



Faith Thiang

Lolita Culture

12 June - 11 July, 2010

Artist Statement

For my graduating portfolio in 2009, I was given the opportunity to document girls of the Lolita fashion subculture in Brisbane and its surrounding suburbs.

The Lolita style is a street fashion developed around the late 1980s in Japan, generally influenced by traditional representations of femininity and decadence, including Marie Antoinette's Rococo style and Victorian fashion, particularly the aesthetics of younger girls' and dolls' clothing. The typical Lolita outfit consists of a blouse, a dress with the trademark bell-shaped skirt, socks, petticoats, bloomers, cute shoes, with plenty of lace, ruffles and matching accessories. There are many sub-styles of Lolita, with each creating a distinct look.

For the Lolitas, the fashion is a form of identity and expression, which is often misrepresented or confused for a costume. The sexy discourse and styles of Romantic Goth and French Maids often associated with Lolita are opposite of what it is meant to represent. Association with Vladimir Nabokov's novel of the same name may conjure correlations to seductive nymphets, while in reality the knee-length skirts and overwhelming volume of petticoats and bloomers actually combat this image. Lolitas aim to distinguish these negative connotations from their subculture, which projects who they are in a very distinct visual style. The style makes them feel pretty and confident and conveys a sense of anachronistic elegance, modesty and cuteness that is unusual to encounter on a Brisbane city street.

The images ask the viewer to consider what it means to be an individual in our society and study the often conflicting desire to belong. Hopefully this series creates an awareness of the dress codes, attitudes and intent of this alternative fashion and unique subculture in order to give an insight to the world of Lolita.

Biography

Malaysian born Photographer Faith Thiang completed her Bachelor of Photography in 2009 at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University. Since graduating Thiang has exhibited at the Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney and the White Canvas Gallery in Brisbane. Her work has also been published in research reports by The Australian Lung Foundation and the Wesley Research Institute.

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Related artists

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