



MEDIA RELEASE

SHORT AND SWEET
Photographs by Margherita Coppolino



“We are living normal lives,” says photographer **Margherita Coppolino**, whose exhibition of photographs of short-statured people, *Short and Sweet*, opens at Paddington’s Global Gallery on **June 12** as part of the 2013 Head On Photo Festival. “We are not just clowns and circus performers. My photographs show we can get married and have families, just like everybody else.”



hEAd ON
photo festival



Coppolino, who is short-statured herself and whose adult life has been devoted to disability advocacy, set out to capture the everyday lives and celebrations of people physically on her level. “I take the photos straight on rather than looking up as I normally have to do,” she says; a situation that suits her subjects, too: “They don’t tell me to watch their double chin or have to kneel down when I take their photograph.” Her black-and-white images show weddings, sport and other gatherings and, after a short while in the company of these photographs, the subjects’ perceived disability fades and the humanity takes centre stage. “My own experiences of being short statured have been an emotional roller coaster,” says Coppolino, a recipient of a Centenary Medal for her contribution to women’s and disability rights and twice an Australian team competitor in the World Dwarf Games. “When I decided to embark on photography, I struggled with the idea of how I was going to do this, given my height. How would I handle some of the equipment?” Coppolino, who was mentored by photographer Belinda Mason, feels very differently now on the eve of her first exhibition: “I feel empowered taking photos.”



Margherita Coppolino. *Photo: Steven Roe*

Short and Sweet, part of the Head On Photo Festival, is at Global Gallery, 5 Comber Street, Paddington, June 12 to 23, <http://globalgallery.tumblr.com/> 02 9360 5728

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