, the perfect spring blossom, articulate a psychological suspension in which both joy and fear oscillate.”

*The judges felt that Lydia Goldblatt’s portrait embodied the psychological complexity of the events of this year. The contrast between the attractive, suburban garden and the incongruous presence of the tent as a bubble presented wonderful layers and embodied what photography should be able to do.*

**£2,000 Third Prize: Yolanda Y. Liou for *Enam Ewura Adjoa Asiama***



Enam Ewura Adjoa Asiama by Yolanda Y. Liou © Yolanda Y. Liou

**Yolanda Y. Liou** is a 30 year old, Taiwan-born photographer and moving image maker, based in London and Brighton. Her work has been featured in publications including *The British Journal of Photography*, *i-D*, and *It's Nice That*. Her commissioned fashion work includes *GQ*, *Marie Claire* and *Rouge Fashionbook*. This is the first time she has been selected for the *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize* exhibition.

Yolanda’s portrait is from a collaborative on-going project *Thank You For Playing With Me* with artists Enam Ewura Adjoa Asiama (the sitter) and Vanessa Charnell Marshall Russell. Speaking about the photograph, she highlights how it captures the uncompromising energy and confidence of the sitter: “The expectation of being skinny as standard is relentless in Asian culture. I’ve experienced the stress of this since a very young age. I was taken by Enam’s confidence and charisma. A key component of the photo was to demonstrate self-love and being comfortable with who you are in your own body.”

*The judges responded to the strength and directness of Liou’s portrait. They felt that in pose and point of view it presented an empowering representation of her sitter that conveyed a sense of authentic identity, collaboration and trust. Formally, the judges thought highly of Liou’s manipulation of light and her confident allusion to the nude in the history of art and photography*

The annual *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize*, now celebrating thirteen years under Taylor Wessing’s sponsorship, is one of the most prestigious photography awards in the world and

showcases new work submitted by some of the most exciting contemporary photographers. The prize-winning photographs and those selected for inclusion in the exhibition were chosen from 5531 submissions entered by 2169 photographers from 75 countries. A total of 54 portraits from 37 artists have been selected for display.

This year's prize is displayed as an online exhibition on the National Portrait Gallery's website, in order to reach a wide international audience and enable the competition to continue as planned during the current Coronavirus pandemic. The photographs are displayed in a virtual gallery space that replicates the rooms of the National Portrait Gallery, enabling online visitors to view the portraits collectively, as well as exploring each individual work in more detail. The popular People's Pick feature, which offers the public the opportunity to vote for their favourite portrait is also running online. The National Portrait Gallery building in London is closed until 2023, while essential building works take place on the Gallery's [Inspiring People](#) redevelopment.

This year's judging panel was **Dr Nicholas Cullinan** Director, National Portrait Gallery (Chair); **Edward Enninful**, Editor-in-chief of British Vogue; **Magda Keaney**, Senior Curator, Photographs, National Portrait Gallery; **Penny Martin**: Editor-in-Chief, The Gentlewoman, and **Mark Neville**, Photographer.

Judged anonymously, the diversity of styles in the exhibition reflects the international mix of entries as well as photographers' individual and varied approaches to the genre of portraiture. Photographers were again encouraged to submit works as a series in addition to stand-alone portraits.

**Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director National Portrait Gallery** said: "Congratulations to the prize-winning artists and all those selected for exhibition. Each year the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize displays the very best in contemporary portrait photography and despite the unprecedented circumstances, this year is no exception. I hope that many more visitors from across the world will have the opportunity to enjoy the exhibition online."

**Shane Gleghorn Managing Partner at Taylor Wessing**, said: "The NPG has done an amazing job of delivering this exhibition virtually. By doing so, the gallery has ensured that artists around the world continue to have an opportunity to showcase their fantastic work. Working together with the NPG to support the artists throughout this extraordinary period is a privilege for us. The works display a broad variety of techniques and subject matter and they are, in each case, striking images from an all-female list of prize winners, which is wonderful to see. We have no doubt that everyone will enjoy viewing these amazing images."

#### **TAYLOR WESSING PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT PRIZE 2020**

24 November 2020 - 31 March 2021

*Supported by Taylor Wessing*

[www.npg.org.uk/photoprize](http://www.npg.org.uk/photoprize)

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## Notes to Editors

### Exhibiting Photographers

Tara Bogart	Ingvar Kenne	Silvia Rosi
Olgaç Bozalp	Yolanda Y. Liou	Jack Smethers
Mark Chilvers	Gideon Mendel	Simone Strijk
Charlie Clift	Dan Nelken	Nicky Thompson
Ana Cuba	Erik Norrud	Matthew Thorne
Alfonso De Gregorio	Oghalé Alex Ogbaudu	Tobias Titz
Sophia Evans	Tim Pearse	Alys Tomlinson
Jermaine Francis	Bertie Pearson	Nikki Toole
Tim Franco	Ryan Prince	Phillip Walter Wellman
Chiara Gambuto	Lloyd Ramos	Georgie Wileman
Rongguo Gao	Dirk Rees	Kiki Xue
Lydia Goldblatt	Will Robson-Scott	
Justin Keene	Nina Roeder	

### National Portrait Gallery

The National Portrait Gallery was founded in 1856 to encourage through portraiture the appreciation and understanding of the people who have made and are making British history and culture. Today it promotes engagement with portraiture in all media to a wide-ranging public by conserving, growing and sharing the world's largest collection of portraits.

[www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk)

### Inspiring People

*Inspiring People* is the National Portrait Gallery's biggest ever development since the building in St Martin's Place opened in 1896. The project, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund will see a transformed National Portrait Gallery, including a comprehensive re-display and re-interpretation of the Gallery's Collection from the Tudors to now across 40 refurbished galleries, combined with a complete refurbishment of the building, restoring historic features, creating a new and more welcoming visitor entrance and public forecourt on the building's North Façade, and enhancing the Gallery's accessibility.

The designs by Jamie Fobert Architects, working in partnership with Purcell, will also see the return of the Gallery's East Wing to public use as the new Weston Wing, including restoring the original gallery spaces, the creation of new retail and catering facilities and its own dedicated entrance at street level; and a new Learning Centre for visitors of all ages with studios, breakout spaces and high quality practical facilities. The Gallery's existing entrance will also remain, with new step-free access.

In order to complete the project efficiently and to safeguard visitors, members of staff and the Collection, the Gallery in St Martin's Place has temporarily closed to the public from 29 June 2020 until spring 2023, while essential building works take place. During this time the Gallery will share its unique Collection of portraits with the nation in a major programme of activities across the UK. Beginning in 2020, this ambitious nationwide programme will show hundreds of works from the National Portrait Gallery's Collection, some of which are rarely loaned, through a series of partnerships and collaborations during the period of redevelopment.

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