

# ASWAT

FESTIVAL FOR CREATION AND  
ALTERNATIVE SCIENTIFIC  
WRITINGS IN THE ARAB WORLD



February 8-10, 2024  
Cinematheque Beirut  
Royal Cinema

The second edition of the Aswat festival, Alternative Scientific Creations and Writing in the Arab World, will take place in Beirut from February 8 to 10, 2024.

The necessity of documenting the world, the reality and the imaginaries, and of considering it with the tools of the human and social sciences, from Beirut and the Arab countries, has hardly ever seemed so crucial. After having been postponed due to the uncertainties linked to the war in Gaza and Lebanon, Aswat will now take place, with a slightly modified program to include two films on Palestine and its history.

Conceived as a meeting place between the worlds of research, sound and visual creation, and a wider public, Aswat continues to engage in training and discussion around works created by/with researchers of all disciplines, along with documentary sound and filmmakers working in and on the Arab world. The workshops, hosted this year by Cinematheque Beirut, are at the heart of this commitment.

With the teams of IESAV-USJ and ALBA-UOB, we wanted this program also to be that of cinema students. The Aswat team met and questioned them: how can uncertainty be understood and filmed? How can we approach the dynamics of memory and the challenges of its transmission?

Finally, choosing a film from the official selection of the Jean Rouch Festival contributes to the dialogue between Aswat's programming and international documentary production. The screening of films from the jury's selection on the free streaming platform Aflamuna.online will extend these conversation beyond the festival.

# SCREENINGS



## DAY 1

Thursday, February 8

**6.30 PM INCERTITUDE | UNCERTAINTY**  
Short documentaries by ALBA-UOB Students  
Discussion moderated by Danielle Davie

**8.15 PM BEHIND THE SHIELD**  
A film by Sirine Fattouh  
Discussion moderated by Michel Tabet

## DAY 2

Friday, February 9

**7.00 PM MANGER LE POUVOIR**  
A podcast by Julie Métais, Elisa Portier and Sahar Aurore Saeidnia  
Discussion moderated by Nicolas Puig

**8.15 PM VIA DOLOROSA**  
A film by Oraib Toukan

**CHILDREN OF SHATILA**  
A film by Mai Masri  
Introduction by Anaïs Farine & Jihane Sfeir

## DAY 3

Saturday, February 10

**6.00 PM CINEMA, ARCHIVES, MEMORY**  
Short films by IESAV-USJ film students  
Discussion moderated by Ghada Sayegh

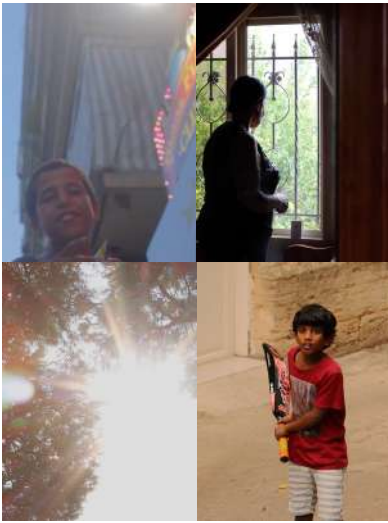
**8.15 PM TONRATUN**  
A film by Inna Mkhitarian  
Organized in partnership with the Jean Rouch Festival  
Discussion moderated by Hratch Tokatlian

# SCREENINGS



## L'INCERTITUDE

Short documentaries by third-year students at the ALBA-UOB School of Cinema and Audiovisual Production



Students in their 3rd year at the ALBA-UOB School of Cinema and Audiovisual Production, in collaboration with the artistic team of the Aswat Festival, made short documentaries on the theme of uncertainty. Taos Babour, Nicolas Puig and Michel Tabet shared their experience in the field with the students, exchanging ideas as they developed their film projects and began location scouting. Danielle Davie supervised the shooting and editing of the films.

### **Sans titre**

by Tadeo Boustany | 2023 | 08 min 19 | arabic

### **A Soul's Journey**

by Sacha Daher, Christine Abou Zein, Shirine Zein | 2023 | 13 min 14 | arabic with english subtitles

### **Unheard Screams**

by Joseph Chakhtoura, Perla Geagea, Claritta Ghattas | 2023 | 13 min 17 | arabic

### **The Hidden Game**

by Wadih Abdelnour, Christina Klat, Rami Serhal | 2023 | 16 min 29 | english

### **Chou El Ghada Lyom ?**

by Sally Hage, Lynn Morkos, Ralph Bassim | 2023 | 13 min 46 | arabic

# SCREENINGS

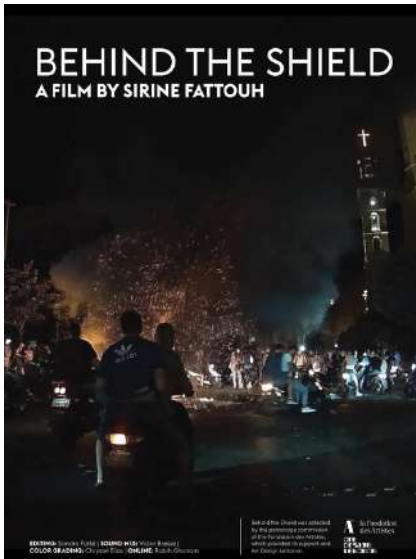
 **Royal Cinema**

## BEHIND THE SHIELD

A film by Sirine Fattouh

Lebanon | 2022

57 min | arabic, french with english subtitles



Behind the Shield is a video that paints a filmic portrait of the city of Beirut over the past three years. The work documents key moments in the country's recent history – from the October Revolution to the port explosion of August 4th – while also shedding light on the mundane and commonplace facets of everyday life. The entirety of the footage is drawn from filmed material that was recorded on a Dash Cam I had installed in my car in 2018. Powered by the car's battery, the camera is constantly recording, even if the engine is shut off. When the memory card is full, it automatically overrides old footage, replacing it with new filmed material.

## EATING POWER

A sound documentary by Julie Métais and Sahar Aurore Saeidnia

France | 2023 | 21 min | french  
Production and editing support :  
Elisa Portier



But where does sensoriality fit into social science research? Equipped with headphones, recorders and microphones, we wander through sensorial fieldworks, from Sana'a to Marseilles, via Cairo and Beirut. One episode, one researcher, one original angle on the issue. An intimist podcast that immerses us in "the senses of fieldwork". For the festival, we propose the first episode in the series, "Eating Power". In this podcast, Marine Poirier shares her culinary experiences at the heart of her fieldwork on Yemeni political elites in exile.

# SCREENINGS

 Cinéma Royal

## VIA DOLOROSA

A film by Oraib Toukan

2021

21 min | arabic, english with english subtitles



Footage shot by the late photographer and cinematographer Hani Jawharieh, slowed-down, studied, and re-assembled with material from where it was found—piles of film reels discarded by former Soviet cultural centers in Amman, Jordan, accompanied with commentary by literary and film scholar Nadia Yaqub : Via Dolorosa (Latin for the Arabic 'Way of Suffering') is itself a processional route that Jawharieh filmed in his birth city of Jerusalem.

## CHILDREN OF SHATILA

A film by Mai Masri

Palestine, Lebanon | 1998

47 min | arabic, french with english subtitles



A Palestinian boy, Issa (11 years), and a girl, Farah (11 years) living in Shatila refugee camp in Beirut use digital cameras to capture the stories of their grandparents and the imagination of the children who have survived siege, massacre, and dispossession. "Children of Shatila" commemorates the 50th anniversary of the 1948 Nakba and explores how memory is passed on from generation to generation through the eyes of Palestinian children born in exile.

# SCREENINGS

 Cinéma Royal

## CINEMA, ARCHIVES, MEMORY

Short films by IESAV-USJ Master's students in cinema, as part of the Cinema, Archives, Memory course led by Ghada Sayegh.



" Each object contains a memory, a deep meaning that unveils a past and shapes its impact on the present. As apprentice filmmakers, the Cinema, Archives and Memory course has been a space for experimentation and creation, where we have deeply considered our relationship with archives and memory. The resulting films, narrators of unique and personal stories, resonate with each other in their exploration of the figure of the archive, examining the fundamental essence of its use."

### **Il m'a regardée**

by Evelyne Hlais, 2023 | 10 min 24 | french

### **The wave that remains**

by Inès Heddar | 2020 | 10 min 47 | english

### **Archives du futur**

by Giorgio Bassi | 2023 | 16 min 40 | arabic with french subtitles

### **Les chaises libanaises**

by Daniella Saba | 2020 | 10 min 14 | french

### **Ricordi?**

by Aurora Lovecchio, 2023 | 11 min 49 | french, italian with french subtitles

### **أنا بخير يا جدتي**

by Mohamad Tabboush | 2023 | 10 min 25 | arabic

### **Le résiduel**

by Zeinab El Hajj | 2023 | 14 min | arabic

### **Carpe Diem**

by Marc Rajji | 2020 | 15'09 | arabic

## SCREENINGS

 Cinéma Royal

## TONRATUN

A film by Inna Mkhitarian

France, Armenia | 2023

84 min | Armenian with english subtitles



In an Armenian village, five women - who are daughters, mothers and grandmothers - from several generations debate together about life and war while they prepare lavash, the Armenian traditional bread.

Tonratun (bakery) is a space where women can talk openly about things considered shameful or embarrassing in Armenian society with a patriarchal tradition. While the men are away, they talk to each other near the fire and mix their tears with the flour. Their words and their laughs are now part of their daily nourishment.



# WORKSHOP



## DAY 1

February, Tuesday 8

9.00 AM - 1.00 PM

Closed session

### WELCOME AND PROJECTS PRESENTATION

Welcome and presentation of projects, informal discussion (update on project progress, workshop expectations).

Work on a selection of images/sounds/montages chosen by participants in line with their project or the issues it raises.

2.00 PM - 3.00 PM

### VISIT TO THE CINEMATHEQUE

Open session by invitation only

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## DAY 2

February, Friday 9

9.00 AM - 1.00 PM

2.30 PM - 4.30 PM

Closed sessions

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Individual work sessions with reporting/feedback schedule

## DAY 3

February, Saturday 10

10.00 AM - 1.00 PM

Open session by invitation only

### PLENARY SESSION

Projects presentation and collective thematic discussions.

"Researching and/or making films during a genocide": open discussion.

# WORKSHOP SELECTED PROJECTS

## THE ALGERIAN CIVIL WAR AS SEEN BY THE CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS

A sound documentary project by Saphia Arezki

More than sixty years later, the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) continues to occupy the Franco-Algerian space. The memorial, audiovisual, and media space. It's made into fiction films, sometimes awarded at major festivals, documentary films that air in prime time in March or July in years ending in two; podcasts, history books, novels and exhibitions are produced; but almost no one talks about the war that tore the country apart from 1992 onwards. And yet, as the daughter of immigrants born in the 1980s, the first war I was confronted with, the first one I remember, is that of the 1990s. I recall the Algerian flag that regularly adorned the top of the TV screen during the news. There was talk of kidnappings, assassinations, bombings and massacres. I was a little girl. My father's country was at war. Ablazed. I couldn't go there.

This war is the one that prevented me from discovering my father's country when I was a child. I experienced this war through the small screen, through the litany of deaths on the news. I remember Bruno Masure and Daniel Bilalian on Antenne 2. Their voices. On Channel 1, it was PPDA and Claire Chazal. But I think my father was more of an Antenne 2 person, and so was my mother.

How did the children of Algerian immigrants born in France experience this war? What memories have they kept? Images? Sounds? Smells? Did they continue to go to Algeria, or did the war interrupt these trips? From when? Until when? For those who continued to go, how do they remember these moments? What do they remember? Was the violence present? How did this war impact their family relationships, and their connection with the country of their - or one of their - parents?

In this podcast, I want to meet French people of Algerian origin who were children during the black decade of 1990. Children who grew up all over France. Children who were 5, 8 or 10 years old when the war broke out, and who for some were almost young adults when it ended.

# WORKSHOP SELECTED PROJECTS

## 30 HOURS OF RUSHES, NAVIGATING BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT... DISCOVERING A FILM, AND CREATING ANOTHER

A film project by Fatima Joumaa

As Fatima, a young filmmaker discovered that in 1992 her family has been sending VHS to her uncle Ahmad in exile for 7 years. And unlike what she thought, she's not the first director in her family. She uncovers an entire archive when her father is a director, the family is playing roles, and the Grandmother, the hero, is trying to convince her uncle Ahmad in Mannheim to come back home, to Lebanon.

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## WATCHING THE FULL MOON

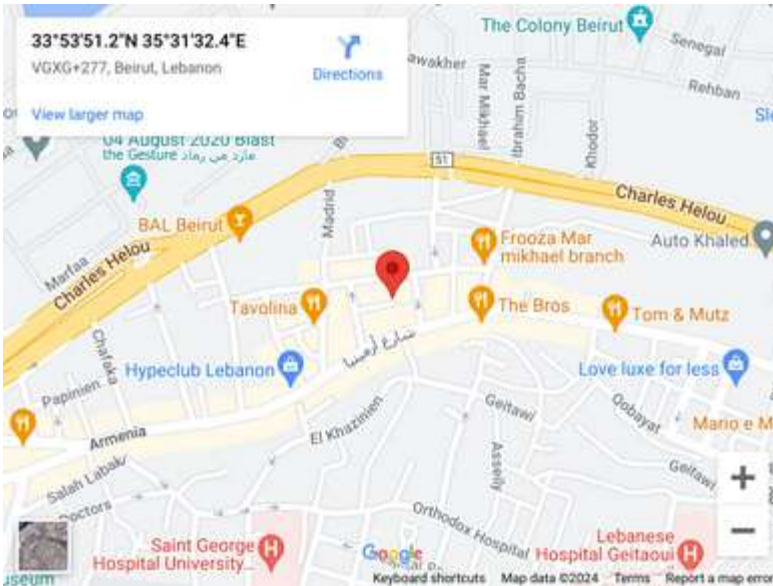
A film project by Cécile Boex

The uprising and conflict in Syria have generated a considerable amount of video footage by protesters, image activists and combatant groups, mainly uploaded to YouTube. It's the most filmed revolt and war in history, by its own protagonists. Since I left Syria in 2011, I have been studying the uses and practices of video by the various protagonists of the conflict, from a perspective that intersects political science and audiovisual anthropology. These images, particularly embodied, are often opaque, fragmentary, and anonymous. Most of them, rarely seen, are still buried under countless layers of other images and sounds, if they have not simply disappeared. How can we make sense of the multitude of these images, 12 years after the start of the revolution? What has become of those who filmed? Where are they? Are they still alive? And if they could see these images again, what would they say? Did they take them with them when they left Syria?

Watching the full moon is a kind of filmic investigation, the beginning of which is a gesture of exhumation of these latent, orphaned and scattered images, in order to find a way through them and restore their intensity. Starting with these found videos, the aim is to track down, in their place of residence in exile, the men and women who filmed or appear in the image, to capture something of their experience of revolt and war. Who are they? How do they perceive these images? What do they (re) awaken? It will also be about probing the thickness of time that has settled on these images and this particularly intense experience. What remains of it? How has it transformed the lives and the relationship to the world of those who took part in it?

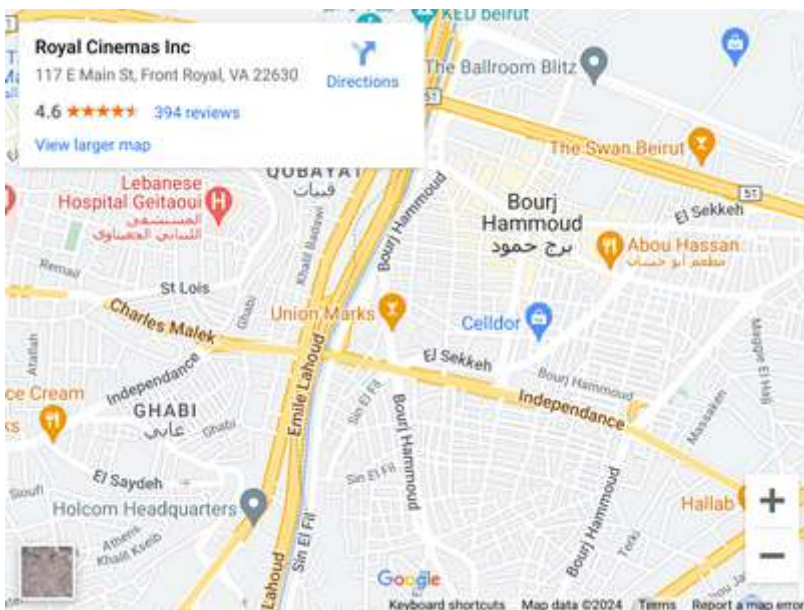
# VENUES

## Cinematheque



**Cinematheque Beirut**  
Alexandre Fleming street  
Makh Mikhael - Beirut

## Royal



**Royal Cinema**  
Bourj Hammoud - Beirut

# INFORMATION

The festival is entirely free. Screenings at the Royal are open to all.

The plenary workshop session, at the Cinematheque Beirut on Saturday February 10, is reserved for students, researchers and filmmakers taking part in the festival, as well as partners, upon pre-registration and within the limits of available places: [aswat.festival@gmail.com](mailto:aswat.festival@gmail.com)

## Workshops design and supervision :

Rayya Badran (author, contemporary art and sound curator)

Danielle Davie (film director, anthropologist and director of the ALBA-UOB School of Cinema and Audiovisual Production)

Anna Roussillon (film director and editor)

## Selection committee :

Serge Akl (General Secretary of the Lebanese Film Festival of France)

Renée Awit (Project Manager of Aflamuna.online)

Anais Farine (Researcher, Programmer and head of the Research Department at Metropolis)

Katia Jarjoura (film director)

## Organisation :

Taos Babour (Ifpo)

Nicolas Puig (IRD)

Michel Tabet (CNRS)

**Contact et information :** [aswat.festival@gmail.com](mailto:aswat.festival@gmail.com)

# THANKS

This festival would not have been possible without the support of Ifpo, IRD and the Cooperation and Cultural Action Service of the French Embassy in Lebanon.

We would like to thank our partners, in particular Antoine Waked and Danielle Davie (Alba -UOB); Toufic El Khoury, Ghada Sayegh and Marianne Noujaim (IESAV-USJ) for their active participation in the programming; Laurent Pellé, from the Ethnographic Film Committee, for giving us access to the Jean Rouch Festival selection; Mindy Krause, Anaïs Farine and the Cinematheque Beirut team, as well as Karl Hadife and Dana Mikhail from Cinéma Royal for their hospitality ; Renée Awit, Riham Hassi and the Aflamuna team for the cooperation with Aflamuna. online.

We also thank all the colleagues who, behind the scenes, contributed to the production of this event: Agnès de Geoffroy (SCAC Liban), Myriam Catusse, Raymonde Khayata, Billenda Chami, Leïla El Jeichi, Johnny Harfouche and Jean-Christophe Larroque (Ifpo), Soulaf Kadiri and Aude Mathieu (IRD).

Last but not least, we are grateful not only to the members of the selection committee and the team responsible for designing and running the workshops, but also to the filmmakers, researchers and students whose participation makes this festival possible.

# مهرجان أصوات

الإبداعات والكتابات العلمية البديلة  
في العالم العربي

فبراير 8-10، 2024  
سينماتيك بيروت  
سينما رويال

