



Jenny Nijenhuis Brings SA's Dirty Laundry to Cornell University



SA's Dirty Laundry public installation

[Jenny Nijenhuis](#) is a contemporary South African sculptor and visual artist known for her sculptures and public installations. As a visual artist Jenny uses sculpture, photography and installation that seeks to answer questions such as: "Who am I?"; "What is freedom and does it exist?"; "How do we become caught up in the belief that we are what we are merely experiencing?"

In late 2018 Nijenhuis was contacted by the Cornell University International Students Union (ISU) about giving the keynote address at a university-wide event being hosted on the 7th of March 2019. She has been asked to introduce the work she is doing as an advocate for womxn's rights, to talk about her journey as an artist, and the role her work plays in effecting socio-political change by highlighting issues around identity and the female experience.

The event is focused on highlighting how womxn around the world are uniquely affected by shared global issues, which see womxn suppressed, and in particular sexual violence. The event hopes to focus on how womxn around the world are attempting to address sexual violence within their own cultural environments. Nijenhuis will be

speaking about womxn's rights in terms of her own work (and SA's Dirty Laundry), but also about the situation specifically in South Africa. Why South Africa has such high rates of sexual abuse and how womxn deal with these issues.



Artist Jenny Nijenhuis

Cornell will be airing the SA's Dirty Laundry documentary at the event and a small portion of the installation will be displayed onsite. ISU is a student-run organization that represents more than five thousand international students. They strongly advocate for rights and resources by upholding Cornell's motto of "Any Person, Any Study". In order to promote multicultural awareness in the Cornell community, they host large-scale events and fund the university's cultural organizations.

ISU came across Nijenhuis work through a research paper published on [Tandfonline](#) and consequently through a book which included SA's Dirty Laundry in a transnational study on sexual violence titled "[Disrupting Shameful Legacies - Girls and Young Women Speak Back through the Arts to Address Sexual Violence](#)". Edited by Claudia Mitchell, Ph.D and Relebohile Moletsane, Ph.D Brill Sense Publishers.

ISU felt that Nijenhuis background as an artist and writer on issues of women and femininity, freedom, culture, religion, and gender would be valuable in providing guidance and perspective to promoting internationalism on campus.



Cornell University, New York

The aim of this project is to invite inspiring people with diverse backgrounds to give a talk to students on campus to increase dialogue about issues around the world. This year, ISU is focusing on sexual violence against women. Last year, they hosted [Dr. Eleni Gabre-Madhin](#), an esteemed Ethiopian economist who has studied and worked all over the world, particularly focusing on African development. As part of a [refugee awareness campaign](#), they also invited accomplished Syrian artist [Mohamad Hafez](#), whose work juxtaposes destruction and hope in the Syrian civil war.