

Response

One of the "relations," I find myself a part of this vast company, the dramatis personae of Judy's life. She was on hand to crystallize one idyllic summer day, catching my Aunt Dora and me suspended somewhere between that specific dinner and our forty years of shared history. She knows our vulnerability in loving one another - all of us - and she transmutes that into images which capture the tensions that both unite and divide us.

Judy loves a crowd, but not just any crowd. It's that intermingling of flesh and flesh, of adult and child, of the human couple and of child with child. She passes on to us a generous sense of celebration, of that spontaneous combustion of people feasting, of outings and picnics. Like no one else, she comprehends the order and the disarray of those visits we women pay one another with our children. She gets it right each time: that stolen ray of light, the deflection of our attention from the children to each other... our fragmented focus.

A tourist in children's private preserve, her eye picks out their exchanges unmediated by parental will. She catches Gideon and Corina - and all our children - as they observe each other, dress up, clown and live out the fabric of their lives. They contemplate statuary in moments of serious reflection; while their thoughts are secret, the process is made naked, transparent through the lens. We sense Judy in so many pictures, hidden from us behind her Leica and projected outwards through the children's responses.

She's done well by us - the women. Two walls of us, each alone and unguardedly self-presenting in her private space.

We fill each frame, frozen in time, in gestures where struggle and aspiration meet. Ranged so confidently in our alcove, we are a formidable assembly.

There's no sentimentality, though. Judy penetrates to the heart of the mêlée and busy-ness. Her camera records the singular experience of aloneness which can separate each one of us from the vast surge of forward-moving life. Despite the parties and the friendships, the couples and the children, there are those moments of chilling exclusion. Single mothers stare worriedly over their children's heads; an old woman gazes fixedly at the floor as children riot around her; men reduce themselves to horizontal planes as life rages on.

Transcendence too - a remembered day in St-Malo: Michael and Corina follow an ephemeral dragon-fly kite on a ribbon road in muted greys. This show itself transcends its parts - its thematic unity, recurring images, provocative groupings. It tells of those attachments which both inform and survive the action of the shutter. This collection is interwoven with a comprehension and a caring that embrace and transform the diversity of its parts into this oneness: "Relations."

Greta Nemiroff,
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