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## Artistic duo RongRong & inri to be honoured at 2016 Sony World Photography Awards

**Recipients of the Outstanding Contribution to Photography prize**

**at the world's largest photography competition**

- The fine art photographers have shaped contemporary photography in Asia
- First major European exhibition of RongRong & inri's work including new works from the critically acclaimed series *Tsumari Story* to be shown as part of the 2016 Sony World Photography

## Awards Exhibition

- Images available from [press.worldphoto.org](http://press.worldphoto.org)

***“This award genuinely encourages us to put more efforts into the development of photography.***

***We have faith in this career we choose and love.” RongRong & inri***

FEBRUARY 2016: RongRong & inri, the influential photographic husband and wife team who have shaped contemporary photography in China and beyond, will receive the Outstanding Contribution to Photography prize at the 2016 Sony World Photography Awards.

The photographers are being recognised for both their careers as artists and their significant impact on Asian photography.

RongRong & inri’s photography reflects the intimate world that they have created together and pushes the boundaries of traditional black-and-white darkroom techniques. Together they founded China’s first contemporary art space dedicated to the medium, the [Three Shadows Photography Art Centre](#), and the 2015 Jimei x Arles Photo Festival in partnership with Les Rencontres d’Arles.

Chinese photographer RongRong and Japanese artist inri will be presented with their award in London on 21st April at the 2016 Sony World Photography Awards ceremony.

In celebration of the award, a special exhibition of RongRong & inri’s current and past work curated by Zelda Cheadle will be shown at Somerset House, London from 22nd April – 8th May as part of the 2016 Sony World Photography Awards Exhibition. It will be the first time so many of the photographers’ works have been brought together outside of Asia and will include the European premiere of new works from their latest, critically acclaimed series, *Tsumari Story*.

The Sony World Photography Awards, the world’s biggest photography

competition, are organised by the [World Photography Organisation](#) (WPO). Previous recipients of the Outstanding Contribution to Photography award include Eve Arnold, William Klein, Marc Riboud, William Eggleston, Mary Ellen Mark, Elliott Erwitt, Bruce Davidson and Phil Stern.

Talking about the selection of RongRong & inri, WPO Creative Director Astrid Merget Motsenigos, comments:

*“RongRong & inri’s contribution to photography goes well beyond their extensive and exquisite production of still images. For over fifteen years they have personally contributed to the industry as a whole, specifically within their community, creating venues and resources for artists to flourish. Their photography has captured the great intimacy they have shared over the years and presents their unique interpretations in critically acclaimed photo stories, collages and installations.*”

*“Despite the significant contribution they have made, they are not broadly known internationally and we, the World Photography Organisation, want to help change that by celebrating the remarkable influence they both have had on the Asian photography community.”*

Supporting this award, Christopher Phillips, Curator at the International Center of Photography, New York adds:

*“Long recognised for their own important creative photography, RongRong & inri took a bold step in 2007 when they founded China’s first independent photography centre, Three Shadows, in Beijing. Through its exhibitions, publications, international conferences, and annual awards for young Chinese photographers, Three Shadows has done more to encourage the serious appreciation of photography than any other organisation in China.”*

Talking about their forthcoming award and exhibition RongRong & inri said:

*“We are extremely honored to accept the Outstanding Contribution to Photography prize at the 2016 Sony World Photography Awards. When we made the step and founded Three Shadows Photography Art Centre eight years ago, we dared not imagine the status quo of Three Shadows and us. We are extremely grateful for the support and encouragement that we’ve received throughout the*

*years, to which our recognition is due today. This award genuinely encourages us to put more efforts into the development of photography. We have faith in this career we choose and love. Besides our supporters, we would like to thank photography for giving us so many challenges and opportunities.”*

Press images by RongRong & inri are available to download from [press.worldphoto.org](http://press.worldphoto.org)

## **Background**

Following successful individual careers, RongRong (China) and inri (Japan) have worked together since 2000. Although they did not speak the same language when they first met, the pair immediately connected via their photography,

Throughout their collaboration, the photographers' images have been both acutely personal and widely relatable, touching upon the most fundamental motifs of the human experience.

Their past critically acclaimed series of works, such as *Mt. Fuji, in Nature, Liulitun, and Tsumari Story* focus on the beauty of the human body in nature and the urban environment. Their recent work brings attention to the beauty and value of new beginnings in their shared life and surroundings, especially amidst a rapidly changing world.

In 2007, RongRong & inri established the Three Shadows Photography Art Centre in the Caochangdi art district of Beijing. The building was designed by Ai Weiwei and is China's first and only privately run, non-profit centre devoted to photography and video art. The centre's most recent exhibition, "Chinese Photography: Twentieth Century and Beyond", was the first Chinese historical exhibition from the Chinese perspective.

The photographers' annual Three Shadows Photography Award was introduced in 2009 to discover and encourage China's most promising photographers and the pair opened a new Three Shadows space in Xianmen in 2015.

Having previously worked with France's Les Rencontres d'Arles on the

Caochangdi Photospring, RongRong partnered with Arles and the Jimei area in the southern Chinese city of Xianmen to launch Jimei x Arles Photo Festival in 2015. The inaugural festival showed over 2,000 works from nearly 400 artists.

The photographers currently split their time between Beijing and Tokyo.

**For further details and interview requests please contact:**

**Jill Cotton, Senior PR Manager, World Photography Organisation**

+44 (0) 20 7886 3043 / [jill@worldphoto.org](mailto:jill@worldphoto.org)

**Notes to editors:**

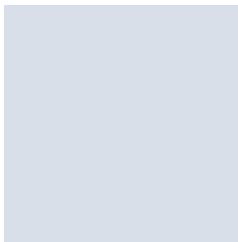
- A press preview of the 2016 Sony World Photography Awards exhibition, including RongRong & inri, will take place at Somerset House, London on Friday 22 April. Please register to attend by emailing [press@worldphoto.org](mailto:press@worldphoto.org) with the title **SWPA Exhibition Preview**
- Tickets for the exhibition can be booked at [www.worldphoto.org/2016exhibition](http://www.worldphoto.org/2016exhibition)
- **About World Photography Organisation (WPO)**WPO is a home where photography is celebrated and the art of the photographer is recognised. Working with professional, enthusiast and student photographers alike, the World Photography Organisation provides a global network across the photographic industry to not only to raise the level of conversation around the subject, but to increase awareness and appreciation of this artform. WPO hosts a year-round portfolio of industry and public events including: **Sony World Photography Awards**, the world's largest

photography competition and accompanying global exhibition; the **World Photography Student Focus Programme**, inspiring and working with the next generation of photographers, and **Photo Shanghai**, Asia Pacific's premier art fair dedicated to photography. In addition, WPO has a thriving online presence via its website, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. For more information please visit [www.worldphoto.org](http://www.worldphoto.org)

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## Contacts



### **Sony Europe PR Team**

Press Contact

PR Team

[press@eu.sony.com](mailto:press@eu.sony.com)