



# HAIR STORIES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
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February 1 - May 31, 2019

**Closing Reception and Book Signing**  
Friday, May 24  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

The Warren Alpert Medical School of  
Brown University  
222 Richmond Street  
Providence, RI

## Hair Stories

From an early age I understood that hair had power. At the age of 7, my own two ponytails were chopped off very unceremoniously and for a good part of my childhood I sported a boy's haircut from which I probably never fully recovered. The trauma of losing control of my identity has stayed with me my entire life.

For my project *Hair Stories*, I interviewed and photographed almost three dozen women about their hair. These women represented a diverse group of ages (14 to 100) and ethnicities. The leading question was "Tell me about your hair." What I discovered is that hair is a language, a shield, and a trophy. Hair is a construct reflecting our identity, history, femininity, personality, our innermost feelings of self-doubt, aging, vanity and self-esteem. Hair also has deep sociological roots. It can be indicative of a certain religious or political belief system and like its genetic code, is complicated and touches our very core.

The photographs in this series were inspired by the personal stories and histories of the subjects and created in their home environments. From my experience as a neurologist, I utilized the interviewing skills gleaned from medical training and the women's oral narratives were transcribed and excerpted for written and audio clips.

*Hair Stories* reflects that hair is more than just style or aesthetics; it is a physical manifestation of the history of women. Every participant had her own unique connection to her hair (or the absence of it) and her own story, whether it was an association from childhood or a way of caring for or presenting her hair, yet there were many similarities in the language they used and the feelings expressed. The overall collective voice confirmed that hair is important and is best understood as a meaningful mirror of identity and often evolves, just as we do.

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## The Book

*Hair Stories* is also a book published by Damiani Editore containing 92-pages of full-color reproductions of the images and excerpts from each woman's story. This exhibit highlights 15 of the 35 subjects in the book. It may be purchased at [rohinahoffman.com](http://rohinahoffman.com), [damianieditore.com](http://damianieditore.com), Amazon, or your favorite bookstore. *All photographs are available for purchase as editioned pieces. Contact [Kris\\_Cambra@brown.edu](mailto:Kris_Cambra@brown.edu).*