

Press Release  
For immediate distribution

## DURING ITS 41ST EDITION, THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS ON ART (LE FIF A) WILL HONOUR THE BEIRUT ART FILM FESTIVAL WITH THE TRIBUTE AWARD FOR ITS COURAGE AND DETERMINATION



Montreal, February 1, 2023 — **The International Festival of Films on Art (Le FIF A)** is pleased to announce that during its 41st edition, the **Beirut Art Film Festival**, an example of courage and determination for all cultural stakeholders, will receive the **Tribute Award**.

Since its creation in 2014, **the Beirut Art Film Festival**, in addition to its vocation of celebrating and promoting artistic creation, has been concretely committed to the defence of human rights, cultural patrimonies, and freedom of expression. Situated in a battered, martyred city that nevertheless remains host to intense cultural activity, the BAFF continues to raise the voices of Lebanese artists who are constantly living alongside death, kindness, and uncertainty – and yet always retain their faith in a better future.

**Alice Mogabgab**, director of the **Beirut Art Film Festival**, will receive the **FIFA Tribute Award** on March 15, at 5:00 p.m., as part of the professional activities of the 41st edition of **Le FIF A**.

“It was in Montréal, in March 2014, that I discovered **Le FIF A** and its panoply of films on art. For ten days, I was drawn in, overwhelmed, shaken, but above all enchanted by the magical medium of film and the relevant views of extraordinary directors. For ten days, in theatre after theatre, I drank in documentaries and discussions, nourished by the sublime expression of the human condition: art. This intense, dazzling time made me think of Lewis Carroll’s famous tale, *Alice in Wonderland*. I was to take the wonders revealed in Montréal back to Beirut with me, with the firm desire to share this memorable cultural experience.”

— **Alice Mogabgab**, founder and director of the **Beirut Art Film Festival (BAFF)**

“The International Festival of Films on Art is this Tribute Award, with profound gratitude, to the Beirut Art Film Festival. This award underlines the crucial importance of cultural stakeholders’ perspectives in

the world today. Despite pain and uncertainty, the BAFF continues to make the voices of artists heard with determination and hope. Consistent with our values, it was important for us to support the BAFF in its commitment.” — **Philippe U. del Drago**, Artistic and general director of **The International Festival of Films on Art** (Le FIFA)

#### **ABOUT THE BEIRUT ART FILM FESTIVAL**

In the fall of 2014, the **Beirut Art Film Festival - BAFF** was founded. At its head, a team of 6 volunteers: Michèle Nahas, Maria Chakhtoura, Nadine Mokdessi, Souraya Karam, Alia Karam and Alice Mogabgab. The first edition sees the light of day in November 2015 in the movie theaters of the Sofil Center, it is success. Young and old were at the rendezvous: packed theaters, an enthusiastic audience, an adventure that starts. Buoyed by this first success, the festival team was far from sleeping on its laurels. It was going to work hard to make the BAFF a platform for debate and cultural sharing. As of 2016 the festival has was to leave Beirut to offer itself to universities and cultural centers in the Lebanese regions. In 2017, the BAFF @ School program was launched.

In 2018, 14 cultural centers in the regions, 16 university campuses, 1000 private and public schools hosted the festival. But a feeling of anxiety and insecurity preoccupied the youth; BAFF responds to it with films on heritage, collective memory and identity. As soon as it was announced, the 5th edition was reduced and then postponed because of the economic crisis in the making, which was to erupt on October 17, 2019. The popular revolts spread across the country. Anger rumbles. Roads are cut, universities, schools and cultural centers are closed ... A wind of change blows on the country. But the political junta in power clings on and plunges Lebanon into bankruptcy and chaos.

The Covid 19 pandemic forces the population into confinement, emptying the streets and squares, offering the repressive forces of power and barricaded banks a royal road to disaster. On August 4, 2020, the double explosion in the port of Beirut caused carnage: more than 200 innocent people were killed, more than 6,000 injured, more than 300,000 displaced and an apocalyptic landscape. This perfect crime is monstrous. The Lebanese are devastated, they mourn and mourn both their dead and their shattered country.

In this field of ruins, blood and tears, hope became impossible. The living and working conditions imposed by the power, trapped in its corruption, end up destroying the state and bringing the population to its knees. But the history of Lebanon teaches us that capitulation is impossible. To survive is to resist, to rebuild is to assert oneself.

In this year 2020 marked by the pandemic, while the world virtually celebrated the 250th anniversary of Ludwig van Beethoven, in Beirut, the Ode to Joy of the German composer was going to launch the 6th edition of the festival, in presence, defying the prohibitions. Placed under the signs of continuity and determination, this rebirth of the BAFF inaugurated the cultural season. Since then, the festival returns every November in theaters and every month online, organizing, with the support of its faithful cultural partners and sponsors, screenings, meetings and artistic performances.

Because "Art is what resists: it resists death, servitude, infamy, and shame", as Gilles Deleuze said, BAFF will remain a cultural platform committed to the preservation of freedom, dignity and tolerance.  
[www.beirutartfilmfestival.org](http://www.beirutartfilmfestival.org)



## THE 41st EDITION OF LE FIFA KICKS OFF!

The International Festival of Films on Art (Le FIFA) is pleased to reveal the poster for its **41st edition, which will be in theatres March 14–16, 2023 and online March 24–April 2, 2023**. Created by Montréal designer and artistic director **Joanie Brisebois**, the poster, in the Festival's colours, highlights our uniqueness and our fields of expertise and exploration: film and art; as you know, films on art happen at Le FIFA more than anywhere else.

## [ACHETEZ VOS PASSEPORTS EN SALLE ET EN LIGNE DÈS MAINTENANT](#)

### ABOUT LE FIFA TRIBUTE AWARD

The FIFA **Tribute Award** is a recognition of an individual or organization for their outstanding contribution to the field of art and art film. It is a reward for their hard work, dedication and long-term success. Le FIFA **Tribute Award** is intended to honor the achievement of the individual or organization and to express sincere gratitude for their contribution to the art film community.

### ABOUT LE FIFA 41

The International Festival of Films on Art (Le FIFA) is dedicated to the promotion and international distribution of films on art and the media arts. Under the general and artistic direction of Philippe U. del Drago, Le FIFA offers an annual event in March to discover the latest productions of films on art. Through its programming, its many annual activities and its online art film platform (ARTS.FILM), Le FIFA, founded by René Rozon, is committed to increasing public knowledge and appreciation of art. Le FIFA is also committed to promoting the work of artists working in the fields of film, video and visual arts, and to encouraging the production and distribution of films about art. **The 41st edition of the festival will take place in theatres in Montreal and Quebec City from March 14 to 26, 2023 and online from March 24 to April 2, 2023.**

[www.lefifa.com](http://www.lefifa.com)

Le FIFA thanks Patrimoine canadien, le gouvernement du Québec, le Conseil des arts du Canada, Téléfilm Canada, la SODEC, le Secrétariat à la région métropolitaine, la Ville de Montréal, le Conseil des arts de Montréal and Tourisme Montréal for their generous support.

Canada

Montréal

Canada Council / Conseil des arts  
du Canada

TELEFILM  
CANADA

TOURISME /  
MONTREAL

CONSEIL  
DES ARTS  
DE MONTRÉAL

Québec

Source :

**Jérôme Rocipon**

Directeur des communications, marketing et partenariats

Festival International du Film sur l'Art (Le FIFA)

lefifa.com

[jrocipon@lefifa.com](mailto:jrocipon@lefifa.com)

Relations de presse :

**Geneviève Harvey**

**Consultante principale**

**RuGicomm**

[genevieve@rugicomm.ca](mailto:genevieve@rugicomm.ca) | 514 927-1525