

You saw the world through their lenses

...now meet some of the people behind the most unforgettable images of our times

Stephanie Yeow

IN AMSTERDAM

IT WAS more than just an opportunity to smile for the cameras at the 50th-anniversary celebrations of The World Press Photo Foundation.

Held last weekend in Amsterdam, it drew more than 700 guests, including 28 past winners of The World Press Photo of the Year contest.

They came for two days of workshops, symposiums and the launch of stamps, a book and a photography exhibition.

Known primarily for organising the prestigious World Press Photo contest, the Dutch-based, non-profit foundation gets thousands of entries each year. It awards a cash prize of 10,000 euros (S\$20,500) to one main winner.

This year, 69,190 entries came from 4,266 photographers in 123 countries. The latest winner is Arko Datta of India. His winning shot showed a grieving survivor of last year's Dec 26 tsunami.

Since its first international competition in 1955, many iconic images have surfaced, such as the picture of a naked Vietnamese girl fleeing a napalm attack and that of a Chinese man confronting a column of tanks during the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989.

As part of the celebrations, a 400-page hardcover book, *Things As They Are*, which documents half a century of photo-journalism since 1955, was launched in conjunction with an exhibition at the Foam Fotografiemuseum in Amsterdam, which runs until Dec 7.

A workshop on Visual Literacy for photo editors from Asia and Europe was jointly organised by the World Press Photo and the Asia-Europe Foundation which is based in Singapore.



PHOTO: ARKO DATTA/REUTERS

This picture of a grieving survivor of last year's Asian tsunami won Arko Datta the top prize this year.

Please keep watching

PEOPLE may know the pictures but most do not know the photographers behind them. This event saw a gathering of prominent photography figures like Iranian Reza, Americans David Burnett and David Turnley, and Canadian Larry Towell.

It was clear from the passionate discussions during the symposiums that the profession is alive and well.

Dr Jan Pronk, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Sudan, said: "Seeing helps making a choice. Journalistic photographs help many to become and remain subjective in the real sense of the word. Please, keep watching. We need more stories and more pictures."

► The World Press Photo is now accepting entries for the 2006 World Press Photo Contest. The deadline is Jan 12. The entry form may be obtained from www.worldpressphoto.nl



PHOTO: STEPHANIE YEOW

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SHUTTER BUGGED: Looking like they would be more comfortable behind the camera than in front of it are 20 of the 28 past years' World Press Photo winners.

(Front row, from left): Co Rentmeester (1967) and Leslie Hammond (1977).

(Second row): Sadayuki Mikami (1978), Eric Gregorian (2002), Jean-Marc Bouju (2003), Nick Ut (1972), Malcolm W. Browne (1963), Alon Reininger (1986), Frank Fournier (1985), Pablo Bartholomew (1984) and Arko Datta (2004).

(Third row): Hocine (1997), Robin Moyer (1982), David Turnley (1988, 1991), Lara Jo Regan (2000), Lucian Perkins (1995), Claus Bjrnrn Larsen (1999) and Erik Refner (2001).

(Back row): Wolfgang Peter Geller (1971) and David Burnett (1979).