

Mixed Race, Through the Eyes of Photographer

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Chandola Family [Photo Courtesy of CYJO]

"CYJO's Mixed Blood series depicts a waypoint in humanity's progress toward a more integrated society, with the family unit as its base - as represented by specific families in two of the world's most influential nations.

Mixed Blood is a group of photographs and texts created by CYJO between 2010 and 2013. It portrays families with children of 'mixed' races, ethnicities, and cultures in New York City and Beijing." *—Nik Apostolides, Curator*

Q&A with CYJO

Why did you choose Beijing for this project?

I've had a relationship with Beijing since 2009 and have been committed to the city for quite a while. My husband has work here, and it was a great opportunity to show this part of my reality. Choosing Beijing has allowed some topics to come to surface, like the rapidly changing landscape of the city and culture, the diversity of its culture with its 56 ethnicities, and the migration stories that stemmed from Chinese history.

How did you take photos of the families?

The family portraits were shot in the context of their own homes. Parents were on the left, and children on the right (with the exception of some children who couldn't stand). They owned their stance and voice. It was a natural process.

How do migrants integrate into the American mainstream life?

The America we know today has been shaped by immigrants, people coming from other countries. Much of the American population has a migrant family history whether it's first generation or multiple generations. People came from everywhere. —So the process of integrating for me would start at adopting a country as your own and eventually having the culture become part of your identity. At the same time, there is respect for other cultures because that's part

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Did you get feedback for this project?

Yes. Overall the feedback has generated discussions about family, love, and the different relationships we have with people from various backgrounds. It has also generated conversations on how life experiences with different cultures whether you're mixed or not shape identity. Mixed Blood is a project that many people can relate with.

CYJO | MIXED BLOOD

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