nederlands fotomuseum

Press release 25 July 2017

Steenbergen Stipendium 2017

16 Sept. – 29 Oct. 2017

The jury for the Steenbergen Stipendium 2017, the prize for the best photographic graduation project, has nominated five projects created by students of the art academies. Both the jury prize and the public's choice award will be presented on 11 October. The winner of the jury prize will receive an incentive prize of 5,000 euros from the Steenbergen Foundation. The works will be on display in the Nederlands Fotomuseum from 16 September through 29 October.

The nominees
The five nominees, accompanied by the jury's brief description of their works, are:

Eline Benjaminsen (1992, Norway), *Where the money is made*
www.elinebenjaminsen.com
Royal Academy of Art, The Hague

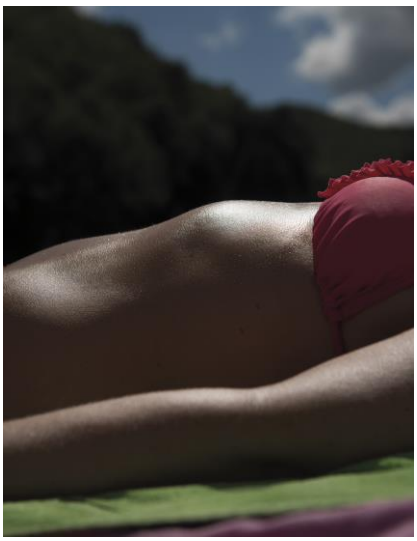
'If I say stock exchange, what image does this bring to mind?' is the question Eline Benjaminsen repeatedly asks the viewer. Meanwhile, a bird's-eye view of the German landscape slowly passes by. This cinematic flight is frequently interrupted by colourful graphs showing the peaks and valleys of the financial market or by brief portraits of northern European cities such as London, Frankfurt, Calais, where high-frequency trading takes place.

Benjaminsen's film reflects on how the financial market has left every connection with the Earth behind. The tall transmitter masts that set the stage for this high-frequency trading are the only physical elements still referring to this parallel reality in the clouds. Benjaminsen makes this intangible subject tangible by photographic and cinematic means and also finds a way to make us stop and think about it.

Tim Cullmann (1989, Germany), *Tulip – All2gether Sommer Kombi*
www.timcullmann.de
Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam

The starting point for this work by Tim Cullmann is a visual study into the privately owned garden and the creative craftsmanship expressed to create it. He does this in a very idiosyncratic way by using the camera to understand the garden as a physical place while also creating an abstract photographic work. Patterns of a red and white checked tablecloth with a cherry pie on it, for example, melt into a harmonious overall structure. The graphic qualities of the garden's paving suddenly are the main focus. He presents these images again as a paving pattern on a wooden construction frame.
In doing so, Cullmann questions the ownership (in the sense of appropriation) of images that naturally lurk behind the making of photographs. Do we have images in our heads before we create them? To what degree do they influence what we create? Or do they just provide a framework? An exciting experiment with images that creates a new way of looking at them.

Niké Dolman (1991, The Netherlands), *Welcoming, Recognizing, Also recognizing, Acknowledging, Also acknowledging, Emphasizing, Also emphasizing, Stressing, Recognizing, Emphasizing, Acknowledging, Agreeing,*
Willem de Kooning Academy, Rotterdam



After reading the Paris Climate Agreement (a 25-page document), Niké Dolman remained particularly struck by its poetic tone. She felt that this tone was entirely at odds with the premise that specific goals and obligations were being imposed on the countries agreeing to this agreement. The more abstract than specific wording (to which the title of the document specifically refers) inspired Dolman to create a free photographic translation of the agreement. In this project, she presents herself as an excellent image-maker who can even capture clichés on camera in such a way that the viewer is tempted to think about what the aim of this climate agreement really is.

Felicity van Oort (1989, The Netherlands), *Either not dead or does not exist*, www.felicityvanoort.com
HKU University of the Arts, Utrecht

On Wednesday, 12 September 2001, Antonio Arturo Hernandez's mother did not get a phone call from New York. This young man usually called his mother in Mexico every Wednesday. He had probably been working the day before in the World Trade Center and was one of the many illegal immigrants who had died when the towers collapsed. In a widescreen slideshow, Felicity van Oort sketches a picture of the life of Antonio as based on historic family photos, still lifes and cityscapes of New York while his mother talks about him. Van Oort constructed this fictitious portrait so that the fate of one person and his family could symbolise the larger group of illegal immigrants who were never recognised officially as victims. Her slideshow begins with a long line up of facts about the unknown victims of 9/11; the viewer is immediately struck by Van Oort's thorough research into this subject. The result is an honest portrait of this burning issue along with the emotional impact it deserves.

Kevin Osepa (1994, Curaçao), Mester blousé,
www.kevinosepa.com
HKU University of the Arts, Utrecht

Kevin Osepa was born on a small island in the Dutch Antilles where magic, superstition and spirituality were part of the culture. Upon his arrival in the pragmatic Netherlands, it was as if all these elements belonged to the past. In his photography, Osepa searches for a merging of these two cultures by 're-enchanting' the drabness of the Netherlands: adding colourful, aromatic interventions and other magic elements to the picture.
His personal quest for identity and environment is so whimsical and free that underlying matters also emerge: a colourful Netherlands, the presence and absence of para-realities in this country, and the impact that colonialism has on current generations.

The Jury for the Steenbergen Stipendium 2017: an awareness of the presentation form
Last summer, the jury for the Steenbergen Stipendium visited the graduation exhibitions in the various Dutch art academies and nominated five photographic projects. As important selection criteria, the jury considered not only the content but also the presentation quality of the projects. In viewing the graduation exhibitions, the jury was impressed by the students' proficient and well-informed choices for the best way to present their photographic work. 'After being overwhelmed by photobooks in previous years, we noted that there are clearly fewer publications this year. When they were used, there was a definite reason for doing so, and this also applied to all the other forms of presentation,' said Caroline von Courten (Jury Chairperson).

Announcement of the winner
On 11 October, the jury will announce the winner who will receive an incentive prize of 5,000 euros from the Steenbergen Foundation. Published at the same time will be the jury's report that includes a critical review of the quality of the graduation exhibition at each art academy. This year, the jury is made up of Caroline von Courten (Jury Chairperson and a PhD candidate in Photographic Theory at the University of Leiden), Jaap Scheeren (photographer and honourable mention at the Steenbergen Stipendium 2003) and Merel Bem (art historian and writer).

Just as with previous editions, this year will also witness the bestowal of a public's choice award. To determine this winner, the public can vote for their favourite work while visiting the gallery from 16 September through 8 October. The winner of the public's choice award will be announced during the award presentations on 11 October.

The Steenbergen Stipendium: the prize awarded to talented young photographers
The aim of the Steenbergen Stipendium is to single out photographic projects of excellent quality. Over the past 20 years, the Steenbergen Stipendium has proven itself to be an authoritative prize which is respected by academies, students and critics. For the nominees, the prize is the start of a flourishing career.
Previous Steenbergen Stipendium awards were given to Olya Oleinic (2014), Ola Lanko (2012), Willem Popelier (2008), Wytske van Keulen (2005), Petra Stavast (2002) and Andrea Stultiens (1998).

The nomination of the projects goes hand in hand with identifying new developments in photography and provides insight into how the new generation is using the medium. These findings are expressed every year in the jury's report which also sheds light on the quality of the various degree programmes.

The Steenbergen Foundation
The Steenbergen Foundation was established in 1961 by Johan Steenbergen (1886-1967) in memory of his older brother, Hermann Diedrich Steenbergen (1883-1945). Johan Steenbergen moved to Dresden in 1908 where he founded Ihagee Kamerawerk, a factory that became world famous in 1936 by introducing the first single-lens reflex camera by the name of Exakta. In 1928, Johan became the Dutch Honorary Consul in Germany. The bombing of Dresden in 1945 completely destroyed the factory. After the Second World War, the company was taken over by the former DDR and run as a state-owned business.

www.steenbergen-stichting.nl www.facebook.com/StStipendium

With thanks to: *The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science / The Municipality of Rotterdam / The BankGiro Loterij / The Prince Bernhard Culture Fund / The Wertheimer Fonds*

The Nederlands Fotomuseum
Wilhelminakade 332
3072 AR Rotterdam
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Opening hours
Tuesday – Sunday Friday:
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Note for editors

For more information about the exhibition and visual material, please contact:

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