

OUR PICKS OF THE MONTH

JULY 2012

BOOK

Girls Uninterrupted

There's a lot of compassion in Rania Matar's portraits of teenage girls in their bedrooms, and her new book, *A Girl and Her Room*, is a testament to the complex—and often conflicting—emotions that mark that time of life. The young women appear vulnerable and invincible, unsure and self-confident, tough and sensitive.

Matar began the series by making portraits of her teen daughters and their friends, and soon discovered that most of them wanted to be photographed in their rooms, which in many ways are extensions of themselves. Inspired by her own adolescence, Matar decided to expand the project to include girls she did not know who lived in the United States and Middle East, two places she grew up in.

We see girls whose walls are covered with photos of friends or posters; some have clothes strewn about; others are neat and tidy; a few have stuffed animals on their beds. Yet as Anne Tucker, photography curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, states in the book's introduction, for each girl, this is her "safe space." Seeing them in their havens reminds us not only of what it was like to be a teen, but to have empathy for those currently experiencing the uncertainty of young adulthood.

A Girl and Her Room
Essays by Susan Minot
and Anne Tucker
Umbrage
Hardcover, 144 pages
\$40



From Rania Matar's new book *A Girl and Her Room*,
"Reem, Doha, Lebanon 2010."