

Kaiserring Goslar

The jury has unanimously decided that the 2018 Kaiserring 2018 be awarded to Wolfgang Tillmans.

The artist, who was born in Remscheid in 1968 and now divides his time between Berlin and London, has created a densely packed and many-layered life's work that is highly regarded internationally. He has been driven by the great questions: of truth (including pictorial truth), of expansion of knowledge, of the perception of the stars, of the documentation of the abundance and transitoriness of immediate life, of beauty, of friendship, of freedom.

His central artistic medium is photography. He has analytically investigated its conditions and exploited its possibilities all the way to abstract works such as the 'Freischwimmer' series, which created without using the camera, or the photographs of the perfect 'paper drops' which are formed from photographic paper. On his numerous journeys the artist uses the camera as an instrument to capture the diversity of phenomena in our globalized world as well as the uniqueness of places.

An important theme for Wolfgang Tillmans is the exhibition as personal artistic event. He arranges the rooms himself and in situ, employing an intensive process which is partly intuitive and partly analytical. Glass cases play a central role, as do the various, precisely stipulated formats of the photographs and different hanging techniques of them. Visitors to his exhibitions are involved in an intense perception and recognition process, in which the perspectives change and associations are made.

In recent times, in view of the massive increase in right-wing populist currents and badly shaken in particular by Brexit, he has been exploiting the possibilities open to an artist of using his art to actively exert a political and social influence. Thus he has developed a number of poster campaigns to encourage people to vote and to demonstrate their conscious support for Europe and against right-wing populist ideas. The analysis of the medium of photography, the testing of its limits, and the balancing of poetry and disillusionment all make Wolfgang Tillmans one of the leading artists of our age.