



The Borders

NEW EUROPEAN ART MOVEMENT

The Borders

I dream of a period when artists met, took the time to have lunch together and shared their ideas, and sometimes even their knowledge.

I dream of a more open artistic world. A world where galleries dare to defend emerging artists once again, where collectors take pleasure in discovering young talents, where art fairs proudly display their top picks, where museums plan exhibitions bringing all generations of artists together.

I dream of a more positive world, where beauty once again finds its place in art, and where emotions are shared.

Birth of *The Borders* art movement

Abstraction has been the main subject of my work since the very beginning of my career as an artist. My idea has always been to go beyond the limits of photography. It is an approach that can be found in my positioning from my first creation. This approach has become more and more concrete, structured, and conscious with the very practice of painting and the creation of the ***LikeAPainting*** series in 2020, during the very particular period of the global Covid-19 pandemic, when everyone was locked down. This series served me as a starting point to create a movement that brings together other artists with joined-up thinking. This project of a new art movement was first announced in my work *LikeAPainting* in 2021, then in the collective exhibition ***The Colour of Light*** at the Mark Rothko Centre in Daugavpils, Latvia, the same year.

The movement was born in Belgium, but the roots will definitely be European and may later spread to the whole world.

The Borders

The Borders is used in English. In the Larousse dictionary, the word 'border' is defined as "a delimitation, a limit between two different things". The theme of borders is strongly linked to the current events of our era. An era marked by the geopolitical fragmentation of the world (territorial disputes, strengthening or closing borders, significant migration flows, etc.). By analogy, this title invites artists to go beyond their comfort zone, to take one step further, to open and widen their borders, to avoid being afraid of the other as a stranger.

The goal of ***The Borders*** movement is to question and test the limits of abstract photography with other forms of art: play with these limits, cross them, transgress them, experiment with them, make a link with painting, sculpture, etc., encourage exchanges, bring artists together. This movement aims to bring together abstract photography artists whose main work is clearly related to non figurative painting. The resemblance is such that it can sometimes lead the spectator to confusion and loss of reference points.

Create an art movement today

I have been learning about abstract photography for 25 years and collecting abstract artwork by meeting artists, visiting exhibitions and art fairs. This research gave me a fairly global vision - even if incomplete - on abstraction in photography, but also on other forms of art.

My first observation is that abstraction has been a subject on its own since the beginning of photography. From the start, photographers have experimented with this process through deconstructed images. Afterwards, photographic abstraction became a subject on its own and had its time of glory during the first half of the 20th century, notably with Man Ray and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, and then continued after the war. Moholy-Nagy is one of my mentors for his artistic reflection. The evolution of the image is often linked to the rise of new technologies, but what can also be noticed, is a desire of the artists to move away from reality and to experiment.

My second observation is that, in recent years, there have been very few new art movements bringing together artists with a common vision. The last clearly defined major European art movements or currents are the following: the Düsseldorf School of Photography in the 80s, The Young British Artists in the 90s, and the artists of the Helsinki School of Photography in the late 90s and in the early 2000s.

Today, it is time to unite artists around a common interest and theme. Because I realized that a certain number of confirmed or emerging photography artists are still interested in abstraction and clearly challenge the boundaries between photography and painting; this is actually an approach similar to mine. As a result of this observation, I wanted to bring artists together in order to claim this common vision to defend it together and disseminate it as best as possible to cultural institutions through exhibitions and publications. Artists are often isolated in their studios, especially in the current context, and they are probably unaware or little aware of the work of other artists with the same approach as theirs. This feeling of isolation is reinforced by social media which tend to drown and dissolve everyone's creations in this ocean of images. Each artist is of course different, but the diversity of their works brought together could be a richness and would allow a greater impact through the movement.

The movement could be a beacon serving as a landmark for artists, collectors, galleries, art centres and museums. It could also raise public awareness and interest in photographic abstraction. And finally, it could allow photography to be seen differently.

Yves Ullens
Founding Member *The Borders*

January 2022





Yves Ullens :
Founding Member

Born in 1960 in Brussels (Belgium), lives and works in Brussels.

Photography is and has always been for me the ideal medium to express emotions. The particular energy brought by light and colour is vital both in my private and professional life. Light, as the only form of energy we can see, presents itself as colour. My photographs allow the viewer and the creator to explore feelings through abstraction. I see photography very much like a painter and I use my camera like a brush.

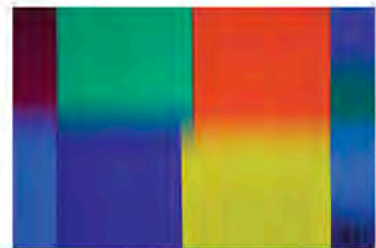
My world of photography has developed into six major themes: pictorial, kinetic, optic, urban traces, pure nature and LikeAPainting. Each body of work takes on its own rhythms. Progressively since 2011, I have become a more global artist; by extending - with the help of my team - the possibilities of photography and associating it to other media and design applications. Photography will always be at the very heart of my work. And, with the spirit of a scientist, I enjoy pushing its boundaries ever farther and further!
www.traqueurdelumieres.com



Orange and Red Composition #1,
Malaga (Spain), 2013



The Rebirth of Colours,
Knokke (Belgium), 2014



Matrix 05.05
Brussels (Belgium), 2020

Niko Luoma :
Member

Born in 1970 in Helsinki (Finland), lives and works in Helsinki and Trieste.

I work at the studio. My photographic process is analogue. I use camera, light and film as my materials. As simply as possible, instead of one exposure, I use many overlapping exposures on one frame and one film.

I work inside of the camera rather than behind or in the front of it. The exposure itself becomes my content and the process itself manifests as images. Speed and decelerations are the seminal topics of my photography. Speed of seeing, speed of hearing, speed of working through the space. Space is speed decelerated into rhythm.

www.nikoluoma.net



Self-Titled Adaptation of Standing Blonde Nude with Dropped Chemise (1917),
2018



Systematic Collapse G to R,
2014



1966A,
2010



Richard Caldicott :

Member

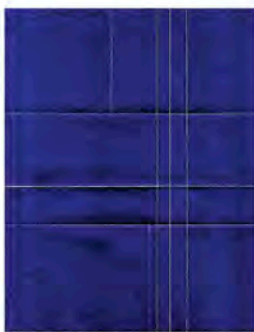
Born in 1962 in Leicester (England), lives and works in London.

Though he also produces drawings and prints, Richard Caldicott is best known for his photographs—abstract compositions of colors and geometric forms made from precise arrangements of Tupperware and other kitchen implements.

While his use of such a mundane consumer product as Tupperware to create his exquisite photographic images could be considered ironic, Caldicott seems more focused on formal considerations than conceptual hijinks. His photographs have been compared to the Color Field paintings of the Abstract Expressionists Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman.

His work is photographic, yet it is not figurative. By using the camera to record collages and constructions, Caldicott has carved himself a unique aesthetic niche that manages to reference iconic modernism without reverting to familiar forms.

www.richardcaldicott.co.uk



Untitled #15,
2017



Cartoon,
2005



Untitled #164
2000

Luuk De Haan :

Member

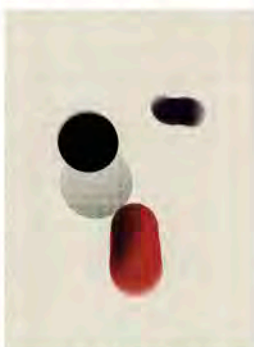
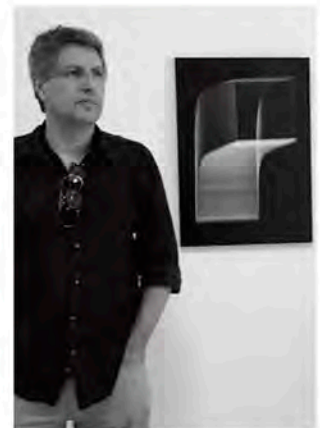
Born in 1964 in Vlaardingen (Netherlands), lives and works in Bergen.

Although in many ways resembling abstract painting, photographs of the kind made by Luuk de Haan celebrate and delight in exploiting photography's indexical grounding in a world of chemical and physical reactions to physical phenomena and, more recently, the optical potential inherent in digital, screen-based photographic manipulation.

They are documents of their own coming into being rather than the recording of a world outside the photograph. Despite their abstract, non-referential appearance, they are as 'realist' as photographs can get.

Emphasising sequential processes and long durations rather than instantaneous exposure, they return photography to a unique and individualised practice and away from reproductive economies of mass production.

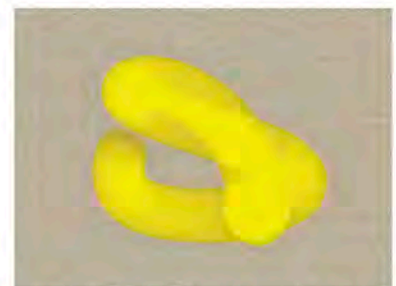
www.luukdehaan.nl



ukiyo #12,
2017



big nothing #77
2016



a long way from purple #5,
2022



Hanno Otten :

Member

Born in 1954 in Köln (Germany), lives and works in Köln.

Hanno Otten's work probes the nature of color through extraordinary photographs made only with light from a color enlarger onto photographic paper. He manipulates color and light to create a modern palette of vivid hues. Geometric patterns and shapes evoke a 1960s graphic sensibility. As in his earlier work, Otten insists on the primacy of color, forgoing any literal and narrative imagery. His subject matter is light itself.

www.hannootten.de



Colorblock n° 1992/15
1992



Colorblock n° 1992/7
1992



Lichtbild n°103
2002

Sebastian Knot :

Member

Born in 1970 in (Netherlands), lives and works in Rotterdam.

Sebastian Knot uses light as his material to create contrasts of color and form with which the given space is beautified.

A composition of simple shapes is placed in the studio. Around the composition are set up studio lamps with different color filters. When shooting, the composition is illuminated simultaneously by all lamps.

This creates a shot in which a unique moment is captured with scattered light, shadows and mixed colors. The use of a lens adds optical illusion and questions what you see. There is no digital manipulation of the image. The works are unique or in limited editions.

www.sebastianknot.nl



nr 49581
2021



nr 47904
2021



nr 48430
2021

Program of *The Borders* movement :

- Writing and signing of a manifesto that defines the bases and philosophy of the artistic movement *The Borders*.
- Group shows of artists from *The Borders* movement in museums and art institutions in Europe (*).
- Group shows of artists from *The Borders* movement in contemporary art and photography galleries in Europe (*).
- Organization of seminars and/or conferences on abstract photography in association with museums.
- Creation of a website for the movement.
- Creation of accounts on social networks to communicate the activities of the movement (Instagram & LinkedIn).

(*). When possible, a special publication will go along with the exhibitions.

Yves Ullens is represented by Marc Minjauw Gallery (Brussels), Art Rasson Gallery (Tournai & Knokke), the Mob-Artstudio (Luxembourg) and Mark Hachem (Paris, Beirut).

Niko Luoma is represented by Persons Projects (Berlin), Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery (New York), Galerie Nikolaus Ruzicka (Salzburg) and Atlas Gallery (London).

Richard Caldicott is represented by Atlas Gallery (London), Sous Les Etoiles Gallery (New York) and Photo Edition (Berlin).

Luuk De Haan is represented by Sous Les Etoiles Gallery (New York).

Hanno Otten is represented by Janet Borden Inc. (New York).

Sebastiaan Knot is represented by Bos Fine Arts Gallery (Den Haag).

More artists will be invited to join the Borders in the near future.

www.theborders.eu

info@theborders.eu

[@theborders_artmovement](https://www.instagram.com/theborders_artmovement)