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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



**APERTURE GALLERY PRESENTS:
INTENDED CONSEQUENCES: RWANDAN CHILDREN BORN OF RAPE
PHOTOGRAPHS AND INTERVIEWS BY JONATHAN TORGOVNIK**

**OPENING RECEPTION: MARCH 5, 6:00-8:00 P.M.
Exhibition on View: Friday, February 20, 2009—Thursday, May 7, 2009**

**EXHIBITION AND ACCOMPANYING BOOK COINCIDE WITH 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF
RWANDAN GENOCIDE; SATELLITE EXHIBITION OPENS IN LOBBY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS ON APRIL 7TH AS PART OF ALL DAY COMMEMORATIVE EVENT**

During the 1994 genocide, over a hundred thousand Rwandan women were subjected to massive sexual violence, perpetrated by members of the infamous Hutu militia groups known as the Interhamwe. Among the survivors, the most isolated are the women who have borne children as a result of being raped. 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. In February of 2006, 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. She described how her entire family had been killed, and recounted the terrible abuse she experienced. Odette’s horrific story led Torgovnik to return to Rwanda to work on a personal project about women like Odette, who were the victims of the same heinous crimes and who were left pregnant as a result. Over the next three years, he made repeated visits to photograph these women and their children, and record their heart-wrenching stories.

Intended Consequences: Rwandan Children Born of Rape brings together Torgovnik’s powerful stories of these women. The exhibition is comprised of thirty stunning individual portraits of the women with their children accompanied by their testimonies – intensely personal accounts of the daily challenges they continue to face, and their



conflicted feelings about raising a child who is a reminder of horrors endured. The testimonies are presented through text panels as well as video interviews with the women projected on a large screen 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.

An accompanying book of the same title will be published by Aperture worldwide on April 7, 2009, coinciding with the 15th anniversary of the start date of the genocide, and a satellite exhibition of Torgovnik's work that will open in the lobby of the United Nations that same day. This commemorative event at the UN will include a solemn reading of testimonies of survivors of the genocide -- including some of the women in the Aperture book and show -- by UN officials, well known personalities, and students. Readers to be confirmed include the UN Secretary-General, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, and the Rwandan Ambassador to the UN, a genocide survivor himself. Similar readings of testimonies of the survivors will take place in cities all over the world, including Melbourne, Cape Town, Johannesburg, London, Tokyo, and New York. "The Reading of The Testimonies" is a project of SURF Survivors Fund and Foundation Rwanda, supported by the United Nations, and the UN event will officially kick off the global commemoration.

Relevant Activities and Events:

On Wednesday, April 29, Aperture will present a panel discussion with Torgovnik and others to be announced at its Aperture Gallery location. Additionally, Aperture, in collaboration with Open Society Institute, Amnesty International, and Foundation Rwanda—founded by Torgovnik and non-profit professional Jules Shell—will launch a traveling exhibition that will visit ten universities in the United States as well as venues worldwide. A companion 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 of war. The guide will be distributed to thousands of educators, including the venues for the touring exhibit. Venues confirmed to date for the touring show are: Kniznick Gallery, Women's Studies Research Center, Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass (February 23-April 9, 2009); The 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.

The Aperture book includes an essay by Rwandan-born **Marie Consolée Mukagendo** who has worked with UNICEF for over five years. She specializes in working with children affected by armed conflict.

REVIEW COPIES OF THE BOOK AND ARTWORK ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

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