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Audio Description script for The Photographers' Gallery, Saturday 4 July 2020

**Hannah Reyes Morales, photograph from the series *Redefining Beauty*, 2020,
Courtesy the artist/National Geographic Magazine**

This colour photograph is landscape in format. It depicts four women standing around a seated younger woman in a hair salon. They fill the frame from their torsos at the bottom to their heads reaching two-thirds of the way up the photograph. The mood is one of tender concentration. The predominant colour in the photograph is yellow.

The room is small and intimate. Hanging down into the top centre of the image, the bottom section of a sign reads in capital letters 'RESTAURANTE LANCHONETTE PORAI'. Below the sign, two hair picks – one red, one yellow – and two combs – one blue and one black – and as well as several pairs of scissors hang on the back mustard-coloured wall. Below the combs and hair picks is a shelf with various plastic and glass jars. A circular mirror, the size of a large frying pan, hangs on the wall to the left of the sign, surrounded by a square beige frame. It reflects the outside street with houses/shops and what appears to be a hanging basket with plants. The reflection in the mirror shows bright sunlight outside.

The four women standing are very engaged and busy attending to the young seated woman. All have differently styled tattoos. They appear to be in their late 20s through to their 30s. Two stand in profile, on either side of the photograph facing inward, and two stand in the background facing the camera, each at a slight angle.

The young woman at the centre of the photograph, still in her teens, sits in a chair facing outward, her head at their chest height. She has pale, freckled skin and green eyes. She is looking down, her dark, mascaraed eyelashes contrast against her blonde eyebrows. She wears a tight, gold hoop earring in her left ear and a wider gold ring in her right. Her facial expression is still, she is neither smiling nor engaging with the viewer. She appears passive compared to the women standing around her. She wears a golden yellow, hairdresser's cape. Cut locks of her bleached blonde hair have fallen on the shoulders of the cape. Her darker hair colour shows through in shaven sections of her head, while

longer seemingly random sections of her hair with bleached ends remain in lines and patches. Her hair is being simultaneously cut and styled by the two women on either side of her.

The woman on the far left has a dramatic hair style. Her hair is mostly dark and short on top, with longer dark strands at the back, reaching part way down her chest. Two to four centimetres of the front of her hair, around her face, has been shaved. A tuft of hair toward the front of her head, and on top, has been bleached blonde. She has a gold ring stretcher in her ear and a thick, black nose ring with a bead on the end. She is wearing a black short-sleeved top with bright blue geometric flower patterns. A hair clip is attached to one of her sleeves. A thick long metal chain hangs around her neck and down her front. She is looking intensely at the seated young woman's hair. Both hands are close to the sitter's head and she holds both a black comb and pair of scissors in her right hand.

The woman on the right has placed her left hand gently on the side of the sitter's head. Her right hand is also at the sitter's head, just out of view. She has a black towel draped over her left arm with a dollop of cream or gel on it. She is wearing round-framed, light brown plastic glasses and has a silver nose ring, and two ear piercings. Her arms are covered in many tattoos. One depicts a bottle with fire coming out of the top. Another is a fine line illustration of a road truck. The back of her hand has a tattoo and her right inside arm has more tattoos which are slightly out of focus and on her 'ring' finger she has five vertical black dots – two just above the finger nail, three running down from the top knuckle. Her dark hair is dyed on top with curls that are tinged lime green. She is topless although in profile her left arm is held up and just covers her nipple. A gold chain frames her left breast like the outline of a bikini top. She has dark underarm hair and light brown, tanned skin.

Behind the seated woman, two other women with hair shaved in similar styles stand looking animatedly at the back of the young woman's head. The woman at the back on the right appears to be talking. She is also topless – her breasts out of view, behind the seated woman's head. She wears bright red trousers or a skirt. Her hair is cropped short and blonde in a Mohican style with a burgundy strip running from her face toward the back of her head, just above her temple. She and the woman to the far right are slightly heavier set than the other three women, who appear of average build.

The woman at the back on the left has darker hair shaved at the front and is wearing asymmetrical drop earrings. She is tanned light brown and wears a green vest t-shirt. On her lower half she wears an article of black, light green and white plant-patterned clothing. She is smiling a little and watching intently.

The salon is busy and the women make a very intense team, embedded collectively in the process.

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This photograph is part of a series by Hannah Reyes Morales called *Redefining Beauty* that was commissioned by National Geographic Magazine. It was published on 7 January 2020 alongside an essay by Robin Givhan. It included photographs taken in Turkey, Brazil, South Korea, Nigeria, the USA and Europe.

The caption accompanying this photo reads:

A young woman has her hair styled at São Paulo salon and collective Coletivo Cabeças. Rather than trying to help people conform, the alternative salon works to create a sense of belonging and provide a platform for free expression in Brazil.