



CATALOGUE

THE SPIRAL OF CONTAINMENT: RAPE'S AFTERMATH

Elisa Iannaccone

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where art & social justice intersect

"My career as a cinematographer and photo-journalist came to a sudden halt after I was sexually assaulted in 2011.

Through art therapy, I started to process my assault creatively.

I reached out to other people who had been raped, to explore the images that spiralled in their own minds.

The result became a project that aims to impact people around the world".

ELISA IANNACONE, 2018.



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THE SPIRAL OF CONTAINMENT: RAPE'S AFTERMATH, is an experiential exhibition by Mexican-born photographer, cinematographer and foreign correspondent **Elisa L. Iannacone**, first exhibited at the **OXO Towers Bargehouse** in 2018.

Each of the 24 photographs in the suite features a rape survivor in a magical-realist image-scape. Iannacone worked with each subject to deconstruct and reframe their recollections of their experiences, evolve each experience into a compelling and iconic statement of empowerment, agency, and identity. The project drew upon the artist's own therapeutic recovery following rape.

Following a preview of four select works at the **Investec Cape Town Art Fair (February 2022)**, the exhibition is on show at the home of Human Rights, **CONSTITUTION HILL** in **Johannesburg (May 2022)** – in the **Isolation Cells** of the notorious **Number 4 Prison**.

Simultaneously, Iannacone who has been in residence at **NIROX FOUNDATION**, to May 2022, will be showing a body of work at the annual Winter Sculpture Fair, *Good Neighbours*. A programme of workshops accompanies the South African exhibitions, at both Constitution Hill and Nirox. SPIRAL will travel globally from late-2022, to art fairs, museums, and heritage venues.

Photographs are available for purchase:

Specifications:

- **Entire Suite of 24 works; or**
- **Individual photographs.**
- **1500mm x 1000mm**
- **Hahnemule Photo Rag Baryta – unframed or mounted on Dibond or Diasec**
- **Edition limited to 5 of each image, plus 2 Artist Proofs**

Please contact Kathy directly on art@acaza.co.



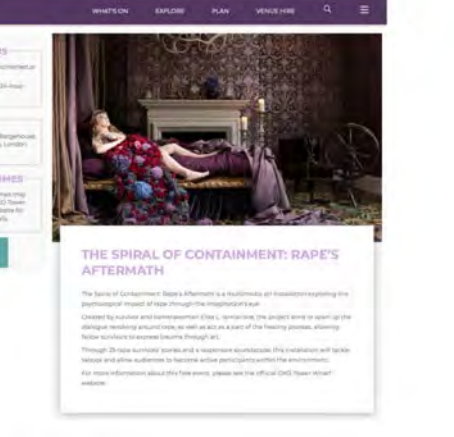
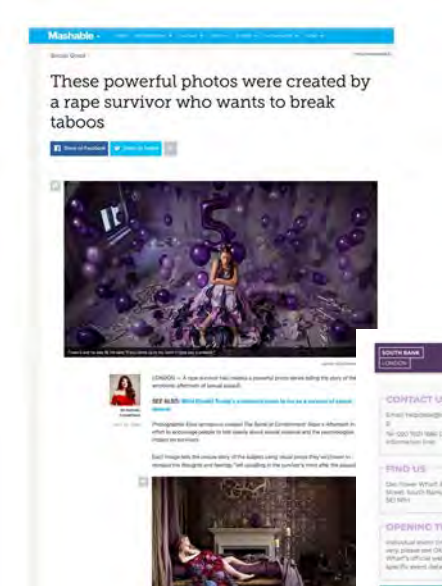
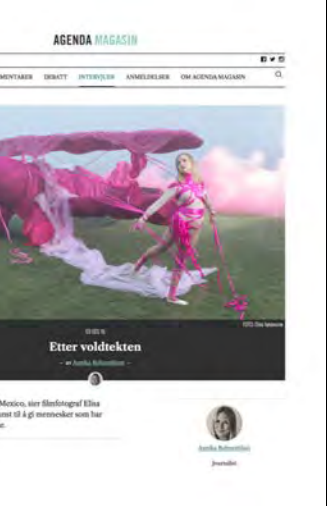
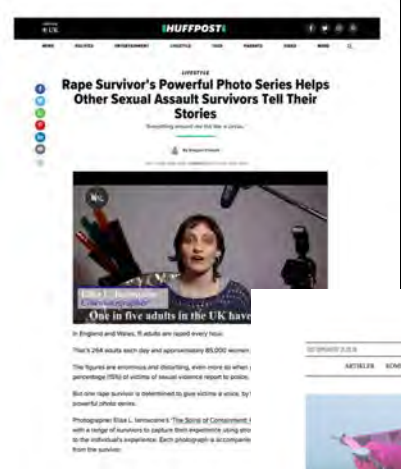
Elisa Iannacone was born and raised in Mexico, and studied BFA Film Production (York University, Canada, 2010) and MA International Journalism (City University London, 2013). As a photographer, filmmaker, journalist, foreign correspondent and human rights documentarist, she has worked on six continents, for **BBC**, **Newsweek**, and **National Geographic**, among others, covering conflict zones and humanitarian crises such as the Rabaa massacre, domestic violence in Syrian refugee camps in Iraq, and cyclone Idai in Mozambique.

In addition to her journalistic work, Elisa is a **keynote speaker (TedX)** and **moderator on human rights, sexual violence and social impact**.

On its debut in London, the SPIRAL project was covered in over 10 languages by international media outlets such as **Reuters**, **Newsweek**, **Mashable**, and the **Huffington Post**.

Her most recent assignment, on Cameroonian refugees/exiles, shot at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg just prior to lockdown, is featured in **Newsweek** and **BBC** (June 2021).

Elisa lives in London, and is married to a South African.



See also: DAILY MAVERICK article by Kathy Berman. <https://bit.ly/3fwlwrv>



THE CLIMB
ELISA L. IANNAcone

THE CLIMB

ELISA L. IANNAZONE

"My innocence might have been stolen from me but the future is still mine. I can't be chained to my past forever." – RED.



"He was a very sick individual. He manipulated me and several other young girls, and took advantage of a position of authority. I suppose I had a bit of a hero complex because I was told that if I complied, then the others would be spared. So, I thought I was doing this grand thing, I was "giving myself up" – one for the many.

THE CLIMB is an image that I created so that whenever it happened, I would go somewhere where the pain wasn't there. I visually hid these horrible happenings in a chest. I had convinced myself that as soon as I turned that key and I locked that lock that I was fine. And it worked. But, needless to say: Trauma: you can't just lock it away. It seeped out in my dreams. It has been a constant battle to rise above it. "



POWER
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNAZONE

"Running was my thing. I won my Olympic medal by running as fast as I could. As far as I could. Away from home." – FIRE ORANGE.



"Escapism was on my mind: How do I escape from the pain, from the disappointment, from the sadness? I wanted everything to vanish and to disappear – up in smoke.

My decision was to try to become the best person that I could possibly become, and to find something that made me feel that I was in control and that no one could take away.

Sport, track and field, running was my thing.

I tried to take my life when I was 14 years old. When I was at the Olympic games in 1988, in Seoul, I remember crying my eyes out and thinking: 'In 1979, when I was in Barbados, if I didn't make it, and I was successful in committing suicide... I would never have known, the world would never have known what I was capable of doing.'

It is astounding how many people I know who have been abused. And no one listened. The thing that really stays in your heart, and your soul, is the disbelief from other people when you tell them. I think if anything, that, for me, was more painful than the act itself.



STAYING AFLOAT
ELISA L. IANNACONE

STAYING AFLOAT

IMAGE 3

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"When my uncle was assaulting me, he kept saying: 'I am doing this because I love you.' I will never understand what that really meant." – ORANGE.



"I was very scared of him. He was my uncle. He was in jail for a very long time – for about 15 years. We walked through a graveyard, for about 15 minutes. I stopped. I fought with him. He beat me up, threatened to kill me, and he kept saying to me: 'I'll shoot you if you run'. Through the graveyard, we walked quite a distance and, I kept reading every tombstone that I walked past – I read all the names, when people died... I saw that there were people that had died in 2015 and I thought: 'I'm going to be one of these people this year'. He raped me, and then again near water, in the bush. I heard every sound in that bush. I heard the birds, I heard the river, the trees, I heard everything. And when he was busy assaulting, raping me, he kept saying: "I'm doing this because I love you". Those are the words that I will never really ever forget. I can never understand what they really mean."



UNCAGED
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

“There came a time in childhood when I thought: 'Is this why I have been put in the universe?' We all have a journey and purpose. For some of us, that purpose is painful.”– GOLDEN YELLOW.



“I think incest is so confusing, it makes you feel so displaced. Nothing feels safe. When there’s a person in the house, that you live with, who is supposed to be family and is the one person that is hurting you – but makes you believe that they’re loving you while they’re doing it. The lions in the photograph represent all the things that are out there to get me: people, my own mind, restriction. I feel like I’m in survival mode every day. I’m just out there trying to punch back. I have to remove myself from thinking. It was way back in 1984. There’s always this rush to get over things. People don’t get the time to just sit down and say: “I’m hurting”. You don’t have the time, or the space, or the room to just call your demons. It’s okay if you’re not okay, there’s no pressure.”



THE KINGDOM
ELISA L. IANNAcone

THE KINGDOM

IMAGE 5

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"My life was full of joy when they came and ripped it apart. But I was able to take control, regain my power, and move on. The rape made me feel worthless. I think in this photograph, I am worthy now." – YELLOW.



"Looking at the dress, you can see how majestic it was, and how beautiful. The colours are bright. It shows someone that was full of joy. And then these people came and started ripping it apart, taking something that I owned. Taking my strength from me. I was walking and I got mugged, and then walked into the same guys again. They told me: 'We'll give you what you're looking for'. I wasn't looking to be raped, but they kidnapped me, and started raping me.

As soon as someone says the word 'raped'...we get asked 'what were you wearing?' It's not about what I'm wearing, we need to stop victimising the victim.

I think posing for this photograph, standing on the abyss, was very intimidating, very scary. I had a lot of fear in me, when I got there. But I felt that, once I got comfortable, I had confidence, and once I had the dress on, as broken as the dress was, I really felt in control.

I felt that this was My Kingdom. I was owning it. I was commanding back into my life everything that had been broken or taken from me."



FIESTA
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNAcone

" It started when I was 5 years old. My grandfather was a sick person and everyone knew it. I wrote a letter to the family about it at 17 and sent it to everyone I knew. If I had thought of the consequences. I would never have done it. Everything totally exploded." – LIME YELLOW



"It was always a well-known secret. It wasn't something new, but quite simply, nobody would dare to say it. Abusers and rapists are within families. They are fathers, and in my case, grandfathers.

One day, at about 17, I sat on the couch and wrote away. I took the letter, put it in an e-mail, and sent it to everyone I knew. They didn't even get angry about what had happened. They got mad at me for having said it. It was like a loyalty they kept amongst themselves, and I broke it.

The dynamite box represents this latent gun-powder that was always there. Someone had to come to detonate it, and it was chaos, there were explosions, there was pain, but it had to be done.

My mom was always there, , fromt the time that this happened when I was 5 years-old. I hoped that my dad would react, that he would go and defend me, perhaps spit on his father's face, something like that... It never happened.

You have the family that you get, but there is more family out there, and I choose that one."



BROKEN CACTUS
ELISA L. IANNACONE

BROKEN CACTUS

IMAGE 7

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"I was broken just like those walls, completely destroyed, totally in pieces. Standing there, I am a strong woman – alive, resilient. I can see the horizon" – LIGHT GREEN



"Like a cactus, all broken and punctured everywhere. I'm still here, alive, standing, with strong thorns. I see the horizon with a desire to continue living...

I went on a trip and trusted someone whom I thought was my friend. I stayed in his house... you don't realise what a person is thinking, until you're already in that moment.

About a month after I was raped, I found out that I was pregnant... and there's something that I still haven't forgiven myself for, which was having said to it "why me? I don't want you here." And then he left. I know that a thought can't kill someone... but it was my baby, and he left. It's something that I still haven't found closure for.

I think of all the women that have been raped and have had a child from that person... how horrible it feels in that moment, to wonder what's going to happen to you for the rest of your life... but at the same time... it was my son... blood from my blood. I have no idea what I would have done with a child at 18... But it's very sad, the feeling of losing something that is yours... twice in the same month."



ABANDONED
ELISA L. IANNAZONE

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"I was 5. It went on until I was 7. It was my mother's uncle and it would always happen in his car. I felt abandoned by my parents. I tried washing the dirtiness away by mechanically scrubbing and scratching myself. I still shower when I feel anxious." – GREEN



"It all began when I was sent to live with my grandmother at about 5 or 6-years-old. What happened then, had an impact on me for many years, and still does. It was my mother's uncle who did it, and it would always happen in his car. It carried on until I was nearly 7. It was a secret that I always hid from the people around me. I even tried hiding it from myself, because I felt incredibly guilty, almost as though I was the cause of what was going on.

Unfortunately, my great uncle died before I had the chance to express everything I wanted to say to him. It's unlikely that he'd have understood my words though, and I think I would have had to physically hurt him.

The room where we shot this image, was in my grandparents' real house, which is now completely empty. It's a space that still carries a lot of meaning and emotions. Going back to it for this purpose was therapeutic. I feel like I've managed to wipe off that filth and finally feel more at peace with myself. I'm also more open to men and the possibility of having a loving relationship."



FOLLOWED
ELISA L. IANNAONE

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"I was violently assaulted and raped by a 15-year old while on a solo hike. I had 39 injuries. At 29, I was independent and adventurous.. Suddenly I was a walking shell of what I had been. My friends' lives continued. Mine felt like it stood still. It is a decade. I have worked hard to heal and become stronger."

FOREST GREEN



"I was assaulted in April 2008. I was on a hike on my own, in a park, on the outskirts of West Belfast. I had been followed by a 15-year-old boy that I'd met earlier in the park. He approached me, and struck up a strange conversation. I didn't realise that he was following me, until I had reached a much more remote part of the park. There was some furniture strewn around. It was a place where people had been living – there were traces of people living there. I remember looking down the slope ...and just seeing him coming up. And then I realised that I was in trouble. I was violently assaulted, and raped, and I had 39 separate injuries after that. It took me years to recover from that. I think we're always halfway between survivor and victim, that kind of betweenness is maybe, ideally, something that other people will understand as well. "



FIRDAUS
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"Firdaus is Paradise in Indonesian. I was on holiday. When he saw me crying after he raped me, he made out that we were both cheating on our partners. It took two years to tell my boyfriend. I have never seen him since. I felt powerless – I had done something that could not be undone – like the sands falling through my hands" – TURQUOISE



"The island where the assault took place was the most beautiful, idyllic place on earth. There were palm trees, the sky was this gorgeous blue, and the sea was turquoise. When I left, it felt like it was paradise – but tainted.

The net really instills that feeling of being caught up in something, feeling stuck, not being able to find a way out. I was wearing a dress that I'd just bought in a market – hand-dyed batik. During the assault, he didn't even bother to take the dress off. The dress stayed on and turned from something that was quite innocent, into this disgusting, tainted rag.

I came away with this feeling of being stuck, like, 'Do I tell my boyfriend that this has happened? Maybe I shouldn't because I've cheated on him and I've done something wrong'.

So it was really hard to untangle what was me cheating on my boyfriend, and what was this emotional manipulation, that I didn't really have much power over. I didn't tell my boyfriend for a couple of years, so that when I did, it devastated him to the point where he couldn't support me any longer. The relationship stopped–t here and then. And I lost my best friend."



NORMAL
ELISA L. IANNACONE

NORMAL

IMAGE 11

ELISA L. IANNAcone

Other people looked at motherly figures and women as nurturing and loving. I looked at them with fear” – VERDIGRIS.



"Society tells you that a young boy that gets raped is lucky, but I can promise you he's not. Other people look at motherly figures as nurturing and loving. I looked at them, and they struck fear into my life.

When somebody entered my room and that shadow came in, I had no way of voicing my fear, I had no way of saying 'Hey! Don't do this, leave me alone, I don't wanna do this!' you know? I didn't have a choice. So yeah, I was introduced to sex at the age of 5. That was 'normal', apparently.

I felt so alone because I'd never seen, or heard of, another boy that this had happened to. But I think the hardest thing for me, was when a woman raped me when I was 12. I was saving myself for that special woman, and she took it away from me. I think that was the one that affected me the most.

Just empower your children, but don't just empower your little girls. When I hear everybody say: 'Oh, you've got a daughter, have you bought a shotgun?' Nobody goes, 'You've got a son, are you protecting him?' Just empower your children. Because if you don't, somebody else will."



SANDS OF TIME
ELISA L. IANNAONE

THE SANDS OF TIME

IMAGE 12

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"As I looked at the hour-glass, I could feel myself waiting for the rape to end, for the trial to end. The falling sand is the baggage slipping away."– BLUE.



"This was me, waiting for the rape to end. This was me, waiting for the trial to end. This was me, waiting for him to go and serve his time.

I remember a moment after the struggle, giving up, and just looking at the time, to see how long it lasted. It was a whole 2 minutes and 13 seconds. The entire trial process took just over three years.

He was found guilty, and they gave him bail, pending sentencing. The social worker who came to my house said that they went to his house and he was not there. His mom had said she hadn't seen him for about 2-3 days, so they filed a missing person's case. He's in the wind, nobody knows where he is. I'm not going to spend my time stressing and worrying about what he did.

The time we spent today surrounded by these clocks, reminds me that I am healing, I am growing, I am learning more about myself. I was looking at those sands falling and, that's just all of the baggage falling off.

He'll get his time, it won't necessarily be in the way that I want (which is his going to jail), but his time is coming.

I do believe in Karma, I believe that I've stood the test of time."



MANNEQUIN
ELISA L. IANNAONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

“Incest is such a shameful, horrible word. Child sexual abuse happens behind closed doors. My grandfather effectively ruined half of my life.” – BABY BLUE.



"The abuse that I suffered on a very regular basis was my normality. Childhood sexual abuse happens in places you wouldn't imagine. And it happens to anybody, anywhere. Children should be cared for and looked after, rather than being violated and abused.

You can put your memories away in a box, and shut them away so that they are forgotten, but you can also take those memories out and show them to people.

I was abused by my grandfather between the ages of five and eleven. The blue of the mannequin is the blue of a dress that I remember really well from my childhood. I think something quite terrible must have happened when I was wearing that dress, I remember it so well.

The drawer box that I'm holding, (a model of a room) is one of the places where I was abused, and has probably most meaning for me. You could open those drawers and see each of the different places that I was abused.

But what the picture as a whole represents, is that I was objectified over and over again, and very much felt like a mannequin."



FROZEN
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

"She opened the door on crutches and was skin and bone. Her eyes were ice blue. She wanted to participate in the project. Her therapist thought it would be good for her. All she could say over and over is that she was FROZEN." ELISA re ICE BLUE



"I feel like I'm frozen. After this, what happened, I have problems to talk. You know, people hurt me in the past and I can't love anymore. I don't feel like I fit in any group. I like to be alone or around animals. I love horses, you know, since I was a child. And I feel safe, and you don't have to talk, and I feel connected to horses.

Just the police believed me. My family: They were thinking 'Ah, maybe you were drunk or something'. It was quite hard. Even though I lost the case in court, no matter what people say, I know what happened. He knows what he did.

I tried psychotherapy but it wasn't for me, because after every meeting I was even more down, and you know everything came up, and it was horrible.

I think like no-one can help me... I have to do this on my own."



~ No Culpéis
No culpéis a mi lira,
si a su memoria escapa una nota,
Culpable soy por mi mente delirio,
si de mi corazón escapa
la célebre gaviota.

~
Y no culpéis a mi piano,
cuando rebelde brote el sonido,
culpable soy yo que desgano,
culpable soy por tener
mi corazón
dolorido...

THE POET
ELISA L. IANNAZONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

"I was on holiday, I had gone to a restaurant and came back to my hotel room. They held a knife to my throat. And raped me. After it happened, I wanted to say something to someone. I was alone with my fear. I grabbed a piece of paper and pen. I unloaded everything with poetry." – ROYAL BLUE



"Since I was a child, I enjoyed pretending that I was a princess. I read about Queen Elizabeth and, in certain moments, I wished to be a Queen. I know that my inner strength is that of a queen's.

There were two of them. They said that if I didn't co-operate, they would kill me. So, I had zero possibilities of escaping an attack like that.

I write every day. I think that poetry is a world parallel to this one, but also very magical. The words, the letters are magical. I forgave myself for suffering, and the forgiveness towards them happened in a minute and a half because the first thing I thought about was God. If you find refuge in God, you have love, you have hope, you have it all.

I am the person who has fought to leave the past that hinders... to leave it behind... and to realise that my life did not end then."



THE EYE OF THE STORM
ELISA L. IANNAONE

ELISA L. IANNAZONE

"This photographic shoot helped me understand that I do feel quite separate from the incident now. I look back and see a very young me that I'd love to talk to, and comfort. But it doesn't have anything to do with me now. It's quite liberating" – DARK BLUE



"It was a house party with friends and a very common scenario of being too drunk. Everyone else was sent home, and I stayed. I cried, and said no.. and things happen. The next morning, I remember very clearly sitting in his room, on his bed, holding the sheet, just sitting there while he was taking a shower, just trying to process what had happened. And I mean I didn't process it at all. I was just sitting there in the sheet – that was what stuck with me the most.

One of the things that really threw me for a long time was that I initiated sexual intercourse with my rapist, the next morning, as a way of trying to take control of a situation that I had no control over. I blamed myself for a long time, for doing something wrong; that I had let him off the hook, and I had let him think it had been consensual by doing that. I recognise why I did it, and it just, it happens. I think women need to understand that, and men need to understand that.

It's not about being complicit, it's about trying to take back control in a powerless situation."



TRACKS
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

"I feel like I was drowning and am still drowning. I was drugged and raped. By my boss. All he had to do was drop something in my drink to mess up 11 years of my life." – NAVY BLUE



"The idea of drowning is two-fold because, on the one hand, I'm holding myself under water, drowning, not believing myself, questioning myself; and on the other hand, my memories are taken with me. So I'm left to drown in this feeling of 'not knowing'.

I like to have facts, and I like to have all the small details, and not being able to remember what happened, but being so affected by something drives me mad.

I remember feeling confused, but not in a normal way. One of the few things I do remember, is phoning my friend, and I remember crying. I saw these train tracks – it was how he found me. But I was so confused that I could see train tracks and yet I didn't know where I was.

I think it will probably drive me mad for the rest of my life, because I can never see the truth in front of my eyes. It's like you're battling to believe yourself, and then you're pushing to try and get other people to believe you.

The more time has gone on, it feels like the deeper I have fallen into the water."



THE PRESENT
ELISA L. IANNAZONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

"I was 5. He was 16, and babysitting my sister and me. He asked me to come upstairs – he had a present for me. It was the wrong present, a dirty present.

At 17, I had flashbacks. My dad eventually told me the story. I accessed the court documents. I think bad things happen for a reason. I feel that I'm more grateful for little things now "– PURPLE



"He was babysitting me with his mom. My sister was also there. Even though I wouldn't want that to happen to her, I was like: 'Why me and not my sister? What was it about me?' He asked me to come upstairs because he had a present for me. And I walked up the stairs and then he closed the door, and then I was standing near the door, against the wall on the corner. That's when he undid his zip and moved my hand to touch his penis. And then it escalated from there. I felt like he was unwrapping me. It was a present I wasn't expecting, it was the wrong present, a dirty present, not the present you get at Christmas, or on your birthday."



SLEEPING BEAUTY
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"He was an ex-boyfriend, who was very violent. It happened five years later at a party. We were all drunk. I woke up and realised I had been raped. It felt like the real version of Sleeping Beauty, who is raped by a married king and wakes nine months later in child-birth. It took some time for me to piece it all together."
IMPERIAL PURPLE



"I was asleep and I'd come across Sleeping Beauty's original story where there is obviously rape involved while she is asleep. And so it resonated with me, that story. It was a boyfriend that I'd had when I was 16-17 years old, and we weren't together for very long, but it was such a turbulent relationship. We ended up breaking up and it was a horrendous break-up, just horrendous. I think it was four to five years later... there was a big group of us, we went out, and you know everyone got hammered and ended up passing out. I woke up the next day in such a state of confusion. I didn't really know what had happened because I thought I'd been assaulted, I didn't realise that I'd been raped, I kind of pieced it together. No-one wants to ever think that someone they know or their neighbour, their friend, their husband, whomever, is capable of doing that. So I think that lots of people make excuses and they apologise for these certain acts happening."



STRENGTH & BEAUTY
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNAZONE

"The past will always pull you back, but you have to look forward. It can't strip you of your strength and beauty." – CERISE.



"These hands symbolise criticism, the past, people in your life who will want to pull you back, and make you smaller. But they will never get to you because you are strong from within. The fire in the torch is small because sometimes you just need to trust the next two steps, you don't need to know the entire way. Protecting yourself is not your right, but your duty. I'm trying to forgive, so I can move on. It's to set me free. Sometimes, you need to leave people behind, you can't move ahead if you take the entire village. Sometimes you just walk alone. If you can't talk now, your time will come, if you can talk now, speak up and shout. Don't just whisper it. Shout 'til somebody believes you. You have to air a wound to heal it. If you hide it away, it will not heal. Life is not going to be a popularity contest, and there will be some people who will not be happy, and that's alright. Let the boat rock, if it needs to rock, and let the bridges burn, if they need to burn, but speak up. Real beauty cannot be inherited, and real strength has to grow within."



FLIGHT & FRIGHT
ELISA L. IANNAZONE

FLIGHT AND FRIGHT

ELISA L. IANNACONE

IMAGE 21

“My first response was flight – to escape the horror. But soon after I realised that I had survived. I was determined to fight for change.” – PINK.



"How do you end up at that place where you're deciding, with more than person, to do that to somebody else? What happened to me was a stranger rape and it was a gang rape. I'd been living in Uganda, working in the field of sexual health. 24% of the female population of Uganda claim that their first ever sexual experience was non-consensual. Half-way through my year placement I was raped, and after it happened, I got on a plane and flew back home to the UK.

After I'd taken some time away, I decided to then fly back again. That's where the fight response came in, I went back and I started an organisation which I named 'Attacked not Defeated' to improve the situation for other women who didn't have the privilege of being able to get away from the place where it happened to them.

For a long time I didn't want to accept that this was the past, and that it had to just stay that way. I never felt safe in any situation, and I was constantly convinced that it was going to happen again. Every day was a mission to avoid it. One of the things I found really helpful, was a creative outlet, and an escape. Ballet was a way of doing that. The colour also ties in with ballet but also with the colours for Attacked not Defeated, which I think is a really strong, vivid, vibrant colour."



BIG BONNIE THE BICYCLE BANDIT
ELISA L. IANNAcone

BIG BONNIE,, BICYCLE BANDIT.

IMAGE 22

ELISA L. IANNACONE

"At first glance, it seems very playful, childlike and fun. But I use humour to pacify myself when I feel pain. The abuse started when I was 6 with a neighbour. And it continued with my aunt's husband at 9. I left home at 21, and went into prostitution. I eventually decided to rob a bank with a toy gun when I needed a roof over my head. " – CRIMSON



"I was raped by a teenage neighbour when I was 6 years old. It hurt, there was blood running down my legs. My granny decided to send me to go and live with an aunt in the Cape. Her husband decided he liked me a lot. When I was 9, he started visiting my bedroom. He used to have his friends come round and visit me.

I tried prostitution because I was quite used to it, but being a good Catholic girl, I stupidly didn't use any contraception, and fell pregnant. There was absolutely no way that I would bring a child into the world that was so cruel to kids – that's the little baby on my back, the doll, and inside of that bag is all of my baggage, my hurt, my pain, my anger, my broken bits and pieces.

Going to jail was a better option because I would be able to have a roof over my head... I got onto my bike, rode up to the nearest bank agency, walked in, asked for money, and was given money. It took three robberies to eventually get caught. I didn't go to prison, but I did get therapy for the first time in my life."



THE PUPPET
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNAcone

"During the incident, I felt like a rag doll, numb. I wasn't a human being any more. My rights were stripped, and I was dominated by a monster who was going to do what he liked with me.. Rape is a crime, but this happened overseas and people don't get prosecuted there." – BURGUNDY



"I was naive, naive in a good way because I'm a nice person. There are horrible people in the world and it's ugly. The puppet depicts how I felt, and how numb I was, and how I'm just barely an object, thrown about and misused. You don't have ownership of your body anymore, your brain, your soul, you're dominated by a monster that is going to do what they like with you. Your rights, you're stripped of everything you have. You don't have a voice, you were clearly controlled. You think it can't get any worse, and then it gets worse. Forget about the act, I mean the act was brutal in itself, but oh no, the aftermath... I had to tell my mom and my dad. My dad: It.. killed him, killed my mom. Then they have to live with you through it, and you have to get yourself out of it, no one else can really help you. It's like, it's a crime, it should be like death, it's wrong, it's irreversible."



CIRCUS
ELISA L. IANNACONE

ELISA L. IANNACONE

"I think it is much harder for people to understand the concept of rape when we're talking of a male survivor." – DARK RED.



"I'd recently come out as gay, and I was kind of attracted by the big lights. I was from a small village.

Then, when I went to university, I thought, 'this is the time when I can be myself'. I deliberately chose to go to THE University of Manchester because it's an area where there is a big gay population. Quite quickly, that kinda turned sour.

Some of my memories of the overall night are kind of hazy, because I was quite drunk. I was put to bed in this house, and not long after, I woke up, and he was raping me. Everything felt like a circus around me, and I was like this vulnerable thing in the middle, objectified.

The parrot was one of my most enduring memories from the evening, because he had a pet parrot in his house. I was about 30 miles away from University. I didn't know any public transport routes. I didn't have any money, so I had to go through the process of letting him drive me back – probably a way for him convincing himself that there was some element of consent involved. He was in a kind of red Ferrari.

There's an assumption that gay men are more promiscuous so therefore being raped is almost 'less' of a traumatic experience than it would be for a woman. This is obviously not true."

BROKEN WINGS
ELISA L. IANNAONE



BROKEN WINGS

ELISA L. IANNACONE

IMAGE 25
(Hologram)

"After the assault, I felt like a shadow of a person without much direction and hardly any capacity to navigate earth. I kept imagining myself stripped bare, with these antler-looking wings growing out of my back, which had once had feathers but were no longer useable" – BLACK AND WHITE – ELISA IANNACONE



"My career as a cinematographer and photojournalist came to a sudden halt after I was sexually assaulted in 2011. Through art therapy, I started to process my assault creatively. I reached out to other people, who had been raped to explore the images that spiralled in their own minds. The result became a project that aims to impact people around the world". ELISA IANNACONE



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