

APALAZZOGALLERY

Maxi Cohen *Ladies' Rooms Around the World*

APALAZZOGALLERY is pleased to announce the first solo show of Maxi Cohen in Italy.

Growing up, bathrooms were my favorite hiding place and the one sanctuary of solitude. I was sure I could win an award for being the person who at parties, escaped the most to the bathroom. I was always going. Lecturing myself into some courageous act, rehearsing how to be spontaneous, getting over an embarrassing moment, or just hiding from being visible. As I got older, whether on business meetings or hot dates, I retreated to the ladies room to think, make decisions, plan strategies.

In 1978, I was at the Miami Film Festival, with Joe and Maxi, a feature documentary about my relationship with my father that I made with Joel Gold. The awards dinner in a hotel ballroom adorned with ice sculptures and fluorescent lighting was boring. Escaping to the ladies room, I found a tribe of octogenarians adjusting their corsets and false eyelashes and began photographing. This was the genesis of Ladies Rooms Around the World, my photographing in public bathrooms as I travelled—from the Australian Aboriginal outback to Zambian discos, Cannes Film Festival to Rio samba school, New York to Tel Aviv to Bombay to Burning Man.

In the mid 1990s I wondered what if we knew the secrets of women, the traumas they hide? Could this make a valued difference, knowing that social change can only begin once the truth is revealed?

In the Australian outback, I walked into an Aboriginal bar where the women invited me to sit with them. When afraid that the men might overhear, they dragged me into the ladies room to tell me about the incest and rape inflicted upon young boys and girls by men in their community. This was the first video to be followed by many in various styles of vulnerable moments on issues I stumbled into, ranging from adultery to sex, abuse to power, fame to fashion, social outcry to celebratory expression, horror to delight.

The images are in the same style as the first I photographed: the head-on postcard shot. Until 2012, I used 400 ASA color slide film, with one camera after the other, as each got stolen or died. Rarely I went digital. Now it seems like that is all there is.

What began as an answer to boredom has grown into a project that includes photographs, video, film and installation work. It is an oblique portrait which both celebrates women and advocates for their rights; after all, for some women the ladies room is their only sanctuary.

Maxi Cohen

Opening Wednesday 18 April from 6 pm
18 April – 15 May 2018

APG SRL
Piazza Tebaldo Brusato 35 - Brescia 25121 - I
Tel + 39 030 3758554 - Fax +39 030 6391824
www.apalazzo.net - art@apalazzo.net