

Claire Felicie

I was born in the south of the Netherlands, in the city of Breda, in 1966. The first pictures I took was at age 18 with my brother's camera, the second I saw them after getting them developed I was hooked. I had to get my own camera and pursue my new passion. In 1988, after the birth of my eldest son I moved to Amsterdam with my husband and gave birth to four more children in the coming years. I took up a study History at the University of Amsterdam. At that time it didn't occur to me that I could become a professional photographer, and I chose a study that I'm still very much interested in and take my advantage of. In 2002, after meeting some important figures such as Herman Hoeneveld and Suzanne Dechert who believed strongly in my work (the first being an editor at PF Magazine and the other being the director of the Melkweg gallery at the time) I decided to start my own business in photography, and since then I've had a lot of exhibitions and publications.

At the age of four I was confronted with my mother's death. The sudden loss of a beloved family member affected me deeply, even at such a young age. Ever since I have been fascinated with how we cope when we lose those close to us. What happens when our dreams or fantasies are destroyed, what makes life bearable after those tragic moments and do we find reconciliation in the end?

Here are the young men

My series "Here are the young men" (The Netherlands – Afghanistan, 2009-2010) show photos of Dutch marines deployed to Afghanistan. These marines are young boys, full of excitement and expectations who are being sent to a war zone. There they are confronted with pain, sadness and death. Will something appear on their faces of these experiences? To find an answer to this question Claire Felicie photographed the marines of the 13th infantry company of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps, before, during and after their deployment in Uruzgan.

The series 'Here are the young men' is divided in three subseries:

'Marked': black and white triptychs of marines before, during and after their tour of duty to Afghanistan.

'Armoured': diptychs of black and white portraits of marines back from patrol and photos of their good luck charms.

'Committed': colour photos of marines on nightly patrols and on their Combat Outpost Tabar in Uruzgan, Afghanistan