

CITY PHOTOGRAPHER ANTWERP
2010-11

Fifty One Fine Art Photography hosts the first exhibition of the voluntary association City Photographer Antwerp. As a partner of the association the gallery ensures the artistic quality of the photographic interpretation. This summer, the first group of city photographers (2010-2011) will be in the spotlight. This group consisted of five photographers: Maarten Vanden Abeele, Patrick de Roo, Elisabeth Broekaert, Dan Zollmann and Alex Salinas.

Founded in 2010, the non-profit organization City Photographer Antwerp strives to create a collective and artistic photographic memory of the city in the long-term. Biennial the city photographers commit themselves to perpetuate their gaze on the city. They are being selected by a heterogeneous committee consisting of Antwerp delegates from various disciplines.

The concept of the city photographer is not new. The American photographer Weegee (USA, 1899-1968) is perhaps the best known example. As a photojournalist, he photographed the confrontations such as car accidents and gang murders in the city of New York in the years 40-50. Importantly, he built his oeuvre under his own management, regardless of any political ideologies. This vision is also reflected in the workings of the association whereby the city photographers capture completely autonomously and voluntarily their view of Antwerp.

The first city photographers are not new in their field. Maarten Vanden Abeele (BE, b. 1970) makes for a long time series of (inter-) national dance and theater company's. He has worked with Jan Fabre, Jan Lauwers and Opera National de Paris to name a few. In addition he develops his visual work by creating installations combined with his photographic work and performances, which he directed and performed by himself sometimes. Quite differently is Patrick De Roo (BE, b. 1967) who is mainly active as a press photographer. He has already won several prizes, including the Flemish press award in 2006. Photographer by training Elisabeth Broekaert (BE, b. 1964) her greatest passion is documentary photography. Her work has been praised many times and in 2000 her exhibition at the Museum of Photography in Antwerp, 'Let's stick together', about the marriage rituals in Flanders, was a huge success. Dan Zollmann (BE, b. 1964) is also a documentary photographer, but especially of the Orthodox Jews of Antwerp. Through his shared religious origin, he knows to penetrate into the core of this community whereby he records unprecedented scenes for an outsider. In previous years Dan's work has been included in several exhibitions and his 'Hassidim' book is an intriguing work. Finally, Alex Salinas (BE, b. 1971) has a totally different style. Subtle, yet direct he shoots mainly the fashion and music world. Often he is a portraitist as well.

These five city photographers helped to design the concept of the association. The resulting archive is intended for all Antwerp residents and its visitors and is also intended as a reference for our future generations. In the long term, the images thus function as a collective memory of the city.

During the opening in the gallery publisher Lannoo, who is also a partner of the association, will present the eponymous book which will be officially introduced by Mr. Philip Heylen, alderman for culture of the city of Antwerp.

*Opening on 23 June at 14h at Fifty One Fine Art Photography
The exhibition runs from 26 June to 28 July 2012.*

Next to the exhibition in gallery Fifty One Fine Art Photography, there are two other exhibitions where the work of the city photographers can be admired. The outdoor exhibition in the Blauwmoezel Street at the cathedral of Antwerp, funded by the City of Antwerp as an exhibition in the Museum of Photography in Antwerp.