

ARTS / CULTURE

Staring right into their bedrooms

And not being charged under existing stalking laws

BY GREG MCFARLANE

Adrienne Salinger's fixation with teenagers inside their bedrooms probably needs some explaining. The first thought that comes into a lot of heads is, "Why?", but it's a thought that's easily answered.

Teenagers in Their Bedrooms is not a new joke book rife with masturbation gags — instead it's

Salinger's latest photo exhibit on display at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. Through 40 portraits of average early-nineties kiddies, viewers peer into the private sanctuaries of hippies, nerds, druggies, metal heads, jocks, mothers and more. And they're all under the age of 20. The portraits are accompanied by written statements by the kids themselves,

making the experience even more poignant.

While we can all remember the mental anguish over those hard choices we were forced to make as teenagers (Coke or Pepsi — what to do?), Salinger's exhibit goes beyond and shows the contradiction, troubles and uncertainty of being adolescent — and how those feelings are expressed on the walls, floors, ceilings and dressers of their sleeping quarters. She does it remarkably well, too.

Society's problems, from the seemingly trivial to the blatantly monumental, find their way into Salinger's lens and into your psyche. There's Betsy P, a devout

Mormon who thinks she likes boys too much, and Karl B, who's straight-edge all the way, but has Budweiser poster girls and a massive *Choose Your Own Adventure* library in the same corner of his room. This stuff is child's play, and only the beginning.

More pressing issues come forward in a much stronger fashion. There's Lynne M and her daughter Alexis, who stare into the camera from within bleak, paint-chipped, water-stained walls. They are surrounded by third-rate furniture, and sit in front of the stained white bars of an old crib. But from this chaos stare two healthy bodies, abandoned mother and child, showing that maybe material goods

aren't the be all and end all of how we are judged.

Auto C's father beats him, Brad S can't see the purpose to life, al-Vaughn B is seen as a thug because of the colour of his skin and Amie D is strong and proud. Through all of these subjects, Salinger shows that the conflicts in their lives aren't that different from anyone else's.

Although the shots are a bit dated (Salinger took the photos in upstate New York in 1990-91, thus Kurt Cobain and Eddie Vedder hadn't had the chance to brood on any walls yet), the exhibit acts as a striking timepiece.

See it before the kids move out.

Ringling in the Year of the Rabbit

BY LIBERTY TRIMARCHI

On Feb. 16, the staff and patrons at the Garden View Restaurant in Dartmouth rang in the New Year with ancient Chinese traditions.

The Chinese New Year, unlike its western counterpart, is not about champagne toasts, confetti, and party hats. The Chinese New Year represents a renewal and a new beginning.

For young children the New Year is like Christmas; they receive gifts of money in bright red envelopes as a symbol of good luck.

The Chinese New Year is a 2-week celebration based on an ancient legend of 12 animals and 5 elements. Each year is named for one of the 12 animals; the year and the individuals born in that year are believed to possess characteristics of the animal. The same kind of year occurs every 12 years. Nineteen hundred ninety nine is the year of the Earth Rabbit.

No celebration would be complete without the traditional Lion Dance to chase off demons and ensure good luck in the New

Year.

The non-profit Chinese Youth Society of Nova Scotia performed the Lion Dance at the Garden View. Performers included David Luong, Edmune Tan, Simon Choo, Enoch Wu, as well as two Dal students, Douglas Choo and Po Suen. Compliments to the Chinese Youth Society for a spectacular job, and to the chefs for preparing a delightful dinner that made the celebration as delicious as it was entertaining.

Rabbits are lucky, talented, clever and crafty. They can get out of any jam. Just think of all of those stunts Bugs Bunny pulled on Elmer Fudd and Daffy! Other famous rabbits include Drew Barrymore, Johnny Depp, Tina Turner, Roger Moore and Fidel Castro.

Rabbit years are also noted as great times to negotiate. Take the INF Treaty negotiated in 1987 which limited nuclear weapons, the last rabbit year.

As Greg and Trudy Fong, owners of the Garden View Restaurant assured me,

"[1999] will be a year of peaceful times and prosperity."

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