

Artist: Éva Szombat

Exhibition title: I Want Orgasms, Not Roses

Curated by Peter Bencze

Venue: Longtermhandstand, Budapest

Date: December 1, 2022 – February 10, 2023

@evaszombat @longtermhandstand @everybodyneedsart

www.longtermhandstand.art

The series itself is a collection of photography and interviews, all made between 2017-2022. The photos are about sexuality, trauma, shame, desire, acceptance, and rebellion. In 2017 I placed an ad. I was looking for people who would show me and my camera their sex toys without any inhibition. Thirty women have let me in their intimate space, showed their faces, used their own names, and decided to talk about their innermost personal matters. I have always been interested in mental well-being, and how it manifests in people. My approach was always different, and this time I decided to examine well being through sexuality. Everybody has a relationship with sexuality, doesn't matter the gender, the social class, upbringing, even if someone identifies as asexual, it is still a large part of a personality. It is not something that can be disregarded. While sexuality is free to discuss in western popular culture, there is a rise in fundamentalist values in Eastern Europe and in several other parts of the world. Abortion rights are under debate, LGBTQ representation is being restricted. There is hardly any conversation about sexuality in my region, while sex itself is often represented. This duality interested me very much. My goal was to examine how we can become more open, more accepting, and how we can get rid of our frustrations. I wanted to help separate shame from sexuality through the use of photography, by making the invisible visible. Whether it is about the world of men, identity, our environment, or individual and social problems, sociological examination is always an important part of my work. Being entertaining and thrilling is always the main focus for me. I am constantly looking for examples of happiness in the material world around me, and if I can't find it, I create still lifes on my own, or seek out people who actively increase their own happiness. The way I install my photos is crucial, the frame is the organic part of the picture itself, I often make unique frames and atmosphere for the pictures. It is important for me to create artworks, which are not difficult to understand, so that my audience is able to find them-selves in the subjects. My mission is to make people realize that life is not so terrible, but if it is, that terribleness can be overcome to enjoy life to the fullest. I Want Orgasms, Not Roses, the first showing of the Robert Capa Award winning series, and the first opportunity to purchase the photo book of the same title.

The book has been realised in collaboration with the prestigious German publisher, Kehrer Verlag, Everybody Needs Art and Longtermhandstand.