



MEMORIES OF EXILE

The first blow is against your freedom. Being different, thinking differently, having a different skin color, religious belief, or political opinion: all are pretexts for enslavement. Yes, at the beginning, it's a government that won't or can't guarantee your freedom as a citizen. Sometimes its passivity makes it a silent accomplice in your loss of liberty. Exodus then becomes the only way for you to keep on living. The first step you take as an exile is to leave your country, often at the risk of your own life. After this difficult transition, you begin the subtler process of trying to rebuild. You have found a refuge through exile. Your new country is a sanctuary where you are physically safe and have intellectual freedom. Now you have to adjust to the emotional displacement of being a stranger. Within you, the memory of your lost country and disappointment of the Promised Land. Beyond the joy of being free, there remains, too, a feeling of mourning for your native land. A familiar smell, a food that tastes like a dish back home, a countryside that evokes scenes from your childhood, someone speaking your language, and you hear once again the melody of your native tongue. For the exile, the joys of the present are full of the memories of the past. As you build your life in this new elsewhere, you carry on, while always struggling with the conflict between finding inner peace in your new country and still feeling at war within yourself because you are not in your own land.

Rachel Deghati & Reza

Guest of honor of the project "Iran, Syria, Iraq ... Another look" proposed by the city of Sotteville-lès-Rouen, Reza exhibits in the library of the city, alongside the Syrian refugee children trained in photography by the association Reza Visual Academy, as an invitation to think about our humanity. A meeting is organized before the end of the exhibition, in the presence of the photographer.

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Exhibition: November 7 to December 6, 2017

Lecture: November 28, 2017, 6:30 pm

[Bibliothèque municipale](#)

[110, rue des Déportés](#)

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