

Insight Exchange | Arts Lab



Voices of Insight Collection | Artist Statement | Louise Whelan

Recognising a lack of diversity in the visual language ascribed to domestic violence is the catalyst for my research and artistic expression. This work addresses the social problem of amplifying one type of abuse at the risk of diminishing others.

Through thoughtful engagement this Insight Exchange Arts Lab collaboration draw on lived experience of domestic and family violence with the aim to produce new visual narratives that help redefine how the complexities of family and domestic violence are represented. The work challenges the idea of who benefits from a 'single channel' visual approach to a complex multi-layer problem. It aims to shift the frame from 'victim only' as well as foregrounding the role of the media in the portrayal of domestic and family violence.

Creating works that explore the aesthetics of violence is both challenging and empowering in its potential for change. Throughout the art and image making process I carefully considered de-identifying not only the victim but the social structure from where the violence occurs. Well-thought-out ways of upholding dignity was forefront. Resistance to the existing exhausted visual trope related physical acts of violence where subjugated victims hold stage was considered. This collection is an effort toward re-balancing the dominant aesthetics about violence, from that of a global and state observation of war and conflict, to revealing a domestic and intimate focus on violence.

I have honoured and recognised the individuality of each narrative and event, giving space for each image to speak for itself as well as creating a new way of seeing within the collection – making way for a collective uprising. As a collaborative we have centred on resistance to violence, coercive and controlling behaviour, economic, spiritual, emotional, physical and sexualised abuse.

The approach and style of the images are as diverse as domestic violence itself. Much like the complexities of understanding time, a linear approach is futile. From the micro-seconds between the acts of violence, to dipping toes into other planes of time and existence where disassociation marries survival. Time, memory, longevity and the pace of violence are inherently expressed in this collection.

View the [Voices of Insight Collection](#)

Contact the Insight Exchange Team contact@insightexchange.net

Louise Whelan <https://australiansall.photoshelter.com/about>