

The Arab Weekly

Kassatly's virtual exhibition showcases Lebanon's 'precarity'

The exhibit presented a collection of 100 pictures taken between 2012 and 2019 in Palestinian and Syrian refugee camps.

Sunday 07/06/2020



Interior scenes from one of the refugee camps in Lebanon taken by the Lebanese photographer Hoda Qassatli

BEIRUT – Alice Mogabgab took her Beirut gallery into the virtual world during the coronavirus pandemic, showcasing a photo exhibition by artist Houda Kassatly depicting Lebanese heritage, nature and modern-day conditions during a tumultuous time.

“Today we are returning to our artistic activities through an exhibition by photographer Houda Kassatly, while our world is immersed in intense silence the ambulance sirens break amid the lockdown,” said Mogabgab.

“Imprisoned, mankind appeared helpless and wondered: How long will this crisis last? How much will it cost? What are its results? What will life be like after the quarantine?” she asked

Mogabgab focuses on three groups that she feels embody the “Eastern spirit”: the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinians, who she says share a rich history, culture and traditions, and have each faced their own tragedy, including violence to their homeland.

In Lebanon, Kassatly tried to show society’s complex reaction to a multi-pronged crisis. In the exhibition, she highlights extreme poverty, the beauty of innocence of childhood, the dark horizon and hopes for a better future.

Titled “Refugee’s Camps in Lebanon, the Unsustainable Precarity,” the exhibition, which ran from April 14 to May 23, presented a collection of 100 pictures taken between 2012 and 2019 in Palestinian refugee camps in Burg al-Barajneh (near Beirut) Nahr al-Bared (near Tripoli) and in camps that gathered displaced Syrians in the Bekaa (in eastern Lebanon).



A portrait of a boy from one of the refugees camps, Houda Kassatly's online exhibition "The Refugee's Camps in Lebanon, the Unsustainable Precarity Photographs"

Through photographs ranging from landscapes to portraits, the exhibition touches on the main issues that define life in the camps – from the camp’s components, to the daily life of refugees, to the identity of the people living there to their vague and mysterious future.

Born in 1960 in Beirut, Kassatly graduated with a DEA in Philosophy from the University of Paris I Pantheon – Sorbonne in 1984. In 1987, she completed a doctoral thesis in Ethnology and Comparative Sociology at the University of Paris X – Nanterre. In 1986, she went back to Lebanon and devoted her life to research and photography.

<https://thearabweekly.com/kassatlys-virtual-exhibition-showcases-lebanons-precarity>