

AFAC

# Crossroads' First Workshop

June 2012

الشعب خط أحمر



آفاق AFAC

The Arab Fund For Arts and Culture  
الصندوق العربي للثقافة والفنون – آفاق



Crossroads holds its first grantee workshop on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2012. Taking place in Beirut, the workshop caters to the first batch of Crossroads grantees and hosts advisors /experts in the filmmaking scene from across the Arab region - including Lebanese filmmaker Ghassan Salhab, Moroccan filmmaker Ali Essafi and established producer and president of CNC (Aide aux Cinemas du Monde) Dora Bouchoucha from Tunisia. Over a three-day period, these three experts worked closely with grantees Ahmad Ghossein (Lebanon), Bahia Bencheikh Elfegoune (Algeria), Fadi Yeni Turk (Lebanon), Karima Zoubir (Morocco) and Mohamed Rashad (Egypt). Programs were partly hosted by Crossroads' local partner, Beirut DC, and representatives of regional partners Semat (Egypt) and ATAC (Tunisia) were also in attendance.

As all Crossroads grantees are awarded for film projects in the development phase, the purpose of the workshop is to examine the challenges the filmmakers are facing – where are they stuck, what creative approaches best deliver their ideas cinematically, and how can production be supported. The intimate setting of individual conversations and one-on-one dissection of their film projects with the help of the workshop advisors offers the grantees new perspectives and guidance to move forward.





At 9:00 AM, the workshop kicks off at AFAC premises with the five grantees warmly welcomed by executive director Oussama Rifahi, board members Nabil Qaddumi and Suzanne

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Wettenschwiler, Film Programs Manager Rima

Mismar and Crossroads Project Manager Zeina Zahreddine. After a short presentation, a round-table discussion with the 5 grantees – Ahmad, Bahia, Fadi, Karima and Rashad – ensues, each describing their respective film projects and its current status at the development level. The 6<sup>th</sup> grantee from the first batch of Crossroads grantees, Mohammad Hasan Shawky could not attend due to a previous engagement.

Ahmad Ghossein's debut feature-length narrative "Upside Down", is concerned with the sectarian and political crossroads at which Lebanese diverge; Mohamed Rashad's "The Little Eagles" is a literal confrontation between two generations: the parents on one side, which were part of the left wing of the sixties and seventies, and their children on the other side, who were eventually the makers of the revolution; Karima Zoubir's short narrative project "Behind the Wall" explores the confined life of a teenage girl living in





one of Morocco's tin quarters; Fadi Yeni Turk's "Monumentum" is an exploration of the fate of well-known monuments in the Arab world examining their changing relation to history and memory; Bahia Becheikh-El-Fegoun's "Algerians, State of Affairs, State of Mind..." is a documentary that seeks to answer a simple but complicated question: Why did the revolution skip my country?

Each at a time, the grantees present their film projects to each other, where they currently are in development, and share their concerns and challenges regarding the cinematic expression of their ideas. Ahmad feels pressured as his producer informs him that funds for his feature project, "Upside Down", are coming in, but he is still dissatisfied with the current draft of his script. Bahia is very concerned about how to incorporate archival material into her film, "Algerians, State of Affairs, State of Mind..." in an artistic way and is anxious about embarking on production. Fadi is facing feasibility issues in obtaining the permission to shoot in Iraq and Bahrain for his film "Monumentum" but is confident that he will ultimately find a solution. Karima is making her first fiction project, "Behind the Wall", and as someone more inclined toward documentaries, she is curious to explore the value of storytelling in fiction form. Rashad, on the other hand, is embarking on his first documentary project, "The Little Eagles", and is worried about ending up with a reportage rather than a creative film. He hopes this workshop will answer his needs.





Around 10:30 am, the Crossroads team moves from the AFAC office to Dar al Moussawir, our next-door photography studio/bookstore/coffee shop, where we are hosting our grantees' first meeting with the experts. Zeina engages the group in a discussion around the different forms of professional and tailored support that Crossroads provides to set the platform for the workshops to begin. The first group discussion is moderated by Ghassan Salhab. In his candid and informal manner, Ghassan explores the philosophical premises of visual expression in film. He discusses the questions of objectivity and subjectivity, the slippery yet more accurate reality of relativism, and the importance of self-questioning in being authentic. Every film is, to a large degree, a subjective expression of the filmmaker's point of view. The grantees discussed with Ghassan the personal approach versus the generalized. Though they may be dealing with political or social concerns, their films can only come from personal experience and personal reflection.

Over lunch break, Dora Bouchoucha and Ali Essafi join the group for a casual gathering at Dar's friendly outdoor setting together with other AFAC staff. Discussions are lively between the funders, advisors, and grantees on the situation of filmmaking in the Arab region today.



At 3:00 PM, the first series of one-to-one meetings begin. Advisors Dora, Ali and Ghassan discuss with grantees the details of their projects individually. The duration initially given to each meeting is 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes. The meetings, however, extend beyond 1 hour 30 minutes, with both advisors and grantees asking for more time. "A lot can be touched on and learned in a one-to-one discussion, and the quality of attention and depth of analysis is much more meaningful to us and to the advisors alike," says one of the grantees. The meetings wrap up around 6:30 PM and we head to Metropolis Cinema for the screening of the short documentary *My Father Is still a Communist* by Crossroads' grantee Ahmad Ghossein. This same film will be the subject of the case study on Tuesday. After the screening, Lebanese curator Rasha Salti cordially invites us all to her home with other friends and spoils us with homemade Lebanese dishes courtesy of Ahmad's mother.



In the morning, the one-to-one meetings continue and by lunchtime all grantees had had the opportunity to meet with each of the advisors for more than 90 minutes. They are

**June 05**

surprised by the level of intimacy and increased self-understanding that they reached with the advisors during the long sessions of careful listening and questioning. "Many layers are peeled away and the grantees are astonished to find themselves revealing personal secrets, things that they had not revealed to anyone before, in the privacy of the one-to-one meetings," said one of the advisors. They understood more clearly the words that Ghassan had said a day earlier about being raw and transparent in making personal films. "Sometimes young filmmakers hide their personal stories behind a more general subject whereas the real issue is their own lives," he said, "Filial relationships, parent-child dynamics, personal idiosyncrasies – these are the stories."

The personal elements are essential to the films, yet the advisors noticed that they were not being fully explored and that the grantees seemed reluctant and shy. Some grantees were taken aback by the advisors' questioning and resisted being prodded out of their comfort zones. "Later on, especially after viewing and discussing the personal creative documentary by fellow colleague Ahmad Ghossein, they became more open with themselves and the advisors; more appreciative of their intervention somehow."

The meeting moves from the Dar photography studio and to the ground-level café where we all enjoy a well-deserved break and hearty meal. Joining us is Amine Messadi, the representative of Crossroads' Tunisian partner ATAC – The Tunisian Association for Activating Cinema. We all board the mini-van and head to Beirut DC, our local partner, in Furn el-Chebbak where we are welcomed by their spokeswoman Cynthia Choucair. Meanwhile Hala Galal, the representative of our Egyptian partner Semat, joins us there directly from the airport.







ATAC, Beirut DC and Semat are three film institutions based in the Arab world and partners in AFAC's Crossroads program. Each representative presents to the grantees the background and context of their institution, their goals and vision, the challenges they face, and their common dedication to supporting contemporary Arab cinema. Beirut DC and Semat are both much older than ATAC and work more on a regional level with a longer track record, yet they share the vulnerability of ATAC with regards to funding and the longer term commitment of their sponsors towards their institutions. They discussed the challenges and opportunities of production and distribution of Arab films. Though their trajectories have been different, they all share a determination to make a difference in their respective countries and in the region.

After the presentations, grantees, advisors and partners gather to discuss Ahmad Ghossein's film from the previous evening, *My Father Is Still a Communist*. The choice of the film as a case study was well appreciated as everyone believes it is important to move away from the stereotyped iconic approach to filmmaking and take on a more accessible and open attitude. Discussing a film in the presence of the director and amidst fellow grantees and advisors was overall a very useful experience.

At 5:00 PM the discussion is wrapped up and the first public panel: "Co-production: Still a Prototype to Pursue?" starts. Zeina moderates the panel and begins by asking Dora, head of Fonds Sud in 2010 and currently president of CNC (Aides aux Cinemas du Monde) about the state of Arab/European co-production. Is there a decrease of co-productions between the Arab world and Europe and a shifting towards local productions and co-productions among the Arab countries? Dora confirms this trend and explains it to be due to the scarcity of European funds today and conversely, the increase of Arab funds. Ghassan comments on the large diversity of films being currently produced, which requires a more nuanced appreciation among funders. Arab filmmakers have often turned towards European sources as the only professional and reliable funding available, yet the attitude towards contemporary film is changing and with the establishment of institutions like AFAC and other funds in the Arab region, local film producers feel stronger and more confident. In this current context, filmmakers' interest is shifting to co-production possibilities mainly to secure the international market. All agree that this is a significant change and that a new dynamism is occurring in the region, with many good films coming to light.





Crossroads grantees meet at AFAC's offices for the second group discussion: "Using Archives in Films." We are joined by Monica Borgman from

## June 06

Umam Documentation & Research. Umam is an initiative dedicated to Lebanese archives – restoring them, organizing them and uploading them to a special website called Memory at Work where archival material from the Lebanese civil war is made publicly available free of charge. As experts in researching and archiving, their on-the-ground experience is valuable to share and is well-received the grantees. During the discussion, Ali examines the meaning of the term 'archive' and states that any past document - private or public - film, birth certificate or radio recording - is an element of an archive. Ghassan discusses the different levels of handling archives in a film project i.e. first searching for them then studying them over and over again and, finally the last step of how to actually use them.

"There is no magic recipe on how to use an archive in a creative way. It is the material you find that actually dictates the process and not the other way round," he says. In her feedback, Bahia admits that she was hoping to learn how to use archives but instead found out that she was putting the donkey behind the carriage. "I was worrying about how to approach archival

material and how to incorporate them creatively into my film before actually collecting."

Later in the day, the Crossroads press conference is hosted at Metropolis Cinema and presents the scope of support to Arab filmmakers and the grantees themselves. Additionally, the second and final batch of Crossroads grantees is made public. The six new grant recipients are Djemal Fawzi (Tunisia) for his short narrative "Abrupton", Hazem Alhamwi (Syria) for his documentary "Caravan in a Room", Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk (Egypt) for their documentary "Out/In The Streets", Mazen Khaled (Lebanon) for his short narrative "A Very Dangerous Man", Rifqi Assaf (Jordan) for his feature-length narrative "The Curve" and Sara Ishaq (Yemen) for her documentary "Fatherland". Members of the press conduct interviews with the film experts, funders and grantees present, learning more about the Crossroads grantee selection and the current workshop.

After lunch, we all head to Beirut DC for a second round of one-to-one meetings. After an intense two days of shared experiences and discussions, the grantees are more relaxed and increasingly more receptive to their advisors, able to go deeper in analysis and discussion.

At 5:00 PM the second open panel begins and it is the conclusive event of the three-day workshop. Under the title "Arab Cinema in the

## Conclusion

Context of Possibility and Change" a number of questions are discussed, mostly relating to the present and future of Arab cinema in light of the changes sweeping the region: Will the coming few years witness a revolution in visual expression? How do the upheavals in the region and their inevitable intersection with image-making and social media effect cinema production? By and large, the panelists/advisors respond by pointing out that Arab cinema had started to witness changes - both on thematic and artistic levels - well before the revolutions began. Over the past three years or so, Arab filmmakers were exploring new approaches and revealing sensibilities and concerns with films pointing in a sense to a "prediction of the revolutions." According to the panelists, Arab films predating 2011 were able to capture the shifting grounds and simmering realities in their societies, often foreshadowing – though by no means causing or urging – the revolutions.

The discussion then turns towards a different direction set by the grantees themselves.

"How are we supposed to react as filmmakers to the ongoing changes? Should we just record and document? Should we abstain from

making films until we achieve the necessary distance from reality? Should we have a plan to implement new visual expression that fit more the new realities?" Those were some of the questions asked by the young directors, who, despite their shared concerns, come from very different backgrounds in relation to cinema. In the Egyptian context, the issue is how to break free from a long and dominating system of film production. For Tunisians, the horrific decrease in the number of film theaters from 100 to 10 over the past decade and the recent assaults on artists and filmmakers are new realities and limitations that they have to deal with and presage and ominous future. Fadi, who has covered the Libyan revolution as a photo journalist, shares an interesting thought by stating that the mere presence of the camera inside the revolution has pushed reality itself into different territories, resulting sometimes in the revolutionists adding a "performance element" to their actions. His comment echoed the point of view expressed earlier by the panelists/jurors: there's no such thing as "objective reality" or "objective image". The panel concludes with a general agreement that there is no cinematic obligation towards the revolutions aside from re-thinking, as individuals and filmmakers, our past, present and future and maintaining a critical position towards what's happening around us.





# Crossroads Grantees First Batch

**Project Title:** Upside Down

**Grantee:** Ahmad Ghossein

**Country:** Lebanon

**Type:** Feature-Length Narrative

Five people try to escape the bombing in a southern Lebanese village during the last days of the July War. They decide to hide in the basement of an undamaged house. Soon, seven Israeli soldiers enter the first floor. Trapped by their own fears, they experience an out-of-control situation during the next three days.

**Project Title:** The Little Eagles

**Grantee:** Mohamed Rashad

**Country:** Egypt

**Type:** Documentary

Between two generations, the left-wing activists of the sixties and seventies, and children of the nineties, many things remain to be said. The film revolves around a confrontation between the dreams, aspirations, political action, failure, frustration, alienation, and finally the revolution on both sides.

**Project Title:** Monumentum

**Grantee:** Fadi Yeni Turk

**Country:** Lebanon

**Type:** Documentary

What if the 'Monument', a landmark designed to reinforce a message of power through time, was deemed to oblivion, re-adaptation or even destruction? What if it becomes a nightmare that will haunt forever the mind of its creator? Such are the changes currently unfolding in the Arab world and seen in a diversity of stories reflecting on the destiny of monuments, shifting between memory and dementia, between re-appropriation, rejection or even annihilation.

**Project Title:** Algerians, State of Affairs, State of Mind...

**Grantee:** Bahia BenCheikh-El-Fegoun

**Country:** Algeria

**Type:** Documentary

It all began with a question: Why did the revolution skip my country, Algeria? I look in the dictionary, around me, in the reality. I realize how much the meaning of Revolution has changed. Over the years, through the regimes, the politics and events, the terminology and its symbolism have taken on a negative connotation, a painful one. We are experiencing a sliding of meanings. Are we experiencing a sliding of revolution in Algeria?

**Project Title:** Behind the Wall

**Grantee:** Karima Zoubeir

**Country:** Morocco

**Type:** Short Narrative

Nadia, a 15 year-old girl, lives in the slums of Casablanca, surrounded by a wall that separates it from the rest of the city. One day, Nadia notices an unusual activity around the wall. Municipality workers deploy their tools and start painting the wall. Why is this sudden interest in the wall?

**Project Title:** And on a Different Note

**Grantee:** Mohamad Shawky Hassan

**Country:** Egypt

**Type:** Experimental

And on a Different Note is a reflection on the ambivalent relationship of an Egyptian living in New York City with the ongoing political developments in Egypt and the media rhetoric associated with them. This audiovisual experience is created through the juxtaposition of images of the author's various habitats within the city, and sound fragments from Egyptian prime time talk shows, echoing a growing sense of alienation and a state of physical detachment, and capturing the stillness of New York's urban life compared to the pace of events and their surrounding debates in Egypt.



## Crossroads Grantees Second Batch

**Project Title:** Out/In the Streets

**Grantees:** Philip Rizk and Jasmina Metwaly

**Country:** Egypt

**Type:** Documentary

This is a film about labor workers. Throughout the ongoing Egyptian Revolution some workers have lost a relative or friend; most continue to be exploited by factory owners and many are fighting back and resisting. This film mixes the forms of documentary and fiction in order to see the Egyptian revolution from the workers' perspective beyond the factory's heavy gates, beyond the frozen assembly lines and rusty machinery. The film challenges both the visual discourse of the role of labor workers in film, as well as the workers' political narrative in the context of the revolution in Egypt.

**Project Title:** The Curve

**Grantee:** Rifqi Assaf

**Country:** Jordan

**Type:** Narrative

One night, "Radi", a Jordanian of Palestinian origins suffering from social phobia, hears a shrilling scream in the distance. Despite his phobia, he challenges himself by switching on the lights of his home – a VW microbus. With the seemingly trivial switching on of a light, he soon finds himself on a road trip that alters his clockwork and very private lifestyle. A series of unanticipated events occur along the way - past and present memories and surprising illusions reveal themselves in collective confrontations.

**Project Title:** Fatherland

**Grantee:** Sara Ishak

**Country:** Yemen

**Type:** Documentary

The film follows the filmmaker's personal documentation of a casual reunion between estranged family members which escalates into an all-engulfing popular uprising. The film also focuses on the shifting dynamics between women and men within the context of a modern Yemeni family, testing all preconceived ideas about identity, social customs, familial and social bonds at a time when women's roles and input have become integral to the Yemeni revolution.

**Project Title:** A Very Dangerous Man

**Grantee:** Mazen Khaled

**Country:** Lebanon

**Type:** Short fiction

Beirut, Lebanon; April 2012. Life seems as normal as can be in this city, yet something is bubbling underneath. As people go about their normal lives, a political activist gets chased around the streets of Hamra. Meanwhile, a suspicious looking





bag easily changes hands, gets transported, and awaits an unknown destination in a busy Hamra cafe.

**Project Title:** Abruption

**Grantee:** Djemal Fawzy

**Country:** Tunisia

**Type:** Short fiction

Tunisia lives in a climate of terror and violence two days after January 14<sup>th</sup>; an atmosphere of insecurity prevails in the country and in the heart of the people. Ramla, a 26-year-old movies props woman, has been busy for weeks in a shooting of a thriller. Forced to finish the missing few days of shooting, the team resumes work in a very tense atmosphere. Forty five minutes before curfew, Ramla leaves the movie set to go straight home. Thwarted by the tense and stressful day, she forgets one crucial detail and finds herself in a complicated situation

**Project Title:** Caravan in a Room

**Grantee:** Hazem Alhamwi

**Country:** Syria

**Type:** Documentary

The year 2011 witnessed the beginning of unprecedented social movement in Syria after 40 years of political stagnation. From the beginning, death was the risk at stake for venturing out to the streets and expressing one's rage. I was overtaken by a deep feeling of the certainty of death looming near me, around me, everywhere. I decided to face this feeling with a kind of courage and optimism, by finding enjoyment in the things I do. Like someone wanting to leave traces of my life, I turned to the two things I enjoyed most: painting and photography. Painting gave me space and distance to be with myself and my thoughts. My personal memories echoed the heavy collective memory of violence in the streets of my homeland. The world is watching as if this violence were something new and alien, but I have known it well... I have seen it in schools, in families, in neighborhood streets since the day I was born. Today it simply rises to the surface. This film is a sharing of narratives from Syria. Some are personal and others are social commentaries, some arise from the present and others look to the past. All seek to explain the reasons for the outbreak of this revolution and how one's soul can shift from seeking death to finding new life.



## Crossroads Advisors and Jurors

### **Dora Bouchoucha, Tunisia**

A graduate of English Literature, Dora Bouchoucha has been a film producer since 1994. She has produced and co-produced several Tunisian and foreign documentaries, short and feature films including "Africa Dreaming", (a series of short African films) "Sabria" by Abderrahmen Sissako, "The Season of Men" by Moufida Tlatli, "Baraket" by Jamila Sahraoui, "Satin Rouge" and "Buried Secrets" both by Raja Amari. Her films have been selected at Venice, Cannes and Berlin.

In addition to film production, Dora Bouchoucha also founded the Carthage Film Festival Projects' workshop in 1992 and the SUD ECRITURE workshops in 1997, which she has been running since. She is actively involved in training and promotion for southern cinema. She was a permanent member of the International Rotterdam Festival CineMart Board for more than ten years and was consultant for Arab and African films for the selection board of Venice Film Festival from 2007 to 2011. Between 2008 and 2010, Dora Bouchoucha was head of Carthage Film Festival after which she was appointed head of Fonds Sud. In 2012, she was appointed President of the CNC "Aide aux cinémas du Monde."

### **Ali Essafi, Morocco**

He studied psychology in France then entered the world of filmmaking. His works as a director include Général, nous voilà (General, Here We Come!, 1997), a documentary about Moroccan veterans of the French army. It was awarded the Special Jury Award at the Namur Film Festival in Belgium, and shown in Carthage and at the Paris Arab film biennale. Le Silence des champs de betteraves (The Silence of the Root Fields, 1998), was awarded the Grand Prix at the International Festival of Environmental Film & Video in Paris, and was also included in the Cinéma du Réel documentary festival. In 2001 his Ouarzazat film was awarded the Best Mediterranean Documentary at the CMCA, and praised on the international circuit. In 2002 Ali Essafi returned to Morocco where he made several documentaries then got involved in public TV for 3 years as an Art Director Adviser. He just finished his most recent film Wanted!, commissioned by the 10<sup>th</sup> Sharjah Biennial and selected by the MoMA's program of the Experimental Arab Film "Mapping Subjectivity." Currently based in Casablanca, he lives and works between Morocco and Brazil.

### **Irit Neidhardt, Germany**

German-born filmmaker Neidhardt is dedicated to Middle Eastern cinema and currently runs mec film (middle eastern cinemas), a distribution company for films exclusively from the Middle East. She has worked as a dramaturgical





consultant together with Sayed Kashua for Dancing Arabs and on the screenplay adaptation of his novel "Let it Be Morning". Her theatrical catalogue also includes films like "Rana's Wedding" by Hany Abu Assad and "Atash" (Thirst) by Tawfik Abu Wael. In the World Sales, mec film distributes Simon El Habre's "The One Man Village" and others. Irit is associate producer of Mahmoud al-Massad's award winning feature-documentary "Recycle" and co-producer of Simon el-Habre's highly acclaimed "The One Man Village" as well as his latest "Gate #5". She is a curator, consultant and author of various articles on subjects related to cinema and the Middle East.

#### **Ghassan Salhab, Lebanon**

In addition to making his own films, Salhab collaborates on various scenarios in Lebanon and in France, and teaches film in Lebanon. He has directed four long films: "Beyrouth Fantôme" (selected by Trois Continents/Nantes 1998 and various international film festivals), "Terra Incognita" (selected by Sélection Officielle «Un Certain Regard» - Cannes 2002, and also selected by several other international film festivals), "The Last Man" (selected by «Cinéastes du Présent» - Locarno 2006, Montpellier, Torino, Dubai, Singapore, Tribeca, "Tous les cinémas du monde" – Cannes 2007...), and "1958" (selected by FID Marseille, Locarno, MEIFF Abu Dhabi...), in addition to numerous short films and videos, including "(Posthume)"; "Narcisse Perdu"; "My living body, my dead body"; "La Rose de personne"; "Baalbeck" (co-directed with A. Zaatari and M. Soueid); "Afrique Fantôme"; "Après la Mort..." He has also published his texts and articles in various magazines.

#### **Mohammed Soueid, Lebanon**

Senior producer and director at Al Arabiya TV, Mohammed Soueid was born in Beirut. A graduate of the Lebanese University with a bachelor of science (chemistry), his passion has nevertheless always been film. Soueid began writing weekly film criticism for the daily newspapers of Assafir and An-Nahar. He directed an award-winning autobiographical trilogy of documentaries: "Tango of Yearning" (1998), "Nightfall" (2000) and "Civil War" (2002). His books include the non-fiction directory "Postponed Cinema-The Lebanese Civil War Films" (1986) and the novel "Cabaret Souad" (2004). He is currently a commissioning editor at Al-Arabiya News Channel for which he had directed a number of documentaries including: "My Heart Beats Only For Her" (2009) and "How Bitter My Sweet" (2010).



## Crossroads Partners

This network of film institutions will assist Crossroads on various levels: facilitating information exchange, hosting workshops, supporting production, festival participation and film distribution.

### **BEIRUT DC, Lebanon**

Founded in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1999 by a group of cinema professionals and art advocates, Beirut DC aims to provide help and support to Arab independent filmmakers in order to address and overcome the constraints confronting independently-minded Arab cinema.

### **RAWI SCREENWRITERS' LAB, Jordan**

Launched in 2005 by the Royal Film Commission (RFC) in Jordan, Rawi is a screenplay development lab founded in consultation with the Sundance Institute. Independent Arab screenwriters and directors are offered the chance to develop their work in a creative environment under the guidance of internationally acclaimed screenwriters from all over the world where emphasis is placed on each participant's individual voice and story.

### **SEMAT, Egypt**

An association founded in Cairo, Egypt, by a group of young filmmakers in October 2001, its objective is to provide a space for independent cinema and to support filmmakers to realize their films without being limited by the mainstream productions dominating the Egyptian market. Semat also encourages the youth to make their own audio-visual creations and empowers new generations of filmmakers.

### **Tunisian Association of Action for Film – ATAC, Tunisia**

Founded in 2009 to help promote film as a liberator of thought and imagination, ATAC aims to contribute to the reform and development of the film industry in Tunisia by promoting the dissemination of film culture, the reorganization of the business of film and the enhancement of Tunisian film production, financing and distribution.





## About Crossroads

Crossroads is an AFAC film program that aims to capture and support new cinematic expression emerging from this period of turmoil as Arab filmmakers explore the nuances and frontiers of change. The program accommodates as wide and diverse a scope of film genres as possible and gives financial and professional support to new and experimental projects.