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PRESS RELEASE

“I cannot really tell you how many men came to rape me, but four months later, I was pregnant. I felt so bad, I tried committing suicide twice. I now live with HIV, which is a legacy of genocide.” —Sylvina



INTENDED CONSEQUENCES: RWANDAN CHILDREN BORN OF RAPE

PHOTOGRAPHS AND INTERVIEWS BY JONATHAN TORGOVNIK
Essay by Marie Consolée Mukagendo

**PUBLICATION COINCIDES WITH 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF
START OF RWANDA GENOCIDE**

**COMPANION EXHIBITS ON VIEW AT APERTURE GALLERY THROUGH MAY 7, 2009
AND UNITED NATIONS THROUGH MAY 10, 2009**

In February of 2006, photographer Jonathan Torgovnik traveled to East Africa to report on a story for *Newsweek* coinciding with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the outbreak of HIV/AIDS. While in Rwanda, he heard the testimony of Odette, a survivor who was raped during the Rwandan genocide and as a result of the rape had a child and contracted HIV/AIDS. Later that year, he returned to Rwanda on his own accord to work on a personal project about women like Odette—women who were the victims of the same heinous crimes and who were left pregnant as a result. Over the course of the next three years, Torgovnik made repeated visits to photograph these women and their children, and allow them to tell him their heart-wrenching stories.

Intended Consequences: Rwandan Children Born of Rape (Aperture, April 2009) brings together Torgovnik’s powerful documentation of the accounts of thirty Rwandan women who were subjected to massive sexual violence by members of the infamous Hutu militia groups during the 1994 genocide. Due to



the stigma of rape and “having a child of the militia,” the communities and few surviving relatives of these women have largely shunned them. The portraits and testimonies featured in *Intended Consequences* offer intensely personal accounts of these survivors’ experiences of the genocide and the challenges they face today, as well as their conflicted feelings about raising a child who is a reminder of horrors endured. An introduction by Rwandan-born Marie Consolée Mukagendo, a UNICEF staff member who has studied this aspect of the genocide, provides an in-depth analysis of this complex subject. In recent atrocities in Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo, rape has been used systematically as a weapon—making this poignant reflection on the legacy of the Rwanda genocide urgently relevant. Included in the book is a multimedia DVD produced by MediaStorm featuring interviews with the women portrayed in the book.

An exhibition of thirty portraits from the book is on view at Aperture Gallery through May 7, 2009. The women’s testimonies are presented through text panels, as well as multimedia interviews projected on a wall in the center of the installation produced by MediaStorm. The exhibition also features a large grid with sixteen portraits of the children, and a video interview with Torgovnik. A companion show of ten images is on view in the Main Gallery of the Visitors’ Lobby of the United Nations through May 10, 2009.

Relevant Activities and Events:

On Wednesday, April 29, Aperture will present a panel discussion with Torgovnik and others to be announced at Aperture Gallery. Additionally, Aperture, in collaboration with Open Society Institute, Amnesty International, and Foundation Rwanda (founded by Torgovnik and non-profit professional Jules Shell) have launched a traveling exhibition that will visit ten universities in the United States and venues worldwide. A curriculum guide produced by Amnesty International provides activities and lessons to engage students in discussions of the complex and difficult issues raised by the exhibition, including genocide, gender-based violence, the role of women in conflict, and rape as a weapon or war. Venues to date are: Kniznick Gallery, Women’s Studies Research Center, Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass (February 23–April 9, 2009); Bernstein Gallery, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Robertson Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J. (September–October 2009); and Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C. (January 22–March 13, 2010).

Jonathan Torgovnik’s (b. 1969, Israel) photographs have been widely exhibited and published in numerous international publications, including *Newsweek*, *Aperture*, *GEO*, *Sunday Times Magazine* and *Stern*, among others. He has been a contract photographer for *Newsweek* magazine since 2005, and is on the faculty of the International Center of Photography School in New York. In 2007, Torgovnik won the National Portrait Gallery’s Photographic Portrait Prize for an image from *Intended Consequences*. He is co-founder of Foundation Rwanda (www.foundationrwanda.org), a non-profit organization that supports secondary school education for children born of rape in Rwanda.

Aperture—located in New York’s Chelsea art district—is a world-renowned non-profit publisher and exhibition space dedicated to promoting photography in all its forms. Aperture was founded in 1952 by photographers Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, Barbara Morgan, and Minor White; historian Beaumont Newhall; and writer/curator Nancy Newhall, among others. These visionaries created a new quarterly periodical, *Aperture*, to foster both the development and the appreciation of the photographic medium and its practitioners. In the 1960s, Aperture expanded to include the publication of books (over five hundred to date) that comprise one of the most comprehensive and innovative libraries in the history of photography and art. Aperture’s programs now include artist lectures and panel discussions, limited-edition photographs, and traveling exhibitions that show at major museums and arts institutions in the U.S. and internationally.

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