

MUSEUM FRIEDER BURDA
SALON BERLIN

RWANDAN DAUGHTERS by Olaf Heine



Exhibition running alongside Sonia Gomes, *I Rise - I'm a Black Ocean, Leaping and Wide*

Press preview: September 6, 2019, 5–7 pm

Opening (both exhibitions): September 6, 2019, 7 pm

Exhibition runs: September 7, 2019 through February 22, 2020

Almost a million people fell victim to the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, around 250,000 women were raped. Today, perpetrators and victims live as next-door neighbors. And while women have become more influential within Rwandan society over the past 25 years, the rape victims and their children are still often marginalized, living with the stigma of widows and orphans. Today, it is the daughters of the raped women in particular who support their traumatized mothers and fight against this stigma—with incomparable courage and boundless optimism in a society marked by major trauma and authoritarian rule.

***Rwandan Daughters* is a tribute to the power of these women.** In these expressive pictures, German photographer Olaf Heine (born 1968) has made portraits of the mothers and daughters of Rwanda—side by side at the scene of the crime. Sometimes the gaze of mother and daughter goes in different directions, sometimes they touch each other gently. Even a slight smile would be a lie. But the resemblance between their faces speaks of their connectedness and thus their shared hope of being able to leave the past behind. The natural settings often feel peaceable, while the urban space keeps the deprivation and the hurt alive. Nonetheless: crimes took place in all of these locations.

For the viewer, the *Rwandan Daughters* project is touching and unsettling in equal measure. It was made between 2017 and 2018 in close cooperation with 'ora', a children's aid organization that has been working in Rwanda for years. A moving and intense project about memory, it celebrates the strength of Rwanda's women. "How is it possible to develop love for a child who reminds you every day of the worst time of your life?" asks Heine. His documentation also shows that it is not always possible to forget and that mother-daughter relationships are not always unproblematic. In spite of this, the strength and willpower of these women build bridges to carry them over the horrors of the past.

"Systematic violence against women is one of the most common human rights violations worldwide and a recurring means of warfare—as today's political discussions are making increasingly clear. But for too long, this aspect has been marginalized by the big debates about weapons technology and their destructive impact," says Patricia Kamp, curator of the exhibition and artistic director of Salon Berlin. "We hope that Olaf Heine's striking and subtle pictures can help to raise

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awareness of these problems, for there is much to be done here. As well as the issue of genuine help for the victims, the question of prosecuting perpetrators must also be addressed with far greater urgency.”

On the book *Rwandan Daughters*

Heine's latest book, also titled *Rwandan Daughters*, was published in the spring. As well as the photographs, it contains various essays and short texts by the women themselves in which they describe how they deal with what they have experienced. (March 2019, Hatje Cantz, texts by Matthias Harder, Andrea Jeska, Antje Stahl, Olaf Heine, German/English, 208 pages, 78 plates, hardback, 24.80 x 33.50 cm, 60 euros, ISBN 978-3-7757-4547-5).

On Olaf Heine's work

The photographer Olaf Heine came to prominence through his work with internationally known recording artists like U2, Sting, and Coldplay, through his portraits of actors like Daniel Brühl, Thomas Kretschmann, and Don Cheadle, and through his photographic engagement with the work of the Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer.

Today, Heine works as a photographer and director. Born in Hanover in 1968, he studied photography and design at the Lette-Verein in Berlin. His photographs have been published on countless album covers, in international magazines, and in the books *Leaving the Comfort Zone* (2008), *I Love You but I've Chosen Rock* (2010), *Brazil* (2014), and *Rwandan Daughters* (2019), as well as featuring in exhibitions at Camera Work (Berlin), Folkwang Museum (Essen), Noorderlicht (Groningen), and Icon Gallery (Los Angeles).

Special opening times during Berlin Art Week:

September 11, 12 noon – 7 pm

September 12 – 15, 12 noon – 8 pm

Opening times

Thursday through Sunday, 10 am – 6 pm

Exhibitions at Museum Frieder Burda in Baden-Baden

ENSEMBLE. Centre Pompidou – Museum Frieder Burda (April 6 – September 29, 2019)

KARIN KNEFFEL (October 12, 2019 – March 8, 2020)

SONIA GOMES (October 12, 2019 – March 8, 2020)

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Caption:

Olaf Heine, *Rwandan Daughters, Glorioso U. with her daughter Alice, Kigali*, 2018. C-Print, 160 x 122 cm. Courtesy of the Artist with support by Volkswagen AG © Olaf Heine, 2019

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