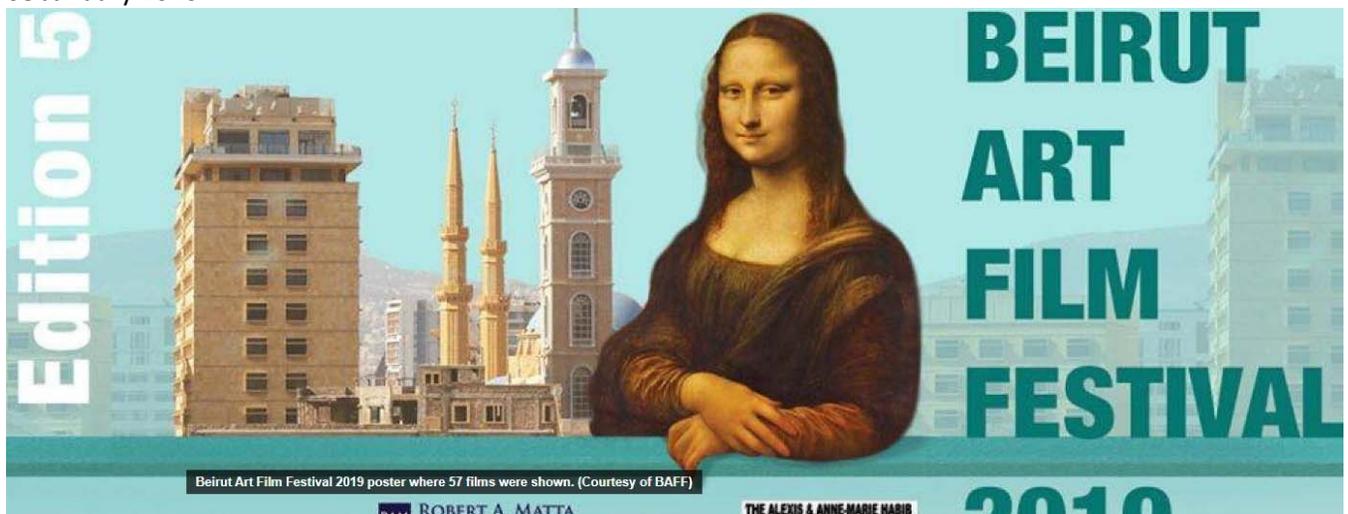


Beirut Art Film Festival reinforces the role of film in affecting change

This year's BAFF is exhibiting over 57 film productions relative to art, architecture, dance, archaeology, photography, cinema, and Lebanon's rich cultural heritage and its ecological depletion.

by Perla Kantarjian
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BEIRUT: Having launched the first two weeks of its fifth edition under the theme of “change” in December at the American University of Lebanon, and despite the riotous political and social situation of Lebanon, the Beirut Art Film Festival commenced the succession of its screenings on Monday.

Over the five years of its establishment, BAFF has grown to become an annual event, offering diversified and abundant programs of local and international screen productions that assuage the appetite of film and arts enthusiasts of Lebanon.

This year's edition was set to begin during late October, Alice Mogabgab Karam, founder of BAFF, told Annahar, adding that “the coinciding onset of the revolution only affected the date of the launching of the festival, and did not, in any manner, make the organizers consider its cancellation.”

Accordingly, the inauguration of weeks 3 and 4 of BAFF took off with two screenings at the Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA): “Io Leonardo”, a 2019 biographical movie on the life

of Leonardo Da Vinci, and “Mona Lisa is Missing- the Man who Stole the Masterpiece”, a 2012 documentary on the stealing of the Mona Lisa painting from the Louvre in 1911.

The Lebanese film industry is known as one of the oldest in the region, and according to a 2015 research by the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL), it is becoming “particularly attractive as it entails the growth of a ‘film community’ composed of creative talents, producers, technicians, and moviegoers.”

This year’s BAFF is exhibiting over 57 film productions relative to art, architecture, dance, archeology, photography, cinema, and a great number of productions that highlight topics related to Lebanon’s rich cultural heritage and its ecological depletion.

With its every edition, BAFF embraces a certain theme. Previous themes have included “Tomorrow” and “Freedom”, and this year’s theme corresponded perfectly to the “Change” that Lebanon is going through with its ongoing revolution.

“Rule number one in life is to always keep going,” Karam said. “The festival is strongly in support of the revolution, and finds its identity within that of the revolution whose purpose is to affect change and alter perspectives.”

Karam explained that film has always contributed to revolutions and that artists have always been “in the process and pursuit of changing things.”

She added, “Through film, we embark on journeys within ourselves. We travel through the camera to amazing places the eye cannot reach. We become bird-like, yet human at the same time, and with the right productions, we gain new perspectives on various important topics.”

“The common point between Lebanon’s revolution and BAFF is the act and pursuit of changing perspectives,” Karam said.

BAFF will continue with its weeks 3 and 4 at the ALBA till January 17, at Auditorium 2.

For more information about the upcoming screenings and their venues, visit the Beirut Art Film Festival website www.bafflebanon.org

<http://bit.ly/2tGz6pp>