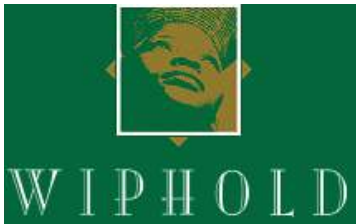


domestic



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Curated by Jacki McInnes and Melissa Mboweni

Jodi Bieber
Reshma Chhiba
Hannelie Coetzee
Penny George
Gabrielle Goliath
Nadine Hutton
Alison Kearney
Nandipha Mntambo
Zanele Muholi
Diane Victor

GoetheonMain
6 – 28 August 2009

Zanele Muholi
Imanzi II
2008
Lambda print
48 x 63 cm
Edition of 8 + 2AP





Foreword

Domestic violence thrives in our country because it is typically ignored by those not directly involved, and suppressed by those who are. The topic continues to be shrouded in a silence motivated by intimidation, shame and the fear of stigmatization. Sometimes financial dependence prevents victims from speaking out, and sometimes cultural expectations are to blame. South Africa boasts one of the most progressive Constitutions in the world and yet our advancement towards human dignity, safety and personal fulfillment will continue to be dogged as long as prejudice, ignorance and social inequality muddy the waters.

As the curators of *Domestic*, we approached a select group of some of South Africa's most hard-hitting women artists to engage with this complex and often sensitive topic. We have opted to exhibit this body of work in conjunction with National Women's Day this August since women are almost always the victims in cases of domestic violence. But it is in tribute to the women of this country that the stories told through the art on this exhibition speak of more than just victimhood.

The selected artists were asked to engage in a dialogue, real or metaphorical, with another woman, or group of women, who is in some way affected by the scenario of domestic violence. By telling the particular stories of affected individuals, it was our curatorial aim that the exhibition should have more relevance for people in the audience who may themselves be affected. In addition, the idea of individual stories is intended to dispel the myth that women affected by domestic violence have character defects and in some way "bring it upon themselves".

This exhibition would not have been possible without generous funding from the National Arts Council, the United States Consulate General, the Goethe Institute in Johannesburg and Wiphold. We would like to express our sincerest thanks that even in this current climate of economic uncertainty, these institutions have come forward to support us in this important initiative.

Jacki McInnes and Melissa Mboweni
Women's Day, 9th August 2009

Diane Victor
St Catherine (panel 1 from the triptych *The Wise and Foolish Virgins*)
2008
Charcoal stain on paper
200cm x 100cm (each panel)



Domestic: Fragments for discussion

...[V]arious assumptions promote the idea that domestic violence is a purely individual problem caused by character defects in the persons involved. In this way society can obviate any sense of responsibility for the way in which their institutions and practices may contribute to the occurrence of domestic violence

Ludsin and Vetten (2005)

In spite of numerous initiatives aimed at reducing the incidence of domestic violence through the education and empowerment of South African society, the statistics of violence in the home have not improved significantly year-on-year. It is an insidious crime in that it happens behind closed doors and is rarely spoken about readily or frankly. When a case of domestic violence is reported, outside intervention such as the investigation of incidents by the SAPS or by welfare organisations is often inappropriate, or too heavy-handed, although probably well-intentioned. And whilst it is true that these authorities don't always handle the situation in an appropriate way, it is an unfortunate reality that the hands-off attitude that tends to result allows abusers to act with relative impunity.



Penny George
Street Brush series
2007
Mixed media
Dimensions variable

Alison Kearney
One Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty
2009
Mixed media installation, paper and gut
Dimensions variable



Further complexity is added in that the affected woman finds herself in a paradoxical situation: on the one hand she is expected to take personal responsibility for extricating herself from the abusive situation and is considered weak if she accepts the status quo. But on the other hand, a woman who does speak out is often stigmatised by her community for not maintaining the respectability of the family.

On myths...

Another crucial factor in domestic violence is that, although widespread, it is a hidden phenomenon and as a consequence, poorly reported and understood. Due to the absence of accurate information about the problem, its causes and its effects, society is inclined to fall back on tried and tested myths. If a woman stays in an abusive relationship, then surely she either thrives on her sense of martyrdom, or, perhaps the abuse really isn't as bad as she makes out. Alternatively the victim is blamed for inciting the violence by questioning her man's authority or not behaving according to cultural mores expected of women in relationships. Being under the influence of alcohol, although undeniably an exacerbating factor, is often seen as a bit of a joke and the perpetrator's culpability therefore diminished.

"Sometimes I think I am just ugly. I just think maybe I was stupid. He kept on hitting me, hitting me, and I kept on staying with him for no reason. Sometimes I blame myself for it." (Cassandra Emma Moyo)



On statistics...

Crimes committed against women and children, often by the men closest to them, have become a norm in our society, so commonplace in fact that we have become numb to the statistics. Alison Kearney's installation, *One Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty* refers to the actual number of rapes reported in South Africa every day.

Kearney says of her work:

One Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty comprises 1380 paper lilies which, when presented together, make this horrific number tangible. The act of making each lily can be understood as a poignant meditation on the women who are victims of this culture of violence that we live with daily. The audience is invited to reflect on this and contribute to the work through making a lily of their own in the gallery space.



Gabrielle Goliath
Bouquet III (detail)
2007

Archival Print (triptych)
26cm x 130cm (each print in triptych)
Edition of 5

On masculinity...

Not surprisingly, since the vast majority of domestic violence is perpetrated by men, this topic has become almost exclusively the domain of women. But can attitudes and behaviors be changed if the male voice is all but ignored?

South Africa may be a culturally diverse country, but its various groups nevertheless demonstrate a remarkably cross-cultural agreement on the subordinate status of women – leaving many women subject to their male partners' authority and control. Couple this with a South African environment in which poor standards of education, unemployment, fierce competition for scarce resources and high levels of alcohol abuse cause men to feel frustrated, emasculated and inadequate, and one is left with a highly volatile situation.

Khwezi Gule remarks that “the way in which men perceive their roles as men (masculinity) is deeply implicated in these acts of violence.” And goes on to suggest that “cultural practices such as sport, initiation, conversation, work, dress and entertainment become potent sites through which masculinities are sustained.”

Jodi Bieber's body of work entitled *Survivors* comprises a series of photographs of women who have been in abusive relationships but have managed to extricate themselves. The women Bieber photographed were left with nothing but scars but they nevertheless were prepared to make their stories public; perhaps through a desire to save other women, or because making portraits together with Bieber contributed to their healing. Many of their stories confirm Gule's opinions on the construction of masculinity:

My name is Cassandra Emma Moyo. You know our African culture. They think women are to be beaten. You can discipline a woman by beating her. So from my husband's background, his parents, his family, they believe in beating your wife.

On translation...

Ukuhlukunyezwa kwecansi (Rape) – how much detail of a traumatic event like rape can get lost in translation when you are reporting it to the police?

Even more intriguing is the way in which rape is referred to in Tsonga. Fumani Mboweni recalls in the legal proceedings around a rape trial in Giyani in Limpopo how a perpetrator was asked: "Did you put your tail into the forbidden river?"



Euphemistic references such as these can result in brutal facts of the case being obscured. And often this is the only legal record of the rape.

On coping...

Roslyn Bucher (53):

This guy has had money at times but he refuses to provide a home. He is a mechanic and we are presently living in the workshop. I basically have been staying there in the evenings. I'm not there during the day. I just go – I amuse myself during the day. I sat in the laundromat day in and day out for 4 months. I am actually an institution in this place. At least it was a place of safety.

In conclusion...

The fundamental aim of *Domestic* is that it should avoid a documentary slant or uninvolved commentary on the topic. Instead, the main focus should aim towards personal interaction and engagement between artist and subject. It is our hope that the exhibition should stimulate a dialogue that encourages an understanding of the circumstances and rationales behind domestic abuse.



Jodi Bieber
Roslyn Bucher
2004/5
Archival Print

Jodi Bieber

Survivors

In South Africa:

One woman is killed every six days by her intimate partner.

One woman is raped every 26 seconds.

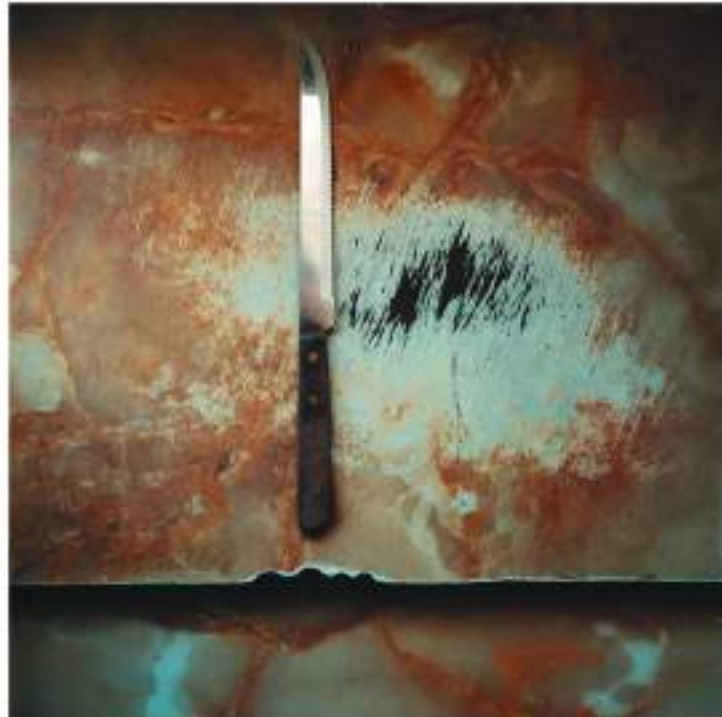
One out of four women is beaten regularly by her intimate partner.

Amnesty International, Holland and Médecins Sans Frontières, Holland collaborated with eight photographers on a global photographic project about Violence against Women. The project was created to highlight the fact that violence against women is universal.

It was inevitable that I was going to look at domestic violence in South Africa in my work. On a daily basis, stories about abuse are reported throughout the media and the news is filled with horrific incidents. Working closely with organisations sheltering and supporting women who have been abused, I created my project *Survivors*.

The women I photographed were courageous in that they have managed to walk away from their abusive relationships. They were also willing to make their stories public, either through a desire to save other women, or because making portraits together with me formed part of their healing.

Cassandra Emma Moyo
2004/5
Archival Print



As poverty in South Africa is rife, abused women tend to rely on their partners for financial support, making it difficult for them to leave. The more we discuss these issues openly, the less women will tolerate abuse. By leaving abusive situations, women not only liberate themselves, but make it acceptable and a little easier for other women to do the same.

Speaking out about their experiences and sharing their stories, these women have made public the unacceptable abuse that occurs in relationships. They have shown that there is support, that in the end, they are not alone and however scarred they feel, it is possible to walk away to a new life. I believe that each time this work is displayed, it opens a potential door to allow yet another victim to walk away from her tormentor and become a survivor.

This is not just a South African story.



Reshma Chhibba

When I think about domestic violence and abuse towards women, I think about my own experiences, and my first thought is that at some point in every woman's life, she is violated by a man. No matter how small or big the violation, most women can relate to an experience of abuse, violence or violation.

The more I read and think about this topic, the more it becomes apparent that the area within domestic violence that is the most neglected is that of teenage girls within abusive relationships. Much attention is paid to young girls who are molested and abused, especially within their own homes, and most often by someone they trust. We also hear about married women in abusive relationships, but it is very rare to hear of teenage girls, who are engaged in, or have been in, abusive relationships with a teenage partner.

For me, this is such a sensitive area, as it is at that point in a girl's life where she is just coming into womanhood, and is still learning about herself and her body. I have come into contact with someone, who at the tender age of 17 was involved in a physically violent relationship. She explains that for the most part the relationship was good, and she trusted him, it was only towards the end that the abuse became violent, to the point where the bruises and scars were visible. She does not say much about verbal abuse, but there is something in her silence that tells me the physical abuse was the natural progression after much verbal abuse. Verbal abuse is harder to deal with, the scars are never visible, and it is something that she will carry with her as she moves into womanhood. This young, confident girl, whom I am sure will grow into a beautiful, intelligent woman, has been beaten and bruised, both emotionally and physically.

I have asked this girl to write a poem about her experience. In this poem she talks about how this boy throws her around like a "rag doll" and then chokes her, to the point that she almost cannot breathe. She suffocates, while people walk past and do nothing. Eventually she gets away and finds safety, and finally finds the courage to walk away. He leaves, unharmed, unaffected and free.

The work consists of a soft, fragile yet firm face, a rag doll. It is wrapped, tightened and strangled. The "doll" is both pushing out of, and being pushed back into the black wall, into the darkness. It is the reading of the work that determines whether it is about a fight against the darkness or a submission to it.

I go back to the point I made at the beginning: as a woman, I know what it is like to be violated by a man. I hope in some way, this work has given hope and helped at least one innocent voice to come forward and move into a positive space of hope and confidence. This is the only way for us as women to win this gruesome battle, one voice, one story at a time.



Linga-Yoni (detail)

2009

Steel frame, sari,
cotton, nylon and
comforel

130 x 47 x 37cm

Hannelie Coetzee

Whilst reading up on my own family history I came across the possible existence of letters/affidavits written by Afrikaner women who were raped during the Anglo Boer War (1899-1901). On a hunch I contacted the Free State Archives Repository and they indeed confirmed the existence of these letters and affidavits from 1902.

I visited the Archives and found a small collection of fragile letters. There were quite a few references to attempted rape, but two letters stood out. The first letter, written by Alletha Cecielia de Jager on March 3rd 1902, stated that she was 'geheel verkrachten'. The second letter, written by Johanna Caterina Geldenhuys on February 5th 1902, describes how she witnessed a soldier molesting a 10-year old girl. Mrs Geldenhuys stopped the soldier by luring him away. She does not mention what happened afterwards.

What bothered me the most were that the attempted rape and the rape and molestation of children were never explicitly recorded or mentioned in our history books. I had to read between the lines in history books to find out the letters existed and then visit the Free State Archives Repository to understand the true impact of these records.

Reading these stories made my own ambiguous memories of being raped by a boyfriend resurface. Because I was in a relationship with him it blurred the lines between consensual sex and rape. Like the stories of these Afrikaner women, my own ordeal went unnoticed. It made me realize that as a society we still have a long way to go.

I used the 'invisible writing' technique used during the Anglo Boer War to write the letters I will be showing on *Domestic*. Afrikaner women kept diaries in the concentration camps by using lemon juice that would not be visible. After the war they used a candle to heat the writing, turn the lemon juice darker and make it visible.

Verkrachtings
2009

Lemon juice on paper
Dimensions variable



geseelt
verkrachten
mo

Penny George

Rituals of death occupy a fundamental and sacrosanct place in human society. Diverse in practice, death rites have several things in common: they evolve over time and within a communal context; they acknowledge mystery or superstition and they proffer concrete ways to make a transition. My visual repertoire, spanning nine years, reflects my initial fascination with the rituals of death and burial practices. Early works were inspired by an examination of the material culture and imagery of Basotho rites and ceremonies and how these are influenced by Western tradition. Metaphors obtained from the annals of Basotho folklore on the subject of specific rituals before, during and after death occupy a central theme in my early visual images.

My initial preoccupation with the subject of death extends to images reflecting the cycle of life and death. Imagery of the fly, larvae and pupae become clearly inspirational forces, where the projected death of life – still in progress – results in ambiguously infused composites. In many instances, these works suggest decay; the subjects undergoing the physical changes that occur with death.

The *Street Brush* series comprises works where the found object has direct influence on the depiction of decay. The dirty tentacles of the street brushes enhance the traditional etchings of mites so as to seemingly form part of the mite itself. The glass engraving becomes the 'microscope' to reveal the mite amongst the decaying matter, which in this case is the found object.

In *Buff it, Clean it, Hide it* the depiction of the progression of decay not only focuses on the decaying dead but on the decaying living. The lived experience of battered women and children can be considered to read as a form of decay and therefore the floor buffs become a metaphor for these women and children. The degree of dirtiness signifies the degree of battering and decay. The artwork also suggests that battered women tend to hide their injuries.

My current work reveals a growing range of techniques and materials and a further development of my earlier subject matter. By coalescing life and death, beauty and corrosion, organic and the inorganic, I bring my audience face to face with the essence of humanity.



Street Brush series
2007
Mixed media
Dimensions variable

Gabrielle Goliath

163

163 is the ward number of the Trauma Unit at Johannesburg General Hospital, colour-coded red.

trauma [[traw]-ma] **1** Psychol. a powerful shock that may have long-lasting effects. **2** Pathol. any bodily injury or wound.

The word 'trauma' evokes images of violence; bruised eyes, cut lips, broken noses. However, countless women experience abuse on a daily basis, but without these obvious traces. Their experience is a private one, a fearful one - their normality is an environment of psychological as well as pathological abuse. Bruises are temporal, occasional, but the abusive environment is a constant and everyday reality. In such cases women feel trapped, locked in a manipulative and intimidating relational matrix, unable (or so they feel) to express or resolve the abuse they experience. Rather than seek treatment, they 'self-medicate' or 'suffer in silence'.

As an artist, I find engaging with the notion of abuse intimidating in itself; one does not want to be glib, nor state the obvious. In *163* my intention has been to explore and uncover the unseen reality of abuse – that everyday environment. To evoke something of the tragedy of this fragile and precarious existence – the constant fear and psychological tension of living within an abusive environment. Personal interaction with women, who have suffered in this way, has impressed upon me the grave emotional damage of such an existence, and also just how long it can take to extricate oneself from such an environment.

A sleeping head, a seemingly tranquil and domestic scene, and yet when harshly lit – every pore, follicle and freckle laid bare – imbued with an unsettling emotional undercurrent. Printed large-scale, the sleeping head is presented within a hospital bed-like sculptural object – the image is looked down upon, sympathetically or perhaps judgementally. Sterile and set on castors, the 'hospital bed' has an agitated, restless presence. The red colour code is that of the Trauma Unit, presenting the everyday, seemingly normal environment of abuse – represented by the sleeping form – as the traumatic, though in this case untreated, condition it is.



163 (detail)

2009

200 x 90 x 70 cm

Lambda print & multimedia construction

Nadine Hutton

Written on her face

Madelaine Bernardo is my mother and this project is an oral and visual history of the life of one woman who kept going back and how this affected her family; her daughters, her son and their children. How it affected the way they grew up to think about relationships between the sexes. And ultimately, of how she broke the cycle. Gender violence is so much a part of our family that the effects are, quite literally, written on my mother's face.


I have used my mother's journal as my primary source, as well as my photographs and interviews with her. I have worked with my mother, helping her to tell her story, piecing together the reasons she continued going back, her history and her present. This is one woman's story but it speaks for countless other women. Women who can never break free from the cycles of violence with their men until they are able to afford to leave. It questions what is, in many quarters including in the women's movement, an assumption: that the only way out is to 'pack up and go immediately.'

Madelaine's story is like those of many other South African women whose histories tell of a similar dependency, a sense of helplessness and even humiliation: that one has to go back and suffer the abusive hand, because it is the same hand that feeds you. This is not only one family's oral history, but a testimony to one of the country's biggest social problems.

Written on her face

2006

Video installation



Placing my hand on the
his ~~side~~ right out, and I was
the kitchen making a bottle for
daughters, when he came striding
me. He grabbed the poker that we
use for the stove as he came
towards me I grabbed the poker
out of his hand when he pushed me
back I fell to the floor. When he
was over me in my face I
saw that I was out of
Leaving my children behind I
ran to Acot Rd. Which is around the
corner where two of my friends lived
their names were Billy and Sally
Vanderwalt. I knocked on the door
and they opened the door. They said
to me, Madeline did you see what
your face looks like so I said no.
They went to their bathroom and
looked at myself in the mirror.
I went into tears when I saw my
face my right side of my face was
torn apart. They then took a taxi
and carried my face and rushed me
to Tohung Jev. When we arrived
there I was sent to straight away.
The doctors asked me if I was in
an accident, so I said no my face
kicked me in my face I had

Alison Kearney

I am interested in issues pertaining to the contexts of art production and display, as well as issues to do with how value is determined in culture. Within my current art production I interrogate the institutions of art (and here I include the discipline of art history), which, to a large extent, determine cultural value and influence cultural production. Included in this interrogation is a questioning of the relationship between artist, artwork and audience in the field of exhibition. I explore these issues through parodying different museums' conventions of collecting, archiving and display, and through inviting audience participation in the making of interactive artworks in the gallery.

A recent study by INTERPOL, the international police agency, revealed that approximately one thousand three hundred and eighty women are raped everyday in South Africa. This means that, on average, a woman is raped in South Africa every 17seconds (Vogelman and Lewis, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, available online at www.csvr.org.za). My work for *Domestic* is in response to these shocking statistics.

One Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty comprises 1380 paper lilies which, when presented together, make this horrific number tangible. The act of making each lily can be understood as a poignant meditation on the women who are victims of this culture of violence that we live with daily. The audience is invited to reflect on this and contribute to the work through making a lily of their own in the gallery space.

I would like to thank the following individuals for their much appreciated help in making the flowers for this work: Benjamin Metcalfe, Daniel Sher, Desmond Kearney, Iona McNaughton, Lucy Simmonds, and Marina Macropulos. Thank you also to Scott Kearney for documenting the performance.

One Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty (detail)
2009

Mixed media installation including paper and gut, table and stools
Dimensions variable





One Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty (detail)
2009

Mixed media installation including paper and gut, table and stools
Dimensions variable



Nandipha Mntambo

Nandipha Mntambo has developed a distinctive aesthetic through her use of cowhide, which she tans and moulds onto casts of the female body, usually her own. She purchases the hide as raw as possible in order to engage fully with the material – its smell and textures causing revulsion but also provoking a consciousness of the corporeal. As the artist explains:

The work I create is part of an engagement with the physical and tactile properties of cowhide and aspects of control that allow or prevent me from manipulating this organic material. In my process of wrapping, hooking, grinding, washing and cleaning, I am conscious of the subject of memory and how this informs both my process and end product. While working, I think of the material memory that remains in the cells of each hide, and of the universal cultural and historical memory associated with the cow as deity, sustenance and currency.

Mntambo's intrigue with this material has led her to explore the Greek myths of Europa, Zeus and the Minotaur as well as the sport of bullfighting and the Hindu legend of Nandi the bull. In each of these contexts, there is a dynamic between fighting and protecting, public spectacle and private self. Themes of confrontation, protection, armour and refuge play out particularly in relation to personal conflicts and vulnerability, and to notions of self-love/hatred.

Mntambo's photographic image *The Rape of Europa* is her reinterpretation of a Picasso sketch of the Minotaur caressing a girl. In Mntambo's version, the artist occupies both roles in an enactment of Europa's abduction by Zeus in the guise of a bull.

(Artist's statement courtesy of Michael Stevenson Gallery and Mfundi Vundla, 2009)

The Rape of Europa
2009
Archival pigment ink on cotton rag paper
112 x 112cm
Edition of 8 + 2AP
Photographic composite: Tony Meintjes



Zanele Muholi

“Dead Bodies do not bleed.” – (bell hooks 1995: 213)

My “Blood” project is a work in progress which began in 2003. I call it *Igazi lami*, which is a Zulu expression that can be translated as “my blood,” “time of the month,” or “period in time.” I use my menstrual blood to signify and articulate my pain as a witness to lesbian rape. I try to capture the aesthetic of the body across space, culture and time, highlighting the social and gendered aspects of the body and its internal functions – especially menstruation. There is no better aesthetic of the body to theorise on than that which is the very meaning of the female, lesbian, black body – blood, the life force within us women.

I want to emphasise in my work that bleeding, menstrual blood, rape and lesbian rape all have specific localised meanings in South African culture. Rape is a violent act that makes us bleed both literally, from our vaginas, and figuratively, from our souls, much like the cultural, social, spiritual, economic, and political violence of colonialism that made us bleed, figuratively and literally, as we lost our lands and natural resources, our culture and our identities.

Between 2002 and 2006, I documented 50 cases of violent hate crimes that took place over a decade involving black lesbians in the townships. Many of the men who perpetrated these crimes considered rape to be a ‘cure’ against lesbianism – ‘curative rape’. The act of rape is a weapon meant to put black lesbian women in ‘their place’ in our society.

The source of shame we feel as lesbians who have been raped comes from the same patriarchal source as the shame we feel about our menses. Furthermore, we are not only made to feel the shame of being raped by men on the streets or in our homes but often have to endure the secondary shame of the ‘re-victimisation’ some doctors impose on us. These doctors comment that lesbians can’t be raped, or that it is a sin to be lesbian and therefore our rape is justifiable – our punishment.

Our torn and bleeding vaginas are scrutinized by male policemen and doctors, who become experts on our bodies, our subjectivities and our experiences. It is their ‘expert’ knowledge that decides our fate – “yes, you were raped and deserve sympathy and justice” or “no, you were not raped and you are a liar”. bell hooks writes that “dead bodies do not bleed.” It is our living breathing bodies that endure this literal and figurative bleeding.

In postcolonial African countries, rape and menstruation are used to persecute, vilify, and humiliate women. In many African countries, black lesbians attempt to remain invisible for fear of violence against



Isililo
2008
Lambda print
63 x 48cm
Edition of 8 + 2AP

Amahluli
2008
Lambda print
63 x 48cm
Edition of 8 + 2AP



Imanzi V
2008
Lambda print
48 x 63 cm
Edition of 8 + 2AP



them. In some countries, this violence is condoned by the state. In contemporary South Africa, it is not unusual for black lesbians to be raped, or even brutally murdered, at the hands of gang members. Homosexuality may be legal but 'queer phobia' is still rampant.

Sizakele Sigasa (34), a lesbian activist living in Soweto, and her partner Salome Masooa (23) were raped, tortured, and murdered in July 2007. Thokozane Qwabe was also found callously murdered in Ezakheni in Ladysmith, KwaZulu Natal. And many other rapes and murders of lesbians occurred in 2007. Si-mangele Nhlapo and her two-year-old daughter were raped and murdered in June. Madoe Mafubedu (16) was raped and stabbed to death. In 2006, Zoliswa Nkonyana (19) was stoned to death by about 20 young men for being openly lesbian in the Cape Town township of Khayelitsha. In 2008, Eudy Simelane (31) of KwaThema, Springs – a Banyana Banyana soccer player – was also raped and killed.

bell hooks (1995). "The Radiance of Red: Blood Works," *Art on My Mind: visual politics*, The New York Press: New York.

Diane Victor

The abuse of woman comes as no surprise

This series of drawings looks to the mostly Catholic tradition of the veneration of martyred saints – regaled as morally laden stories over countless generations and intended to inspire and influence populations toward a greater good\God.

Women, especially, were encouraged to meditate on the virgin martyrs, who in many cases were made to endure sadistic tortures and eventual death at the hands of family or suitors, often in a vain attempt at preserving their virginity. These meditations on virgin martyrs were intended to elevate the thoughts of women above vain trivia in favour of virtuous behavior. The suffering and violence endured by these ‘saints’ was glorified and made exemplary. The punishment of a flawed, physical body was seen as a greater form of spiritual redemption than carnal (enforced) submission.

These stories were mostly about young women who had rejected advances. In resisting these advances, they drew the full wrath of the men that they had refused. Within that society (as in ours), quiet suffering and stoic humiliation was seen as something ‘admirable’, or as a burden to be shouldered. Suffering was admired over the immorality of the abuse.

St Lucy had her eyes gouged out (before inevitable death) for rejecting a suitor, St Agatha had her breasts cut off for a similar misdemeanor, St Agnes of Rome was raped, then set on fire and finally beheaded for refusing the prelate’s son in marriage. (On the way to her execution, she was quoted as being ‘as happy as a bride on her wedding day’). St Monica was sainted for enduring a violently abusive husband and gradually (though unsuccessfully) tried to mend his ways.

The list goes on and the methods of punishment vie to outdo one another in their levels of gratuitous violence. These stories were meant as moral guides to support abused and troubled women and yet teach suffering as sainted and stoicism as rewarded. Today, as then, such indoctrination creates the perfect scenario for the domestic abuser.

This body of work, a series of stained drawings depicts martyred female saints (or virgin martyrs) and contemporary women who ‘become’ martyrs (or saints) for their tolerance or endurance of domestic violence. The intention is not to deify these women but to point out the futility and hypocrisy of a system that allows, or glorifies, the abuse of ‘woman as martyr’ as a model to be upheld. As a result of this tradition, the abuse of women comes as no surprise.



St Agatha (panel 3 from the triptych
The Wise and Foolish Virgins)
2008
Charcoal stain on paper
200 x 100cm (each panel)

Biographies

Jodi Bieber

After completing three short photographic courses at the Market Theatre Photography Workshop in Johannesburg, Jodi Bieber was selected to participate on a photographic training programme at the Star newspaper with the late Ken Oosterbroek in September 1993.

She continued to work there as a photographer leading up to and during South Africa's first democratic elections. 1996 was a turning point. She was chosen to participate in the World Press Master class held in Holland and started working on assignments for publications like NY Times Magazine, Geo and The Telegraph magazine. She now also works for non-profit organizations like MSF, Positive Lives and Amnesty International on special projects for booklets and exhibitions.

Over a ten-year period, from 1994 to 2004 her own project focused on the country of her birth, South Africa – photographing youth living on the fringes of South African society. This work finally found itself a home in the book *Between Dogs and Wolves – Growing up with South Africa*, which was published and released in five countries in 2006.

Bieber has won eight World Press awards, a 1st Place in Picture of the Year International and received numerous other accolades. Her first solo exhibition at Visa Pour L'Image, Perpignan, France in 2002, has also been seen in many venues around the world. Bieber recently showed *Real Beauty* at the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg.

Bieber has taught or been a guest lecturer at the Market Theatre Photographic Workshop (JHB), London College of Communication (UK), Westminster University (UK), ICP school of Photojournalism (N.Y.) and at Photo Espane. She continues to teach at the Market Photo workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa.

She was a jury member on World Press Awards 2008.





Reshma Chhiba

Reshma Chhiba lives and works in Johannesburg. She holds a BA degree in Fine Arts obtained in 2003 and is currently completing her Masters Degree in Fine Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand on a part-time basis. In 2002 Chhiba also completed a Diploma in Bharata Natyam, a classical Indian dance style, which she studied under the tutelage of Smt. Satyabhama Kolapen, disciple of Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale of Kalakshetra.

Chhiba has participated in numerous group shows, including *Women: Photography and New Media. Imaging the Self and Body through Portraiture* at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 2006, *Impossible Monsters* at Art Extra in 2007 and *Self/Not Self* at the Brodie Stevenson Gallery in 2009. She recently held her debut solo exhibition *Kali* at the Brodie Stevenson Gallery in 2008. This exhibition doubled as the practical component of her Masters Degree.

Highlights in Chhiba's career include being awarded joint First Prize winner of the Martienssen Prize in 2003 and being selected by the Goethe Institut to train and work as an art mediator at *Documenta 12*, in Kassel, Germany in 2007.

Chhiba is currently the exhibitions curator at the Johannesburg Art Gallery.



Hannelie Coetzee

Hannelie Coetzee is a Johannesburg-based artist and photographer. She is interested in the history of South Africa from the perspective of an Afrikaaner, in both the private and public sphere. Her personal South African family history goes back to 1679.

As a photographer, Coetzee specialises in social documentary photography and has worked alongside NGOs and corporate companies to document their community projects. She has worked with ESPN Magazine in 2009 doing a Photo Essay about a US football star, Fugo, doing missionary work in Madagascar. For the Wall Street Journal 2009 Coetzee produced a Photo Essay about a Grassroots Soccer program in Cape Town. Further to this Coetzee has also done photographic work for 'Rally to Read' in Kwa-Zulu Natal in 2009, the Vodacom Sustainability Report in 2009 and the Anglo America Chairman's Fund in 2008.

The inspiration to work with communities and tell their stories has gone beyond documenting them with photography only. Coetzee, together with Usha Seejarim, has recently formed an artist's initiative called "Such Intervention". Their goal is to change the perceptions of the public through eco-conscious public art.



Penny George

Penny George obtained a B-Tech Degree in Fine Art (Cum Laude) from the Free State University of Technology in 1999, and completed her Postgraduate Certificate in Education at the same institution in 2007.

Her work experience has tended to centre on art education and she has worked as a lecturer's assistant at the Central University of Technology. Between 1999 and February 2005 she was the Educational Officer at the Oliewenhuis Art Museum in Bloemfontein. During this tenure she was involved in various activities, including the *Address Redress Print Collection '99*. George is an active member of the 'Friends of Oliewenhuis Art Museum', and the chairperson of the Fractal ad-hoc committee, which aims to nurture a love of art for future generations. In 2009 George lectured in Drawing & Graphic Processes at Motheo FET College in Bloemfontein and was the Supplementary History of Art I lecturer at the Central University of Technology, Free State in Bloemfontein in the same year.

George has participated in numerous group exhibitions and art competitions since 1995. Her first solo exhibition, entitled *DK* was held at the University of the Free State's Stegmann Art Gallery in 2006. In 2007 the *DK* exhibition travelled to the Gordart Art Gallery in Melville, Johannesburg and to ART.B in Belville.

George has just held her second solo show at the ABSA Gallery in Johannesburg in June 2009



Gabrielle Goliath

Gabrielle Goliath is a Johannesburg-based artist who works primarily in the medium of photography.

She completed a Diploma in Fashion Design at the Technikon of the Witwatersrand in 2003 and followed this up with a Bachelor of Arts, with a double major in English Lit. and Fine Art, at Wits University in 2007. Goliath is currently engaged in the MAFA Masters Programme at the same institution.

Highlights in Goliath's career include her selection for the Wits Martienssen Show in 2006 and 2007. She was also awarded joint first prize winner on this exhibition in 2007. In the same year, Goliath won first prize at the Art's Alive/JHB City Exhibition.

Goliath was a finalist on the Carnegie Photographic Exhibition at Wits in 2008 and was selected to show work on a group show entitled *Four Tales* at Gallery MOMO in the same year. She was represented on the Gallery MOMO stand at the Johannesburg Art Fair both in 2008 and 2009 and again showed work at a group show at Gallery MOMO in 2009.

Nadine Hutton

Nadine Hutton is a Johannesburg-based photojournalist whose interest is directed towards in-depth documentation of stories that may not necessarily seem newsworthy – stories that are a neglected part of the process of the last decade and which have important implications for the understanding of this country.

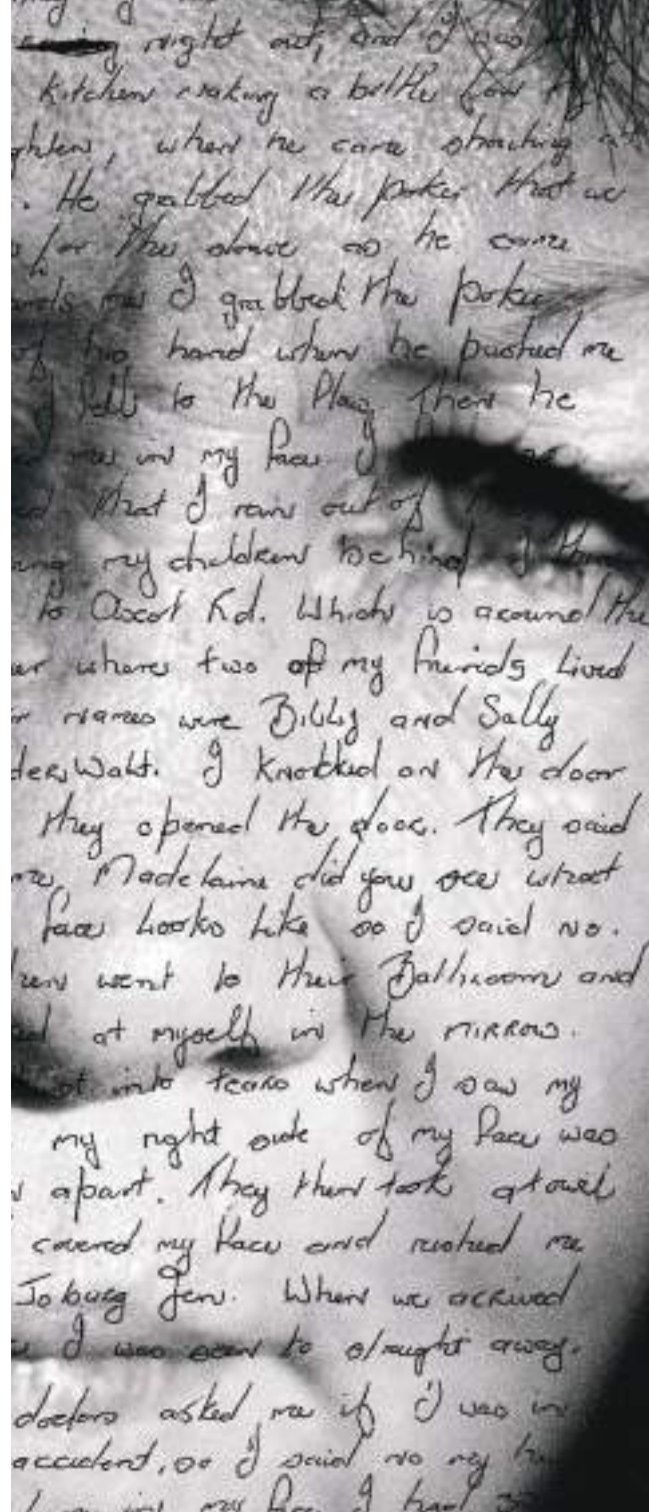
Hutton has a BA in Communications and English from the University of South Africa and a Higher Diploma in Journalism from Rhodes University.

She was the Chief Photographer at the Mail & Guardian newspaper for many years and now has her own company called 2point8. She continues to work on documentary and art projects, including documenting the lives of South Africa's poor white communities for a book. Hutton also provides regular services to Bloomberg News, Associated Press Sales Images and Guardian Creative.

Her work has been published in TIME, The Guardian, The Observer, Marie Claire, The Mail & Globe, Tages-Anzeiger, GEO, BBC Focus on Africa, The Associated Press, the Daily Telegraph, Aftonbladet, and many others. She is represented by PictureNET Africa, South Africa's premier online photographic agency.

Hutton was recently an artist-in-residence at the Bag Factory Fordsburg Artist Studios and now continues to pursue more creative avenues of expression and video-based work.

Hutton was awarded the Ruth First-Heinrich Böll Foundation Fellowship for 2006.



...right out, and I was
kitchen making a bottle for my
children, when he came strutting in
. He grabbed the poker that we
for the stove so he could
and I grabbed the poker
of his hand when he pushed me
fell to the floor, then he
me in my face. I
that I ran out of
my children behind of them
to Ascot Rd. Which is around the
er where two of my friends lived
names were Billy and Sally
deWalt. I knocked on the door
they opened the door. They said
me, Madeline did you see what
face looks like so I said no.
then went to their Bathroom and
at myself in the mirror.
at into tears when I saw my
my right side of my face was
apart. They then took a towel
covered my face and rushed me
Joburg Jew. When we arrived
I was sent to straight away.
doctors asked me if I was in
accident, so I said no my
I was in my face. I had



Alison Kearney

Johannesburg-based artist Alison Kearney completed a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts (with distinction) at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2002, and a Masters Degree in Fine Arts (with distinction) at the same institution in 2005.

Kearney has received a number of academic and art awards including the Maude Catherine Bird Scholarship from 2000-2002, the E.J.A. Loerincz Scholarship in 2002, the Standard Bank History of Art Award in 2002 and her M.A.F.A. *Cum Laude* in 2005. She was selected as a finalist in the MTN New Contemporaries Art Award in 2003 and in 2004 was awarded an artist's residency in Switzerland. This was followed by another residency at the 2006 NEXT WAVE festival in Melbourne, Australia.

Kearney has participated in numerous group exhibitions in South Africa and abroad. In 2008 she held her fourth solo exhibition, titled *Offerings*, at The Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg. Aspects of this exhibition were also shown at the KZNSA gallery in Durban in May 2008 under the title *Put Something in to take Something Out*.

In addition to her professional art practice, Kearney has lectured in the subject 'Applied and Visual Arts' at a number of Universities in South Africa in the past three years and was also invited to be a guest lecturer at Konstfack in Stockholm. Currently, Kearney lectures in the Department of Art in Education at the Wits School of Education.

Nandipha Mntambo

Nandipha Mntambo was born in Swaziland in 1982 and graduated with a Masters Degree in Fine Art (with distinction) from the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town in June 2007. In 2005 she was the recipient of the Brett Kebble Art Awards Curatorial Fellowship, and in 2006 she was one of five young artists selected for the MTN New Contemporaries competition and exhibition curated by Khwezi Gule at Johannesburg Art Gallery.

Recent group exhibitions include *Beauty and Pleasure in South African Contemporary Art* at the Stenersen Museum in Oslo in 2009, *.za: giovane arte dal Sudafrica* at the Palazzo delle Papesse in Siena in 2008, *Apartheid: The South African Mirror* at the Centre de Cultura Contemporania de Barcelona (2008) and *Olvida Quien Soy - Erase me from who I am* at the Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas in 2007.

Mntambo's first solo exhibition, *Ingabisa*, took place at Michael Stevenson in 2007. Her second solo exhibition, *The Encounter*, was also hosted by Michael Stevenson in 2009.

Two catalogues trace the progression of Mntambo's work; *Nandipha Mntambo* from 2007 and *The Encounter* from 2009.



Zanele Muholi

Zanele Muholi was born in Umlazi, Durban in 1972. She completed an Advanced Photography course at the Market Photo Workshop in Newtown, Johannesburg and has continued to work from Johannesburg since. She was the co-founder and also worked as a community relations officer for the Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), a black lesbian organisation based in Gauteng. She has also worked as a photographer and reporter for *Behind the Mask*, an online magazine on lesbian and gay issues in Africa.

Muholi's work represents the black female body in a frank yet intimate way that challenges the history of the portrayal of black women's bodies in documentary photography. She held her first solo exhibition at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 2004. This show was followed by another solo exhibition, *Only half the picture*, which showed at Michael Stevenson in March 2006, before travelling to the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg and the Afrovibes Festival in Amsterdam. Muholi also held a solo show at Le Case d'Arte, Milan in 2008.

Muholi was the winner of the 2005 Tollman Award for Visual Arts and the recipient of the first BHP Billiton/Wits University Visual Arts Fellowship in 2006. She was also awarded the Ida Ely Rubin Artist-in-Residence at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2009.

Recent group exhibitions include *S&M: Shrines and masquerades in cosmopolitan times* at NYU Steinhardt, New York in 2008, *Radical Drag: Transformative performance* at SAW Gallery in Ottawa, Canada in 2008, *.za: giovane arte dal Sudafrica* at Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena in 2008, *Make Art/Stop AIDS* at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles in 2008 and *Heterotopias*: at the first Thessaloniki Biennale in 2007.

Muholi's work is explored in the catalogue *Only half the picture*, published in 2006.



Diane Victor

Johannesburg-based artist, Diane Victor completed a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts, majoring in printmaking, at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1986. In this time she received many student awards including the University's Martienssen Prize in 1996 and the New Signatures Award in the same year. She followed these achievements up by winning the 1988 Absa Atelier Annual Studio Award in 1988, the J & B Rare Achievers Award for Arts in 1999 and the Wam Sasol Wax Award in 2002.

Victor is a prolific career artist who also takes time out to lecture in drawing and printmaking at a number of tertiary institutions including the University of Pretoria, Rhodes University and the University of Witwatersrand.

Victor has exhibited extensively both in South Africa and abroad since 1987. Early highlights include selection for the Cape Triennial in 1988 and 1991 and the Vita Art Now Awards in 1991, 1993 and 1995. Victor made her first international appearance at *Inter-graphic 90: Solidarity Graphics* in Berlin in 1989.

More recently Victor contributed to *Volatile Alliances – International Print Exchange* at the Johannesburg Biennale in 1995 and was part of the group show *Personal Affects* at the Museum of African Art in Queens and the Cathedral of St John the Divine in Manhattan, New York in 2004. In the same year, Victor's work was selected for *Show me Home*, a curated show at the Johannesburg Art Gallery and in Copenhagen and for *Open End Project – Images of men and woman living with HIV* – a German/South African interactive exhibition at Museum Africa in Johannesburg.

Victor was a finalist in the SASOL Wax Art Award in 2006 and an award winner in the International Print Triennale in Krakow, Poland in the same year. She was also selected as the festival artist at Aardklop Arts Festival in Potchestroom in 2008.

Victor has been represented by the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg since 1994 and has works in many major South African collections. She is the subject of the publication *Taxi 013: Diane Victor* published by David Krut Publishing, Johannesburg in 2008.



Jacki McInnes

Jacki McInnes has practiced variously as artist, arts educator, arts writer and curator since obtaining her BA(FA) (with distinction) from UNISA in 2001 and her MFA from the Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT in 2004. Upon graduating from UNISA, McInnes was awarded the UNISA medal for “Top Fine Art Student” for her high standards in both Fine Art Practice and Art History. Other highlights include winning first prize in the category “Other Medium” in the M-Web New Signatures Competition in 2000, being awarded a National Arts Council scholarship in 2003, and being selected for the “Pro Helvetia Arts Council of Switzerland Artists in Residency” programme in 2004.

McInnes’ artistic practice historically tended towards topics relating to women in society, especially with reference to reproductive rights and domestic violence. More recently she has extended her focus to include explorations of the lived experience of marginalised, urban communities, especially within Johannesburg.

McInnes has staged a number of solo exhibitions since 2002 and has participated in numerous group exhibitions both in South Africa and abroad. Some of the more significant of these being *Xoe!² Site Specific* at Nieu Bethesda and the Grahamstown Festival in 2000, *AidsArt/South Africa* curated by Marilyn Martin and Kyle Kauffman at the South African National Gallery in 2004, *Inside Out* at the Christoph Merian Stiftung in Basel, Switzerland in 2004 and *Bliss* at Fried Contemporary in 2007.

McInnes’ work experience in the arts encompassed a number of stints of lecturing at the Michaelis School of Art and Cape College from 2003 to 2006. In 2007, Mc Innes accepted the full-time role of Assistant Editor at David Krut Publishing. During this time highlights included being the project manager and writer of the Educational Supplement to *TAXI 013: Diane Victor* and project manager and editor of the *Taxi Art: Education Supplement Compendium*.

Currently, McInnes continues to work as a professional artist and is preparing for a three-person show at David Krut Gallery in September 2009. She also writes on a freelance basis for *The Afropolitan Magazine* and *Artthrob* and runs a small business producing business writing for various Medical Aid Schemes.

In 2007 McInnes curated the group show *A Legacy of Men* at the Johannesburg Art Gallery. The exhibition, staged in support the “16 Days of Activism” campaign against violence towards women and children, took as its theme a male perspective on male-on-female violence and featured new work by seven of South Africa’s top emerging male artists. *Domestic*, A Women’s Day project to be staged at the Goethe Project Space at Arts on Main, August 2009, is McInnes’ second foray into the field of visual arts curation.



Melissa Mboweni



Soweto born curator, writer Melissa Mboweni holds a BA (FA) from Witwatersrand University.

Her professional experience commenced with a period in which she worked as a curator at the Goodman Gallery. She subsequently left to start her own company Akani

Creative Consulting. During her time at the gallery Mboweni focused on media and publicity aspects of exhibition curation. Mboweni has been involved in various projects including judging art competitions for WSOA, ABSA Atelier, and MTN New Contemporaries. Under Akani Creative Consulting, Mboweni curated the MTN New Cotemporaries in 2008 as well as curating such projects as Jive Soweto! and the 'Energy Exhibition' under the Joburg City Arts Alive programme in both 2007 and 2008.

Although Mboweni's passion lies in the visual arts her journey didn't begin there. After matriculating in 1994 she joined a corporate intern programme called the Commercial Advancement and Training Scheme (CATS) with German company Bayer. This programme included practical work-based departmental training as well as studies in Economics, Commercial Law and Accounting. Mboweni then went on to study at Umea University and also did a graphic design course. She has held positions as a Corporate Relationship Consultant for a communications company and was also field research manager for DRA.

Mboweni was the Gauteng editor of online magazine Artthob and has written and been profiled in Art South Africa, The Mail and Guardian, Cosmopolitan, Classicfeel and Destiny Magazines.

Acknowledgements

The curators of *Domestic* would like to thank the National Arts Council, the United States Consulate General, the Goethe Institut Johannesburg, and Wiphold for partnering us on this Women's Day visual arts project. Without their support, the message bound up in this exhibition would not have reached the relevant audience that we sought to address.

To the artists, all of whom contributed such strong and pertinent work, we would like to say a huge thank you for agreeing to be a part of this worthwhile project. Without your engagement and sensitive handling of this topic, the opportunity to speak to the scourge of domestic violence, and the courageous women subject to it, would have been lost.

Thank you to Michael Stevenson Gallery for loaning Zanele Muholi and Nandipha Mntambo's work to the exhibition and especially to Federica Angelucci and Fiona Mauchan for their helpfulness and professionalism in all of our dealings with them. Thank you too to the Goodman Gallery Cape Town and Johannesburg for the loan of Jodi Bieber's prints, especially to Storm Janse van Rensburg and Neil Dundas for their constant efficiency.

A special thank you to John Hodgkiss for your willingness to photograph and prepare the images of Alison Kearney and Penny George at such short notice. And to Lara Koseff for your creative suggestions and excellent layout of the catalogue.

Jacki McInnes and Melissa Mboweni