

The PhotoBookMuseum

#04 Stephen Gill

Coexistence

The photobook

The city of Dudelange lies in the south west corner of Luxemburg and is considered one of the two industrial centers of the nation despite its moderate size. Meanwhile, the times in which the steel mill played an important role for residents are long gone. In his new photobook “Coexistence”, Stephen Gill contrasts the small world of Dudelange with the life in a pond which he found on some industrial wasteland. It is not only metaphorically about the big in the small and the other way around. The artist also formally chooses an intriguing approach: While Gill photographed particles from the biotope under a microscope, he portrayed the residents with an underwater camera which he had previously poured water from the pond onto.

Only toward the end of his work did the photographer realize how many parallels were between the processes in the pond and the social structure. Or put in a different way: to coexist.

The photographer

Stephen Gill was born 1971 in Bristol, England and is a real explorer. He almost becomes one with the location where his photobooks are created. Most of his renowned works he developed in Hackney Wick, a neighborhood in London which is home to many artists. Stephen Gill did not just study the topography and history of this neighborhood but also the residents who he always incorporated in his concept. He devoted every single one of his photobooks to a socio-cultural range of topics. Sometime they were more social, other times they were more political aspects which the artist analyzed visually. Furthermore, his works are

distinguishably experimental in their approach. For instance, Gill sometimes buried photographs in the ground or sprinkled them with water from a pond in order to create a material connection to the location at which he had previously taken the photograph. The photobooks which are often bound in linen almost seem like they are handmade. In any case, very unique. In order to be able to control the manufacturing process from end to end, Stephen Gill founded his own publishing company Nobody Books in 2005. After all, a photobook means more to him than two covers with a few random photographs in between. For him it is definitely the best medium to express his photo-artistic creations.

