

EX PAN SIONS



La Biennale di Venezia

Arte
Architettura
Cinema
Danza
Musica
Teatro
Archivio Storico

RESPONSES
TO

HOW WILL
WE LIVE
TOGETHER?

SHE: ALAE AND NATHALIE



As a Lebanese-born American artist and mother, my cross-cultural experiences inform my art. I have dedicated my work to exploring issues of personal and collective identity through photographs of female adolescence and womanhood—both in the United States, where I live, and in the Middle East, where I am from. I am interested in what it means to be a girl and a woman in a world that poses endless questions of girls and women of all backgrounds.

My work addresses states of “becoming”—the fraught beauty and the vulnerability of growing up—in the context of our visceral relationships to our physical environment and universal humanity. It is also about collaboration, experimentation, performance, empowerment, and pushing the limits of creativity and self-expression—both for the young women I work with and for myself.

I have recently started collaborating with two twenty-year-old women who seemingly had nothing in common between each other: Alae, a Shia Muslim woman from Southern Lebanon, and Nathalie, a Jewish woman from Weston, Massachusetts. Whereas their lives and backgrounds are very different, they are both college students at similar stages of their young lives and are alike in more ways than one could imagine, especially in their love of art and the artistic process. Our collaboration became regular and intense, and extended to different locations and seasons, with each bringing her own creativity to the process. I eventually found myself developing a similar and parallel collaborative relationship with each of them, and introduced them virtually to each other on Instagram. They instantly connected and we started a back-and-forth collaborative artistic relationship across continents, which coincided with my own trips between Lebanon and the United States. Each photographic encounter with one would elicit a photographic response from the other and so on, as I shared the images with them and acted as the visual “messenger.”

By collaborating with these two young women, one in the United States and one in the Middle East, I am focusing on our essence, our physicality, and the commonalities that make us human, ultimately highlighting how female subjectivity develops in parallel forms across cultural lines. In the

Rania Matar was born and raised in Lebanon and moved to the US in 1984. Matar received a 2018 Guggenheim Fellowship, 2017 Mellon Foundation artist-in-residency grant, 2011 Legacy Award at the Griffin Museum of Photography, and 2011 and 2007 Massachusetts Cultural Council artist fellowships. She has published four books: *SHE* (Radius Books, 2021), *L'Enfant-Femme* (Damiani Editore, 2016), *A Girl and Her Room* (Umbrage Editions, 2012), and *Ordinary Lives* (Quantuck Lane Press, 2009). She is associate professor of photography at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

divisive world we live in today, I hope that these images and this unlikely collaboration between two beautiful young women of very different backgrounds can reveal the delicate and multilayered beauty in our shared humanity—in the universal as well as personal experience of young women encountering the challenges of growing up regardless of background, culture, and religion.

Rania Matar, *Alae, Khiyam, Lebanon*, 2019.

Rania Matar, *Nathalie, Weston, Massachusetts, United States*, 2019.

ESRA AKCAN
NOURA AL SAYEH-HOLTROP
MOHAMMAD AL-ASAD
STAN ALLEN
SEPAKE ANGIAMA
PEDER ANKER
SAROSH ANKLESARIA
PAOLA ANTONELLI
ZAHIRA ASMAL
KARIM BASBOUS
MERVE BEDIR
AARON BETSKY
EVE BLAU
GARINE BOGHOSSIAN
M. CHRISTINE BOYER
LLUÍS ALEXANDRE
CASANOVAS BLANCO
PIPPPO CIORRA
JEAN-LOUIS COHEN
LIZABETH COHEN
BEATRIZ COLOMINA AND
MARK WIGLEY
CYNTHIA DAVIDSON
IVÁN DE LA NUEZ
PRAJNA DESAI
SARAH DEYONG
KIMBERLY DOWDELL
ANA MARÍA DURÁN
CALISTO
KELLER EASTERLING
ROSS EXO ADAMS
MONA FAWAZ
NOAH FELDMAN
KURT W. FORSTER
YONA FRIEDMAN
RUPALI GUPTA
LIMIN HEE
SAMIA HENNI
SARAH MINEKO ICHIOKA
THEODOSSIS ISSAIAS,
FATURA COLLABORATIVE
MOMOYO KAIJIMA AND
YOSHIHARU TSUKAMOTO,
ATELIER BOW-WOW
PAMELA KARIMI
HAMED KHOSRAVI
RENAN LARU-AN

LAUSAN COLLECTIVE
SYLVIA LAVIN
ANDRES LEPIK
MARIA ALEJANDRA
LINARES TRELLES
KHALED MALAS
DIDIER MALEUVRE
MICHAEL MALTZAN
RANIA MATAR
V. MITCH MCEWEN
ROZANA MONTIEL
MARISA MOREIRA SALLES
AMY MURPHY
IJLAL MUZAFFAR
ALONA NITZAN-SHIFTAN
TOSIN OSHINOWO
RODRIGO PEREZ DE ARCE
VIRGINIE PICON-LEFEBVRE
PANAYIOTA PYLA
NASSER RABBAT
TODD REISZ
FLORENCIA RODRIGUEZ
PETER G. ROWE
HUSSA SABAH AL-SALEM
AL-SABAH
M. BELÉN SÁEZ DE IBARRA
FELICITY D. SCOTT
CATHERINE SEAVITT
NORDENSON
RICHARD SOMMER
LAURENT STALDER
HADAS A. STEINER
STUDIO FOLDER
DEJAN SUDJIC
SHIRLEY SURYA
MARRIKKA TROTTER
ALLA VRONSKAYA
OLIVER WAINWRIGHT
DELIA DUONG BA WENDEL
SARAH M. WHITING
CRAIG WILKINS
FOLAYEMI (FO) WILSON
GUILHERME WISNIK
GWENDOLYN WRIGHT
ALA YOUNIS
MIRKO ZARDINI