



SELF PUBLISHERS
— UNITED —

A new photographers' collective presents itself at UNSEEN Amsterdam.

Self-Publishers United (SPU) is a collective of more than twenty photographers who publish their own photobooks. The recently founded SPU will present itself for the first time at a stand at the UNSEEN book market. There they will show their most recent book publications. Contacts have been made for events that take place later this year, such as Paris Photo and the Antwerp Academy Art Book Fair.

The SPU is an initiative of photographer Map de Maar. 'There are few opportunities for individual photographers to position themselves at photography events like UNSEEN. Book stands are only available for publishers. That's what I had heard from UNSEEN in early April. I still wanted to show my work. The same applies to many other photographers. So, I tried to find a solution.'

A collective initiative

De Maar contacted her network and in no time she found more than twenty photographers who wanted to participate in a joint initiative. This was the start of what is now called Self-Publishers United. On the 30th of April 2018 SPU launched the SPU Facebook page and, a couple of days later, the website selfpublishersunited.com went online. On the 20th of June Unseen announced that SPU is welcome at the book market.

De Maar: This shows that it is effective to present photographers as a group. Our initial goal was UNSEEN, but now we want more. We will continue and also aim to attend other events.

Enthusiasm

Map de Maar sees the evolution of the significance of the photobook as the explanation for the enthusiasm of the participating photographers. 'The possibilities for exhibitions are decreasing. Thus, many photographers turn towards photo books. They publish those books themselves but it is not easy to position them on the market. We are now learning, as a collective, how to do that. The fact that we managed to obtain a stand at UNSEEN is already very encouraging.'



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The SPU-group

It's a very diverse group of photographers that joined the SPU. It includes older, younger, experienced photographers as well as beginners. Some have already published more than ten books and others only one. Their interests in photography are very diverse. What they all have in common is that they were educated at the Fotoacademie Amsterdam or at an art academy. Thus, they share a common photographic approach. De Maar: 'Whether we make documentary books or art books, we all aim to make distinctive and quality work.'

The following photographers joined SPU: Hans Bol, Saskia Bruinsma, Yanina Cesa, Tatchatrin Choeychom, Femke Dee, Karlijn van Diepen, Ellis Doeven, Cees Glastra van Loon, Oliver Gouwenberg, Pascale Hustings, Dolph Kessler, Estera Knap, Kjell Leknes, Lis Leijser, Irminia Lentjes, Map de Maar, Maaïke Navon, Wies den Ouden, Katja Poelwijk, Colette Raaijmakers, Marijke de Schepper, Alexander Sporre, Mo Verlaan.

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