

ED is a collective of four young experts in the fields of the meaning and aesthetic value of images.

In recognition of her tenacious commitment to bringing the social relevance of photography to the attention of the general public, Foam's director Marloes Krijnen was awarded the first GKf-Frits Gerritsen Award in January 2013.

Marloes Krijnen used the prize money from GKf (a Dutch association for professional documentary photographers), to finance a scheme that brought together five young women who were asked to start a project called Enter-Photography Belongs to Everyone.

The young women's think tank, named ED, was originally made up of Brigiet van den Berg (graphic designer), Nikki Brörmann (applied ethicist), Sterre Sprengers (image editor), Ola Lanko (visual artist), and Simone Engelen (photographer/filmmaker). As a result of their collaborative research, they published in September 2013 a hefty manual in book

form, *ED IT – The substantial system for photographic archive maintenance* (ssspam). Its aim is to guide the manual editing of private, digital photo archive down to a representative selection of images, as the introduction puts it. *ED IT* was presented during a meeting of the *Editing the World* panel, with the support of Vodafone firestarters, at the Unseen Theatre.

Krijnen had already established a socially embedded photography project in the west of Amsterdam, called West Side Stories, with which the new group would collaborate. Sprengers explains how their focus shifted. "Initially the

Brigiet & Nikki & Ola & Sterre

idea was to do a project that complemented the work of West Side Stories, because at the start we were asked to explore the value of photography in society. But as soon as we visited the project we saw how well it was working already and decided we had nothing to add." West Side Stories focused on cultural participation and the education of people who might not otherwise be familiar with photography, but ED observed that for many people photography is already completely integrated into daily life and practice. "Rather than too little photography, there's too much," says Brörmann.

According to ED photography's value is diminished by its excessive use. All those digital files remain, whether intentionally or not, stored on people's phones, computers and hard disks under such obscure coded file names that you are unlikely ever to find them again. "To find one particular photograph," says Van den Berg, "you need first to trawl through a jungle of redundancy." How can ED IT be of help then? "We have made a statement," says Sprengers, "for which we chose a scientific format so as to approach the subject on a practical rather

than an emotional level. But it turns out not to be very practical after all. It is instead an elaborate system, and what matters is the kind of consciousness you need to develop when implementing it."

For Lanko it's about "raising awareness, about persuading people not to just shoot photographs but really to enjoy the moment, because taking a photograph is magic." Lanko thinks that the kind of pseudo-scientific approach in *ED IT* leaves a clear message. "You need to bear responsibility for all the photographs you take. You need to make an effort to deal seriously with your own image production." Now that the project has been given a good kickstart by the

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institutional support of Foam as well as other backers and a successful crowdfunding campaign, will there be a follow-up to ED or *ED IT*? "We know it's far from finished," says Brörmann. "The book is an opening move that's now transferable. We feel we can add numerous sequels to Discoveries, the appendix to *ED IT*, in which we analyze typologies of photography's everyday use."

"The world doesn't really get it yet," feels Sprengers, "but most people are touched by the idea that you can get rid of stuff instead of saving it all." "Our job is to pose questions," says Lanko. "We only pretend that we know the answers. If *ED IT* makes you think 'What does it mean to make a good image?' then our goal has been achieved." ●