

History, nudity and innovation at London's largest photography event

By Angelica Pursley, for CNN

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10 photos: Highlights from Photo London 2016

Anton Corbijn, David Bowie, London, 1993, Courtesy Camera Work – Director and co-founder of Photo London Michael Benson chooses ten stand out images from the fair, which highlight key issues and trends in the photography industry.

"The great thing about photographs is they almost need no words. I chose this Anton Corbijn image because I think it's just stunning, and of course it's Bowie. I was very sad, as we all were, to see the death of Bowie earlier this year."

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Story highlights

Founded in 2015, Photo London brings together 80 of the world's leading galleries

Director and co-founded Michael Benson chooses the most important images from this year's program

Somerset House. With almost every possible space taken over -- from the cavernous Embankment galleries to new, purpose-built spaces in the courtyard -- there's a lot to take in.

(CNN) — "I think photography really is the art form for the 21st century."

Michael Benson is the director and co-founder of [Photo London](#), the capital's major international photography fair which was launched for the first time last year.

The 2016 edition of the fair -- which opened on May 19 -- has expanded, with 80 of the world's leading galleries and over 480 artists brought together under one roof at

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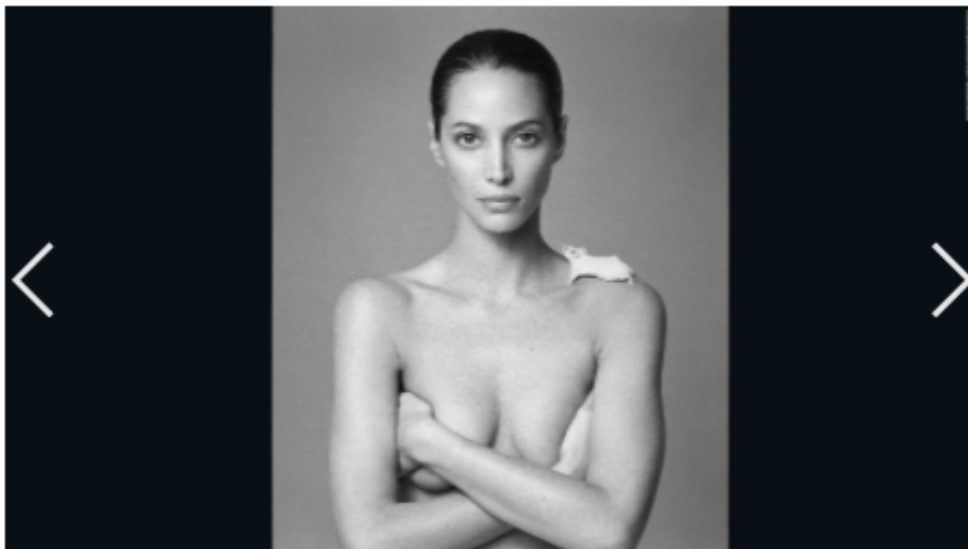


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Christy with Mouse by Patrick Demarchelier

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It's a comprehensive introduction to the world of photography, from leading talents like [Nadav Kander](#), Turner Prize-nominated [Craigie Horsfield](#), and [Don McCullin](#) (who will receive this year's Master of Photography award) to young artists like [Anja Niemi](#) and [Walter & Zoniel](#).

This year's fair also highlights trends in the photography world at large: a return to older forms of photography, especially by the younger generation, and, according to Benson "the seriousness with which people are taking fashion photography."

Why photography matters now

The fair is arguably proof of how much the popularity of photography has risen, not just in public perception but more importantly within the art market.



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"It's interesting because London was the place where the word 'photography' was coined, so we have a very rich and noble tradition in the field," Benson says. "I think we've slightly taken our eye off the ball, so somewhere like New York is probably the great world capital of photography. Our ambition with Photo London is to raise photography up to that level. And that's going to take a few years."

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Benson feels social media has influenced the public's perception of and interaction with photography.

"Technology has given everyone the license to try to make really great photographs. I think most of us, myself included, fail, but it doesn't stop us trying."



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