

## **Denis Rouvre, des voix blessées**

**En faisant le portrait de femmes victimes de violences à travers le monde, le photographe offre un regard sans détour sur une face sombre de l'humanité. Une exposition et un livre témoignent de ce travail réalisé avec l'ONG Médecins du Monde.**

*“Ma vie est un tourment”* dit une jeune femme que Denis Rouvre a rencontrée au Népal. Ces mots résument bien l'état d'esprit dans lequel se trouvent ces femmes qui ont accepté de témoigner à visage découvert. Toutes ont été victimes de violences. Violences conjugales, violences sociales, violences guerrières... En République Démocratique du Congo, le photographe croise la route de nombreuses femmes qui ont connu d'accablantes agressions, parfois des viols. Là-bas, il n'est pas rare que des soldats aient décimé toute une famille et qu'ils s'en soient pris aux rares survivantes. *“On ne peut compter sur personne”* affirme Marina, une jeune congolaise photographiée par Denis Rouvre.

### **Parias**

Pendant plus d'un an, le photographe est allé aux quatre coins du monde pour documenter la blessure de ces femmes. En Inde, certaines insistent sur la difficulté de s'émanciper tandis qu'en Syrie d'autres relatent la crise qu'elles vivent depuis le début de la guerre. Des Philippines, il y a ces femmes qui sont exploitées dans des pays arabes, chez des familles riches qui les traitent comme des parias. En France, Denis Rouvre rencontre notamment Joe qui a été harcelée par un homme quand elle était enfant. *“Même pas mal”* dit-elle aujourd'hui, combattante, tout en avouant qu'il lui a fallu des années pour se remettre de cette plaie.

### **“Au centre de l'image”**

Car en plus des images où ces femmes osent prendre la pose, il y a leurs mots recueillis par le photographe qui donnent de l'ampleur à son travail et révèlent la douleur qu'elles subissent. *“Jamais je n'avais vu autant de cruauté sans filtre”*, confie Denis Rouvre et il ajoute : *“au moment de l'interview, ces femmes se sont effondrées, la plupart se sont mises à pleurer.”* En tout, il réalisera pas moins de 60 portraits. À chaque fois, il a pris la photographie après l'interview et il a cherché, explique-t-il, *“à mettre la femme au centre de l'image, montrer la tension du regard, donner de la vibration, témoigner de sa présence.”*

**Par Jean-Baptiste Gauvin**

**The Deauville Festival gave carte blanche to both emerging and seasoned photographers by inviting them to photograph the city and thus reinvent it. Now in its 10th edition, the photography festival continues to offer a wide variety of photographic styles and approaches.**

*"What I tried to emphasize was the dialogue between the spirit of the setting and the spirit of the photographs,"* explains Laura Serani, the artistic director of this year's edition, before adding: *"It's a little like theater. It's very important too light a scene just right."* As such, and perhaps more than ever, the Festival offered a veritable stage to the participants, giving them access, for example, to unlikely locales such as a suite in the legendary Hotel Normandy, or by creating large-scale installations to celebrate the work of some of the photographers.

### **Caprice**

Such is the case of the work of Klavdij Sluban, who felt passionately about the words of the writers who stayed in Deauville. Pursuing his interest in literature, the photographer went to visually explore the reflections of poets using very large formats that can make viewers a little dizzy. *"This is not an illustration of what I tried to do,"* Klavdij Sluban explains, as he places the words of writers beneath his photographs, *"but a converging of image and text, an alliance between the two."* For him, Deauville is not *"a city that offers itself up very easily,"* but rather a difficult place, *"stable in the midst of caprice,"* as Jean Cocteau once wrote.

Deauville was also photographed by South African photographer Koto Bolofo, who suffered through the city's inclement fall weather and its windy, rainy days. A retrospective of his work is on display at this year's Exhibit on the Beach, where he shot a number of his images for an October fashion shoot during which the weather played a few tricks on him. *"One day, he brought a zebra to the beach!"* laughs Philippe Normand, the City's cultural director and former artistic director of the Festival. That zebra, immortalized by the photographer, now stands tall in its image form, its feet in the sand. Next to him, images of shells mingle with posing fashion models. *"This is perhaps the most beautiful exhibition of my life,"* says Koto Bolofo, before adding that photographer Richard Avedon once gave him a piece of advice that stayed with him his entire life: *"Keep your signature. Don't let others change you."*

### **"Twinkling Lives"**

Having a signature is also important to photographer Alisa Resnik, whose work is on view at a house called La Chatonnière, with shots ripped from the night: sand that looks like water and people who look anxious or sad, struggling with something dark. *"The twinkling of lives never lived but fully felt, altered without being embellished. The sand stretches and twists until it is gobbled up by that void steeped in darkness,"* writes the photographer in a mysterious introduction to her work.

## **Pony**

Contrasting perfectly with that darkness is the humor of the Riverboom collective. Here, these photographers accustomed to war zones train their professional gaze on the small silent conflict that divides the residents of Deauville and those of neighboring Trouville. By using the juxtaposition approach, they present hilarious pictures in which the state of the sky changes depending on the location, where one person rides a magnificent stallion while another rides a tiny pony. Who emerges victorious? Difficult to say, but it is mainly the comedic aspect of the situation that lightens up the mood and points to a common reality: people always harbor a little resentment towards their neighbor, perhaps more so than towards a distant stranger.

## **Beers**

Neighbors are also a subject in the work of one of the photographers in the Emerging Talent showcase, who also won this year's edition, presided by photographer Sarah Moon: Chau-Cuong Lê. The photographer chose to photograph Deauville teenagers, transposing his own youth by asking young people to pose for him in different staged scenes. We see two friends play-fighting on the beach, a young couple sitting on a bed with two empty beers on the bedside table, a young man sunbathing.

Deauville's past is captured by another photographer from the Emerging Talent showcase, Jean-Charles Remicourt-Marie. The artist slipped photographs into old trunks that he made himself, some of which are open while others are closed, offering an unprecedented experience to each visitor. And an enigmatic one, too, because through his photos, he hints at the city's history while giving very little information, freeing the viewer to interpret it his own way and, true to the spirit of the Festival, inviting him to use to his imagination.

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