



RANIA MATAR
HANGING TOWEL, AITA EL CHAAB, LEBANON, 2006
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RANIA MATAR

DESERTED SPACES AND ORDINARY PEOPLE

JANUARY 13 – APRIL 28, 2014

Rania Matar's exhibition at Bank of America Center Houston is a selection of sixteen works from two series, *Deserted Spaces* and *Ordinary People*, and is presented in participation with the Fotofest 2014 Biennial. Rania Matar is a Lebanese-born photographer based in Boston, Massachusetts. Over the past few years she has traveled back to her home country to document the impact of countless years of conflict and unrest. In *Deserted Spaces and Ordinary People*, Matar offers a perspective on humanity rather than any statement on a particular people or political issue.

The rich, color images from *Deserted Spaces* document the unclaimed debris left behind by war – abandoned rooms with toppled furniture, dishes, personal objects and photographs. Confronted by the overwhelming sense of absence, Matar photographed the spaces as she found them. There is a reverent stillness in these photographs, as they capture the destruction of memories and a life that once was. Hauntingly beautiful, they display a palpable tension between the broken imagery and the harmonious compositions of line and color. While the colored photographs are devoid of any human presence, the black and white photos of *Ordinary People* feature the women and children that Matar encountered during her travels. Matar was struck by the kindness and hospitality of these people and their ability to rebuild. She purposefully chose not to photograph images of grief or suffering, but instead captured people's ordinary day-to-day activities. The destructive aftermath of war may be the backdrop for the images, but the focus is on the resilience and strength of the subjects.

This exhibition was organized for the Fotofest 2014 Biennial by Kinzelman Art Consulting on behalf of the owners of Bank of America Center, www.bankofamericacenterhouston.com, M-M Properties, www.mmprop.com, and an affiliate of the General Electric Pension Trust. Works loaned courtesy of Sydness Architects and the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, University of Houston. For additional information about the exhibition, please call Kinzelman Art Consulting at 713.533.9923 or visit www.kinzelmanart.com.