

LAIA ABRIL

A history of Misogyny
Chapter Two : On rape

Opening on Saturday 25th January 2020 from 3 p.m to 8 p.m
Exhibition from 25th January to 22nd February 2020



galerie
Les filles
du calvaire

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Interruption from 22th september to 4th october included.

The galerie Les filles du Calvaire announces the upcoming solo exhibition of the artist Laia Abril. The first chapter of her work on the history of misogyny *On Abortion* has been presented worldwide after the Rencontres d'Arles festival in 2016. Laia Abril presents at the gallery her second chapter: *On Rape*.

Laia Abril's forthcoming exhibition *On Rape* is the second chapter to her project *A History of Misogyny*. It expands her ongoing visual archive of the systemic control of women's bodies across time and cultures.

Of her new work, Abril writes, « by scrutinizing, conceptualizing and visualizing diverse miscarriages of justice across historical regulations, toxic dynamics and victims' testimonies, the project aims to call out the institutional rape culture prevalent in societies around de world. I'm looking at rape by exploring how concepts of myths, power, and law, relate to the constructions of the notion of masculinity and sexual violence.

I choose this topic, the second chapter of a of *A History of Misogyny*, the same way as the first chapter, *On Abortion*. I have been triggered by a local news that impressed me deeply. In 2018 the Spanish Court set free 5 man who gang-raped a 18-year-old with a sentence of abuse instead of rape, that would eventually call into question the Spanish legislative on rape.

In full apotheosis of *#MeToo* movement, I wanted to understand why some institutional structures of justice, laws and policy were not only failing the rape victims, but actually encouraging violence through the preservation of power dynamics and social norms.

By looking back to history, I could identify gender-based stereotypes and myths, prejudices and misconceptions, that have prevailed and perpetuated the rape culture. Through a painstaking research on miscarriages of justice and victim-blaming attitudes, this work evokes how still today society blames victims of sexual assault and normalizes sexual violence. »

On Rape consists of a set of photographs, objects and testimonies. The artist designed the exhibition like an onsite installation. The elements are interconnected and don't give us a linear or chronological approach. Instead, it gives us several levels of reading. By creating bridges between history, places and cultures, Laia Abril reminds us the universality of this drama.

ALINA, 21, KYRGYZSTAN

I saw my husband for the first time on my wedding day. His friends drove me to him. I thought I wasn't going to be able to handle it as I was furious with him, I loved another man and dreamed of becoming his wife. Instead I was forced to marry the man who had kidnapped me. At first, when I confronted him he was silent, then he apologised. My sister had also been taken in the past but had run away. My religious ceremony [Nike] was organised very quickly and officially registered immediately so that I couldn't withdraw from it. Before that, I was a 21 year old student in my fourth year at Arabaev University. I wanted to be a fashion designer. During the holidays I went to visit my family as I didn't want to stay alone in the residency, fearing I might suffer the same fate as my sister; so I travelled on New Year's Eve. I remember happily baking the day before, then I went to visit my sister and on the way home I was ravished. When my family arrived at the kidnapper's home, my mother wanted to bring me back but my grandmother asked me not to disgrace my family, especially after my sister had run away and people in the village had talked about it for a long time. I began crying, but my grandmother begged me to stay there. So I did.



Ala Kachuu, [Bride Kidnapping], Kyrgyzstan, 2019
From series *Power Rape, On Rape*
Courtesy Galerie Les filles du calvaire (Paris)

In the military everything we do is "mission first". Women in the force are seen as weak and emotional, a liability. We constantly downplay our injuries and refuse to be a victim. Before I really came to terms with the fact I had been raped, I had only shared small parts of my story. Eventually I told my boyfriend what my commander had done to me and when I saw the tears and pain in his eyes, I finally understood something really bad had happened. I was still struggling with identifying myself as a rape victim - it didn't seem like a fair title to claim for myself - when he was arrested, discharged but set free after a new case. I grieved for the young girl and I hated myself for not reporting him years earlier. He was indeed a rapist. However, the first time I told my story publicly was years later at an all-women veteran's retreat. I could feel it bubbling up inside me, so I tearfully shared the "relationship" I'd had with my commander, still unable to see how severely he had manipulated me into [a year of] sexual subservience. It was a terrifying relief to finally speak aloud the shame that had festered inside me for so long. But what really set me free was when one of the female leaders looked me in the eye and told me that it was not my fault.



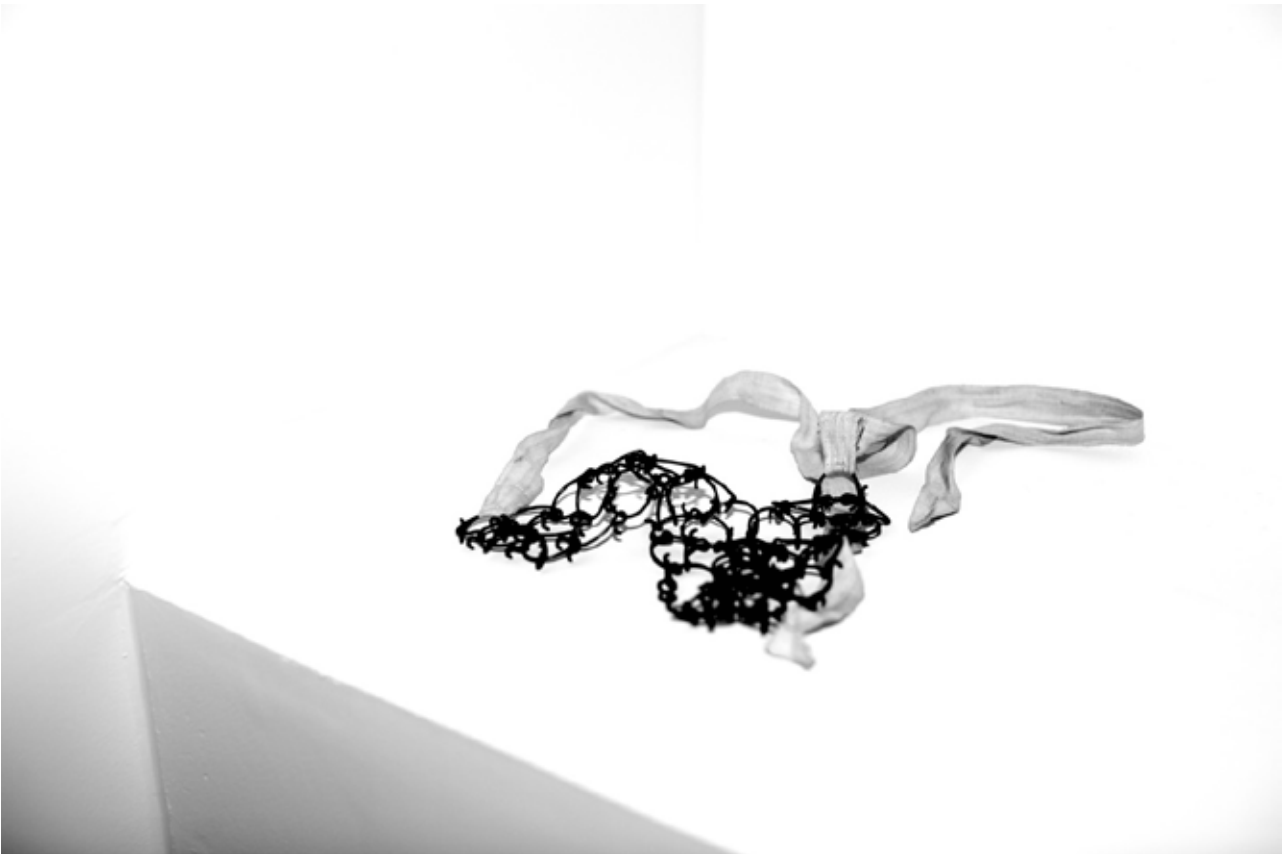
Militar Rape, US, 2019
From series *Power Rape, On Rape*
Courtesy Galerie Les filles du calvaire (Paris)



Shrinky Recipe, 2019
From series *Testing Virgins, On Rape*
Courtesy Galerie Les filles du calvaire (Paris)



Chastity Belt, 2019
From series *Historical Rape, On Rape*
Courtesy Galerie Les filles du calvaire (Paris)



Cilicio, 2019
From series *Punishment, On Rape*
Courtesy Galerie Les filles du calvaire (Paris)

VISUELS POUR LA PRESSE

Notes for images publication :

The Wedding Dress must always be published

The Military Dress must always be published with the wedding dress

Each object needs to be published with the wedding dress

A max of 3 images can be published. If more, please inform Catherine Philippot (Relations Media).



Ala Kachuu, [Bride Kidnapping], Kyrgyzstan, 2019
From series *Power Rape, On Rape*
Courtesy Galerie Les filles du calvaire (Paris)



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LAIA ABRIL

Born in 1986, Barcelona, Spain

Lives in Barcelona, Spain

Nominated for the Deutsche Borse Prize, 2019



Laia Abril (1986) is a multidisciplinary artist working with photography, text, video and sound. After graduating from college with a degree in Journalism she moved to New York to focus on photography where she decided to start telling intimate stories that raise uneasy and hidden realities related with sexuality, eating disorders and gender equality. In 2009, she enrolled in a 5-years artist residency at Fabrica, the Benetton Research Centre in Treviso, where she worked as a researcher, photo editor and staff photographer at Colors Magazine.

Abril's projects are produced across platforms such as installations, books, web docs, and films. Her work has been shown widely and published internationally and is held in private collections and museums, such as Musée de l'Elysée and Fotomuseum Winterthur in Switzerland, FRAC in France and MNAC or FotoColectania in Barcelona.

She has published several books –Thinspiration (self-published, 2012), Tediousphilia (Musée de l'Elysée, 2014) and the highly-acclaimed The Epilogue (Dewi Lewis, 2014), which was shortlisted for the Paris Photo-Aperture First Book Award, Kassel PhotoBook Festival, Photo España Best Book Award and referred to as "a masterpiece of a photobook" by critic Jörg Colberg. In 2016 she published Lobismuller (RM Verlag) which was the first recipient of the Images Book award at Festival Images where was also first exhibited in Vevey, Switzerland the same year.

After completing her five-year project On Eating Disorders, Abril embarked on her new long-term project, A History of Misogyny. Its first chapter On Abortion was first exhibited at The Rencontres d'Arles in 2016, and was the first recipient of the Prix de la Photo Madame Figaro, produced with the support of the Fotopress Grant and nominated for the ICP-Infinity award or Foam Paul Huf among others.

The show has been exhibited in more than 10 countries including The Photographers Gallery (London), the Museum of Contemporary Art (Zagreb) or el Centro de la Imagen (Mexico). The book On Abortion and the repercussions of lack of access (Dewi Lewis, 2018) was the winner of the Aperture Best Book Award in 2018 as well as finalist of the prestigious Deutsche Borse in 2019. Abril is currently developing the next chapters, On Rape –recipient of the Visionary Award and the Magnum Foundation grant and the Genesis chapter On Mass Hysteria –nominee of the swiss Prix Elysée.



On Abortion, Les Rencontres d'Arles, 2016

LAIA ABRIL

CV

SOLO SHOWS (selection)

- 2019** 'On Abortion', Centro de la Imagen, Mexico.
'On Abortion', Ballarat International Foto Biennale, Ballarat, Australia.
'On Abortion', FotoColectania, Barcelona.
'Suyay', LUM Museum, Lima.
'On Abortion', Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki.
- 2018** 'On Abortion', Maison des Metalos, Paris.
'Suyay' Centre de la Photographie, Geneve.
'On Abortion', Museum of Contemporary Art of Zagreb, Croatia.
'Lobismuller' Afogra, Granada, Spain.
'Lobismuller' Photo Festival Ragusa, Italy.
'On Abortion' Foto-Forum, Bozen, Italy.
'On Abortion', PhotoIreland, Dublin.
- 2017** 'On Abortion', City of Women, Festival, Ljubljana.
'Lobismuller', Museo Municipal de Ourense, Spain.
'Menstruation Myths' Festival PhotoReporter, Saint Brieuc, France.
'Lobismuller', Fotoleggendo, Rome.
- 2016** 'On Abortion' Photo Istanbul, Turkey.
'On Abortion', The Rencontres d'Arles, France.
'Lobismuller' Images Festival, Vevey, Switzerland.
'The Asexuals Project', Galerie im Taxispalais, Vienna.
- 2009-15** 'On Eating Disorders', Docfield Festival, Barcelona.
'Tediousphilia', Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne, Suiza.
'The Epilogue', 001 Gallery, Roma.
'Thinspiration', Contraluz Gallery, Pamplona, Spain.
'Femme Love', Studio la Città Gallery, Verona, Italy.

GROUP SHOWS

- 2019** 'On Abortion', Deutsche Borse Building, Frankfurt.
'On Abortion', The Photographers Gallery, London.
'Crazy - life with mental illnesses', F3-Freiraum für fotografie, Berlin.
- 2018** 'Vigilance,Struggle,Pride', Umetnostna galerija Maribor, Slovenia.
'Vigilance,Struggle,Pride', Contemporary Art Museum, Zagreb.
'L'Histoire d'après, Les Filles du Calvaire, 2018, Paris.
- 2017** 'Swing State', Rojas + Rubenstein Gallery, Miami.
'The Epilogue', Setba Gallery, Barcelona.
'Las17' part of Fotopress, CaixaForum, Barcelona.
'Las17' part of Fotopress, CaixaForum, Madrid.
'Photobook Phenomenon', CCCB, Barcelona.
'Up to now', Fotografia Europea, ReggioEmilia, Italy.
- 2016** 'Situations #45', Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland.
'Nuevos relatos fotográficos', Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona.
'Femenine Masculine', Photo50, London.
'Mapping the Body', Taxispalais Gallery, Innsbruck, Vienna.
- 2015** 'Thinspiration', Mois de la Photo, Montreal.
'(No)Privacy exhibition', Fotodok, Utrecht, Holand.
'When we share more than ever' Museum Fur Kunst und Gewerbe, PhotoTriennale, Hamburg.
'Afterlife', Athens PhotoFestival, Athens.

AWARDS

- 2019** Magnum Foundation Grant
Nomenee Prix Elysée
Nomenee Deutsche Borse
Foam Paul Huf Award, nominated
- 2018** Best Book of the year Aperture/Paris Photo
Visionary Award
Photo España Honorable Mention Best Book
ICP-Infinity Awards, Artist book nominated
ICP-Infinity Awards, Emergent talent nominated
- 2017** Visionary Award, nominated
Catchlight Grant, nominated
Foam Paul Huf Award, nominated
ICP-Infinity Awards, Art, nominated
Best PhotoBook, PhotoEspaña, finalist
- 2016** Prix de la Photo Madame Figaro-Rencontres Arles
Fotopres Grant
Revelación Award PhotoEspaña
- 2015** Festival Images, Book Award
Best PhotoBook, PhotoEspaña, finalist
Foam Paul Huf Award, nominated
VU, Artist Residency
- 2014** Aperture, First Book Award, shortlisted
EPF Burn Magazine, finalist
Joop Swart Masterclass, nominated
- 2013** Prix Pictet, pre-selected.
Kassel Dummy Award, shortlisted.
Center Juror's Choice Award.
PhotoLucida Critical Mass, nominated.
Magnum Foundation, nominated.
- 2009-12** FABRICA, scholarship
EPF Burn Magazine, finalist
Joop Swart Masterclass, nominated
Lumix Prix Photojournalism, finalist
Pla(t)Form, FotoMuseum
Ian Parry Award, finalist

COLLECTIONS

- 2017** FRAC; Provence-Alpes-
- 2016** Madame Figaro-Arles collection, France
- 2015** MNAC; Barcelone, Espagne
- 2014** Musée de Elysée, Lausanne, Suisse
- 2013** Fotomuseum Winterthur, Suisse



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