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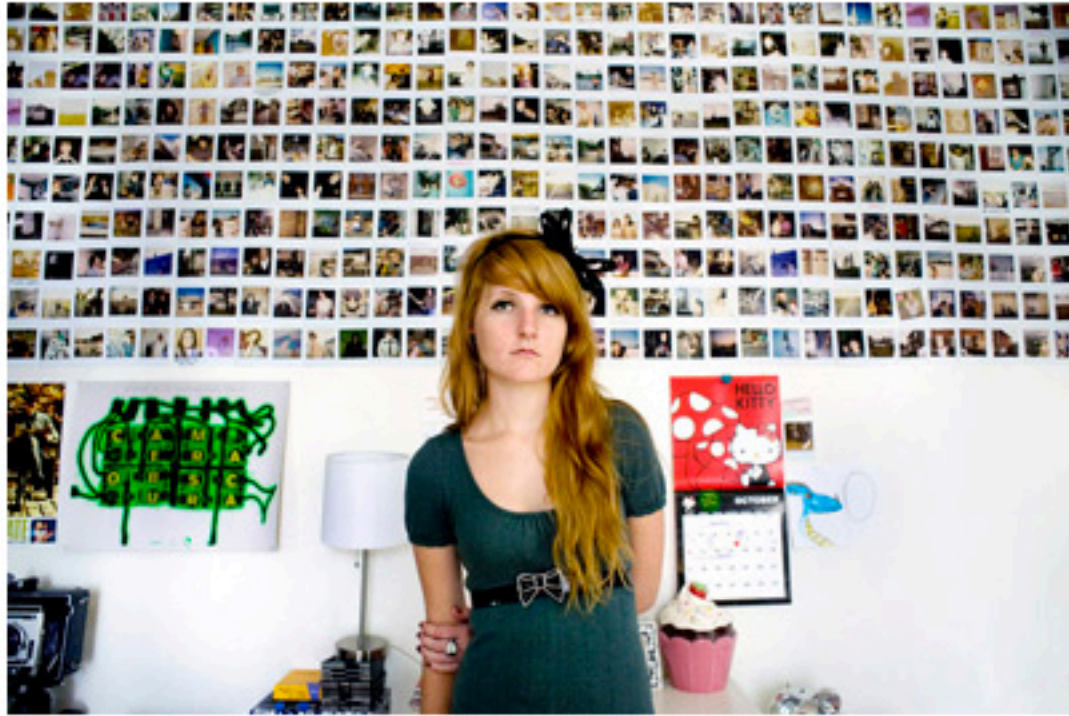
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## art Up Close & Personal: A Girl and Her Room

BY ALEXANDRA OWENS, EDITORIAL ASSISTANT, MAY 2, 2012, 4:01:59 PM



As a teenager, there's a very good chance that you spent a fair amount of time in your room (voluntarily or not is a different story). And if you're like me, you remember agonizing over the perfect display of Spice Girls posters, beaded curtains, and the meticulous arrangement of Bonne Bell lip balms on the vanity.

In her new book *A Girl and Her Room* (Umbrage), out next week, photographer Rania Matar captured the personal sanctuaries of girls across the United States and Lebanon. "Every girl is an individual, but they're all going through the same thing at that age. They're becoming adults and learning to deal with the world around them," she says. "I think when they're in their room, they don't have to prove anything to anyone. They can put anything they want on the wall. So by looking at certain girls and rooms, it's like what Diane Arbus said about photography, 'The more specific you are, the more general it will be.'"

### Ellice, Boston (above)

"You can tell she's into photography from her room. She came to my exhibit opening, and I could see there was something very interesting about her, so I asked if I could photograph her. Ellice later told me she was taking photography, and that she wants to go to art school. I loved what she had on her wall because it was so specifically arranged. I didn't go through it one by one, because I felt it was like a tapestry. I loved the texture and seeing it as a group like that. They were so perfectly laid out and straight. She had her whole life on display."



### Lubna, Lebanon

"I had met Lubna years earlier when I was doing a project about women and the veil, and I spotted her on the street. I stopped her because she was dressed in an American way, but she had her head covered. In the photo of her room, you can also see what I'm talking about, that American touch on the walls. She owns her religion, but she owns it the way she wants to—not the way she was taught to."

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF UMBRAGE EDITIONS

KEYWORDS  
A Girl and Her Room