

An educational project and exhibitions under the auspices of *Ateliers Reza* (Reza's Workshops) in Toulouse.



Over the course of teaching others about my photographic experiences and projects all over the world, I strongly emphasize that a camera is a tool to bear witness. At the *Ateliers Reza* in Toulouse, I saw a glimmer in the eyes of young Sabah at each technical training session. She did not necessarily seem driven by the desire to become a photographer, but was interested in expressing herself and telling her story.

After several sessions with Sabah, Jawad, Océane and the other young students who participated in the workshop, I came to understand the root of their enthusiasm. To sum it up in one sentence that I heard repeatedly from one student to another: "We are fed up with our neighborhoods, Mirail, Reynerie or Bellefontaine, all cities tainted with stories of burning cars or street fights. We want to show that our city is beautiful and that our families are just like others!"

So I came to Toulouse to help bring awareness: ghettoization undermines and damages a society. It isolates people and burns bridges in everyday life, culture and dialogue. Imagine my surprise when some of the children in Toulouse asked me: "Reza, you are always in war zones and difficult areas, so why did you come here?"

As part of the Mois de l'Image in Toulouse, Ateliers Reza invites you to visit the exhibition "My Land, My Family" from September 17th to October 13th at the Jose Cabanis Media Library, from September 17th to November 17th at the Grand M Media Library. This collection of work is the fruit of the photographic labor of forty-some young people from Reynerie, Mirail and Bellefontaine. From March to September they have been trained by professional photographers, supervised by Reza. This project is an initiative of the City of Toulouse. For more information, join the [Ateliers Reza](#).