



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHAL CHELBIN HOW TO DANCE THE WALTZ

April 15 – May 29, 2021

Artist reception:
Saturday, April 17, 2021
2:00 – 7:00 p.m.

ClampArt is pleased to present Michal Chelbin's exhibition "How to Dance the Waltz," her first solo show at the gallery, and her fifth in New York City. The exhibition coincides with the release of Chelbin's monograph of the same title from Damiani (Hardcover, 108 pages, 11 x 12 inches, \$60).

In his preface to the book, Joseph Akel writes: "That pervading sense of contradiction, that eruptive moment when budding youth clashes with burgeoning adulthood, lies at the heart of Chelbin's images, evinced through her juxtaposition of teenage subjects captured in garments, costumes, and uniforms symbolic of long-standing institutions and their traditions." The artist has long been fascinated by costumes and uniforms, commenting on how youth is so startlingly apparent—especially when dressed up in the clothes of adulthood. This fascination led Chelbin over the course of five years to photograph young matadors training at schools in Seville, Spain; cadets at a military academy in Ukraine; and high school students on the eve of prom in Kiev (the capital of Ukraine). The artist looks at puberty and gender as a performance that involves keen attention to costumery. The photographs address the ways in which societal expectations of gender, especially in regard to clothing and uniform, inform a young person's development and identity. With the subjects gazing directly into the artist's lens, Chelbin's remarkable portraits simultaneously represent the sitters' vulnerability and self-possession.



But again, as observed by Akel, Chelbin's young subjects are "bound by the traditions and institutions which frame their lives." These are not the rebellious teens photographed by the likes of Larry Clark, Nan Goldin, and Ryan



McGinley. Referring to Ukraine and Spain and their appeal to her, Chelbin observes, "It's the Old World. . . [M]en are still taught to be men, to be warriors, and the women are taught to know how to dance a waltz."

Michal Chelbin's work has been widely shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions worldwide. Her work can be found in many public and private collections, such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Getty, Los Angeles; Jewish Museum, New York City; Cleveland Museum of Art; Tel Aviv Museum; SFMOMA, San Francisco; and many more.

Her critically acclaimed monograph *Strangely Familiar: Acrobats, Athletes and other Traveling Troupes* was published by

Aperture in 2008 and was awarded PDN's Photo Annual Book Award in 2009. Her next monograph entitled *The Black Eye* was published in June 2010 by Twin Palms Publishers, with solo exhibitions in October 2010 at Andrea Meislin Gallery in New York City and M+B gallery in Los Angeles. Her third monograph entitled *Sailboats and Swans* was published in fall 2012 by Twin Palms Publishers with a solo exhibition at Andrea Meislin Gallery in New York City.

Chelbin is a regular contributor to the world's leading magazines, such as *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *BusinessWeek*, *GQ*, *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Financial Times*, *Le Monde*, and others.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Principal, or see www.clampart.com. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Image 1: © Michal Chelbin, "Young Matadors in the Bush," Spain, 2018, Archival pigment print.

Image 2: © Michal Chelbin, "Young Cadets (I)," Ukraine, 2018, Archival pigment print.