

The Intuitive Cinema is born in Beirut

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The intuitive Film Lab, first experience of its kind in Lebanon and the Arab world, is born in Beirut.

Like a flock of pigeons, nine filmmakers have landed on the rooftop of Muriel Aboulrouss, to dig into the Cine-Jam creative process before flying high above their City: Beirut, proud to declare, despite the dusty skies, a Happy Outcome. They left behind the common people in marshy waters, busy with their day to day shores, ruminating artistic productions poisoned by fear.

It is true that intuition is a form of innate knowledge that cannot be explained by analytical logic. It is also indisputable that writing about it, is an unavoidable offence. I, Adham Dimashki, find myself responsible of testifying to that experience that I witnessed as the coordinator & an active member of this innovative cinematic journey: the intuitive film lab 2022 where the series Ana was born. I felt that this Film Lab has given back Lebanon a front seat on the artistic creative scene. Lebanon has been liberated from its political & economical alienations during these 6 weekends on Home of Cine-Jam rooftop www.homeofcinejam.com

It all started with « emotions », untold emotions which were the mystery that pushed Aboulrouss to bring her film lab to life. She has been aware since 2012 that analytical logic leads the filmmaking industry to compose a lying discourse through images and sounds, a discourse with an agenda beyond the beauty & necessity of the creative act itself.

The Cine-Jam intuitive creative process guides the filmmakers to transcend mental (Neocortex) intellectual mechanisms, digging deeper into their emotions & finding in their Cerebellum (subconscious mind) the unique imagery within each, then to transform it, using their knowhow and talent, all into a short film by trusting the intuitive muscle (frontal Lobe) and surrendering to the process. It is a unique way to manifest what can only be channeled by each and every creator.

The films born through this Film lab are far from the sophisticated creations of the mainstream industry. It is an inward meditative journey and an invitation to probe the depth of the Ego, transform them into images and sounds, in a poetic self painting.

Human intuition presents itself under two forms: the Sensitive intuition that allows us to connect to the outer world through our senses.

The second kind is the intuition allows us to connect with ourselves and be conscience of our own existence and identity: the Cogito.

Thus, the artist's role, in that context, is to respond fully to his/her intuition, instinctively and impulsively, while using their senses & their cinematic knowhow to find and grab the unique audiovisual components that will give shape to their intuitive film.

Muriel Aboulrouss, expert in cinematography, first female cinematographer in the Arab world, had that vision in 2012 and she understood that it all came from her childhood under the bombs of Lebanon's civil war 1975; a childhood where images and sounds were completely separated by the bunker's walls.

Cine-Jam the intuitive film lab was born in 2012, it came to a halt in 2014 due to Muriel's family trauma and personal necessity. Zyara (visit) the doc series was born in 2014 to heal that wound, help transcend pain and allow it to be transformed into art, beauty and hope. Zyara's audiovisual language was born by intuitive process and during the past 7 years, it was a magnificent journey of self discovery for Muriel, in Art as in Life.

<https://homeofcinejam.com/playlist/in-art-as-in-life/muriel-aboulrouss/>

Zyara was initiated and produced by Denise Jabbour who personally conducts the interviews with the "Heroes". As a Zyara hero myself, I can also testify to these incredible compassionate eyes and ears that Denise offers to every person they visit. Together Denise and Muriel founded the Home of Cine-Jam because they both knew that everything they will create, will come to life by intuition and a total trust in Life.

Zyara started as an act of self healing which transformed throughout the years to a tool for social emotional healing for all.

Cine-jam and Zyara were a life journey turning point for Muriel, she decided to retire as a cinematographer, from stereotypes and from the industry's expectations to focus on her self discovery and reconnect with the real reasons that made her choose, the light & the audiovisual tools as her main language of expression.

The vision has been revealed to her, a gift that life offers to its creatives & creators; and because Muriel is an Avant-Garde and pioneer, she created her Intuitive film lab, to share the fruits of her vision and life experiences with the independent filmmakers who believe in reinventing themselves and question the system that is formatting them.

It is a journey into the unknown, a sort of Zen ritual that develops individual intuitive abilities and where the spirit becomes open to the cosmic co-creation with life.

Each filmmaker will face the Mirror, wipe the dust covering it, to recreate piece by piece a unique audiovisual, poetic, self portrait. That is only a first step into the infinite potential of the creative process and it is their choice to develop that ability and dig deeper into that process long after the film lab 6 weeks program is done.

The setting of these short films are poetic therefore they are free to compose it based on their own authentic logic away from the collective expectations.

The sets of this poetic short films are generated without the need for a logical narrative sequence. Everything happens as if one sought to adopt spontaneous knowledge not subject to logical foundations, and to activate the immediate, intuitive and emotional in the directions and choices, and to show the invisible images, to illuminate them from unexpected angles... Muriel compares it to a child playing with Lego pieces and rearranging them as he/she feels without a reference or rules; and this is when, the elements of surprise or genius accidents, will appear to

guide us into completing the art work; an act where the genius child and the adult merge to become one.

You see them, individually, wiping the dust from the mirror and staring deeply at it. They look there at their tattooed faces with other faces that have marked them deeply. Then these faces fade from the mirror, and their faces, pure and raw, remain. The face of the ego, in which the cosmic ego, the social ego and the individual ego are included.

Whoever watches these 9 films composing “ANA” the series, and those who were produced last year “Ana Beirut” <https://homeofcinejam.com/film-lab/ana-beirut/>, discovers, gropingly, a pure cinematographic language, devoid of visual effects and decorative elements. There is no need to impress or dazzle the viewer. As for those who are spontaneously, intuitively creative, they have no material purpose. They make a self-portrait that starts from oneself towards the community in a restorative artistic journey. A journey of artistic self-reconciliation that leads to collective reconciliation.

Here comes the relationship between the artwork and the recipient. The spectator is, in turn, invited to discard his previous knowledge and judgments, to sit in the void, then to enter the director's intuitive panel. It is impossible to weigh gold with the Richter scale, or measure the road with the jeweler's scale.

Each artistic language has its own scale, and the scale of the films born in this laboratory is the absence of balance and the refusal of prejudices.

Nor do we deny the challenges and confrontations posed by this internal mechanism of creation, some of which may seem harsh to oneself or to the recipient. The filmmakers are called, from the beginning, since their affiliation to the laboratory, to withdraw if the test seems hard to them, or when they feel that they are not ready to be honest and transparent in their expression of the 'ego. It is in the light of this laboratory, that they will leave the safe space to which they are accustomed as filmmakers subject to the standards consecrated by the academies, and which govern the labor market.

At first, strange images appear to them. As if they were looking at each other through the peephole. They see images and feelings jealously guarded by motives, tendencies and instincts... To explore one's inner self one must go through the subconscious, where repressed experiences such as anger, love, hatred are deposited and other feelings that form the psychological and emotional background. Here is the essence of creation in the transfer of these intuitive images into concrete language.

Sometimes it's hard for the director to capture the vision. His mind may sometimes tempt him into deceit and indulgence, but the sincerity of creative intuition betrays its truth. The Intuition Scale, as mentioned, is so sensitive that it detects every camouflaged intruder.

This is why Muriel seeks to invest the time spent in her laboratory well. She is aware that temporal laxity can tempt filmmakers to rationalize creation or formal distortions to escape confrontation with oneself.

Analytical thinking is slower because it is controlled by mind, ideas and norms. As for intuitive thought, it is spontaneous, direct, immediate, rapid, unconscious and not subject to the authority of the mind and its rational controls. It generates authentic and pure images and sounds.

The films of the nine directors stood out for their originality. Each film is unique, yet with deep ties that connect them, especially honesty and passion. We were all amazed by the image of the mother, a character common almost to all films, as if she were the eternal womb incubating the self and identity and its formations, or as if she symbolized the umbilical cord which had not still been severed.

In the previous Film lab 2021, where the series Ana Beirut was born, the films were dedicated to the capital, reflecting each director's relationship with his mother city. As for this year's laboratory 2022, during which the "ANA" series was born, its roots go deep into the womb and its repercussions.

These films led the nine directors, as their testimonies confirm, to individual reconciliations. To avoid any possible confusion, we must explain the difference between the role of this cinematographic laboratory of creation based on intuition, and the professionals of art therapy. Psychotherapy uses the arts as a means to a therapeutic end and is not necessarily artistic. But art is both the means and the end. Art is the whole that embraces in its core creativity, reconciliation and the crossing of major questions.

Art asks the question, it does not advance the answer. It asks the questions open both to the self, to the alienation of existence and to the strangeness of the universe, implicated in the ego.

The cinema of intuition is born from the ego, and like all blessed births, a halo of light surrounds it, radiating and increasing with the number of those who believe in the renewal of the artistic spirit and its living essence. .

Artistic pioneers need heroism to break habits that are both coveted and subjugating, then lead a convoy of new creators into a desert in whose mirage the paradise of creation springs from nothingness, or else creation becomes a carrier. word of an Eden where creativity and instinct reside.