

Monday
07.05.2012

RECHERCHE Appuyer sur Entrée pour lancer la rech



MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

WEEKEND PORTFOLIOS



Shannon © Rania Matar

BOOK

Rania Matar A Girl and Her Room



As a mother of teenage daughters I watch their passage from girlhood into adulthood, fascinated with the transformation taking place, the adult personality taking shape and a gradual self-consciousness replacing the carefree world they had known and lived in so far. I started photographing them and their girlfriends, and quickly realized how aware they were of each other's presence, and how much the group affected the identity they were portraying to the world. From this recognition the idea of photographing each girl alone, by herself, emerged.

In the beginning I asked the girls to chose where they wanted to be photographed. A number of them chose their bedrooms, and it was then I realized that was the nexus of a project. The room was a metaphor, an extension of the girl, but also the girl seemed to be part of the room, to fit in, just like everything else in the material and emotional space.

While I started this work with my daughters and their friends, and with daughters of my friends, I eventually moved away from only photographing girls that I knew well. I enjoyed discovering new girls and building with them a photographer/model relationship with no expectation or holding back from either of us. It allowed me to meet girls from all different backgrounds and different worlds. I always spent time with each girl, so she was comfortable with me and eventually the photography session became a beautiful and intimate collaboration. I was discovering a person on the cusp on becoming an adult, but desperately holding on to the child she barely outgrew, a person on the edge between two worlds, trying to come to terms with this transitional time in her life and adjust to the person she is turning into. Posters of rock stars, political leaders or top models were displayed above a bed covered with stuffed animals; mirrors

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Rim © Rania Matar

were an important part of the room, a reflection of the girls' image to the world; personal objects, photos, clothes everywhere, chaotic jumbles of pink and black make-up and just stuff, seemed to give a sense of security and warmth to the room like a womb within the outside world.

I initially started this work focusing on teenage girls in the United States and eventually expanded the project to include girls from the two worlds I am most familiar with, the two worlds I experienced myself as a young woman: the United States and the Middle East. This is how this project became very personal to me. I became fascinated with the similar issues girls at that age face, regardless of culture, religion and background, as they learn to deal with all the pressures that arise as they become conscious and aware of the surrounding world wherever this may be.

Being with those young women in the privacy of their world gave me a unique peek into their private lives and their inner selves. They sensed that I was not judging them and became an active part of the project. Their frankness and generosity in sharing access was a privilege that they have extended to me but also to all the viewers of this work and this book.

The beauty and strength, the aspirations and dreams of these young women from different backgrounds, different worlds, are deeply moving and I have tried to be the invisible mirror of those qualities here.

My deepest hope for this project is that we help them achieve the fullness of their promise.

Rania Matar

Rania Matar was born and raised in Lebanon, moving to the United States in 1984. Her work focuses on women and girls both in the Middle East and the US. She has won numerous awards and her images are in the permanent collections of museums worldwide. *A Girl and Her Room* was a Top 50 Winner at Photolucida's Critical Mass in 2009 and 2010, won the 2011 Legacy Award at the Griffin Museum of Photography and received a 2011 Massachusetts Cultural Council artist fellowship. *A Girl and Her Room* is her second book, published by Umbrage Editions with essays by Anne Tucker and Susan Minot. Matar's first book *Ordinary Lives* was published in 2009. She teaches at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

LINKS

<http://www.raniamatar.com/>