

Artist Patricia Cronin Dedicates Altars to Suffering Girls at Venice Biennale

Lorena Muñoz-Alonso, Tuesday, April 7, 2015

During the Venice Biennale, a special project by the New York-based artist Patricia Cronin will commemorate the women and young girls around the world who face constant violence and repression, especially—but not only—in India and Nigeria.

To create her *Shrine for Girls, Venice* (2015) Cronin has collected hundreds of girls' clothing items from around the world and arranged them on three stone altars to symbolize relics from young female martyrs.

The central altar will display the vibrantly-colored saris worn by girls in India, as a painful reminder of the three teens who were gang raped, murdered, and hung from trees last summer.

The left altar will exhibit hijabs representing the 276 schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram in Nigeria. Lastly, the right altar will present a pile of uniforms resembling those worn by girls who worked at the Magdalene asylums and laundries across Europe and the US—forced labor institutions for young women without means, still active as recently as 1996.

The site-specific installation—which has been curated by Ludovico Pratesi and produced by [The Brooklyn Rail Curatorial Projects](#)—will take over the 16th century Chiesa di San Gallo, near the famous Piazza San Marco in the center of Venice.

The church—which was built in 1581 and features Corinthian columns and stone altars—is the smallest church in the city. It's modest size and period features will accentuate the impact of Cronin's installation, colorful and yet poignant.



Patricia Cronin, *Shrine for Girls, Venice* (2015)
Photo: Courtesy the artist