

Moment: Inspiring Our Youth to Be Active Global Citizens

Robert Abad

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To inspire social awareness, the photographs of Moment share “a view of the world through a different angle.”

Robert Abad's photography collection *Moment* draws on an extensive, thirty-year archive of travel photographs. Its candid shots of life in the “emerging world” were curated by Abad's daughters; they depict peoples' everyday lives, with young people as a special focus.

The spotlight is on countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe, where recent social and economic changes have been immense. The book is uplifting and avoids the places that tourists tend to go. *Moment's* stated goal is to combat learned racism and xenophobia by underscoring the universality of human experiences; Abad asserts that young people impress him with their “loyalty to family and community, entrepreneurial spirit, deep sense of activism and national pride.” His daughters echo this message in the text, discussing social change and young people's leadership roles with passion.

Abad's vibrant color photographs are accompanied by inspirational quotes culled from traditional proverbs and such disparate notables as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Dr. Seuss, and Yogi Berra. Certain visual themes are repeated to emphasize common human experiences around the world. Tender images of parents holding their sleeping toddlers pop up in Singapore and Honduras; children in uniform make their way to school in Cuba, India, Kazakhstan, and China; shop-lined streets across the globe pulsate with competing signs in different languages and alphabets. Eye-catching, creative street art is captured; graffiti in Prague, children's drawings on a placard in Kuwait, and playful Sao Paulo posters that depict Pele and Ziggy Stardust in a tight embrace are included.

Many photographs show children playing games and hanging out outside of stores, often looking after younger ones. Several arresting images show children surrounded by trash. The cover shot of an otherwise joyful scene of Mumbai youth playing cricket and soccer in a garbage-strewn field is arresting, reinforcing the Abads' stated intention of provoking thought and change. Reminiscent of the influential 1955 Family of Man photography exhibition and book, but updated for a new millennium, *Moment* succeeds in sharing “a view of the world through a different angle.”

With scenes of daily life that focus on countries that have been hitherto overlooked in much of Western media, but that are entering new phases of development and global power in the ever more connected world, *Moment* is an appealing collection of photographs that is directed by a humanist perspective.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (May 29, 2021)

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