

Kayee C
Photographer
www.ckayee.com

Portfolio Spring 2022
(last update: March 2022)

Biography:

Kayee is a fine art photographer born and raised in Hong Kong, currently living in France. She creates storytelling images by assembling her self-portraits to explore the dynamics of human relationships. Her works can be humorous, dramatic or melancholic staging of a variety of social interactions.

Characters staged in her portraits range from complete strangers, friends, coworkers, family members to some forms of deity, trapped in familiar settings from famous paintings, mysterious surroundings or entirely surreal dimensions. They often struggle to maintain a perfect balance between the roles imposed by societal expectations and their desire to be themselves. Out of phase with the pursuit of an appearance of cohesion and the idealisation of extraversion, some cannot help but display marginal attitudes such as laziness, contempt, sadism or disillusionment. They seem to be constantly wondering who they are supposed to be in society while silently questioning the status quo.

Human relationships are her main source of inspiration. She builds up her inspiration reserve through her daily observations of human interactions and her own emotions. Her favourite subject above all is the paradox between social disconnect and our desire to belong: the struggle between our desire for a fusalional bond and our need to remain an individual unit. She attempts to offer a critical, offbeat and sometimes poetic look on the way we relate to each other.

Kayee works solely alone. From hair, makeup, wardrobe, lighting, camera set-up, acting to retouch, she is a lone ranger. This is her chosen way of working allowing her flexible hours and deep focus. She sees technical obstacles while being alone on set as fuel to problem-solving. Born partially deaf, she views her solitary way of working as a perfect balance between physical constraints and creative excitement.

Kayee's works can be seen as a whole narrative piece in which each element tells its own story. Viewers should feel free to reorder them the way they wish in order to create their own narratives. Many of the photos were inspired by classical paintings such as the two versions of "Salome with the Head of Saint John the Baptist" by Caravaggio and "The Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci.

Kayee practiced different art forms including classical piano and writing before fully focusing on digital photography in 2015. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Hong Kong (2005, Comparative Literature and French).

Exhibitions:

Upcoming:

2022 Rotterdam Photo Festival, Single Image Photographer, Rotterdam, NL (18-22 May)
2022 Paper Positions, represented by Jörg Maass Kunsthandel, Berlin, DE (28 Apr - 1 May)
2022 Art Shopping, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris, FR (8-10 Apr)
2022 Loosenart "On Clothing. The Visible Self", Roma, IT (7-15 Apr)

Past:

2021 Paris Photo, represented by Jörg Maass Kunsthandel, Paris, FR (11-14 Nov)
2021 The Glasgow Gallery of Photography "Black Edition", Glasgow, GB (27 Apr - 8 May)
2021 The Flux Review "V1", online (26 Apr - 26 May)
2021 La Galerie Paris 1839 "Women Gaze", Hong Kong, CN (4 Mar - 2 May)
2021 Loosen Art "Windows into the Virtual", Rome, IT (25 Feb - 4 Mar)
2020 The Glasgow Gallery of Photography "Portraiture", Glasgow, GB (5-14 Nov)
2020 Loosen Art "Isolation. Living Yourself", Rome, IT (18-24 May)

Publication:

"Dante 2021: A Photographic Tribute". Trieste, Italy: ExhibitAround, 2021, a collective tribute to Dante Alighieri on the occasion of the 700th anniversary of his death

Narrative photography series / Série de photos narratives

“Visual Guide to Social Life”
圖解社交生活

on-going series since 2018

“Visual Guide to Social Life” is an on-going series staging various moments of a civilised social life, aiming to provide guidance to navigate in a world full of intentions in disguise.



I Wish There Was Popcorn (2019)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Inspired by "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp" of Rembrandt, this photo attempts to provide a critical view on social trends and aesthetics that seem to take away women's freedom of thought. In a sense, women are also participating in this tendency by judging their peers based on the same set of beauty standards.



Family Resemblance 1 (2019)
28.5 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
42.8 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Inspired by "Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber" of Juan Sánchez Cotán, with humour, this photo explores love, hatred and indifference in close relationships, and how all this can happen at the same time.



Family Resemblance 2 (2020)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
60 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Reinterpreting Caravaggio's "Salome with the Head of John the Baptist" (1609), this photo explores family dynamics. Unhealthy interactions within a family can result in attachment styles that some individuals need decades to untangle, before they can break through a cycle of pain.



Family Resemblance 3 (2020)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
60 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Reinterpreting Caravaggio's "Salome with the Head of John the Baptist" (1607/1610), this photo explores family dynamics. The way some toxic family members are harmful can be so implied and hidden in seemingly trivial interactions. It can take decades for an individual to even realise. Often the deepest wounds in a family are those that take no physical form at all.



Family Resemblance 4 (2020)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8

40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10

50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Reinterpreting Caravaggio's "The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula" (1610), this photo is a cry for peace when we humans, as one single species, hurt each other based on our differences while we all could coexist with respect.



Family Resemblance 5 (2021)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 4

40 x 60 cm, Edition of 8



Family Resemblance 6 (2022)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 4

40 x 60 cm, Edition of 8



I Love Team Building 1 (2020)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8

40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10

50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "The Musicians" of Caravaggio, this photo is a humorous take on how certain groups place the superficial appearance of cohesion way above the potential of each individual's personality. The characters cannot help but disengage completely from the group activity they are supposed to be doing.



I Love Team Building 2 (2020)

32 x 40 cm, Edition of 10

48 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Inspired by "Dinner at Emmaus" of Caravaggio, this photo depicts the deep desire of some of us to simply disengage from forced interactions for the sake of creating an image of cohesion and harmony.



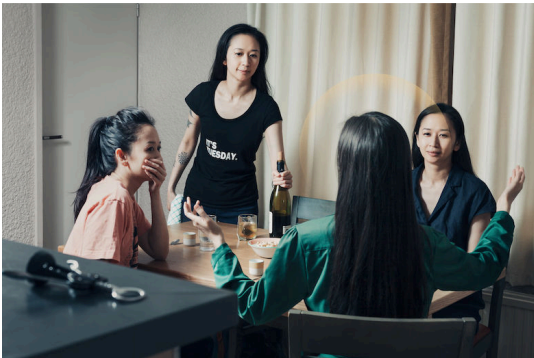
I Love Team Building 3 (2021)

40 x 40 cm, Edition of 8

60 x 60 cm, Edition of 10

90 x 90 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "The Incredulity of Saint Thomas" of Caravaggio, this photo is a personal take on human's desire to dominate and exert control on others. Different reactions are depicted, including doubt, submission and disdain.



I Love Team Building 4 (2021)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8

40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10

50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "Dinner at Emmaus" by Caravaggio, this photo is a humorous take on the phenomenon of equating great leadership with extrovert personalities.



The Taking of All of Us 1 (2019)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8

40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10

50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "The Taking of Christ" by Caravaggio, this photo talks about the objectification of our image that is further reinforced by ourselves when we accept criteria of beauty and success sold to us via the manipulation of our insecurities. Cruelty between us sometimes resides in the peer pressure to comply with certain standards.



The Taking of All of Us 3 (2020)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 4
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 8
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 2



Who Is Listening? (2018)

19.5 x 90 cm, Edition of 8
32.5 x 150 cm, Edition of 3
43 x 200 cm, Edition of 1

Inspired by "The Last Supper" of Leonardo da Vinci, this remake represents a group of individuals who attempt to communicate with no true intention of listening.



Merry Christmas 1 (2020)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "The Last Supper" of Leonardo Da Vinci, this work attempts to portray mixed feelings about Christmas and the end-of-year season, between advertised festivities, the desire for down time and our own loneliness.



Merry Christmas 2 (2020)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by the portrait of Gabrielle d'Estrées and one of her sisters by an unknown artist, this work attempts to portray the feeling of hopelessness encountered in human relationships.



Merry Christmas 3 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4
60 x 90 cm, Edition of 1

Inspired by "The Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci, this photo is about the difficulty of humanity to get along.



Merry Christmas 4 (2021)

Edition info to come

Inspired by "The Last Supper" of Leonardo da Vinci



Merry Christmas 5 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

This photo is about the difficulty of humanity to get along.



Merry Christmas 6 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Inspired by "Salvator Mundi" of Leonardo da Vinci



Merry Christmas 7 (2021)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 6
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 6



Dissection 1 (2021)
40 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
60 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
90 x 90 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by “The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp” of Rembrandt, a work about memories of past nightmares.

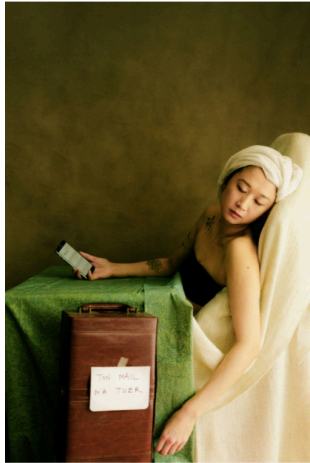


Dissection 2 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
60 x 90 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by “The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp” of Rembrandt, this work attempts to convey a stoic vision of pain.



Annunciation (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Ton mail m'a tuer (2019)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12
Inspired by "The Death of Marat" by Jacques-Louis David.

"Ton mail m'a tuer" means "Your email killed me," with a deliberate grammatical mistake ("tuer" instead of "tué") referring to a notorious murder case in France in the 90's. This remake is a humorous take on how modern communication technologies can sometimes hurt our ego in dramatic proportions.



I have enough friends (2018)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



I don't deserve a face 1 (2018)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

This work is dedicated to anyone living in an abusive relationship. As it is common to blame the victim for "not leaving" the abuser, they may feel helpless and sink into shame for living such an experience. At some point they may even lose the vocabulary to talk about their experiences. Via the creation of these photos, I want to tell them that someone out there will see their face and hear their voice without judging them. We can make sense of our seemingly crazy experience by talking about it. I hope they do not give up on living a better life.



I don't deserve a face 2 (2018)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

This work is dedicated to anyone living in an abusive relationship. As it is common to blame the victim for "not leaving" the abuser, they may feel helpless and sink into shame for living such an experience. At some point they may even lose the vocabulary to talk about their experiences. Via the creation of these photos, I want to tell them that someone out there will see their face and hear their voice without judging them. We can make sense of our seemingly crazy experience by talking about it. I hope they do not give up on living a better life.



I don't deserve a face 3 (2019)

26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

This work is dedicated to anyone living in an abusive relationship. As it is common to blame the victim for "not leaving" the abuser, they may feel helpless and sink into shame for living such an experience. At some point they may even lose the vocabulary to talk about their experiences. Via the creation of these photos, I want to tell them that someone out there will see their face and hear their voice without judging them. We can make sense of our seemingly crazy experience by talking about it. I hope they do not give up on living a better life.

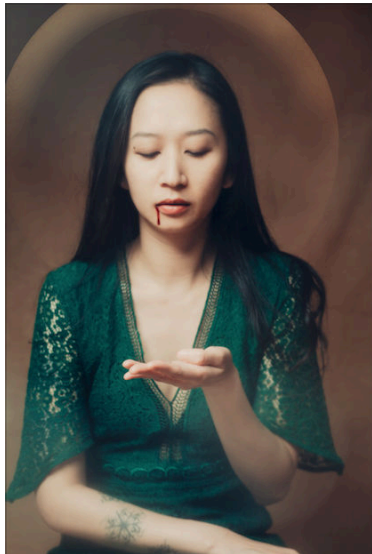


I Loved You All (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

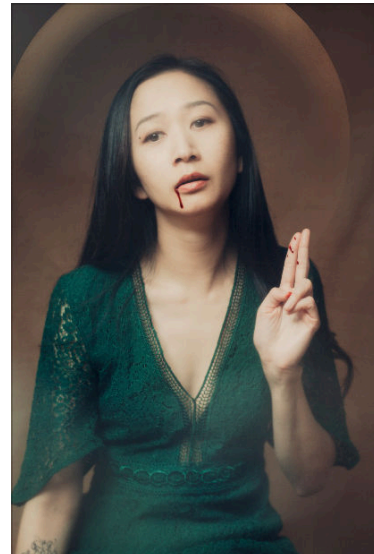


Needing and Loving (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

This picture uses my own self-portraits to depict a human handing a halo to a divine figure who seems to be giving her life. A relationship involving need and adoration, paradox between needing someone and loving someone.



Bleeding Goddess 1 (2022)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 12



Bleeding Goddess 2 (2022)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 12



Departure 1 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 4
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 8
80 x 120 cm, Edition of 2

Narrative photography series / Série de photos narratives

“Transferred”

2021

This series was shot in the summer of 2021 in a hotel room and a tourist apartment, when Kayee deliberately shot outside of her studio, transferring her creative mind to different spaces.

Kayee spent more than a year prior to this series creating the majority of her works in the studio. There was a desire for a reset of her creativity before a new chapter. She chose to create works in spaces completely unknown to her. In each accommodation, entirely on her own, she spent between 20 hours to 2 days.

Against untamed backdrops, Kayee creatively dived into recurrent narratives registered in her subconscious mind. The result is a series composed of tryptiques, dyptiques and individual narrative images, about relationships involving a mixture of attitudes such as domination, submission, solidarity and mistrust. Characters in this series can be seen as family members, sisters, close friends, unspecified deity or simply reflections of oneself carrying conflicting desires. The scenes are volatile snapshots of stories that only briefly existed within those spaces.

Instead of trying to tell her own story, Kayee invites viewers to freely transfer their own experiences and interpretation onto the resulting works of this creative retreat.



Transferred 1 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 2 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 3 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 4 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 5 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 6 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 7 (2021)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 8 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 9 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 10 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 11 (2021)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 12 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 13 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Transferred 14 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Narrative photography series / Série de photos narratives

“I’m Just Visiting”

2021

This small series was shot in a farmhouse in the middle of a saffron field in Le Perche in the North of France. The entire place is maintained by a couple, Nathalie and Julien, saffron producers.

Using what was available, Kayee freely created fragments of scenes of suspense. The characters seem to have just done something they wish to hide or to run away from. Some pretend to look unperturbed while others are obviously in a panic. Unexplained unanimated bodies can also be found in some of the photos. “I’m Just Visiting” is a spontaneous visual representation of small bursts of narratives inspired by the moment.

The narratives can be about the impulse to run away from responsibilities, the survivor’s guilt after a disaster, or simply the desire to run free after long months of living in a time of pandemic. Viewers are invited to join the dots and construct their own stories on their own timelines.



I'm Just Visiting 1 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



I'm Just Visiting 2 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



I'm Just Visiting 3 (2021)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



I'm Just Visiting 4 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



I'm Just Visiting 5 (2021)
33.8 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
42 x 75 cm, Edition of 12



I'm Just Visiting 6 (2021)
33.8 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
42 x 75 cm, Edition of 12

Narrative photography series / Série de photos narratives

“God confined”

2020

This series was completed during the first French lockdown in spring 2020 at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The dominant atmosphere of uncertainty at the beginning of the lockdown also came with helplessness and fear. With humour as a defence mechanism, I imagined the daily life of a confined God and tried to depict how helpless this imaginary God would feel being confined and having to leave humans to their own devices.

This series does not refer to any particular religion and has no intention to question any personal belief. While this series was designed to be lighthearted, some images end up carrying heavier emotions. The various representations of the stir craziness of an imaginary God intend to provide a creative perspective on our own state of confinement - the art of spending time with oneself.



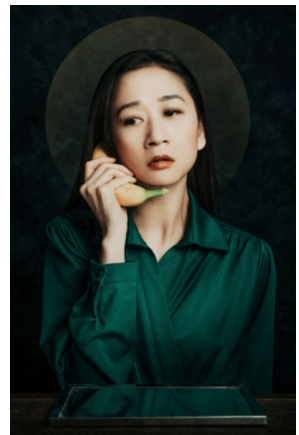
God confined 1 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God desperately trying to deliver miracles



God confined 2 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

The miracle department is temporarily closed.



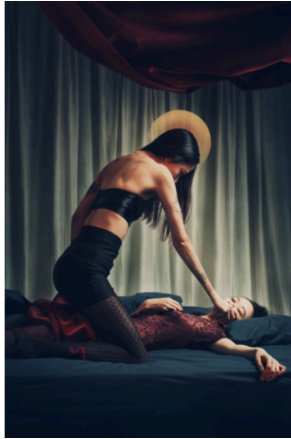
God confined 3 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God desperately trying to reach humans



God confined 4 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God can't help you.
Inspired by "The Creation of Adam" of Michelangelo



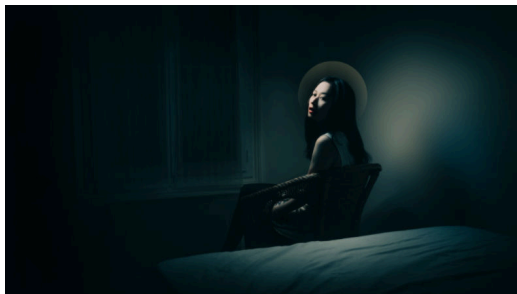
God confined 5 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God can't resuscitate you.
Inspired by "The Death of the Virgin" of Caravaggio



God confined 6 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God can't even help herself.
Inspired by "Salvator Mundi" of Leonardo da Vinci



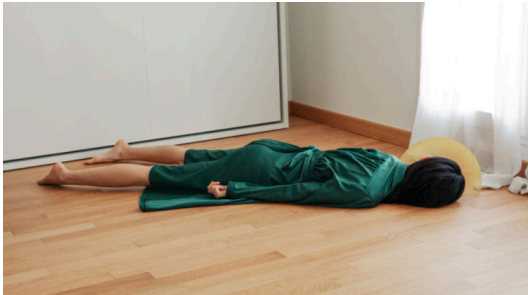
God confined 7 (2017)
22 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
33.75 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God is not in her God outfit today. Try again later.



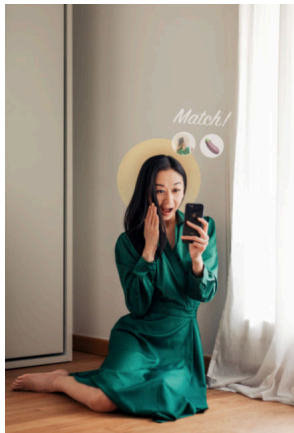
God confined 8 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God discovering all your funny memes about lockdown



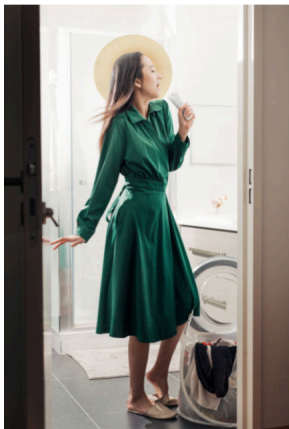
God confined 9 (2020)
22 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
33.75 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God have seen all the content on the internet



God confined 10 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

God downloaded some apps and is amazed by human generosity as they share groceries.



God confined 11 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Laundry day! Let's sing "Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Staying alive! Staying alive!" for all the humans.



God confined 12 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Deconfined, now what?

Narrative photography series / Série de photos narratives

“End of the party”

2020

This series was created during a stay in Le Perche, France, in a 15th-century manor house called Manoir Michelet renovated by a French couple who are retired art dealers.

“End of the party” consists of various mises en scene involving unexplained unconscious bodies, drama and mystery, all interpreted by the photographer herself, shot entirely without assistance.

Surviving characters in this series experience a range of emotions including guilt, shock, indifference as well as benevolence. It is not clear whether someone committed a crime or witnessed an accident or a natural death. These are all inspired by the experience of living as a surviving twin. “End of the party” can mean the end of the intimate time where twins share a womb together, the end of carefree innocence once the survivor’s guilt takes root, or the moment the surviving twin lets go of the guilt and makes peace with the facts with love and benevolence.



End of the party 1 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



End of the party 2 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4



End of the party 3 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4



End of the party 4 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4



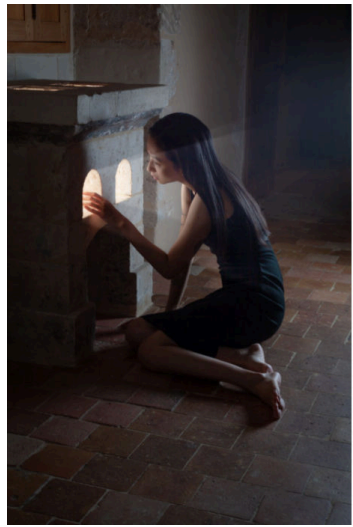
End of the party 5 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4



End of the party 6 (2020)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
48 x 60 cm Edition of 12



End of the party 7 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4



End of the party 8 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12

Narrative photography series / Série de photos narratives

“Sisters”

on-going series since 2019

“Sisters” is an on-going series staging close relationships with dramatic tension and ambiguous intentions.



Sisters 1 (2019)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by the portrait of Gabrielle d'Estrées and one of her sisters by unknown artist



Sisters 2 (2019)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "The Inspiration of Saint Matthew" of Caravaggio



Sisters 3 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 4 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 5 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
50 x 75 cm, Edition of 4



Sisters 6 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 7 (2020)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 8 (2019)
22.4 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
33.8 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 9 (2020)
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 10
48 x 60 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 10 (2020)
22.4 x 40 cm, Edition of 8
33.6 x 60 cm, Edition of 10
42 x 75 cm, Edition of 4

Inspired by "Expulsion from the Garden of Eden" of
Masaccio



Sisters 11 (2020)
24 x 30 cm, Edition of 10
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 12 (2020)
24 x 30 cm, Edition of 10
32 x 40 cm, Edition of 12



Sisters 13 (2021)
26.6 x 40 cm, Edition of 4
40 x 60 cm, Edition of 8

Contact

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