

CEDARS PRODUCTIONS FLORENCE BEIRUT

CEDARS PRODUCTION PRESENTS A FILM BY MARK ABOUZEID "FINDING MY LEBANON" PRODUCED BY LEENA SAIDI

COURT MÉTRAGE
short film corner
FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2016

Cedars Productions presents

FINDING MY LEBANON

a film by mark abouzeid

ever since I was a boy, I wanted to go home...

MUSIC BY RAMY TIBI AND AZZIZA EDITED BY MAPC AND ENTITY DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY SAMUEL ALFANI EXECUTIVE PRODUCER STEFAN HORBONIS
IN ASSOCIATION WITH INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY ASSOCIATION AND WORLD LEBANESE CULTURAL UNION

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ELIAS MOUBARAK SUPERVISOR RONY ABI PHRAM DIRECTOR OF CASTING JOSH BERER SCREEN WRITER ELA VASILESCU
CO-PRODUCERS CRISTINA CHAHINE AND HENRY RIDGWELL TECHNICAL SUPERVISOR ALESSANDRO BARTOLETTI





WHAT EARLY CRITICS AND REVIEWERS ARE SAYING ABOUT "FINDING MY LEBANON"

"No matter where we come from, or how we feel about our life, we all need, at some point, to ponder, reflect and dig in within our inner selves, to find a bigger picture, our founding story, our personal mythology... This is the Mark Abouzeid story, of course, but in a sense, it questions all of us." **Franck Charton, Grands Reportages (France)**

"I want to watch more. Having said that, I will watch it again for Robert Fisk, for his father's thoughts, and for the strong photography." **Simon Blasom, Ingram's Review (UK/Lebanon)**

"I was personally touched from the very first moment - the beauty of the landscape, the pictures of Beirut, the people interviewed, their way to see Lebanon open minded. Mark's family story and pictures, reminded me how little I know about my roots and I felt a strong desire to know more." **Ursula Beer, Kulturmanagement (Austria)**

"It raised intriguing questions but--obviously--did not quite answer them; it is almost like you see an outline of the journey and where it will take you but we still need to take the journey." **Akram Khater, Ph.D., Director, Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies (USA)**

"I would definitely recommend it and i would describe it as a wonderful testimony to our rich culture and history." **Ely Dagher, winner Palme D'or Winner 2015 - Waves '98 (Lebanon).**

"Finding Lebanon --- and I liked it very much. Well done and extremely interesting." **Georges Chamchoum, multiple Emmy Award winning director (Niger).**

"Even though I've been to Lebanon many times, I never really felt that I had a bedrock understanding of it until now, when I watched the film. It confirmed some of the notions I had, and dispelled a few." **George Howard, Chairman Assist America Companies (France)**

COURT MÉTRAGE
short film corner
FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2016

ida international
documentary
association



PRODUCTION PARTNERS

CEDARS PRODUCTIONS

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Asst. Exec producer: Cristina Chahine
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STATE OF ADVANCEMENT

WORLD PREMIER AT CANNES
SHORT FILM CORNER
MAY 2016

COURT MÉTRAGE
short film corner
FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2016

TITLE

FINDING MY LEBANON

LANGUAGE

ENGLISH
ARABIC

LOGLINE

Prequel to the feature film, "Growing Cedars in Air", this is the story of a "modern nomad", the kind of man who was raised without any knowledge of his roots, his past, his heritage. Before his father died, the nomad interviewed him on their family history and for the first time his past was revealed to him through stories, pictures and never met before family members. The film captures the lives of three men: the grandfather who left, the father who died and the son who returned to discover his 'home'...and the Lebanon he found.

MARKET PLACE

With a sense of history and culture, popular in today's documentary market, the film will build its first audience from the Lebanese community, at home and abroad. Rich immersive scenes backed by original music provide a setting for an entertaining and enriching experience that will set it apart from most narrative documentary films and make it popular at film festivals both cultural and international building a larger audience.

GENRE

DOCUMENTARY
CULTURE
SHORT FILM

DIRECTOR

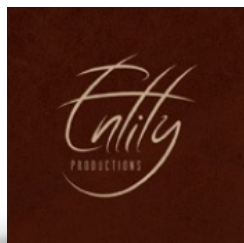
MARK ABOUZEID

PRODUCER

LEENA SAIDI



SPONSORS AND PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS

Beirut Bright Side

DeGustiBus

Live Love Film

Writer in Florence

Stage 32

Stampa Toscana

Barbara Massaad

Souk Al Tayeb

CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Abouzeid
Tom Glassock
Bruce Fernie
Guido Agapito
Stephen Surico

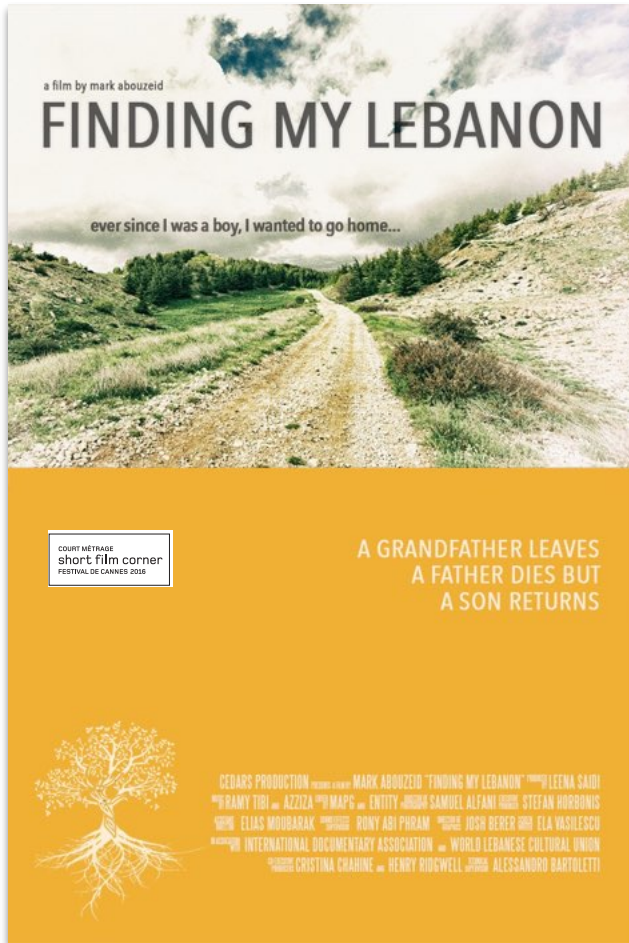
Sandra Surico
George Howard
Henry Ridgwell
Javier Argomedeo
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Martin Federici
Allegra Abouzeid
Lucia Abouzeid
Sophie Beer
Christophe Herrada

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Jennifer Norton
Jacopo d'Albasio
Georges Chamchoum
Elias Mallouf
Josh Berer

Jennifer El Hage
Ramy Tibi
Aliza Beirut



The short film will give a glimpse into an amazing culture and the truth of a country in movement.

“Finding My Lebanon” represents an act of resistance, a way to preserve values and traditions, the stories of the past and of the present, and above all a step forward towards peace in the Mediterranean area.

“This short film is a first step to open a new window on Lebanon, banning clichés and promoting a country on the move. It is a story that will help all of us question who we are, and why we are the way we are.” states Mark Abouzeid, the filmmaker.

Abouzeid spent his entire life traveling around the world, capturing the living heritage of others, while struggling to find that sense of belonging. Before his father died, Mark interviewed him on their family history and the things he learned intrigued him to find his “home”, his Lebanon.

This non-profit project was born from an idea to document everything Mark Abouzeid didn't know about his family's history. Soon enough he learned, he is not the only Lebanese who has felt displaced and

longed for his 'home'. Their teaser video “Lebanon: A day in the Life” hit 1,500 views in less than two days and the Cedar's Facebook page has now gathered almost 2,000 followers. Renowned names from all over the world joined him on his path of discovery, sharing their intimate stories, contributing to what is now becoming a short film.

The production has made a commitment to work with Overseas Lebanese Cultural Associations to reach out to the primary audience for this film. ‘Finding My Lebanon’ is dedicated to Lebanese around the world and to anyone who has uprooted their life and made their home in a new country; who understand that roots, wherever they may be, are a resource to learn from and to teach our children.

Supported by the International Documentary Association, “Finding my Lebanon” is entirely shot in 4k and is planned to be released at Film Festivals around the world. After that it's hoped that it will have a life on the web and later, on television in the US, Europe and elsewhere. In Lebanon, Mark has plans to premiere the film in Rayak's old abandoned theatre and tour the documentary around the countryside and show it to people in villages and towns.



Burying James Bond

The patriarch dies leaving behind a mystery, a glimpse into the past of which the father never spoke .



A Dying Gift

A man asks of his dying father only one thing: his heritage. The answers start him on a journey to recapture his own roots.



The Road to Rayak

Once the future of modern Lebanon, an orphan arrives in Rayak searching for family and finds a 3 century old dynasty.



No Desert, No Camels

After a lifetime of feeling unique, Mark finds himself strangely at home in this place with these people.



My Life told by Others

Through interviews with Lebanese of all walks, Mark hears his own life story in the lives of others.



Finding My Lebanon

From the words of a Gibran poem the theme for a feature film is born and a country waits to be introduced to the world.



Mark Abouzeid
director



Leena Saidi
producer



Samuel Alfani
dop



Rony Abi Phram
editor
a film by mark abouzeid

Mark Abouzeid spent the last 15 years of his life capturing the living culture and intangible heritage of peoples around the world. He has exhibited in numerous museums and is considered one of the top 21st century artists by various media channels. His works are being used as teaching materials in several universities in the United States.

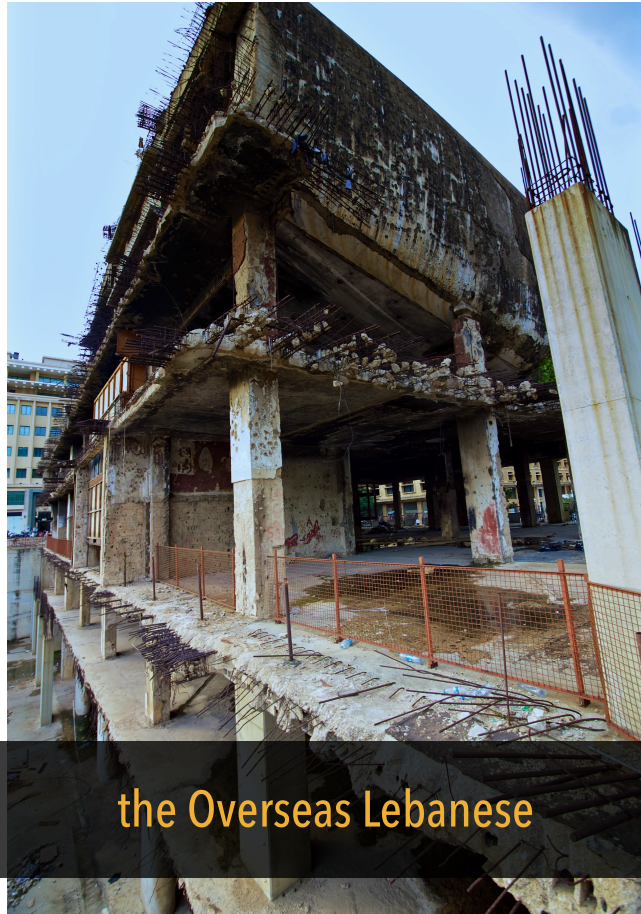
Born in Manchester of Lebanese parents, Leena moved to Beirut in 1987. She joined the national television station, where she was a newsreader and reporter for 14 years. After which she became a freelance journalist and producer covering Lebanon and the region for a variety of international media outlets.

Born in Italy, Samuel has recently released his first short film as Director/Producer, 'The charm of Being Julia', selected for the Cannes Film festival 2015, based on his own screenplay for a feature film entitled 'Kerygma - The importance of appearing'. In 2014, Samuel was the technical director of numerous films.

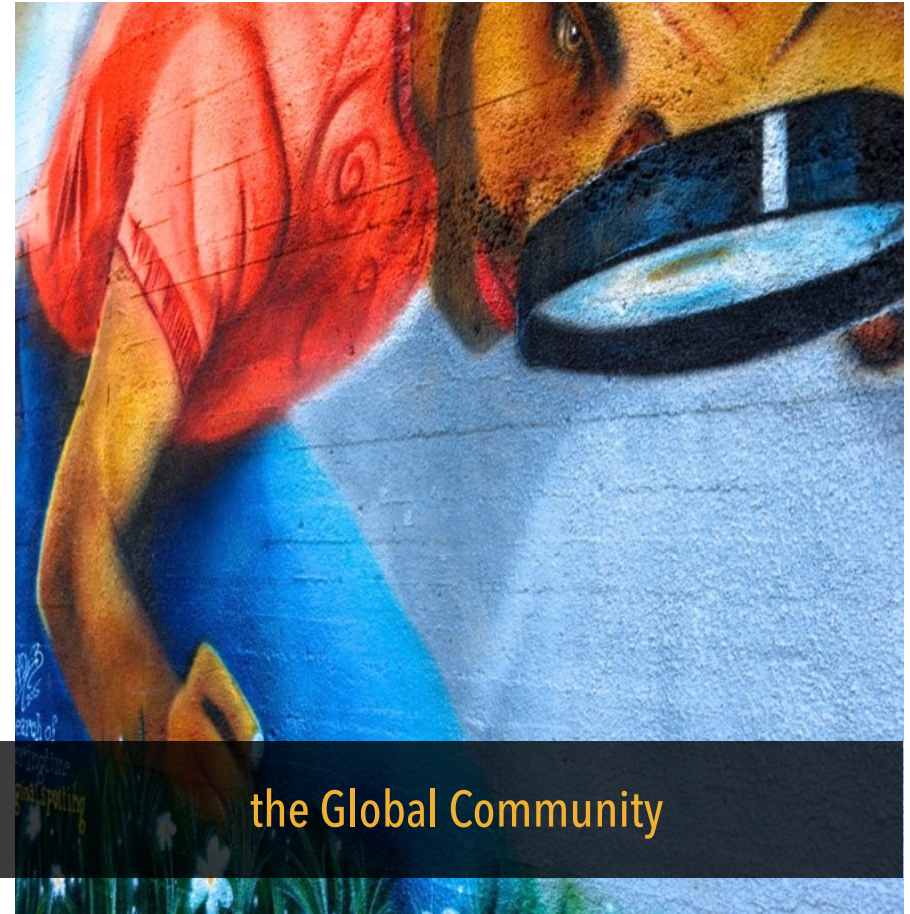
Born in Lebanon, 1980, Rony Abi Phram is a film maker, sound designer, and editor. He has worked on several hit TV shows like Arab Idol and Stars of Science, amongst others. In 2015 Rony founded Entity, a Production Company that offers pre-production, production, and post production solutions for films.



the Lebanese



the Overseas Lebanese



the Global Community

According to Jad Shaaban, a researcher at the American University of Beirut who helped conduct a census of various population groups in Lebanon in 2011, the number of residents ranges between 4,000,200 and 4,000,700.

Apart from the four and a half million citizens of Lebanon proper, there is a sizeable Lebanese diaspora. There are more Lebanese people living outside of Lebanon (5-8 million), than within. Many Lebanese families are economically and politically prominent in several countries.

Documentaries are increasingly regarded as "chic" to watch and to produce, and have undergone an extended renaissance over the past decade. Titles such as Fahrenheit 9/11 and An Inconvenient Truth confirm the revival of the documentary film in theatres around the world. Increased interest in heritage and personal discovery will aid the film in reaching a global audience.



it's in the desert



shame about the war



great fun in the 60's

Lebanon is a Mediterranean country with similar climate and geography to Italy. While you will find tall mountains, lush valleys, snow covered slopes and sun drenched beaches...the only camels are in the zoo or the circus.

The Lebanese Civil War ended 25 years ago. While other wars and actions have occurred since, these have always involved external forces from neighbouring countries seeking to use Lebanon to resolve their differences. For this reason that Lebanon is listed as most at risk to disappear as a nation and culture within 20 - 30 years.

Many countries are remembered with nostalgia for the 1950's and 1960's; think of the Paris of Truffaut or the paparazzi of Fellini's "Roma". It was a time of style and economic boom in many parts of the world. Lebanon is no different, except that, many people think it should still be so or it is no longer interesting because these times have passed. Beirut, today, is still a city of immense style and movement.

THEME 1 BREAKING MYTHS ASK ANYONE WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT LEBANON, AND YOU WILL RECEIVE ONE OF THREE ANSWERS



heritage



culture



identity

We share cultural expressions that have been passed from one generation to another, have evolved in response to their environments and contribute to giving us a sense of identity and continuity.

The culture of Lebanon and the Lebanese people emerged from various civilisations over thousands of years. Today's culture still holds a connection to the traditional past while not impeding modern development. Slow Food points to Lebanon as an example of a healthy food chain.

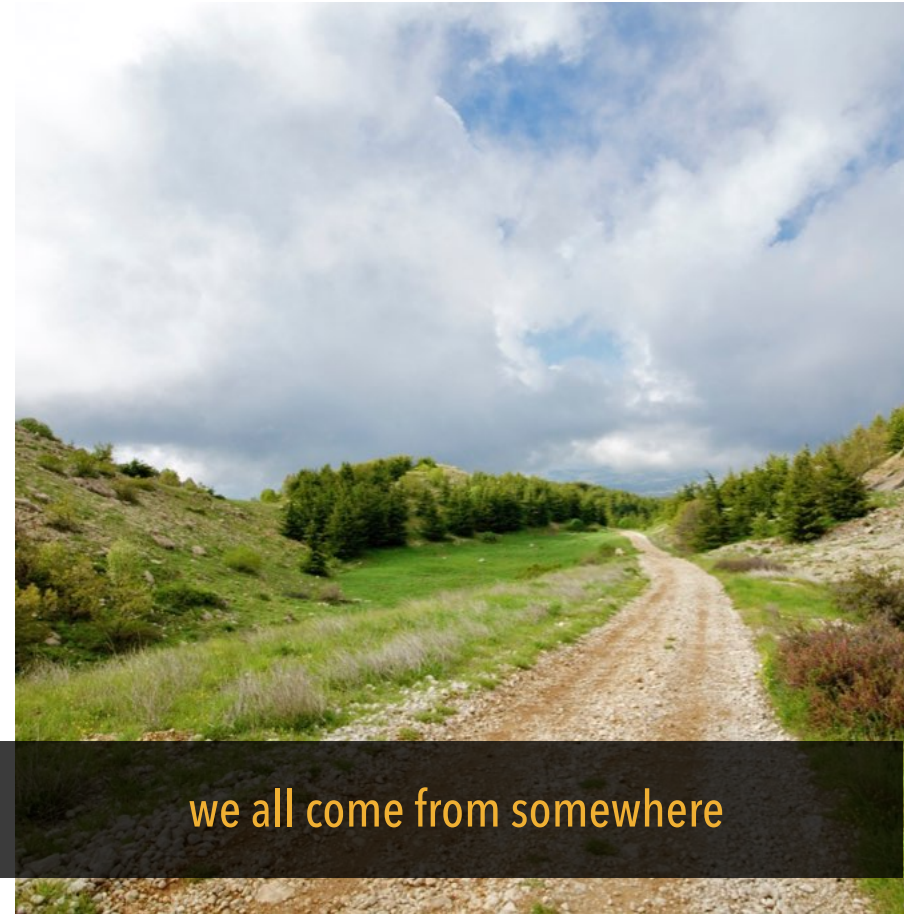
The Lebanese value diversity and foster a culture of inclusion. The successful and eccentric are revered with equal respect. "The other" is a welcome member of the family, is a brother, or a cousin. Since the beginning of recorded time, Mount Lebanon has been home to up to 13 different sects and religions contemporaneously.



we all have a past



we all have family



we all come from somewhere

We all have a past. Our heritage is what connects us as human beings. We are all unique and it is that uniqueness that allows us to leave a fingerprint on the world.

This is the story of an "orphan", the kind of orphan who was raised without any knowledge of his roots, his past, his heritage. It is a little boy's childhood dream to find his ancestral home, his sense of history, to understand why he is the way he is.

Whether you are Lebanese or not, join us on the journey to discover the real Lebanon; to show the world that our roots, whatever they may be, are a resource to learn from and to teach our children. "We teach our children through the stories we tell." Bedouin Proverb



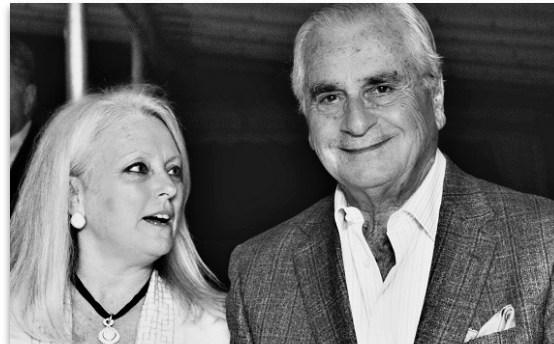
Aziz Abouzeid

deceased, archival photos
patriarch, emigrant, head of the clan,
man of substance



George Abouzeid

deceased, interviewed prior
emigrant, successful businessman,
man of mystery



Mark Abouzeid

filmmaker/narrator
international nomad, visual
storyteller, photojournalist,
renaissance man





Michel Elefteriades
Emperor of Nowheristan and
owner of Music Hall



Barbara Massaad
Award winning cookbook
author & photographer



Kamal Mouzawak
Restaurateur and founder
of Souk al Tayeb



Leila Sarkis
DJette, first female dj in
Lebanon



Rama Tibi
Guitarist, composer &
founder of Rama's Whisper



Azziza
Singer and Tarrapop
innovator





Robert Fisk
Journalist and award
winning author



Rania Abouzeid
Award winning journalist



Mohamad Rifaii
Art Director and graphic
artist



**Elias Boutros
Maalouf**
Founder of Train Train
Lebanon



Jennifer El Hage
Designer and Fashion
Spokeswoman



Rania Tabbara
Artist and director of the
Beirut Art Fair





4k XDCAM



The film will be shot and edited entirely in 4k using Sony's XDCAM technology, a first for Lebanon and the region. Our partner, Entity has created a straight through 4k editing studio for this purpose.

2:55 aspect



To enhance the expansive and immersive style of composition, the final film will be edited with a 2:55 aspect ratio. This will also match colouring guidelines giving the feel of modern film.

film look immersive 4k detail



Colouring and post production will be directed to preserve the rich detail and luminance range that 4k offers while providing an experience much closer to modern film than video. Viewers should feel like they are being entertained rather than the informative style of many documentaries.



original music



Rama's Whisper and Azziza have prepared original songs for use on the soundtrack. Cedars is working with original music composers throughout Lebanon to capture a snapshot of the music scene, today.

1st person narrative



The film follows one man's story, often through the stories of others, but ultimately the story is his. Scripted and unscripted 1st person narratives by Mark Abouzeid, recorded in the studio or live, will be the skeleton for the film.

protagonists voiceover in original language



Protagonist interviews serve only slightly for on camera video but are the core for the film's content. These 'voiceovers' extracted from the interviews tell the stories, share the culture and explore the identity of being Lebanese. Interviews are conducted in the 'mother tongue' of the subject and will not be dubbed. Dual language subtitles, English and Arabic, will transcribe the entire film irregardless of the spoken language on screen.



family archive footage



When necessary, archival photos of the Abouzeid family will be used. However, the intention is not to make a film based on archival photos and these must be styled to suit the rest of the film. When possible, narrative b-roll will be used in place of archival photos.

primary interviews



All primary interviews follow a very structured format. Wide open sense to frame the subject and their context. The subject sits to one side or the other in the line separating horizontal thirds. The framing is critical to the final film: they act as a visual clue to change in subject or storyline.

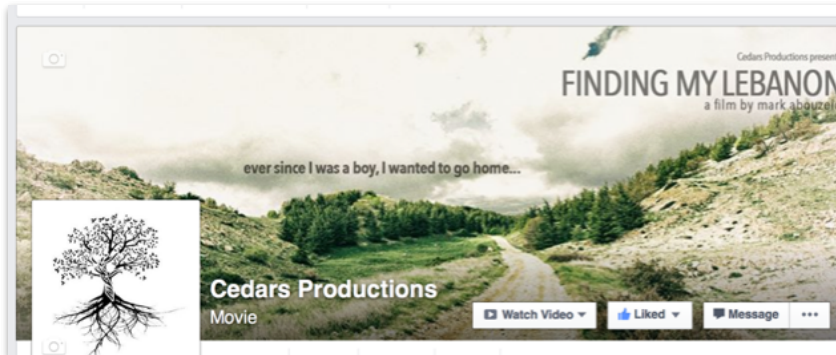
narrative b-roll



The film will use extensive narrative b-roll, being the principal visual narrative method. As opposed to re-enactments, narrative b-roll seeks to expand the narrative from the specific individual to a broader metaphor that viewers connect to, see themselves in. Given that it serves as a metaphor, b-roll can be shot at any time during production, not merely after interviews, providing a more honest exploration of the underlying culture.

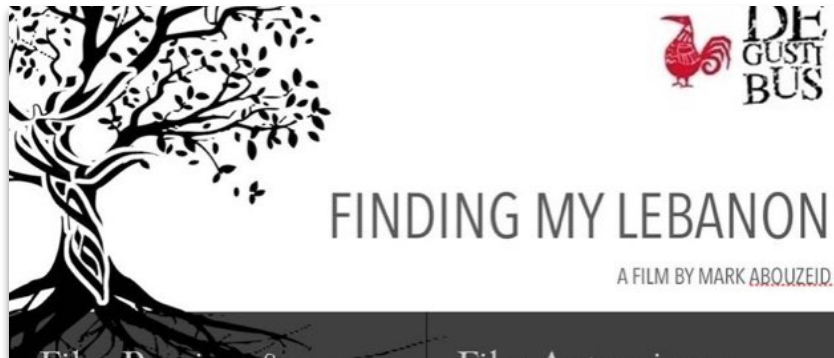


online



Since the beginning of development, Cedars has maintained an online presence in major social media channels resulting in over 2,000 members and over 20,000 video views. Articles of cultural interest, crew notes, interview insights and the 'My Lebanon' initiative continue to feed a viral expansion in the audience base primarily from Lebanon, Egypt, the UAE, Uk and the United States.

previews, screenings and festivals



Cultural Associations and Culture Festivals are natural channels to reach the audience for the film. Cedars has already received a request from the Australian Lebanese Film Festival to show "Finding My Lebanon" at the 2016 festival. While international film festivals will be pursued, screenings tied to community cultural events will be sought equally.

cultural unions and heritage groups



"Finding My Lebanon" has been endorsed by the World Lebanese Cultural Union, Heritage House and other such organisations. Through their outreach programs, newsletters and events, the film will reach a wider audience of overseas Lebanese and other interested communities. Cedars Productions is seeking other such organisations around the globe.



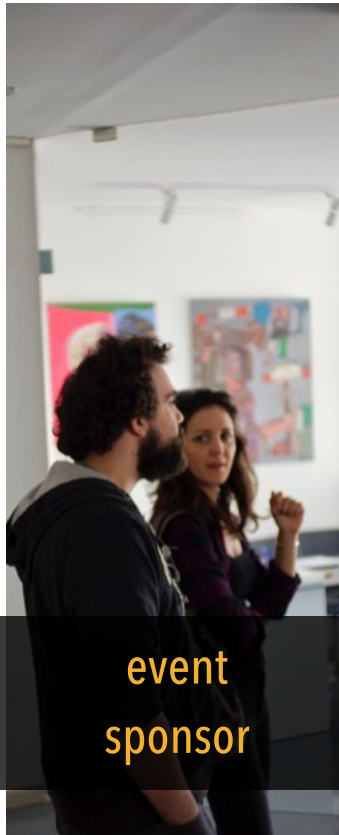
executive sponsor

The film could not be made without the Executive Sponsor and all materials, title credits and promotion reflect that individually.



special thanks

Special thanks will reflect the contribution of these enabling sponsors with their logos appearing together in credits and event promotion.



event sponsor

Events are effective ways to build community membership using the film screening as a centerpiece. Upon request, the Director can be on hand to introduce the project.



media partner

Media Partners help get the word out, build an audience and create interest at festivals. Media Partners are credited in all PR and press activities.



festival screening

"Finding My Lebanon" will be screened at premiere film events as well as cultural festivals around the world. Cedars has already had requests from festivals in Florence and Sydney.

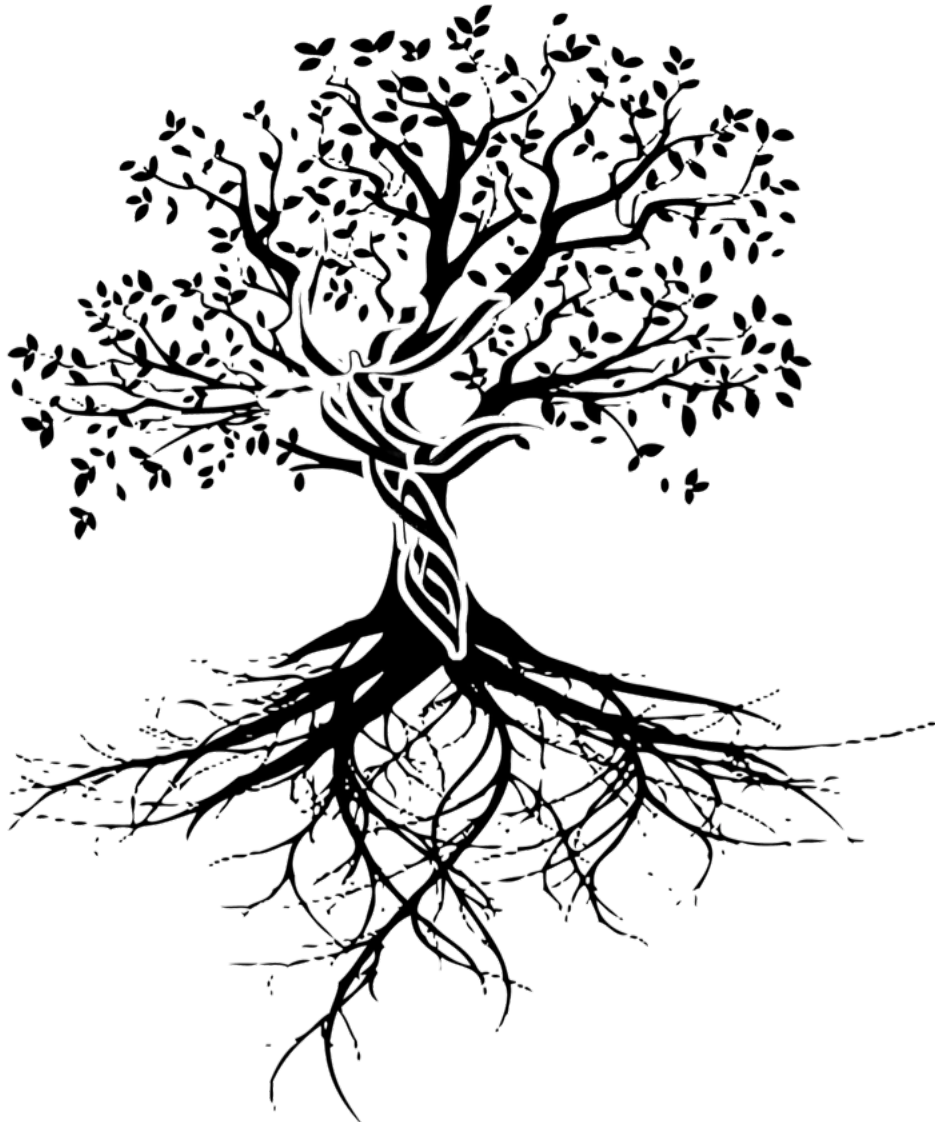


in kind sponsor

In Kind sponsors provide goods and services needed for production and postproduction. These include travel, lodging and equipment.

CEDARS PRODUCTIONS

FLORENCE BEIRUT



CEDARS PRODUCTIONS

Asst. Exec producer: Cristina Chahine

Florence (Italy) | Beirut (Lebanon)

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<https://twitter.com/mabouzeid>