

# PHOTO LONDON

## PHOTO LONDON REVEALS AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENT PLANS WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW DIRECTOR

- **Michael Benson and Fariba Farshad, Founders of Photo London, to develop plans that unlock the strategic potential of the Fair**
- **Roderick van der Lee to become Director of Photo London on 20 May**

Since its launch in 2015, Photo London has successfully established itself as a key event in the global art world calendar and an important annual showcase of the very best of the past, present and future of photography. In advance of the 2019 edition, set to be the strongest to date, the Fair's Founding Directors Michael Benson and Fariba Farshad have unveiled plans to build on the achievements of the first five years.

**Michael Benson and Fariba Farshad** explain: 'Almost as soon as we closed last year we felt this would be the right moment to stop, take stock, survey what we have achieved so far and develop plans for the next phase of Photo London. And so we embarked on a lengthy consultation exercise and what we discovered as we talked to friends and supporters around the world was that Photo London had massive untapped potential. In fact, we were blown away by the scale of support and enthusiasm of collectors from around the world. It was clear from these discussions that the goal of making Photo London the world's best photography Fair, the Fair most clearly in tune with the exciting future of photography, was well within our grasp. What we personally needed was the time and space to make the right strategic decisions that would enable us to unlock and exploit that potential. The appointment of a Director for the Fair is the natural first step.'

Roderick van der Lee, a founder of the Unseen Photo Fair in Amsterdam, will take up the position of Director of Photo London on Monday 20 May following the Fair's fifth edition at Somerset House, which runs 16 – 19 May 2019 (Preview 15 May). The Founders will then create a new Board that will be responsible for the ongoing strategic development of Photo London and related activities. The Director will be responsible to the Founders for the day to day running of the Fair.

Roderick van der Lee was appointed following an extensive international search. He brings considerable knowledge and expertise to Photo London from his career in photography, having worked at the Foam photography museum in Amsterdam, as a founder and board director of Unseen Photo Fair, and having partnered with international photography institutions such as World Press Photo, PhotoEspana and Paris Photo. Under his Direction, Photo London will continue its longstanding support for young galleries and artists with a focus on emerging trends and unseen work as well as celebrating established masters and exploring the future of photography. He will also oversee the highly-acclaimed Public Programme and the development of the Photo London Academy.

**Roderick van der Lee** said: "I'm honoured and excited to take up the role of Director of Photo London, a fair that I admire and have watched closely since its first edition five years ago. As Founding Directors, Michael and Fariba have created a world-class fair and provided me with a truly exceptional platform to build on further in the future. Together, we will work to ensure Photo London continues to go from strength to strength in the coming years."

**Michael Benson and Fariba Farshad** added: “We are delighted to welcome Roderick van der Lee as the Director of Photo London. This appointment was of critical importance for the future of the Fair and we took our time over it. We have every confidence that Roderick is the right man to lead Photo London at this moment in its history. We very much look forward to working with him to further secure the global reputation of Photo London.”

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### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **About Roderick van der Lee**

Roderick van der Lee started his career at auction house Christie’s in Amsterdam and London, after which he joined the Foam photography museum in Amsterdam where he was responsible for the print sales editions, collectors’ courses, international talent award and advising on private, corporate and government photography collections. Together with Foam he founded Unseen Photo Fair and Festival and was on the board of directors for 6 years until 2016. As an independent artistic director he has also curated exhibitions, which were shown across several continents, and was instrumental in setting up the Elliott Erwitt Fellowship for fresh perspectives in documentary photography in collaboration with legendary photographer Elliott Erwitt.

#### **About Photo London**

Founded in 2015, Photo London was created to give London an international photography event befitting the city’s status as a global cultural capital. It is now established as a world-class photography Fair and as a catalyst for London’s dynamic photography community. Photo London is widely recognised as an unmissable global event for anyone who is intrigued by the future possibilities of photography. Each year the Fair attracts over 100 of the world’s leading galleries and a fast-growing community of collectors. Its Discovery section (a platform for emerging galleries) is widely admired as is its Public Programme of artist talks, installations and exhibitions, that has, since inception, been supported by the LUMA Foundation. From its base at Somerset House, Photo London has established itself as the central hub of a city-wide celebration of photography involving the capital’s major museums, auction houses, collectors and galleries large and small. Photo London harnesses the city’s outstanding creative talent and brings the world’s leading photographers, curators, collectors, exhibitors and dealers together with the public to celebrate photography, the medium of our time.