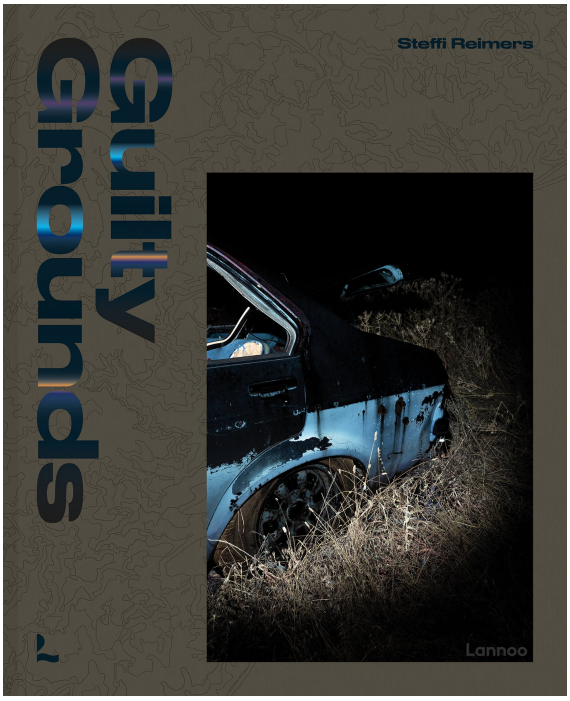
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Guilty Grounds

Steffi Reimers

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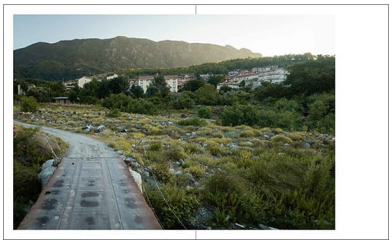
- Artistic exploration of the dark side of Calabrian history and the origins and kidnapping practices of the 'Ndrangheta
- With the stories of victims and their family, essays by experts, and Reimers' personal story
- Haunting photography

For ***Guilty Grounds***, Dutch photographer Steffi Reimers traveled to Calabria in southern Italy. There, she explored the dark side of Calabrian history and the origins and kidnapping practices of one of the world's most powerful criminal organizations, the 'Ndrangheta. She reveals the landscapes of the Aspromonte National Park as silent witnesses to the pervasive influence of the 'Ndrangheta. Landscapes that were once pristine and peaceful now resonate with memories of events that have left their mark, subtly breaking the omertà', the sacred code of silence, so central to the 'Ndrangheta's power.

This book shows Reimers' images, but also tells the stories of the 'Ndrangheta's victims and their family members. Often, their bodies were never found and are presumed to have been buried, destroyed, or fed to animals in Calabria's unforgiving wilderness. And apart from that, Antonio Nicaso, an expert on organized crime and co-author of *Blood Brothers*, also tries to outline the context in which this all happened. Finally Reimers tells her own story, the story of a young woman – a forensic photographer by day, but first and foremost an artist. While inspired by real events, her work is an artistic exploration, a personal and imaginative response to Calabria's dark history. Throughout the process, she encounters obstacles that complicate her attempt to shape this story visually, foregrounding the tension between lived reality and artistic interpretation.

Steffi Reimers (born 1995) is a Dutch photographer who focuses on issues like violence and the spirit of place. Her graduation project *Aftermath*, created during two months in Srebrenica, examined the lingering impact of the Yugoslav civil war and led to an exhibition at the Nederlands Fotomuseum and her first book. *Guilty Grounds* was exhibited at Foam, Amsterdam, Nanjing in China and will travel to Cortona on the move in Summer 2026. Alongside her artistic practice, Reimers has worked since 2022 as a medical-forensic photographer at the Netherlands Forensic Institute.







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