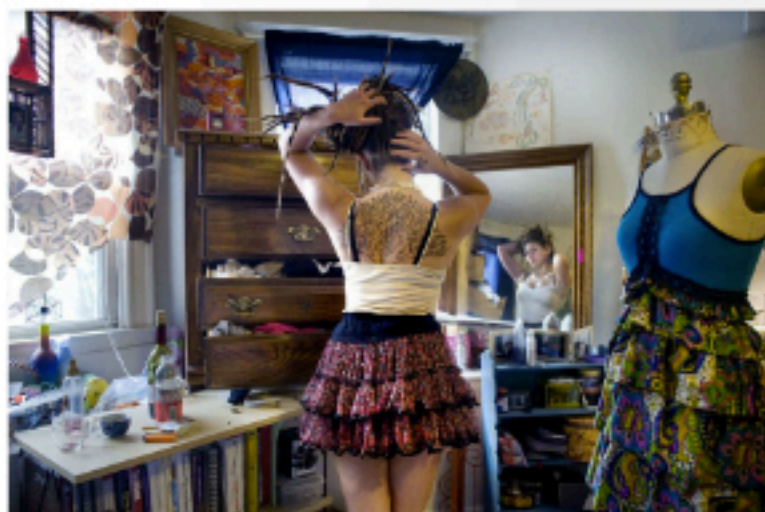


INSIGHT

{ RANIA MATAR }

**Exhibition****A Girl and Her Room**

On view September 14th–December 14th at the
Southeast Museum of Photography

www.smonline.org

RANIA MATAR HAS PRODUCED an exhibition of unique and subtle power. Focusing on contemporary young women from vastly differing cultures in the US and Lebanon, *A Girl and Her Room*, reveals a dizzying array of personalities, dreams, hopes, wishes and frustrations in settings that are clearly expressions of the girls' individual identities—their own rooms.

“As a mother of teenage daughters, I watch their passage from girlhood into adulthood, fascinated with the transformation taking place, the adult personality shaping up, and a self-consciousness now replacing the carefree world they had known and lived in so far,” said Matar. “I started photographing them and their girlfriends, and quickly realized that they were very aware of each other’s presence, and that their being in a group affected very much whom they were portraying to the world. From there emerged the idea of photographing each girl by herself.” When Matar asked the girls to choose where they wanted to be photographed,

a number of them chose their bedrooms. “I realized that was the nexus of a project,” she said. “The room was a metaphor, an extension of the girl, but also the girl seemed to be part of the room, to fit in, just like everything else in the room.”

Matar eventually moved away from photographing girls she knew well and expanded the project to include girls from the two worlds she herself experienced as a teen and a young 20-year-old—the US and the Middle East. She spent time developing comfortable relationships with her subjects and soon, the photography sessions became beautiful and intimate collaborations.

“The beauty and strength, the aspirations and dreams of these young women are deeply moving. I have tried to be the invisible mirror of those qualities here. Their frankness and generosity in sharing them was a priv-

ilege that they have extended to the viewers of this exhibition. My deepest hope for this project is that we help them achieve the fullness of their promise.”

Born and raised in Lebanon, Matar moved to the US in 1984. She trained and worked as an architect before studying photography at New England School of

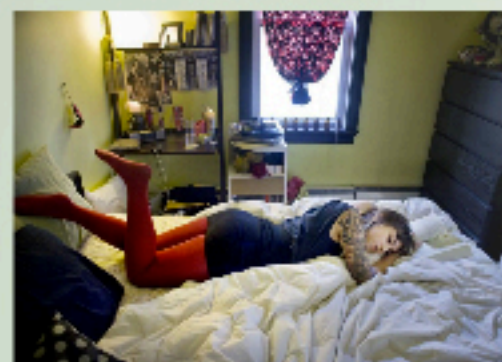


Rania Matar's IMAGES are revealing portraits OF FEMALE ADOLESCENCE.

Photography and Maine Photographic Workshops.

She is the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships. Her images are in the collections of museums throughout the US and abroad. She has also authored two books: *Ordinary Lives* (2009) and *A Girl and Her Room* (2012).

Matar currently works full-time as a photographer and teaches photography at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. She also devotes time to teach photography to teenage girls in Lebanon’s refugee camps. **ON VIEW**

**OPPOSITE PAGE (TOP TO BOTTOM):**

1. SHANNON, BOSTON, MA, 2010, PIGMENT INKJET PRINT, 20 x 30"
2. CHRISTILLA, RABIEH, LEBANON, 2010, PIGMENT INKJET PRINT, 20 x 30"

ABOVE (TOP TO BOTTOM):

1. ANNA, WINCHESTER, MA, 2009, PIGMENT INKJET PRINT, 20 x 30"
2. DANIELLE, BOSTON, MA, 2010, PIGMENT INKJET PRINT, 20 x 30"

ALL IMAGES © RANIA MATAR

LEFT:
RANIA MATAR, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST