

# Sally Mann



Hannah Brunetti

Sally Mann was born in 1951 in Lexington, Virginia, where her father was the local doctor, and an amateur photographer.

In 1969 she began her photography career while at Vermont Putney School. She also attended Bennington College for two years where she met and married Larry Mann, and then received her BA at Hollins College in 1974 and got her degree in writing in 1975. She also studied photography at the Praestegaard Film School, Aegean School Of Fine Arts, Apeiron and the Ansel Adams Yosemite Workshop.

She made her professional debut in 1977 at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington. From 1984 – 1991, Mann focused on family and children and their relationships. Her early photographs were of her three young children, Emmett, Jessie and Virginia. The photos of her children let us see into the life of her family and display the freedom and innocence of childhood. These photos have been published in an album called Immediate Family. Her second compilation, At Twelve was published in 1988 and the photographs have captured young women in the unsure time between childhood and adulthood.

Sally Mann uses a one hundred year old 8” x 10” camera that takes photos like those of the Victorian era. Her photos always have a story or let viewer think about them. Other works that Mann has put together include “Still Time”, “Dream Sequences”, “Landscapes” and Portraits of Women, 1976-77”.

She has won numerous awards for her photography, some include:

- ❖ Friends of Photography's Photographer of the Year Award in 1995
- ❖ Three National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships (1982, 1988 and 1992)
- ❖ John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 1987
- ❖ A professional fellowship from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (1982)
- ❖ And an Artists in the Visual Arts Fellowship in 1989.

She now lives and continues to work in her home land of Virginia with her husband. Her children have grown up and left. Sally Mann is currently working on an on-going project entitled "Marital Trust," which is about her 30-year partnership with husband, Larry.



*Shiva at Whistle Creek*

Sally Mann

1992

The major subject of this photo is the figure of a young girl in a crouched position, she is holding herself together with her arms hugging her knees, her hands, palm to palm, pointing downwards. She is positioned right in the center of the picture and the creek water trickles over her feet. This photo is narrative. It allows you to look deeper into the meaning of it. When I look at the image I see children playing in water but then the girl looks like she is deep in thought, or focusing on something else, so the meaning goes further. This black and white gelatin silver photograph would have been taken with Sally Mann's 100 year old 8" x 10" camera. It was taken in natural light and the reflection of the light on the water behind the girl outlines her silhouette. Because of the camera used, the photo looks sort of mystical, and there is a greeny tinge to it that makes some more detail stand out.



*The Perfect Tomato*

Sally Mann

a mythic portrait of one daughter posed nude in a ballet stance up on her toes with arms outstretched on an outside table. Using the painstaking darkroom technique for which she is known, Mann effectively bathes her daughter in white light, while the two figures watching her are in dark shadows. In another example, “The Perfect Tomato,” the same girl, naked, stands in one of the fundamental tiptoed positions of amateur ballet. Naturally, she draws the eye first. But at the center of the picture’s foreground we find what the title promises, a perfect ripe tomato, nearly splitting its skin.

