

PRESS RELEASE — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Counter-Records: Imaging Law, Gender, and Justice

A new global virtual exhibition from This is Gender and Global 50/50

A Visual Reckoning on Power, Proof, and the Politics of Justice

Global 50/50 and its visual storytelling platform *This is Gender*, present *Counter-Records: Imaging Law, Gender, and Justice*, a new virtual photography exhibition exploring how law and justice are lived, contested, and reimagined through a gendered lens.

Launching ahead of Global 50/50's forthcoming Law & Justice Report — the first global review of gender equality across the law and justice sector — *Counter-Records* turns to photography as a site of testimony, resistance, and imagination.

Photography as Evidence, Photography as Dissent

In law, an image can testify. It enters the record as evidence, carrying the weight of proof and persuasion. Yet beyond the courtroom, photographs testify differently — not to confirm, but to question; not to fix meaning, but to open it.

In an age of rollback and control, rights are curtailed, protest becomes a site of surveillance, and the law polices not only behaviour but bodies themselves. In this climate of escalating biopolitics, the photograph becomes a counter-record — not an instrument of the state, but a tool of dissent.

Since its inception, *This is Gender* has mobilised photography as a tool of inquiry — to see differently, challenge power, and catalyse change. *Counter-Records* builds on this practice, turning the lens toward how deeply gender inequality is embedded within global legal infrastructures.

A Global Call, A Collective Vision

Counter-Records brings together photographs selected from a global open call spanning more than 35 countries, reviewed by an international jury of artists, curators, and advocates.

Across diverse visual practices — including portraiture, documentary, abstraction, and experimental form — the works expose how systems of law and governance are gendered

at every level: who is seen and who is silenced, believed and discredited, protected and punished.

As participating artist Claire Thomas reflects:

“A visual language of justice, for me, isn’t about depicting courts or dramatic legal moments. It’s about revealing the everyday ways justice is lived — in how we care for one another, how we resist harm, and how we imagine collective strength.”

Together, the artists map the collisions between fairness promised and fairness denied — from the architecture of the courtroom to the intimacies of care, fear, survival, and joy. The exhibition forms a living counter-archive: a record of resistance, rupture, and re-imagination across the gender spectrum, and an invitation to see justice otherwise.

A Turning Point for Gender and Justice

The launch of *Counter-Records* comes at a defining historical moment. Movements for gender justice are confronting intensifying political backlash, the erosion of rights once considered secure, and growing attempts to control bodies, movement, and dissent.

This exhibition calls not only for attention, but for engagement. To picture justice, it suggests, is not simply to document it — it is to imagine it, question it, and build it into being.

Exhibition Details

Opening: 12 January 2025

Format: Virtual exhibition

Location: <https://thisisgender.global5050.org/stories/2025-counter-records/>

Presented by: Global 50/50’s *This is Gender*

Press & Contact

For media enquiries, interview requests, press images, or updates on the forthcoming **Global 50/50 Law & Justice Report**, please contact: info@global5050.org

Web:

<https://thisisgender.global5050.org/>

www.global5050.org

Media Notes

Press images

A selection of exhibition images is available for press use, with captions, alt text, and credit information provided.

You can access these [here](#).

Winning images:

- **CROWN OF CURSE AND LIGHT** (*Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2022*) — **Jahid Apu**
A woman stands in a beam of light inside a lentil factory, hands raised in quiet restraint — tracing the gendered and economic afterlives of wrongful imprisonment, long after justice has failed.
 - **PANH-Ô KAYAPÓ, A VOZ DA RESISTÊNCIA** (*Pará, Brazil, 2025*) — **Ester Menezes**
An Indigenous woman leader protests Brazil's "Devastation Bill," exposing how law enables environmental destruction while erasing the leadership of women defending land and collective rights.
 - **THE ENJOYMENT OF LIFE IS NOT FOR ALL** (*Purulia, West Bengal, India, 2022*) — **Barun Rajgaria**
A girl carries water home as boys play freely in the river — a stark portrait of how gendered injustice quietly decides whose childhood is protected, and whose labour begins early.
 - **MARKED** (*Downtown Los Angeles, USA, 2025*) — **Lela Edgar**
A man faces riot police at an anti-ICE protest, his scarred body exposed. Here, the body itself becomes evidence — bearing the marks of state violence without explanation or defence.
 - **DEVELOPING YOUR VOICE** (*Iwaya, Lagos, Nigeria, 2021*) — **Ismail Odetola**
A woman stages protest through performance, dressed in newspapers and raising a loudspeaker. Resistance is embodied, as visibility and voice are reclaimed through gesture and imagination.
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About Counter-Records: Imaging Law, Gender, and Justice

The exhibition unfolds across five interlinked thematic lenses, tracing how law and justice operate across institutions, environments, relationships, bodies, and imagined futures:

- **Architectures of Power** — How institutions shape justice and reproduce inequality
- **Geographies of Justice** — How law is written into landscapes, borders, and environments
- **The Social Contract** — Where justice is lived through relationships, belonging, and solidarity
- **(Em)Bodies of Evidence** — How law inhabits the flesh, and how bodies become testimony
- **Radical Visions** — Imagining justice otherwise, through creativity, refusal, and collective possibility

About Imogen Bakelmun

Imogen Bakelmun is a curator, researcher, and writer, and has led *This is Gender* since its inception. Her practice spans community-rooted collaboration, critical visual cultures, and experimental storytelling, with a particular focus on gender, racialisation, disability, and migration. She has particular experience working at the intersection of visual justice, data, advocacy, and policy.

She has curated projects internationally and worked across major UK cultural institutions and digital culture platforms, and has led visual research on two major policy studies at University College London focused on refugees and migration, designing and delivering participatory and photovoice projects in close collaboration with artists and affected communities.

Alongside her curatorial practice, Imogen writes on visual culture, gender, and social justice for major publications and institutional platforms. Her work is shaped by a commitment to reflective representation, accessible curation, and participatory methodologies that challenge who gets to see, speak, and be seen.

About This is Gender (TiG)

This is Gender is a global visual platform from Global 50/50 that uses visual storytelling as a form of cultural intervention, confronting how gender is represented, misunderstood, and erased across global systems of power. Launched in 2019 as a call for images to disrupt traditional policy reporting, TiG has evolved into a strategy for research, advocacy, and critical reflection. Operating at the intersection of art, data, and activism, it surfaces lived experiences too often excluded from official records, revealing how gender cuts across bodies, borders, and power.

Now in its sixth year, TiG is a growing archive of over 400 visual stories — drawn from more than 5,000 submissions across 140+ countries. Contributors span the gender spectrum and range from first-time image-makers to established photographers. Through curated exhibitions addressing themes such as decolonisation, disability, and the pandemic, TiG challenges the idea that representation is neutral. Instead, it insists that how we see the world shapes what we believe is possible — and whose lives are made visible, valued, or expendable.

<https://thisisgender.global5050.org>
