

## **The Spiral of Containment: Rape's Aftermath**

*Exploring the impact of rape through photography*

Book by Elisa L. Iannacone

Press Release by Pen Works Media

**The Spiral of Containment: Rape's Aftermath** is a book that explores the psychological impact of rape through the imagination's eye. Created by survivor Elisa L. Iannacone – a cinematographer and photo-journalist by trade – the work aims to open up a dialogue about rape that can act as part of the healing process by allowing fellow survivors to express trauma through art.

The book tells the story of 25 rape survivors, exploring how they were made to feel as a result of their attack, but – perhaps more poignantly – Elisa has taken striking images that sum up the details of each encounter. To do this, she took a picture to represent each of the 24-colours on the spectrum, plus a black and white portrait of herself, creating a work of real significance that is destined to have a social impact.

At a time when rape is at the forefront of topical debate, this book shows how art can be used as a therapeutic tool whilst standing on its own as a photography book containing a staggering collection of images.

Each chapter will contain a large photography spread with additional angles from the shoots, behind-the-scenes materials, and never-before-seen pre-production sketches. It will also describe some of the unexpected challenges that Elisa had to overcome – from the difficulty of working with real lions in South Africa, to navigating the emotional rollercoaster that the topic often evokes in the participants.

Elisa has not only been able to rally herself and persuade the survivors to appear in photographs that express their trauma through art, but she's done it in a way that's somehow empowering, even beautiful.

Elisa has put her heart and soul into the project, as well as used her years of professional experience to create something truly noteworthy. She pushed on with the project despite its financial and emotional burdens because she simply feels it's a story that needs to be told.

"As a rape survivor myself, this project means a lot to me," says Elisa. "It became a way of sharing my story and working with fellow survivors to raise awareness on the issue. This project is my way of taking a stance against rape and sexual assault. Given the challenges of the legal system, I was unable to carry on with a legal case, despite having left a police report. Relatives threatened my parents, telling them to "keep me quiet" given that so many assaults of this nature have taken place within the family. On a personal level, this project is my way of responding to their request for silence. On an artistic-development level, this is a chance to utilise all the skills I have harnessed working as a filmmaker and journalist, to crystallise all of my creativity, technical knowledge, passion and artistry as a camerawoman."

For the purpose of this press release, we've included 3 of the 25 images that you're able to share, along with some short excerpts from the book . . .



### **FLIGHT AND FIGHT**

"My first response was flight - to escape the horror I had experienced. But soon after I realised I had survived, and found myself turning back, determined to fight for change. Ballet became a creative outlet; it gave me a sense of grounding."



### **CIRCUS**

"Everything around me felt like a circus."



### THE PRESENT

"I was 5 and he was 16. He said: 'If you come up to my room I'll give you a present'.  
He turned me into a present instead."

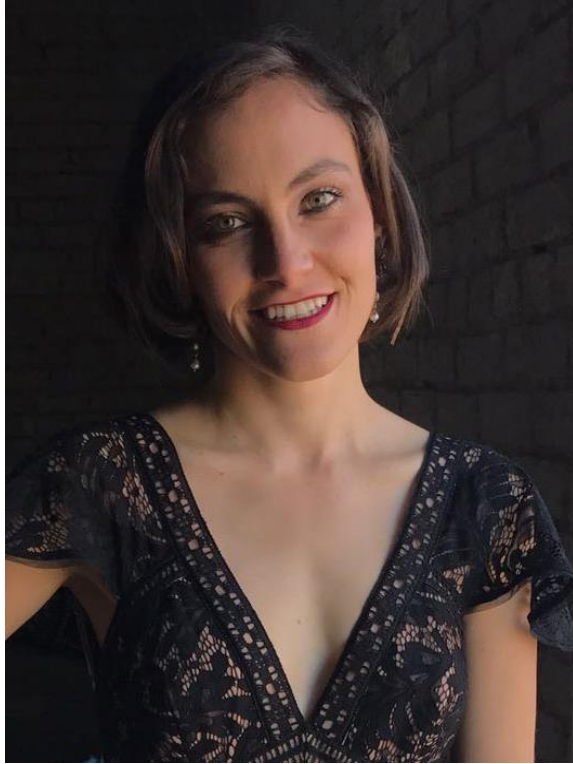
Selected links to previous media coverage and the OXO Tower exhibition, which will open on 8th March 2018 (International Women's Day):

<b>OXO Tower Bargehouse</b>	<a href="http://bit.ly/2k4lyhn">http://bit.ly/2k4lyhn</a>
<b>Huffington Post</b>	<a href="http://bit.ly/2ujzdn4">http://bit.ly/2ujzdn4</a>
<b>Mashable</b>	<a href="http://on.mash.to/2uJsRzR">http://on.mash.to/2uJsRzR</a>
<b>The Daily Mail</b>	<a href="http://dailym.ai/2iwbqtv">http://dailym.ai/2iwbqtv</a>

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<b>Format</b>	Hardback
<b>RRP</b>	Tbc



## About the Author



Elisa's career as a cinematographer and photo-journalist came to a sudden halt after she was sexually assaulted in 2011. Having worked in several hostile environments around the world, the fact that the incident took place at home, where she thought she would always be safe, was a shock that threw her completely off course. Dealing with a family that, in response, labelled her a 'North-American libertine' due to the fact she'd left home at 18 to study film - which they considered to be the 'business of debauchery' - while they completely disregarded the assault, left Elisa feeling isolated and heartbroken.

As a result, she gave up cameras for 10-months whilst undertaking therapy and working as a telemarketer selling tickets for the Toronto International Film Festival in a basement office. Through art therapy, she

started to process the assault creatively, which is where the idea of **The Spiral of Containment: Rape's Aftermath** came from.

Elisa decided that the images in her mind needed to take real form, so she reached out to fellow survivors to explore the images present in their own minds. What was supposed to be a simple get-together in her kitchen with a few arts and crafts soon grew into a much bigger concept that will be crystallised by an art exhibition at London's OXO Tower, as well as a hardback book, which both have the power to have real social significance.

Now that she's mentally able to work within her field again, Elisa's art installation creates something positive and impactful alongside 24 survivors from various ethnicities, ages and backgrounds – truly exemplifying the diversity of those affected. Now we ask for your help in letting others know about the project so it may teach other survivors they're not alone, and inspire them to piece their own lives back together.

For more information about the author or her book, or to request interviews or high-resolution photos, please contact her agent in the first instance on:

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