

Universal Minutes

a sociological action to expose time

a Random Scream project

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Universal Minutes

Universal Minutes is a unique photography project that celebrates the diverse communities living across Belgium and Europe. As an exhibition, a photography book and a happening Universal Minutes invites 12 local & international artists to a specific city to take multiple photographs at the same time. In this way we not only celebrate and expose multiple co-existing worlds, (rich, poor, native, immigrants, male, female, straight LGBT etc.) but also reveal the multiple circumstances in which they live. Universal Minutes is a snapshot into the life of a city with all its beauty and its challenges.

Following the success of the Flemish supported project Karaoke (ART) where we invited international video artist to make original videos for classic karaoke songs. Universal Minutes invites multiple artists to create original artworks that capture a city with photography. These then become touring exhibitions and published art books that bring a city into our private homes and exposes a depth of a place that wouldn't normally be exposed.

The project

Universal Minutes is first an exhibition that can be installed in classic as well as alternative venues: gallery, theatre, café, train station... and second a uniform Universal Minutes artbook. The project invites these local and international artists to each city for a specific week in 2020. Each artist would be asked to take a photograph every day at 21:34h for four consecutive days on a prefixed theme: *'Resistance'*. Within this minute they can take as many photographs as they want, but in the end may only choose one, creating our *'Universal Minute'*. This project is in a sense shaped by its limitations but the photographers themselves decide the content.

The four photographs that each artist chooses would then be presented at an exhibition on the fifth day that will eventually include the 48 photographs of all the artists involved. The exhibition will show the view of the artists who took photographs all at the same time spread out across the different cities. The chosen time for the universal minute falls outside of the classical working hours, encouraging them to work in 'personal time'. Thus we avoid an all too journalistic result and focus on the photographer's personal approach. On the one hand, the project presents a personal and artistic vision of a city, while on the other hand confronts different artistic and sociological interpretations. The given theme and timing, pushes it to stay off the beaten track of traditional documentary or city-marketing imagery.

The artist

Universal Minutes' aim is to focus attention to the multiplicity of dimensions occurring in the exact same moment in time. It allows the eye of both the public and photographers to view the choices made to create each photograph while exposing worlds we don't come in contact with and questioning those worlds we choose to ignore.

So it is especially important for the project that the artist we choose to participate are a pure reflection of the diversity of the city itself. As attention has been focused again to make sure equal opportunity is available, we want to assure that invited artist reflect the most diverse

group across a city. These co-existing worlds are brought together in one space, sometimes colliding, sometimes harmonizing but always presented on a level playing field. The art is curated by the choice of the invited photographers and the setup of the exhibition and book.

The experience will also vary as the choice of the invitees will be broader than what one would call a 'classical' or professional photographer and expands to other realms of visual artists, or even creators from other disciplines. As technology and social media transforms visual culture and how we expose our view of others and ourselves Universal Minutes looks to incorporate both the pure visual arts milieu along with the transformative social media construction. As a true reflection on what it's like to live in the world today, could the artwork of classic photographic artist be standing side by side with the artwork of trending local social media stars?

The cities and the book

Universal Minutes is a reflection of a city. 12 different perspectives of 12 different artists. 12 different worlds happening all at the same time. Through our collaborating partners we'll discover and invite local artists to participate in the project along with international ones so we can have both an inside and outside view of a city. Each day the artists take photographs, we'll print these photographs and exhibit them in our gallery space. Day 1, Day 2, 3, 4. It will be a growing exhibition until the 5th day when all 48 photographs will be exhibited and we have an opening with all the artists and guests. The following month we'll then publish a 64-page art book of the city: Universal Minutes - Brussels, Gent, Antwerp, Porto...

This will include all the photographs (both on a single page and on a 2 page spread with all 12), text on the project, biographies of the artists and provide a space for each photographer to give a bit more insight into the meaning behind the artwork. As more and more cities become involved in the project we intend to create exchanges so that exhibitors can travel around to different countries alongside the books that will be available.

Random Scream

Davis Freeman has frequently embraced photography within his projects and Universal Minutes is another extension of the reoccurring artistic theme of "*What is it like to live in the world today?*"

He has been curating projects, creating visual art as well as creating work for the theater for the past 20 years. You'll find an overview of his past and current works on www.randomscream.be

The photographs presented in this brief are the result of a first experiment with this modus operandi, by a group of visual artists and performers, but in this case no theme was given. It already presents the universal minute, with a coherence and diversity we aim for.

We are currently looking for co-producers, galleries and sponsors to help support this dossier which we turn in on September 15 for project subsidy. If you are interested to be part of this project please contact us:

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