

RANIA MATAR هي

In 2017, Rania Matar accepted a British Foundation Residency Fellowship at the David Laundy Art Project College in London, Ohio, inspired by young female students in her country. Matar began to photograph a new series of portraits, inspired by the project. Matar joined the rest of her young artists, together, both artist and other, shared a sense of empowerment and liberation with the rest of the landscape. The final compositions are shared for the young women they depict, acknowledging the collaborative relationship.

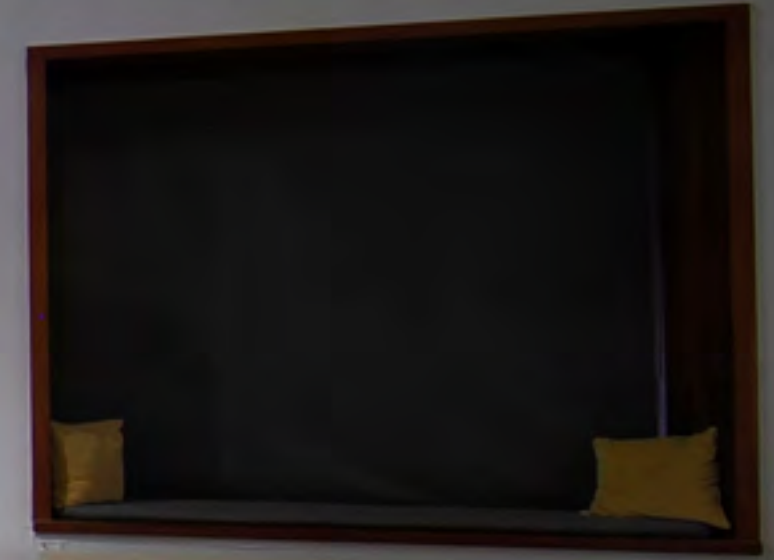
In the completion of her residency at Kenner College, the portraits were exhibited as a series for the first time at the David Laundy in 2018. That year, Matar received a European Fellowship for Photography, and the project continued across the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Matar published an expanded series of 2018 portraits in 2021 and exhibited the project at the Houston Museum of Art in 2022.

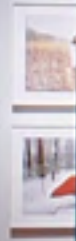
The project has since continued following the 2020 Beirut port explosion, under the title of When the Light Shines On Us. In this project, Matar focuses on Lebanese women and their relationship to the country, including Palestinian young women born and raised in Lebanon, some in refugee camps. As the 10th anniversary of the Lebanese port explosion, a number of the women portrayed in Matar's project have been affected by the current local environment.





Exhibition text panel on the left wall, providing information about the artworks.





RANIA MATAR

SHE هي

The photographs of Lebanese Palestinian American artist Rania Matar tell the stories of young women through portraits taken throughout Lebanon, France, Egypt, and the United States. Photographed through car windows, in abandoned buildings, snow-strewn fields, or floating in the Mediterranean Sea, the women collaborate with Matar, sharing a sense of creative agency. These large-scale color photographs portray individuality intimately tied to the histories and connections of place.

On the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), the photographs taken in the Lebanese capital of Beirut, Southern Lebanon, and Palestinian refugee camps showcase the beauty of resilience found among the traces of destruction.

Students in Sarah Rogers' course HARC 6357: Orientalism and the Visual Arts, wrote the object labels for the exhibition. We are grateful for their perspectives.

Josephine Rodgers
Sarah Rogers
Exhibition co-curators



This exhibition is organized by Rania Matar and the Museum Box



50th Anniversary of Civil War (1975-1990)

The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) was one of the most devastating conflicts in the modern Middle East. It resulted in the deaths of over 150,000 people and the displacement of millions. The war was characterized by sectarian violence, with different groups fighting for power. The conflict had a profound impact on Lebanese society and the region. The 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the war is a time to reflect on the impact of the conflict and the resilience of the Lebanese people.

Photo: Reuters
Photo: Reuters
Photo: Reuters



RANIA MATAR

SHE

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In 2017, Rania Matar accepted a Mellon Foundation Residency Fellowship at the Gund Gallery at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. Inspired by young female students on campus, Matar began to photograph a new series of portraits. Integral to the project, Matar gained the trust of her young sitters. Together, both artist and sitter, shared a sense of displacement and infatuation with the rural Ohio landscape. The final compositions are titled for the young women they depict, acknowledging the collaborative relationship.

At the completion of her residency at Kenyon College, the portraits were exhibited as a series for the first time at the Gund Gallery in 2018. That year, Matar received a Guggenheim Fellowship for Photography, and the project continued across the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Matar published an expanded series of SHE portraits in 2021 and exhibited the project at the Huntsville Museum of Art in 2022.

The project has since continued, following the 2020 Beirut port explosions, under the title *50 Years Later: Where Do I Go?* In this project, Matar focuses on Lebanese women and their relationship to the country, including Palestinian young women born and raised in Lebanon, some in refugee camps. As the 50th anniversary of the Lebanese Civil War approaches, a number of the women portrayed in these images have been displaced following the current Israeli bombardment.





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Wise
Rania Matar, 2019
Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm
This work is part of the exhibition 'She' by Rania Matar, organized by Josephine Rodgers and Sarah Rogers. The photograph shows a woman with long red hair looking out of a window, with graffiti visible around the frame. The view outside the window shows a dense urban landscape.

