



Above: Seth's Room.
Right: Sleeping Porch.
Facing page, clockwise from
top left: Joanna; Abigail;
Ashbridge Park; Joanna, aged 16.
All images © Rita Bernstein.



Rita Bernstein

I BEGAN to photograph in earnest after I left my career as a civil rights lawyer and had two young children to whom I was tethered. I explored the sorrows as well as the sweetness of family life and, more generally, the ambivalence that shadows intimate relationships. Although my subjects have primarily been young people, it is not my intention to examine childhood specifically. Rather, I am interested more broadly in the complex mysteries of the human psyche. I find the uninhibited behaviour of children to be a rich source of clues to the interior life generally; with awkwardness and eloquence, they experience the same psychological and social dramas with which we continue to struggle as adults.

I am a reluctant traveller so most of my photographs are made close to home, either in Philadelphia or near our family's summer cottage in northern Pennsylvania. I work intuitively, discovering rather than orchestrating my pictures. Some of my subjects are strangers but most I know very well and have photographed frequently as they have grown and changed.

Rita Bernstein

The prints shown here are hand-coated silver emulsion on Japanese gampi paper. You will find several galleries of Rita Bernstein's work at www.ritabernstein.com.





Sleeping Porch © Rita Bernstein, see pages 10–11.

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