



Where
Do I
Go?

لوين
روح؟

Rania Matar

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People have all sorts of stories to tell me. They insist on praising the heroic feats of a war that shouldn't inspire any pride. But for the stories of women, it's something else. The women have kept contact with the earth, if I may say, in the ancient roles of witnesses and memory keepers. They have surpassed themselves: their strength has overcome their habits and their prejudices.

Etel Adnan – Of Cities and Women

Fifty Years Later

Rania Matar

2025 marks fifty years since the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War. Half a century later, Lebanon still suffers its consequences. In recent years, conditions have deteriorated quickly, especially after a total economic meltdown, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut Port Explosion on August 4, 2020, and yet another war in 2024, and again in 2026.

Through it all, I found hope and inspiration in the young generation of women. I chose to focus on their majestic presence, creativity, strength, dignity, and resilience. I was twenty when I left Lebanon in 1984 during the civil war. Many find themselves at that same juncture as they face the painful decision in determining whether to stay or leave: one road leading to separation from family, home, and life as they know it, the other staying despite the fraught conditions in the country, always holding on to hope for better days.

On the crumbling wall of an abandoned building, I saw graffiti scrawled in Arabic: *لوين روح؟* (Where do I go?). I was with Perla, a young woman who suddenly threw herself against that wall. In that fleeting moment, that question became the title of this body of work.

While this project started in 2020 after the Beirut Port Explosions, it kept evolving over the past few years, as I connected with more women and as the situation on the ground kept deteriorating. Together, we collaborated to visually tell personal stories—their, but also our collective story—against the meaningful and symbolic backdrops of the unique fabric of the country: textured walls of Beirut, the Mediterranean, raw mountains, traditional and abandoned buildings, and the many layers of destruction accumulated over the years. Women, land, and architecture are all intertwined.

While my photographs may not provide solutions, I hope they nevertheless invite the viewer to pause and find the beauty, hope, shared humanity, and grace that still exist despite everything. They are my love letters to the women of Lebanon. This project is for us all: the ones who stayed and the ones who left but can never leave.

Where Do I Go?

Printed and designed by Rania Matar and Kent Rodzicz

Custom box fabrication by Marquand Editions

Photographs and essay by Rania Matar

Portfolio in a limited edition of 10

Each photograph measuring 16×20 inches

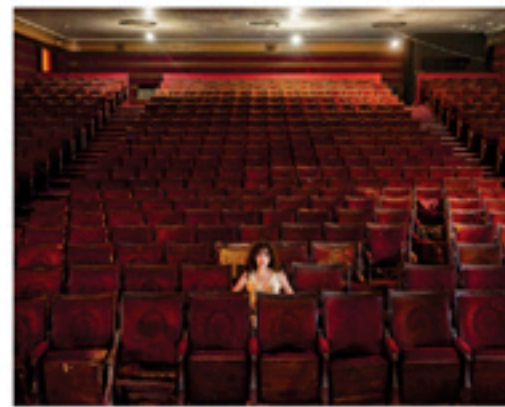
Accompanying Rania Matar's book by the same title, published by KAPH Books in 2026

Edition

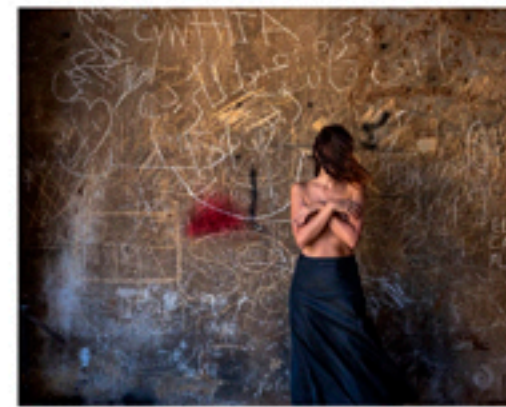
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Perla, Where Do I Go؟ لورب روح،
Kfarmatta, Lebanon, 2021



Rhea S., Piccadilly Theater,
Beirut, Lebanon, 2021
Homage to Fouad El Khoury



Mirna, Rayak Train Station,
Rayak, Bekaa Valley,
Lebanon, 2024



Aya (the Eye), Gemmayze,
Beirut, Lebanon, 2022



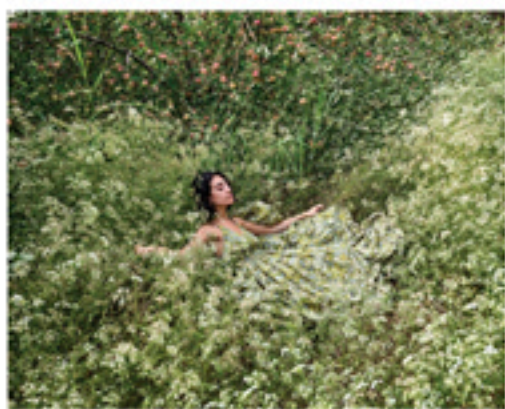
Maya (Odalisque with Cat),
Beirut, Lebanon, 2024
*The sign says: Surgery,
Endoscopy, X-ray,
Ultrasound, Lab, Emergency*



Mariam (Over the Border Wall),
Kfarkila, Lebanon, 2022



Lara M., (Bullet Holes),
Abandoned Zahle Cinema,
Zahle, Lebanon, 2024



Tara (In the Flowers),
Bekaatat Kanaan,
Lebanon, 2022



Rianna, Chartoun,
Lebanon, 2022



Fawzia (with Her
Mother's Pink Scarf),
Bhamdoun, Lebanon, 2022



Rhea and the Balloons
(What's stronger: Hunger
or Sectarianism), The Egg,
Beirut, Lebanon, 2022



Rianna (with Mirror),
Amshit, Lebanon, 2024











جراحة وتنظير - أشعة
صورة صوتية - مختبر - طوارق

