



COCO YOKOYAMA OF GENERIC YOUTH



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Teenage Trendsetter

For a typical teenager, summer break usually means getting a job at a local fast-food joint. Luckily for Coco Yokoyama, she didn't have to settle for flipping burgers—she got to flip through fashion magazines instead. When your father is veteran-designer Jeff Yokoyama, you catch breaks like that.

In the summer of 2004, Jeff came to his daughter with a proposal. He said, "Coco, this summer, we're going to do a summer project. We're going to plant something, cultivate it, and reap the rewards, whatever it is." At first he was thinking in the literal sense—as in actually planting a garden—but Coco made a different suggestion: starting a T-shirt line. Considering her father was an experienced designer, having started Maui & Sons in the '80s, and the more recent Modern Amusement line, it was a fun and unique opportunity for Coco to learn about the fashion business.

Together, they created Generic Youth, a fusion of salvaged fabrics and mod surf style with an eye for detailing. Whimsically printed T-shirts make up the bones of the line, but the one-off creations are what flesh it out. "The youth of America and throughout the world are very individual," says Jeff. "They're not looking to be labeled a certain thing all the time

necessarily." Hence, kids are generic, not in the traditional sense of the word, but because they're into *everything*, they defy simple categorization. The logo for the guys' line is a key, because according to Coco, "Every key is cut different, just like every kid is shaped different." The girls' line features Coco's silhouetted profile for its logo.

**"every key cut is
different, just like every
kid is shaped different"**

— Coco Yokoyama

How does a busy 17-year-old girl find the time for creative musings? It's not easy. Coco's free time is limited. After school she goes to volleyball practice, followed by homework sessions that can last until

midnight. So these days, Coco squeezes in brainstorming sessions during breaks, prompted by some gentle prodding from dad. He also asks that she keep a book of ideas like he does. Coco's is filled with little bits of inspiration that she gathers from magazines and photos of her friends. Of course, in between work, school, and volleyball practice, she needs time to hit the beach as well.

Coco says she's grown closer to her dad, thanks to their joint business adventure. "I learn a lot," she says. "He's teaching me everything he knows."

Jeff is hopeful that one day his daughter will fully take the reins of Generic Youth. "Right now, it's too early to pass the baton," says the elder Yokoyama. "I'm just running the first leg." ●