

Maripol

INTERVIEW BY THE PEOPLE BEHIND F/I/M?/P

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIPOL

"POLAROID QUEEN" STEPS OUT OF HER ULTRA GLAMOROUS A-LIST-CELEB-STUDED PARTY TO CHAT WITH US COMMON FOLKS ABOUT HER FRIENDS (BE JEALOUS, MADONNA'S ONE OF THEM), HER CAMERA AND SHE BECAME A HISTORIAN OF HER TIME; DOCUMENTING POPULAR CULTURE AND THE REBELLIOUS YOUTH RESIDED WITHIN IT. AN EXHIBITION OF MARIPOL'S WORK WAS ON SHOW AT STATION IN BEIRUT.



IT'S NO MYSTERY THAT YOU WERE CLOSE FRIENDS WITH MADONNA AND IT FEELS AS IF SHE WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT TO PHOTOGRAPH. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE MADONNA?

Obviously not as the rest of us do... She was my favorite, as much as everyone else. I'm not sure I know how people perceive her now, but she is truly a mega Pop Star who managed to achieve her dreams. She's a fragile girl who lost her mother at a very young age and obviously made up for the pain through hard work.

YOU DESIGNED THE NOW-ICONIC WEDDING DRESS SHE BEAUTIFULLY WORE FOR THE STEVEN-MEISEL-PHOTOGRAPHED COVER OF HER *LIKE A VIRGIN* ALBUM. ONE WOULDN'T TAKE SUCH AN ACHIEVEMENT LIGHTLY. WHAT WENT ON BEHIND THAT?

Behind that was a great shoot at the St. Regis Hotel. It was very professional and well prepared. The art director wanted Madonna to wear black, what we now call "gothic"!

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HER EVOLUTION AND CHANGE IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, AND OF WHAT SHE HAS BECOME?

She goes with her times and the trends that come along. She surrenders herself to the unknown and well-known talent. That proves that she remains fresh and modern.

YOUR WEAPON OF CHOICE SEEMS TO BE AN OLD-SCHOOL POLAROID CAMERA. ANYTHING AGAINST THE PROGRESS OF DIGITAL PHOTO-TECHNOLOGY, OR IS IT SIMPLY A NOSTALGIC ATTACHMENT TO "GROOVIER" TIMES?

My weapon of choice is less and less Polaroids as the films are not so great nowadays. I'm moving more and more into digital and film.



WHAT WAS THE LAST PICTURE YOU SHOT WITH YOUR PHONE?

A model at the Agnès B fashion show for the summer collection 2014.

WHAT WAS MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT BOTH INFILTRATING & DOCUMENTING THE LIVES OF GREAT ICONS SUCH AS ANDY WARHOL, MADONNA, GRACE JONES, BASQUIAT AND DEBBIE HARRY?

I did not document their lives (except for Warhol). When I met them they were not famous yet nor mainstream. It was very casual to take pictures back in the 80's. Just like iPhones today. I had my Polaroid on me wherever we went - Studio 54, Xenon, Mudd Club (when it opened) and at the Studio. I also used it to shoot my creations, my environment, architecture, etc.

DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DOING ANYTHING OTHER THAN WHAT YOU DO?

Yes - doing nothing on a deserted beach!

FIVE TRACKS THAT TAKE YOU BACK TO REBELLIOUS YOUTH.

- * The Doors - *Light My Fire*
- * Bob Marley - *No Woman No Cry*
- * Rolling Stones - *Satisfaction*
- * Sex Pistols - *God Save The Queen*
- * Serge Gainsbourg - *Aux armes etc*

IF YOU COULD BE INVISIBLE FOR ONE DAY, WHO WOULD YOU SNEAK UP ON AND WHAT WOULD YOUR POLAROID TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH OF?

Our president Obama. Taking pictures of a garden would make me very happy!

GIVE US FIVE WORDS YOU WOULD WANT OR HOPE PEOPLE DESCRIBE YOU WITH?

Skinny (I am not), curious, generous, original and nice.



STATION

since September 20, Maripol's polaroids have been on show at **Station**, a nifty new multipurpose venue in the old printing and industrial Jisr El Wati, right next to the old Art Center. The folks behind **Station** have repurposed the recently renovated wood factory and plan on holding an eclectic mix of cultural and recreational events in their 3 different spaces. Keep an eye out everyone!

