

FORMAT 2024

FORMAT International Photography Festival happens every other year in Derby. As a part of FORMAT's off year programme the festival has partnered with LCB Depot to celebrate its 20th anniversary, bringing amazing international photography to Leicester!

Venues across the city are hosting exhibitions from **25th March - 26th April 2024**. Find out more about the exhibition venues and artists involved at <https://lcbdepot.co.uk/event/format24/> or @lcbdepot



Stolen Spring

Alena Grom

Photography, video

I live in Bucha and work in Irpin. After the Russian occupation, these cities were destroyed. The military landscape has become my reality and routine. Every day I see people who are restoring their cities, their personal lives from the ruins and looking into the future.

I created a series of photographs in a historical dialogue with images by Polish photographer Michael Nash, who captured how the photographer used a decorative backdrop to mask the ruins of Warsaw during World War II in 1945-1946.

The heroes of my photographs are women who became victims of Russian aggression.

The occupation continued in the spring, people who survived this tragic period did not notice how spring passed, how chestnuts and lilies of the valley bloomed, birds flew in. They were deprived not only of their homes, loved ones, work, health, but also part of their lives. IDPs from Donbass and Crimea have a second tragic spring. A stolen spring is a stolen life. Each photo is a personal tragedy, but it is also a life-affirming story of a survivor, a hope that Ukraine will rise from the ruins.

Not for sale

Artist Bio

Ukrainian artist and documentary photographer Alena Grom was born in Donetsk. In April 2014 she was forced to leave her hometown due to military events in Eastern Ukraine. Since 2017 she has lived in Bucha, a town outside of Kyiv.

As a result of the full-scale invasion of Russia in February 2022, Grom and her family became refugees for the second time, but returned after the de-occupation of Bucha.

These events largely affected her artistic practice. Photography became a salvation for Alena and a way to deal with the traumatic reality of war. Since 2016 Alena Grom's work focuses on places affected by military aggression. Her lens captures victims of the war, migrants and refugees, and war-torn Ukraine in large.

However, her photographs are not illustrations of pity or grief. Life in spite of everything is one of the main themes of the artist.

Alena Grom's projects were exhibited extensively in Ukraine and internationally; and recognised by a number of international photography awards. To name a few recent ones: LensCulture Portrait Awards 2023/ Finalist; 2022 Tokyo International Foto Awards / Prize Gold ; International Photography Awards "Best of Show 2022" by this year's curator; Prix de la Photographie, Paris (PX3).

Facebook: [«Alena Grom»](#)