



Leopold Godowsky, Jr. Color Photography Awards

“Mere color... can speak to the soul in a thousand different ways.”

—Oscar Wilde

The PRC is privileged to present the eighth Leopold Godowsky, Jr. Color Photography Awards, which honor the work and legacy of Leopold Godowsky, Jr. co-inventor of Kodachrome film. Established in 1987 by Godowsky's late wife, Francis Gershwin Godowsky, in counsel with his son, Leopold Godowsky III, the awards recognize “achieved excellence in color photography.” Every four years, the PRC seeks nominations of artists working in color from hundreds of experts around the world—directors, curators, educators, and critics. A panel of three jurors, including the PRC Curator, then considers the nominations and selects up to four artists, who receive cash awards and are featured in an exhibition in the PRC Gallery.

From hand coloring techniques in the nineteenth century to the invention of the Autochrome plate in 1904 by the Lumière Brothers to the invention of Kodachrome in 1935, many inventors, corporations, and photographers have sought ways to create color photographs. Nevertheless, many photographers resisted the use of color in fine art photography from the 1930s to the 1950s in favor of black and white images. Viewed as the designated medium for popular picture magazines, advertising, commercial, and amateur photography, color photography did not immediately seize the attention of art photographers. In 1950, Edward Steichen, photographer and photography curator of the Museum of Modern Art, organized the first significant exhibition of color photography. Entitled *All Color*, Steichen urged audiences and practitioners to “overcome the unconscious conditioning firmly established by the black and white photograph.” He argued that color photography be newly conceived as its own medium and be allowed to flourish independent of photography's black and white past. Steichen expressed similar concerns for color television and encouraged his audience not to favor black and white television to the detriment and delay of the advent of color television.

An inclusive exhibition, Steichen's *All Color* exhibition included everything—Autochrome, solarization, microscopic color photographs, color transparencies, and previously confidential color aerial photographs taken by the U.S. Navy. Steichen boasted of the various films used by the artists in his show, such as Eastman Kodachrome, Ektachrome, Aero Kodacolor, and Ansco Color, as well as many of the color processes.

Since the first Leopold Godowsky, Jr. Color Photography Awards twenty-six years ago, the photographic medium, and color photography in particular, have undergone radical changes. The digital revolution transformed photography, opening up new methods and avenues for the creation and dissemination of photographic images. Even since the previous cycle of the Godowsky Color Awards in 2009, color photography has changed; in 2009, Kodak discontinued the last of its Kodachrome products. Today, color photography is so ubiquitous and is the favored medium for creative expression by so many artists; it is hard to imagine that there was ever any resistance to color photography.

In the spirit of Leopold Godowsky, Jr.'s drive to invent a widely accessible form of color photography, the 2014 Awards will be open to artists working in *any form of color photography*. Like Edward Steichen's *All Color* exhibition, the Awards are open to any type of photography. In accordance with the international scope of the awards, the 2014 Godowsky Color Awards will be open to *artists around the world* working in color photography. As with the 2009 awards, the 2014 awards will focus on *emerging or under-recognized artists and new approaches* to color photography. With the 2014 Godowsky Color Awards, the PRC aims to celebrate, recognize, and exhibit a diverse group of artists creating new and innovative works in color photography.