



Press release | Amsterdam, 26 September 2016

10,000 visitors to Unseen Photo Festival, and a notable increase of international collectors to Unseen Photo Fair

For ten days, Amsterdam has been all about photography

Unseen Photo Fair & Festival, the international fair and festival for new photography closed its doors yesterday after a successful final weekend at Amsterdam's Westergasfabriek terrain.

Unseen 2017 dates: 22 – 24 September

The fair

For this fifth edition, Unseen Photo Fair hosted 53 international galleries presenting work by over 150 photographers; more than 80 bodies of work made their debut at the fair. The participating galleries were very enthusiastic about both the interest from international collectors and the well-informed public. Both private purchases and acquisitions for corporate art collections were noted.

Rixt Hulshoff Pol (Director of Unseen): *"It was a very festive edition of Unseen. Visitors to the fair came prepared to buy works: after five years the collectors, artists and gallerists have confirmed our undeniable position in the international photography world. The quality of Unseen improves annually and we succeed time and time again in connecting with and surprising a broad audience both locally and globally."*

Joost Bosland, Stevenson Gallery, South-Africa: *"We came back to Unseen after four years and we really saw the development of the fair. In addition, the audience now is far better prepared."*

Bill and Victoria Cherry, collectors, United States: *"Unseen is the friendliest and happiest fair: where else can you interact with fellow collectors from all over the world and share French Fries with the campaign artists? The excitement of going to a fair where nothing has been seen before was fabulous."*

Gemma Fletcher, Photography Director Creative Review, United Kingdom: *"Unseen has quickly become the go-to festival for contemporary photography and for discovering emerging talent. The festival gives attendees a unique insight into the visionary and experimental work that aims to shape the future of the medium."*

Vogue.it: *"In the span of only a few editions, Unseen Photo Fair has established itself as a must-see event to check the state of the health of the contemporary photographic landscape."*

The festival

On September the 16th Unseen Photo Festival started with a well-visited opening at Museum Het Schip, the heart of this year's festival. With eight locations in the Spaarndammerbuurt neighbourhood and sixteen throughout the city, the festival was both compact and diverse. The festival's visitor numbers doubled from last year. The exhibition curated by Anton Corbijn, the spectacular exhibition in the outdoor swimming pool and the ground breaking Japanese photography exhibition were especially popular.

Alice Roegholt, Director Museum Het Schip: *"There was a great atmosphere and it has been extremely busy! Many visitors coming for Unseen visited our museum for the first time and explored all the activities in the neighbourhood."*

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

Jury announces 5 nominees for the Grolsch Unseen Residency

New this year is the Grolsch Unseen Residency. Unseen and Grolsch are delighted to announce the five nominees selected out of 61 applicants for the launch of the first edition of the **Grolsch Unseen Residency**. Launching at the 2016 Unseen Photo Fair & Festival, the Grolsch Unseen Residency will award one artist a two-month scholarship over the winter/spring period. The 2017 residency will be held in London, where the artist will be working closely with professional photographers and other leaders of the local creative industry on a new body of work with an unconventional approach to the urban creative landscape.

The five Grolsch Unseen Residency nominees are: **Stephanie Syjuco** (1974, Philippines), **Lana Mesić** (1987, Croatia), **Kevin Cooley** (1975, United States), **Femke Dekkers** (1980, The Netherlands), and **Sanna Kannisto** (1974, Finland).

The international jury that selected the nominees consists of **Jenny Nordquist** (Artistic Director, Landskrona Foto Festival, SE), **Karin Andreasson** (Picture Editor, *The Guardian*, SE) and **Alison Nordström** (curator, US). The jury report states: *"Our selection process was based upon choosing artists whose work intrigued us. We looked beyond surface and aesthetic seductions to find well-researched, strong concepts and their convincing realisations. We felt that it was important that the work echoed the spirit of Unseen Photo Fair; there had to be an element of discovering something unexpected. We also considered which artists' practice and growth would benefit from the support and connections offered by the Grolsch Unseen Residency in London. We feel that any of these chosen artists could present us with professional and engaging proposals, that might also give us a joyful surprise."*

Other awards: ING, Meijburg, Outset and Dummy

Several prestigious awards and project funds founded to foster the careers of emerging artists were presented during the first days of Unseen 2015: **Thomas Albdorf** (AT, 1982) was chosen by Unseen and ING as the winner of this year's **ING Unseen Talent Award**. This award offers an international platform for European photographic talents to present their work on an international scale. **Miren Pastor** (ES, 1985) was the winner of the Public Prize.

Elsbeth Diederix (KE, 1971) was the recipient of the **Meijburg Art Commission**. She will receive a project fund to create site-specific work for the office of Meijburg & Co in Amstelveen.

The Chinese artist **Ren Hang** (1987) was selected by the 2016 **Outset | Unseen Exhibition Fund** curatorial committee comprising of **Alona Pardo** (1974, curator Barbican Art Gallery, London), **Carolyn H. Drake** (1985, independent curator, Director at *A Tale of a Tub*, Rotterdam) and **Thomas Dukes** (1984, curator Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool) selected Hang to be granted a solo exhibition at Foam at the beginning of 2017.

Dieter de Lathauwer (BE, 1978) won the **Unseen Dummy Award** 2016; his book, *I loved my wife (killing children is good for the economy)*, will be published by Lecturis and presented at Unseen in 2017.

UNSEEN PHOTO FAIR 2017: 22 – 24 september

www.unseenamsterdam.com

Founding partners

Unseen was founded by partners Foam Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam, Office for Cultural Business Development Platform A, and Vandejong Creative Agency.

Editors' notes

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And many others.