



Film Lab: Palestine

By Alexandra Maurer-Chammas



For decades, our stories have been dictated or manipulated by others to fit within a set framework. So many stories have been told about us, so few by us.

In a growing “global” industry, there is a need to re-appropriate our image culture in Palestine and move beyond the hegemonies of the European and Hollywood industries. We undoubtedly have the talent pool of young Palestinians eager to tell our story, but we are faced with a weak local film industry, which seriously lacks basic resources to support filmmakers on the ground.

Established this year by Hanna Atallah (filmmaker and producer), the Film Lab seeks to open up a creative platform to support and develop a talented and vibrant film scene. It offers a networking space for aspiring and established filmmakers to connect, exchange experiences and knowledge, and strive together to revitalise and strengthen the local industry. Palestinian filmmakers depend greatly on foreign funding, and due to the weak local infrastructure for filmmaking, production costs are quite high. Supporting the local market can create a new atmosphere, increasing the chances of lowering production costs and therefore decreasing the need for higher funding. In addition to the economic facts on the ground, it is also a matter of changing the overall attitude to filmmaking and developing an independent “school of thoughts.”

Based in Ramallah, the Film Lab will provide advanced education in the art and technics of filmmaking and assist in the development and concretisation of projects, whilst introducing the younger generations to the local film scene. Workshops and master classes for filmmakers,

DOPs (directors of photography), and sound technicians are in the pipeline for 2015.

The aim is also to open up Palestine to international networks to ensure sustainability, position the local industry abroad, and develop a more robust Palestinian film industry. The Danish Film Institute is working together with the Film Lab to develop the strategy and resources needed by the film industry, and the entire project is supported by CKU, the Danish Centre for Culture and Development.

The “Days of Cinema” in Palestine, from December 8 to 13, is a public event to introduce and launch the Film Lab. Throughout the week, amateurs and connoisseurs will have the opportunity to view screenings of international award-winning feature-length and short films and also participate in seminars and discussions presented by acclaimed filmmakers and international directors.

We warmly welcome everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to discover the ins and outs of the film industry, and above all to reflect upon the needs within

DAYS OF
CINEMA
أيام سينمائية
8-14/12/2014

the field and to join forces to support the development of the local scene.

Today we are responsible for ensuring that all versions of the stories are heard. The time has come to win back our narrative and give voice to our diverse realities.

For more information, visit our Facebook page: Film Lab: Palestine.

Franco-British Alexandra Maurer-Chammas was immersed in an international and artistic environment from an early age. She was brought up in Africa, moved to France and then to the United Kingdom for her studies. After specialising in African and Islamic art, she started her career at Christie's Paris, the auction house, whilst also training as a gemmologist. She moved to Jerusalem at the end of 2013, and shortly afterwards joined the Palestinian Art Court - Al Hoash.