

cv: Alexandra Jacoby

A self-taught painter and photographer, Alexandra Jacoby is not a vagina expert.

The project was born out of a conversation with a friend about what their vaginas looked like, and how they compared to other vaginas. As there was no visual reference available, Jacoby set about creating vulva portraits—a tribute to individuality and diversity—for women.

Jacoby has made 57 vagina portraits to date and has presented a number of preview exhibitions.

She has also developed a website, vaginaverite.com, which includes over a 1000 pages of responses to questionnaires on vagina-related topics, essays and reference links.

vagina vérité™ is Jacoby's primary artistic focus. She plans to publish a book of the images, and to exhibit widely.

In between exhibitions, Jacoby has the v-portraits installed on her living room wall and welcomes viewers. She also holds a monthly salon.

appearances

Vulvas for Dummies. Aired July 2006.
Interview segment on the Dr. Laura Berman Show (radio).

Sexploration: The Guide to Feeling Truly Great in Bed, by Jane Bogart, M.A., CHES, published March 2006.
vaginaverite.com cited on p. 90 and p.92.

education

1988, B.A. Psychology, Adelphi University
1986, B.A. English Literature, SUNY Albany

affiliations; volunteering

The Exhibitionists
NARAL
NOW
Planned Parenthood
Society for Menstrual Cycle Research
The Women's Mosaic
VDay

websites

leavethecastle.net: paintings and photography
menstruationstore.com: information portal (work-in-progress)
vaginaverite.com: companion website to vagina vérité™, a documentary for women

exhibitions and presentations

Emerging Artists International. October 2005, NYC.
As part of the citywide Emerging Artists open studios event, Jacoby invited viewers to experience the v-portraits.

Society for Menstrual Cycle Research.
June 2005, Boulder.

An installation of 50 v-portraits and printed excerpts from vaginaverite.com questionnaire-responses engaged health professionals and researchers in conversation about how our personal experiences of our bodies relate to health and well-being.

Open Studio. March 2005, NYC.
An six-hour unfolding conversation among women and men in front of the v-wall.

Vaginas, an exploration. March 2005, NYC.
As part of the Alliance for Women's Equality's *Awe-inspiring Authors* series, the v-portraits were exhibited during Liz Topp's reading from her book, *Vaginas, An Owner's Manual*. Lively Q&A followed.

Love Your Tree. Dec 2004-Jan 2005, NYC.
Spire (a 6' 3" totem of eight v-portraits) was included in the *Love Your Tree* exhibition of 16 photographers' work on women's relationships with their bodies. The *Love Your Tree* space was created by Paulette Cole as a companion to Eve Ensler's *The Good Body*—a place for women to gather, talk and listen. The exhibition was curated by Paula Allen.

Threat: A Gathering of the Tribes. Oct-Nov, 2004, NYC.
As part of the *Threat* exhibition, a group show of paintings, photographs and assemblages, a wall of 41 v-portraits, unabashed, soft and proud, posed a challenge to the concept of power as domination.

Decoration & Handicraft: Re-visioning 1970's Feminist Art: Parson's School of Design. April, 2003, NYC.
With the v-portraits installed on the classroom blackboard, Jacoby presented the project and explored the complexities of representing female sexuality with students.

yOur Exhibition. Dec, 2002, NYC.
The first public exhibition of 30 v-portraits surprised and stimulated viewers at Smithfield, a bar on the lower east side of Manhattan. It was attended by 130 women, many of whom had heard much about the project, but still didn't know what to expect until they saw the images. Some were nervous about attending.