ForeWord Reviews

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Legends: Women Who Have Changed the World Through the Eyes of Great Women Writers

John Miller, editor
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What a concept: to gather some of the most gifted women writers to articulate in their creative forte tributes to some of the most influential women of our era. This book is a marvelous inspirational mix of subject matter, writing and photography.

The mix of writer and subject are excellent. Who but Gloria Steinem could remind us of the “real” side of Norma Jean Baker (Marilyn Monroe)? Marilyn, minus all the glamour and glitz, a person who used her feminine notoriety to move her beliefs forward. Yet even in her great fame struggled with her self-esteem and male dependency. As we admire the stunning glamour captured in the striking black & white portrait by Superstock our hearts sadden with the loss of this controversial woman. Steinem leaves women contemplating this thought: “we wonder if the support and friendship of other women could have helped.”

Elsewhere, Alice Walker shares the influence of Zora Neale Hurston on her own life, Yvonne Mitchell reminds us of how Colette was liberated far beyond her time and Margo Jefferson arouses our awareness of our own ignorance at knowing the experiences that truly make people what they are, such as Ella Fitzgerald. Other great females who are shared with us include: Aung San Suu Kyi, Josephine Baker, Lucille Ball, Indira Gandhi, Jane Goodall, Georgia O’Keeffe and numbers more.

Readers may be insprired to obtain more information on each of these great women, but will also be struck by the artristy, lighting, form, pose and character that each of the black & white portraits exudes. The art of this book matches its subjects.

Michele McDonald