

# f F O T O I M A G E

## RITA LEISTNER

(b. 1964, Scarborough, Ontario)

### EDUCATION

1999-2000 International Center of Photography, New York  
1988-1990 M.A. (Comparative Literature) University of Toronto  
1983-1988 B.A. University of Toronto

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *Rita Leistner (Retrospective)*, University of Mexico (UNAM) Puebla (October)
- 2017 *The Tree Planters*, Stephen Bulger Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2016 *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan: From Smartphone to Palladium*, The Paul Paletti Gallery, Louisville, KY
- 2015 *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan: From Smartphone to Palladium*, The Dylan Ellis Gallery, CONTACT Photography Festival, Toronto, ON  
*Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan: From Smartphone to Palladium*, Photoville, Brooklyn, NY  
*Miklat: The Bomb Shelter Project*, The Galleries of the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel
- 2014 *À la recherche de Marshall McLuhan en Afghanistan*, Gallery Pierre Léon, L'Alliance française de Toronto, Toronto, ON  
*Le Projet Edward Curtis*, Le Musée du Nouveau Monde, La Rochelle, France  
*À la recherche de Marshall McLuhan en Afghanistan*, Le Carré Amelot, espace culturel de la Ville de La Rochelle, France
- 2013 *The Edward Curtis Project* with the play of the same name by Marie Clement, The National Arts Centre of Canada with The Great Canadian Theatre Company, Ottawa, ON
- 2010 *The Edward Curtis Project* with the play of the same name by Marie Clement, The North Vancouver Museum and Presentation House Theatre, Vancouver, BC
- 2009 *My Space* — a selection from *The Edward Curtis Project*, W2 Community Media Arts Flack Block Gallery “pop up exhibition”, Vancouver, BC  
*Les dernier bûcherons /The Last Lumberjacks*, Gallery Pierre Léon, L'Alliance française de Toronto, Toronto, ON
- 2007 *Portraitscapes of War (1): Lebanon, 2006*, The Photo Passage at Harbourfront, Toronto, ON
- 2006 *The Women of al Rashad*, Gallery Gachet, World Mad Pride Feature Exhibition, Vancouver, BC
- 2003 *Crazy Horse in Iraq and Kuwait*, The Stephen Willey Gallery, Savannah, GA
- 1999 *What Then? Portraits of Cambodia*, The Foreign Correspondents Club of Cambodia (FCCC), Phnom Penh, Cambodia

## NEW MEDIA

- 2017 *From Janet with Love* (“Legacies 150” Interactive) The National Film Board of Canada, written by Helene Klodawsky and Jennifer Haydock, photography by Rita Leistner

## SHARED EXHIBITIONS (5 or fewer artists)

- 2017 *Legacies 150* (The National Film Board of Canada), “From Janet with Love,” Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, Canada  
*Legacies 150* (The National Film Board of Canada), “From Janet with Love,” Canadian Museum of Immigration, Halifax, Canada
- 2012 *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, The Photographic Arts Federation of Turkey, Gaziantep, Turkey  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, The Photographic Arts Federation of Turkey, Ankara, Turkey
- 2011 *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, The Photographic Arts Federation of Turkey, Istanbul, Turkey  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, The Photographic Arts Federation of Turkey, Sulleymaniya, Iraq
- 2007 *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, Odegaard Library, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, American Public Health Association National Conference, WA  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, Aughinbauch Gallery, Messiah College, Grantham, PA  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, East End Arts Council, Riverhead, NY  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, Atlanta Photography Group, Atlanta, GA
- 2006 *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, Yale University, New Haven, CT  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, CRASHarts, Phoenix, AZ  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, Orange County Community College, Middletown, NY  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, CONTACT Photography Festival, Lennox Contemporary, Toronto, ON  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, University of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, AZ  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, The Photographic Gallery, New York, NY  
*Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*, The Redux Gallery, New York, NY
- 2001 *The Last Jews of Vilnius with Love Bomb*, Live Art Space, Toronto, ON

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS (6 or more artists)

- 2013 *Portraits by Iconic Canadian Photographers, Maclean's Magazine*, CONTACT Photography Festival, Toronto, Canada
- 2009 *Bienvenue*, La maison de la culture Frontenac, Montreal, QC  
*The Edward Curtis Project*, The Annenberg Space for Photography, Los Angeles, CA  
*Mother and Daughter*, PX3 Prix de la Photo, Paris, France  
*The Edward Curtis Project*, HOST Gallery, London, England
- 2008 *Iraq Through the Lens of Vietnam*, The Brighton Photo Biennial, England  
*Battlespace: Unrealities of War*, Gallery FCB, New York, NY
- 2007 *Know War!*, The George Eastman House International Museum of Photography, Rochester, NY
- 2005 The Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery Biennial, Kitchener, ON
- 2003 *American Women Wrestlers*, Visa pour l'image, Perpignan, France

## BOOKS

- 2014 Leistner, Rita, *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan*. Foreword by Julian Stallabrass. London: Intellect Books / The University of Chicago Press, February 2014.
- 2010 Clements, Marie and Rita Leistner, *The Edward Curtis Project: A Modern Picture Story*. Vancouver: Talon Books, 2010.
- 2005 Abdul-Ahad, Ghaith, Kael Alford, Thorne Anderson and Rita Leistner, *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*. Foreword by Philip Jones Griffiths. Vermont: Chelsea Green, 2005.

## ESSAYS ON PHOTOGRAPHY

- 2018 Leistner, Rita, "Photography Goes to War", in Neumüller, Moritz, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Photography and Visual Culture*, London: Routledge, 2018.
- 2014 Leistner, Rita, "Embedded with Murders", in Stallabrass, Julian, ed. *Memories of Fire: Images of War and the War of Images*. London: Photoworks, 2013.  
Leistner, Rita, "Television Wars, Review of Michael Maclear's *Guerrilla Nation: My Wars In and Out of Vietnam*", in the *Literary Review of Canada*, Spring 2014.
- 2012 Leistner, Rita, "Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan", 12-part series, in the *Literary Review of Canada On-Line*, Winter 2012.
- 2007 Leistner, Rita and Timothy Dylan Wood, "Hanging the Past — Exploring the relationship between photography and state narratives at Cambodia's Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crime", in *Idea&s — The Arts and Science Review*, University of Toronto

## ESSAYS IN EXHIBITION CATALOGS

- 2015 Leistner, Rita, "Miklat", in *Shelters*, The University of Beer Sheva, Israel, 2015.
- 2014 Leistner, Rita, "Portraits-paysages de guerre", in *Les âmes grises: récits photographiques d'après-guerre* (French). Festival allers-retours, Musée Albert Kahn, 2014.

## SELECTED MAGAZINE FEATURE STORIES (photography and text)

- 2007 Leistner, Rita, "War Stories: Portraitscapes of Lebanon", in *The Walrus*, September 2007.  
Leistner, Rita and Timothy Dylan Wood, "Hanging the Past", in *Idea&s — The Arts and Science Review*, University of Toronto, Spring, 2007.  
Leistner, Rita, "The Last Lumberjacks", in *The Walrus*, March, 2007.
- 2006 Leistner, Rita, "Portraitscapes of War: Lebanon 2006", in *The Australian Photojournalist*, 2006
- 2005 Leistner, Rita, "The Women of Al Rashad", in *The Walrus*, April 2005.  
Leistner, Rita, "The Road to Najaf", in *Idea&s — The Arts and Science Review*, University of Toronto, Spring 2005.  
Leistner, Rita, "Death is our Business: The Gravediggers of Najaf during the Siege", in *COLORS 63: FRONTIERS*, Winter 2004/2005.
- 2004 Leistner, Rita, "The Burning Tip of the Spear: Embedded with Crazy Horse in Iraq", in *The Walrus*, February 2004.  
Leistner, Rita, "Kurdish Express", in *Outpost*, July/August 2004.
- 2003 Leistner, Rita, with text by Amy Kayishian, "Mama Said Knock You Out," in *Bust*, Spring 2003.

## PHOTOJOURNALISM, photos have appeared in

*Newsweek, Time, Rolling Stone, The Walrus, The New York Times, Italian Vanity Fair, GEO France, Colors, Maclean's, The Australian Journal of Photojournalism, Ideas, The Globe and Mail, The Toronto Star, The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, Libération, Le Monde, The Daily Mail, The San Francisco Chronicle, Outpost, The Phnom Penh Post, The Cambodia Daily, Up Here, Alphabet City, BUST, The Wallstreet Journal, Mother Jones, Adbusters, The Bund Editorial (China), The Financial Post, Bagnews, Daily Kos, The Digital Journalist, ZUM: Revista de Fotografia (Brazil), The Los Angeles Times.*

## FILMOGRAPHY

*The 21st Chromosome* (Documentary Short) (2014) Director of Photography.

Awards for *The 21st Chromosome*:

Audience Favourite 2nd Place, Official Selection 2015 — Cinema Touching Disability, TX

Official Selection 2015 — ReFrame, Peterborough International Film Festival, ON

Official Selection 2014 — Hamilton Film Festival, Hamilton, ON

*Miklat* (Documentary Short) (2013) Director, Producer and Cinematographer.

Awards for *Miklat*:

Official Selection 2014 — American Documentary Film Festival, Palm Springs, CA

Official Selection 2014 — Winnipeg Reel to Real Film Festival, Winnipeg, MB

Official Selection 2014 — HollyShorts, Hollywood, CA

Official Selection 2013 — Bend River Documentary Film Festival, OR

Official Selection 2013 — Chagrin Falls Documentary Film Festival, OH

Official Selection 2013 — New Orleans International Film Festival, LA

Official Selection 2013 — International Film Festival of Cinematic Arts, Los Angeles, CA

Award of Excellence, Best Shorts Competition, 2014

## GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

- 2017 Finalist, Robert Gardner Photography Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2017 Associate Fellow, Victoria University in the University of Toronto (2012 - present)
- 2012 Victoria University Conference Grant, “The Pictures from Syria” web conference co-produced by Rita Leistner and Webby Award-winning Bagnews (now known as, Reading the Pictures) Shortlist, Massey Fellowship, University of Toronto
- 2010 Canada Council for the Arts, Visual Arts Grant for *Portraitscapes of War II: Israel*
- 2009 Ontario Arts Council Exhibition Grant, *Les dernier bûcherons / The Last Lumberjacks* at the Alliance Française, Toronto, ON
- 2007 Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad, 2010 Winter Olympics, Arts Partners in Creative Development Project Grant for *The Edward Curtis Project*
- 2006 Shortlist, Carter Foundation for Mental Health Journalism Fellowship
- 2005 Ben & Jerry’s Foundation Grant to tour *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*
- 2003 Canada Council for the Arts, Exhibition Travel Grant to attend Visa pour l’image, France  
CNN bursary with Rory Peck Trust, Media Training in Conflict Zones
- 1990 Scholarship for graduate studies in Comparative Literature, University of Toronto

## AWARDS

- 2015 The Dorothy Lee Award for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Culture — Finalist, for *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan*  
The Lewis Mumford Award for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Technics — Finalist, for *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan*  
The Marshall McLuhan Award for Outstanding Book in the Field of Media Ecology — Shortlist, for *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan*
- 2013 Best Shorts, Award of Excellence, Documentary Short Film, *Miklat*
- 2009 PX3 Prix de la Photo Paris – 3rd Place, Portraiture for “Mother and Daughter”  
The Design Club of Canada – Award of Merit for “Portraitscapes of War: Lebanon, 2006,” in *The Walrus*
- 2008 Canadian National Magazine Awards – Honourable Mention, Photojournalism, “Portraitscapes of War: Lebanon, 2006”, in *The Walrus*
- 2007 The Design Club of Canada – Gold Award for “The Last Lumberjacks”, in *The Walrus*  
American Photography 23 – Winner in Fine Art category, for “Portraitscapes of War: Lebanon, 2006”  
Applied Arts Magazine - Winner in Photojournalism category, for “Portraitscapes of War: Lebanon, 2006”
- 2006 Canadian National Magazine Awards – Gold Medal, Words and Pictures for “The Women of al Rashad”, in *The Walrus*  
Canadian National Magazine Awards – Honourable Mention, Photojournalism, for “The Women of al Rashad”, *The Walrus*  
Canadian National Magazine Awards – Honourable Mention, Photojournalism, for “The Road to Najaf”, in *Idea&s — The Arts and Science Review*, University of Toronto
- 2005 Nominated for Courage in Journalism Award, International Women’s Media Foundation  
Canadian National Magazine Awards – Gold Medal, Portraits, for “Sisters in Arms”, *Maclean's*  
Canadian National Magazine Awards – Honourable Mention, Portraits, for “The Burning Tip of the Spear”, in *The Walrus*

- Canadian National Magazine Awards – Honourable Mention, Words and Pictures, for “The Burning Tip of the Spear”, in *The Walrus*
- Canadian National Magazine Awards – Honourable Mention, Investigative Reporting, for “The Burning Tip of the Spear”, in *The Walrus*
- Canadian National Magazine Awards, 2005 – Honourable Mention, Politics and Public Interest, for “The Burning Tip of the Spear”, in *The Walrus*
- NPPA, Best of Photojournalism, First Prize, Recurring Magazine Feature: for “Sisters in Arms”, in *Maclean's*
- The Design Club of Canada, Honourable Mention, for “The Road to Najaf”, in *Idea&s — The Arts and Science Review*, University of Toronto
- 1997 Canadian National Magazine Awards, Gold Medal, Words and Pictures for “Screefers - The Treeplanters of Canada”, Rita Leistner, ed. in *Canadian Geographic*

## REVIEWS AND SCHOLARSHIP ABOUT RITA LEISTNER'S WORK

- 2017 “Restaging Indigenous-Settler Relations: Intercultural Theatre as redress rehearsal in Marie Clements’ and Rita Leistner’s *The Edward Curtis Project*”, by Brenda Vellino, *Theatre Research in Canada*, 38.1.
- 2017 “Rita Leistner. *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan*”, *Kultura Wspolczesna* (Contemporary Culture) journal (Poland), by Kalina Kukiłko-Rogozińska, February 2017.
- 2015 “Rita Leistner’s Quest for Marshall McLuhan”, *ARTORONTO*, May 16 2015
- 2014 “Confessions of a Digital Naïve”, *Media and Culture Reviews*, July 16 2014
- “A New War a New Medium”, *Source: The Photographic Review*, by David Bate, London, Spring 2014
- “First New Book of 2014 is a Doosie!” The International Center of Photography Library Blog, by Deirdre Donohue, January 2014
- “Les âmes grises: récits photographiques d’après-guerre,” by Lorraine Rossignol, *Le Monde*, Paris, July 5, 2014
- “Rita Leistner au Musée Albert-Kahn”, *L’oeil de la photographie*, 26 juin 2014
- 2011 “The Frozen Bodies of Edward S. Curtis”, *The Literary Review of Canada*, by Wanda Nanabush, April 2011
- 2010 “An Intervention Into Native Identities Leads to More Questions”, *The Globe and Mail*, by Michael Harris, January 24, 2010
- 2006 “You Weren’t Meant to See This”, *Rabble.ca*, May 16, 2006
- “The Treacherous Medium: Why Photography Critics Hate Photographs”, by Susie Linfield, *Boston Review*, Sept 2006
- “Unembedded”, *Photo 8*, by Ruth Hedges, May 2006
- 2005 “Live from Iraq”, by Nina Berman, *Alternet*, Dec 2005

## INTERVIEWS & PROFILES OF RITA LEISTNER

- 2016 *One Picture at a Time* (Documentary Short Film, 8 min) about Rita Leistner and the making of her book *Looking for Marshall McLuhan in Afghanistan*, Directed by Sarah Martin
- 2014 “New Photos from Iraq Trouble Photographer Who Covered the Last War”, Produced by Stephen Snyder, Public Radio International (PRI), June 20, 2014
- “Rita Leistner, Photographe (Canada)”, par Cyril Mounier, *Artes Magazine*, La Rochelle, France le 27 février 2014
- “Marshall McLuhan, Green Lantern and the War in Afghanistan”, by Diana Kuprel, in the University of Toronto Alumni Interviews, February 2014

- “Rita Leistner and Smartphone Photography”, *Chinese Photography*, June 2014.
- 2013 “Rita Leistner”, Interview with and photographs by Rita Leistner in Kamber, Michael, ed. *The Untold Stories from Iraq: Photojournalists on War*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013.
- 2012 “ReFramed: In Conversation with Rita Leistner”, by Barbara Davidson, in *The Los Angeles Times*, July 18, 2012
- 2011 “Photography and Activism”, *Canadian Art*, Web Features video, Fall 2011  
 “Photographers”, *Canadian Art*, Web Features video, Spring 2011
- 2010 “Look Closely: Award-winning photojournalist Rita Leistner shines a light on North American native communities”, by Jason McBride, in *U of T Magazine*, Winter 2010  
 RCI (Radio Canada International) Rita Leistner, *Le Projet Edward Curtis*
- 2009 “Shadows and Light—The piercing perspectives of photojournalist Rita Leistner”, by Chantal Braganza, in *The Ryerson Review of Journalism*, Summer 2009
- 2008 RCI (Radio Canada International), Macadam, Rita Leistner, *Les derniers bûcherons*
- 2005 CBC Television, The HOUR, Rita Leistner in Iraq  
 ABC Television The Mix, Unembedded photojournalists in Iraq  
 TVO, Rita Leistner in Iraq
- 2004 CBC Radio, The Current, Rita Leistner, *The Women of al Rashad*  
 CBC Radio, Toronto Here and Now, Rita Leistner in Iraq  
 “Going to War with Crazy Horse”, by Sonia Verma, *The Toronto Star*, January 2004
- 2003 “Rita Leistner”, The Hampson Interview, *The Globe and Mail*, June 5th, 2003

## TEACHING

2010 – 2016

As a Sessional Instructor at The University of Toronto, created original course,  
 “The Art and Purpose of Photojournalism and Documentary Photography.”  
 Collaborated in creation of new minor degree program, “Creativity and Society”

## SELECTED PUBLIC LECTURES AND PANELS

- 2017 “From the Battlefield to the Cut Block”, The University of Toronto
- 2016 Centro de Fotografía de Montevideo, Uruguay
- 2016 Roberto Mata Taller de Fotografía, Caracas, Venezuela  
 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico D.F.  
 Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico D.F.
- 2015 Photoville Festival, Brooklyn, NY, USA  
 Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, Toronto, ON  
 The School of Visual Arts, New York, NY  
 The Bronx Documentary Center, New York  
 Ryerson University, Converge Lecture Series, Toronto, ON  
 The University of Beer Sheva, Israel
- 2014 The International Centre of Photography, New York, NY  
 TVO The Agenda: War through the Lens  
 The Northrop Frye Centre, The University of Toronto, Toronto, ON  
 University of Toronto Later Life Learning, Toronto, ON  
 Spur Festival, Toronto, ON  
 L’université de La Rochelle France
- 2013 TVO The Agenda: A Picture's Worth  
 Sheridan College, Toronto, ON

Canadian Conference of College Photography Educators (keynote), Charlottetown, PEI  
“Iraq War—Ten Years Later”, Public Radio International Lecture Series, (with Sebastian Junger,  
Bob Woodruff and U.S. Army Col. Ross Coffman, Boston, MA.

## **COLLECTIONS**

The Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, Canada

The Comanche National Museum, Oklahoma, USA

The George Eastman House International Museum of Photography, Rochester, USA

Le musée du nouveau monde (Museum of the New World), La Rochelle, France

The North Vancouver Museum, North Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Imago Mundi Luciano Benetton Collection, Italy