

Zoe Crosher: 1 Yr Later

Diverseworks

On view through April 28, 2008

by Nancy Zastudil



Zoe Crosher, *Lori* from the series *1 Yr Later*, 2002-2003

Lightjet diptych

20 x 40 inches

Few things are more personally revealing than a teenage girl's bedroom: objects and images are unapologetically (though not unself-consciously) displayed, and tell the story of her adolescent pilgrimage through individuality and conformity. Zoe Crosher assembles and edits such stories with her current exhibition *1 Yr Later* at DiverseWorks.

1 Yr Later is a series of photographs of American girls in their bedrooms at age 17 and again in almost identical surroundings at age 18, presented as diptychs. Each girl sits on her bed (except one who stands in front of an American flag) in the middle of the compositional frame against the personalized backdrop of a bedroom wall. The side-by-side, before-and-after format implies the classic compare-and-contrast method of a simple high school essay.

Crosher allows changes in the girls' physical appearances and the addition or removal of bedroom items to reveal prejudices relevant to coming-of-age sexual and emotional dynamics related to the female experience. For example, Michelle's attention to accessories and straightened posture; Nicole and Paige's switch between brunette and blonde (and the assumed confidence relative to each color); Kristin's new headboard and discarded teddy bear; Elana's intensified uncertain gaze; Marcey's augmented U.S. allegiance; and Lori's enduring interests accented by her "new look."

These photos represent the time lapse of a full year—the diptychs referencing the transience between adolescence and adulthood, contrasted with an ever-growing temporal distance between now and then. Guided by her conceptual approach to representation and documentation, Crosher works with cultural assumptions and societal preconceptions about the influence of internal and external forces acting on the girls. *1 Yr Later* is an indication of Crosher's graceful ability to present complicated psychologies and provocative subject matter.

Nancy Zastudil moonlights as a curator based in Houston, TX, and currently works as Program Manager at the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts at the University of Houston. She is cofounder of Slab, an exhibition method that collaboratively facilitates projects and events.

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