

KLEIN

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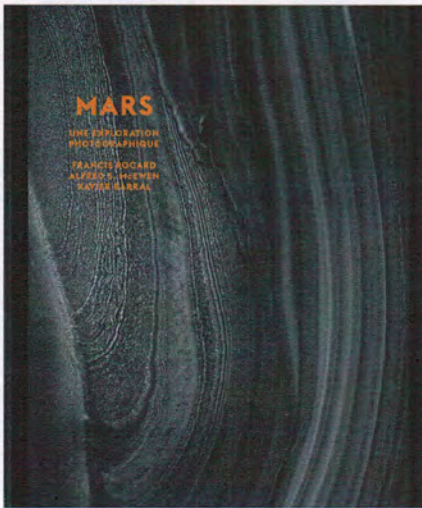
#37 William Klein
€19,50

international photography magazine

KLEIN

Photobooks

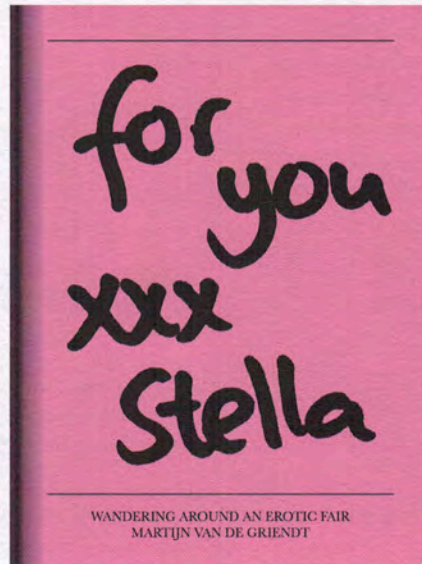
by Sebastian Hau



**Francis Rocard,
Alfred S. McEwen,
Xavier Barral**
*Mars, a Photographic
Exploration*

Culled from images taken by a NASA satellite, artist Sebastién Girard, publisher Xavier Barral and astrophysicist Francis Rocard have created an astonishing book of more than 200 photographs with explanatory texts and an index. We have in the past reviewed some of Girard's books here, noting the concentration he brings to their production in all stages (see last year's *Strip-o-gram* for example). Xavier Barral has repeatedly been praised for the quality of his books. In the autumn LE BAL published a catalogue for an exhibition by Mark Cohen called *Dark Knees* whose conception and attention to detail marks him out as one of the best publishers of photobooks right now. Barral says that *Mars* is a baby he had been carrying for some time, an oversized book that is impressive on several counts. It uses the high-quality scientific material shot by the Mars probe to recreate a strange world that appeals to our sense of the mysterious. The reader can study the images in the light of the textual explanations. The hills, ravines and even tornadoes of the extraterrestrial geological and meteorological phenomena are enough to warrant close examination for a couple of winter months. This is a coffee-table book in the best sense, and an example of Sci-Fi book-making that raises the bar.

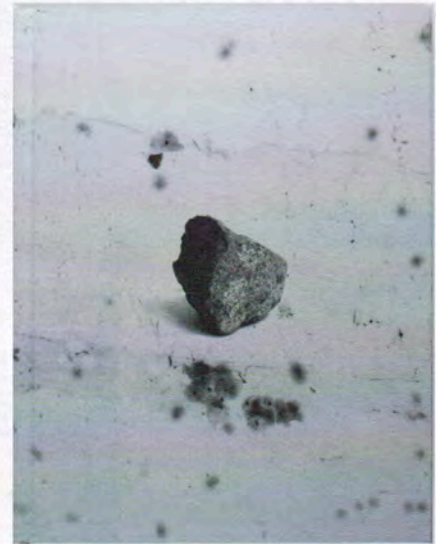
Éditions Xavier Barral
ISBN 9782365110006



Martin van de Griendt
For You XXX Stella

I have never yet been to a sex fair, and Martijn van de Griendt's book doesn't make me want to. But as the book positions itself somewhere between reportage and documentary photographic styles, it does however make me want to understand something that seems otherwise below the radar. It allows me to observe people going to, and working for, these giant fairs and then shows me some strange, humorous and mysterious scenes. I am not sure how best to describe a Tohuwabohu of bodies, corsets and drunken smiles – and I mean bodies in the widest sense. Van de Griendt doesn't shy away from cliché or simple-and-effective photographs, but behind his populist approach lies a quality we used to see in Martin Parr's books in the better days: precise allusions to hidden and distasteful truths, eye-candy images that lurch towards epiphanies under an unswerving gaze. Set against these photographs taken over the past six years at the sex fairs are full-throated portraits of visitors and exhibitors alike against a uniform black background; frontal portraits using a soft flash, with the sitter deciding his or her own pose. There is much warmth and curiosity in these photographs, a sense of humour and even fun, but the book, designed by Sybren Kuiper, brings them together in such a way that they are balanced between storytelling and anti-storytelling. Martijn van de Griendt's books attract you with the charm of a corner brasserie, and if you care to listen they hold just as many improbable tales.

Self Published
ISBN 9789081341639



Aleix Plademunt
Almost There

A book that opens with the image of a rock on a white background does little to charm its readers, but page by page I found a rather stumbling path towards becoming one of this book's happy admirers. There is an index hidden behind the back flap with a microscopic photograph of a blood cell of the author. The ambitious scope of this work reveals a travelogue of galactic dimensions, all in black-and-white, printed in soft and unexpected greys against very dark blacks, jumping between the most personal, landscape photography and photographs of meteors and planets. Although the photographs of snowy landscapes in the American Midwest, or a staircase, a car at night, the head of a snake may appear to be detached, or as one of my clients put it, frustrating and depressive, there is something in these images, and the way they are laid out, sequenced and printed that made me want to accept this author's worldview and perspective. It may all be less mysterious than it appears at first glance: a young artist looking for his place in the world, who rather than employing dead metaphors takes photography as a medium seriously enough to transform its conventional applications.

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