

# leave the castle Thought-provoking art and experiences

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FEB 2010

Dear everyone,

My name is Alexandra Jacoby. I'm an artist/photographer, and for over nine years, I have been working on a project for women, called [vagina vérité®](#). I'm making vulva portraits, proud and unabashed, straight-up documentary photographs—*so that we can see ourselves for ourselves*.

The [project began](#) as a response to a friend who "didn't like the way her vagina looked". I wanted her to know that there was no one right way to look, and it became something of a mission for me to create a document of respect and appreciation for our vaginas, our vulvas, our bodies, ourselves.

I've photographed 108 v-portraits so far and am reaching the final stretch of photography, after which I'll get to work on publishing [vagina vérité®](#) and exhibiting the v-portraits widely.

My hope is that this book of our vulva portraits, while it does not actually tell any woman's story—much less every woman's story—that, by presenting our unique "faces", it will connect all of us: that any woman who picks it up will know that she is included, unique and valued. Because she is.

I could use your help toward completing photography: it's not a number of v-portraits that I am pursuing, but a feeling that we're all represented, and at this point, that means to include more:

- vulvas of survivors of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting [FGM/C]
- transgender vulvas
- vulvas of women of darker skin tone
- [vulvas with more hair](#)

Where might I post or email this outreach for [participation](#). Or perhaps you would like [to make a v-portrait](#)?

This is not say that there is any vulva not welcome, wanted and integral to the project. This is just where I've gotten to in the work so far. Everyone is invited to create a v-portrait. **vagina vérité® is for and about all of us!**

The women who participate in this project may or may not be comfortable with their bodies. They range in age, experiences and lifestyle, and relationship with their vaginas.

Since DEC 2002, I have been presenting v-portrait [preview exhibitions](#) on my own and as part of group exhibitions, including producing two [Vagina Festivals](#) [visual & performance art weekend experiences] as well as salons in my apartment—where the v-portraits are installed on my living room walls.

Also, as a space for conversation, I established [vaginaverite.com](#); it contains over 1000 pages of questionnaire-responses on range of v-topics. Over 2.7 million have visited the site so far and it currently averages over 700 visitors a day. I intend to revise the site later this year and focus energy on expanding the online community.

This project has been and continues to be the most meaningful work I've ever engaged in. I am very excited about the conversations that will spiral out of publishing the book and v-portrait exhibitions!

I welcome your suggestions, comments and questions relating to this, or any aspect of the project.

THANK YOU for reading and for your consideration.

peace & gratitude,



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