

TOY ARTIST RESEARCH

JeongMee Yoon, *The Pink and Blue Project*.



JeongMee Yoon's photography series 'The Pink and Blue Project' explores the way in which children are often encouraged at a young age to like either pink or blue toys depending on their gender. The young girls are pictured with elaborate displays of all of the pink and purple toys that they own, and the young boys are pictured with their toys in various shades of blue. When I was looking at different toys through the decades, although toy advertisements were intensely gendered in buy "trucks for your young man" or "kitchen sets for your future home-maker girl", gendering by colour is a relatively new thing with the increase in plastic toys and mass manufacturing. JeongMee Joon revisited these children four years later and noticed interesting patterns. The girls would often reject the pink colours as they got older, deeming them too 'feminine' (which was always considered to be a bad thing), and switch their favourite colour to blue or less 'girly' colour. Boys however stayed with blue, not having been socialised to believe that there were negative connotations with blue toys or blue as an expression of masculinity. After a further six years, she came back when these children were now teenagers, with both the teen girls and boys having possessions of all colours, although a lot more muted tones, however boys still had a lot of blue either on their walls or as accent colours, whilst the girls were pictured with no one-distinct colour. JeongMee Joon's photography is not only an evocative project on gender expression and socialisation through capitalist production, but is strong in composition and structure, with each picture making up one huge flat lay with a figure included.

References

- Jyni Ong, 2019, 'A study of gender and colour over 14 years: JeongMee Yoon on the Pink and Blue Project.' itsnicethat.com. Available on: https://www.itsnicethat.com/features/jeongmee-yoon-the-pink-and-blue-project-photography-040319?utm_content=bufferf1d92&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=intsocial
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