



**5<sup>th</sup> edition**

**KOBAYAT AUGUST 31 - 4 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**HERMEL 8 - 10 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**PRESS KIT**



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## PRESS RELEASE

REEF Festival launches its 5th Edition  
featuring a program of new collaborations  
and unprecedented Activities  
Kobayat from August 31 to September 4  
Hermel from September 8 to September 10

*Since its inception in 2019, the REEF Festival (Rural Encounters on Environment and films) has carved out a distinctive path in the Arab world, centering around the essence of natural heritage, cinema, and rural culture. Originating in Kobayat, Akkar, the festival's resounding success prompted its expansion to other regions of Lebanon. Following triumphant editions in Bisri Valley, Rashaya-Kfarmishki, and Hamana, REEF's organizing associations - the Akkar Council of Environment and Aflamuna (previously known as Beirut DC) - now unveil two new events this summer in Kobayat from August 31 to September 4 and in Hermel from September 8 to September 10.*

### **In 2023, a central theme revolves around transformations**

At the heart of REEF lies the organizers' commitment to provide disadvantaged and remote rural regions with direct access to culture and spaces for exchanging ideas about the preservation of their natural heritage. In the context of the ongoing socio-economic crisis, the renewal of this festival, which has been well-received by the local residents, demonstrates the desire to maintain a space for escapism, gathering, and reflection on issues related to the common good.

Ever attentive to the difficulties faced by the country, the organizers of REEF have chosen to approach the 2023 edition from the perspective of transformations including geological changes, climate change, water pollution, deforestation, and migrations of animal species, leading to social, demographic, and cultural shifts. REEF 2023 will not only address the negative consequences of these endured transformations but also explore the alternatives and solutions arising from them: new sustainable lifestyles, consumption patterns, and movements of solidarity and cohesion. This overarching theme will be woven throughout various creative workshops, conferences, films, and field visits, involving experts, local stakeholders, and residents, with the aim of stimulating reflection and generating proposals.

Each year, a mascot is chosen to raise awareness among the inhabitants about the importance of protecting the fauna of their region. REEF 2023 will be symbolized by the turtle, thus alerting to the significance of safeguarding this species decimated by the devastating fires of 2021 and 2022.



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## **Program 2023: Unprecedented highlights and new partnerships**

With even greater ambition, this year's REEF festival will encompass a diverse and unprecedented range of activities for all audiences. New partnerships and collaborations have made this exceptional programming possible. The detailed program and practical information can be found further in this press dossier.

### REEF HIGHLIGHTS IN KOBAYAT (August 31st - September 4th)

#### **• EVENTS AROUND CINEMA AND PERFORMING ARTS**

##### **Lebanon's First Screening of Arab and International Films**

Addressing the theme of the 2023 edition from various perspectives, the films selected for the festival will almost all be publicly screened for the first time in Lebanon. Several of them have been chosen by international festivals and received awards. After the screenings, there will be discussions with the audience in the presence of film experts.

##### **Short and Medium-Length Film Competition**

Two prizes will be awarded to 11 Arab short films in competition by a jury of professionals consisting of actress Nada Bou Farhat, director Hady Zaccak, and visual effects and post-producer, expert Mahmoud Korek. As a non-professional jury, the "Young REEF Ambassadors" will present an award for their favorite medium-length film from a selection of 5 international productions. The films in competition will be screened during the festival before the announcement of the results at the Silk Factory of Kobayat and on aflamuna.online, the platform where a "public award" will be presented to the winner when the voting closes.

##### **Workshops and Screenings of "Correspondences between Women" and "Animation Films"**

The festival audience will discover mini-films made by women from Akkar during a "1 Minute for a Film" workshop organized by Egyptian filmmaker Amal Ramsis before the festival, as well as animated films produced by youths from Hermel aged 13 to 18 under the guidance of Fadi Syriani, founder of the Youth Animation Platform.

##### **Musical Parade and Performing Arts**

Thanks to the new partnership with the Collectif Kahraba, the public will experience artistic performances and the animation of the clown "Vol Terre" in the streets of the city. A parade through the city streets will be organized by the Lami Conservatory to inaugurate the festival.



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## • NATURE, ECOLOGY AND RURAL ACTIVITIES

### Hiking along Three Themed Trails

- > An itinerary following the water sources path around Kobayat;
- > A route exploring geological transformations led by expert Dr. Atta Elias;
- > An "Art Trail" offered by Hamana Artist House in the Kobayat forest, featuring "artistic stations."

These easily accessible hikes will be accompanied by educational presentations.

### Conferences organized through new collaborations on the following themes:

- > "Transformations and Development Opportunities in Akkar," organized by Legal Agenda, presenting a study prior to its official release;
- > "Food Sovereignty, Now!," panel and screening organized by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung – Beirut Office;
- > "What Remains of Ecology and Economy" organized by the Knowledge Workshop.

**A plastics recycling workshop** led by REEF's partner, Cedar Environmental, under the guidance of engineer Ziad Abi Chaker.

**A fashion parade titled "Rouh,"** organized by Rytta Couture, featuring "upcycled" garments made from reclaimed and reused fabrics.

**The Silk Factory of Kobayat,** a remarkable historical monument from the 18th century, will host most of the activities, which are free and open to the public without prior registration, except for the hikes and some specific animations (practical information can be found at the end of this release).

Additionally, visitors can explore the local products market at the Silk Factory of Kobayat, where regional culinary specialties, preserves, and artisanal creations will be available for purchase.

### REEF's Young Ambassadors

Among the novelties of this edition, REEF's Young Ambassadors are a group of around twenty volunteers from Akkar, aged between 13 and 18 years old. Their mission will be to follow the festival from start to finish, conduct interviews with invited experts and professionals, moderate certain exchange sessions, and present an award as part of the mid-length film competition. Under the guidance of active members of the REEF team, they will also receive awareness sessions on environmental issues.



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### **HIGHLIGHTS OF REEF HERMEL (September 8-10)**

The extension of the festival to the Bekaa region in partnership with the Cultural Association of Hermel (Mountada Al Tourath wal Thaqafa) aims to strengthen the ties between two neighboring regions, united by common challenges related to their environment. The Oronte River (El-Assi) will be at the heart of these encounters. Once a popular local leisure and tourism site, the Oronte has been severely polluted due to long-term overexploitation. The highlights of the festival in Hermel will include:

- Morning hike and rafting sessions on the Oronte and in the heights of Hermel in the "jird," providing an opportunity to explore the natural treasures and the hazards threatening them.
- Screenings of Arab and international films,
- One-minute films created by the women of Hermel and animations films by Hermel's teenagers,
- Conferences on the challenges of preserving the Oronte, featuring various experts from Hermel who will present the challenges and solutions to safeguard this vital resource, along with a conference on food sovereignty.
- A concert with the artist and oud player Hussein Khalil and talents from Hermel
- A workshop for the younger participants.

These events will take place at the premises of the Cultural Association of Hermel and at the Maison de l'Oronte.



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Interview with

Antoine Daher, President of the Council of environment,

& Eliane Raheb, Artistic Director of the Festival and member of Aflamuna

*Question: On its fifth anniversary, REEF reflects on the transformation of the natural environment. How has the festival itself undergone a profound metamorphosis throughout the years?*

Eliane Raheb: Contemplating the five-year journey of REEF is akin to delving into a profound dream that transcended reality, embracing genuine metamorphosis and surmounting numerous challenges. From an unprecedented two-day cinematic experiment interwoven with nature, we meticulously shaped REEF into a festival that now beckons over 4000 enthusiasts for five enchanting days. Year after year, we nurtured this event, molding it in the light of our aspirations, the cultural yearnings of the region, the pressing issues to address, and the experiences we longed to delve into. We traversed the realms of environment and its impact on modern life, the safeguarding of Akkar and Lebanon's pristine landscapes, the disruptive influence of the pandemic on our existence, the unresolved waste crisis, the devastating forest fires ravaging Lebanon's natural beauty, and the exceptional splendor of Kobayat's woodland and its environs. Cinema served as a potent medium, magnetizing the public and drawing them into the realms of rural life and ecology.

Antoine Daher: By no means an exaggeration, the REEF festival has, over the past half-decade, orchestrated a profound metamorphosis in the cultural and festive tapestry of Kobayat and Akkar. It has gracefully bestowed upon us an eagerly anticipated gathering. In the past, September signified a decline in both cultural and economic vibrancy in our region, with festivities typically culminating around August 15th and the Feast of the Assumption. Now, the initial days of September unfurl a second summer adorned with ecological hues, cinematic enchantment, harmonies of music, environmental consciousness, rural charms, indigenous gastronomy, and the camaraderie of long-forgotten markets. The northern reaches of Lebanon, once perceived on the periphery of innovative events that solely unfolded in the country's central part, now beckon a novel community of cinephiles, filmmakers, and artists, enticed by a magnetic amalgamation of open-air cinema, wilderness explorations, eco-advocacy, and environmental causes. Above all, they come to discover the untamed allure of Akkar and its vast reservoirs of natural, human, and culinary potential. The profusion of workshops preceding the festival empowers a youth fervent for cultural exposure, forging connections with diverse artistic expressions, thereby opening new horizons for those hitherto bereft of such transformative initiations.



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*Q : What were the challenges you had to overcome for REEF to continue to exist five years later?*

E.R. - The initial hurdle lay in reintroducing cinema to this region after its prolonged absence. Our vision was to reinstate a sense of pride in the "provincial" identity, showcasing the richness of rural narratives. Additionally, we confronted the challenges stemming from the past three years of crisis, finding solutions to address basic service issues like electricity, fuel, and transportation for our team, audience, and guests. "REEF malgré tout" (REEF despite everything) became our rallying cry in 2021, a year marred by various misfortunes, including the devastating forest fires in Kobayat, the explosion in Tleil, and the relentless fuel shortage.

Antoine Daher - At every moment of contemplating giving up, the local community extended its support, reinforcing our commitment. The profound attachment of people to these culturally significant endeavors bolstered our determination. In the face of the socio-economic turmoil, the environment and culture emerged as the final bastions of resistance."

*Q: How does the local populace transcend their role as mere observers and actively engage in this event's essence?*

E.R. - At its core, we conduct enlightening workshops on environmental issues for both young minds and adults, encompassing crucial topics like sorting, composting, and recycling. Furthermore, each edition witnesses specialized workshops catering to diverse segments of our audience. The youth delve into short film production, teenagers explore the realm of animation film creation, and we cannot help but marvel at the unyielding spirit and zeal of the women from Akkar, who produce one-minute films. Their unwavering determination and fervor leave us inspired. Not only that, these women hailing from rural regions enchant us with their culinary expertise, profound knowledge of the land, and deft artisanal skills, which epitomize an authentic "cultural heritage." This very reason has led us to dedicate a marketplace exclusively to local products, paying homage to these remarkable individuals for three consecutive years."

*Q: How do film programming and audiovisual creation workshops find their manifestation?*

E.R. - The screening of more than 90 films from diverse corners of the world at REEF has been enabled by the collaboration of Aflamuna and supportive partners, who graciously contribute to the financing of screening rights. The ardent passion of the public for cinema has further motivated us to establish a monthly film club in Kobayat since 2021, extending beyond the confines of REEF. In the realm of audiovisual creation workshops, the expertise of seasoned professionals guides the participants, offering them unparalleled support and appreciation for their endeavors. In welcoming expert guests, we witness the delight of their experiences, which not only unveils hidden talents in



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remote regions of Lebanon but also allows them to explore an extraordinary natural heritage often obscured or unfamiliar.

*Q: How do you perceive the impacts of REEF on the Akkar region, particularly in terms of its transformative effect on the region's image, tourism, and economic dynamics?*

A.D.- The metamorphosis of the region's image, once perceived as a distant and unattractive corner, to a favored destination among both local and foreign residents in Lebanon, bears witness to the profound influence of REEF. Its positive influence on tourism is evident not only to the region's inhabitants but also to the stakeholders in the tourism sector. Kobayat and its environs thrive during the festival and the preceding week, with a surge in chalets, hotels, guest-houses, transportation services, eateries, shops, artisans, and souvenir vendors, as well as increased activity in the souk, participation from festival members, technicians, mountain guides, and more. This spectacle of "full occupancy" exemplifies how REEF has not only integrated itself into the region's local economy and has become an integral part of its cultural and environmental heritage.

*Q: Amidst a nation facing unprecedented fragility and uncertainty, could one argue that this festival's significance pales in comparison?*

A.D. - The ecological inquiry is occasionally misconstrued as a privilege, reserved for the affluent who can afford to prioritize it. In rural areas, our challenge lies in demonstrating that preserving and cherishing our heritage contributes to an enhanced quality of life, and even an improved standard of living. Our mission is to enlighten our audiences about the detrimental consequences of a degraded environment. For instance, pollution adversely impacts the health of the population, with limited access to proper medical care. Moreover, the exceptional natural heritage of regions like Akkar presents opportunities for ecological and responsible tourism, fostering employment opportunities and economic advantages.

#### **REEF IN 4 YEARS: What Milestones Has It Already Achieved?**

12,000 participants

4 editions in Kobayat and 3 off-site editions in Bisri, Rashaya-Karmashki, and Hamana

90 films screened

30 short films through REEF workshops

20 educational workshops and conferences

15 discovery hikes guided by mountain guides

30 local producers showcasing their expertise

100 mobilized volunteers.



## REEF'S PROGRAM DAY BY DAY KOBAYAT FROM 31TH OF AUGUST TO 4TH OF SEPTEMBER

### Thursday 31th of August

- 16:00**     **FILM**  
Dounia and The Princess of Aleppo (72') by Marya ZARIF & André KADI, Canada  
# Suitable for youth and children  
 Kobayat Silk Factory  
  
SYNOPSIS: A few nigella seeds tucked in the palm of her hand, 6-year-old Dounia leaves Aleppo with the Princess of Aleppo's help and travels towards a new world.
- 18:00**     Screening of a 1-Minute Films Directed by Women from Akkar  
"Correspondences between Women"  
In preparation for REEF, a workshop was organized, under the guidance of Egyptian filmmaker Amal Ramsis, enabling Akkar residents to acquire basic techniques for using a camera and producing one-minute films under the title "Correspondences between Women." The workshop aims to facilitate dialogue among women from diverse backgrounds through the medium of videography.  
  
Hermel's Young Talents in Stop Motion Creations  
Organized by the Youth Animation Platform, a workshop was held prior to the festival, allowing young participants from Hermel to explore the realm of animation films. Under the guidance of Fadi Siriani, the founder of YAP, the participants gained fundamental techniques to create short animated videos to be showcased during the festival. These resulting stop-motion videos will be shown during the festival.  
 Kobayat Silk Factory
- 19:00**     Unveiling the Festival: Opening Parade  
by the Lami Conservatory and festival inauguration  
 Streets of Kobayat, neighborhood, and Silk Factory  
After a musical parade through the streets of Kobayat, the festival will be officially inaugurated with a welcoming speech and a short concert by the Lami Conservatory at the Silk Factory.



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**19:00** Opening of Local products and Food market

 Kobayat Silk Factory


**20:00** A rendezvous with two selected films from the medium-length competition

Confessions of a Runner (29') by Bachar Khattar, Lebanon

SYNOPSIS: "Unlike runners pursuing medals, or fame and glory, most ultra-runners have more complex reasons for their all-consuming hobby." - Timothy Rockwood  
Unscripted and unpredictable, Confessions is an exploration of what has driven Patrick to run incredible distances and re-define his limits in an inspiring journey to peace and redemption.

Haulout (25') By Maxim Arbugaev, Evgenia Arbugaeva, Russia

SYNOPSIS: A man waits in his cabin on the desolate expanse of the Russian Arctic. He perseveres to observe a natural event that happens there every year, but ocean warming is taking its toll.

 Kobayat Silk Factory

**21:30** FILMS SCREENING

 Kobayat Silk Factory

Motherland (18') By Bane Fakhri, Gaza Mon Amour (87') By Tarzan and Arab Nasser

SYNOPSIS : When the youngest among three sisters is caught by her conservative family going to the protests against the Lebanese political establishment, the family's can of worms opens up leaving no secret untold.

GAZA MON AMOUR 87' by Tarzan and Arab Nasser, Palestine, France, Germany, Portugal

#Starting 14 years old

SYNOPSIS : Gaza, today. Sixty-year-old fisherman Issa is secretly in love with Siham, a woman who works at the market with her daughter Leila. When he discovers an ancient phallic statue of Apollo in his fishing nets, Issa hides it, not knowing what to do with this mysterious and potent treasure. Yet deep inside, he feels that this discovery will change his life forever. Strangely, his confidence starts to grow and eventually he decides to approach Siham.

## Friday 1st of september

- 9:00      NATURE ACTIVITY  
Water Trail Hike followed by "Narratives of transformations" with The Cultural Salon  
Level : easy, Duration : 3 hours
-  Meeting point : Kobayat Silk Factory - Prior registration required  
The hike begins on the hills of Halbousah valley and continues along the water springs that feed the village of Kobayat. Along the way, hikers will meet farmers and learn about the effects of climate change and uncontrolled tree cutting. At the end of the tour, the Kobayat Cultural Salon will present the major transformations that have taken place in the region.
- 11:30      FILM  
Lene and The Forest Spirits (94') by Dieter Schumann, # Suitable for children
-  Kobayat Silk Factory  
Ten-year-old Lene is going to the Bavarian Forest. She begins her journey somewhat reluctantly, but the forest suddenly turns into a place full of strange creatures: One of them is the "Waldobelix" - half ghost, half national park guard.
- 17:00      A rendezvous with two selected films from the medium-length competition
-  Kobayat Silk Factory  
The Returned (35') By Pieter De Vos, Belgium # Starting 12 years old  
Los Retornados' tells the story of a Maya community in Guatemala, fighting the construction of a hydroelectric dam. This is set against their memory of the genocide on the Mayan population during the armed conflict. Combining powerful testimony with strong visuals, the film exposes a forgotten genocide and connects it with today's struggle for indigenous rights and the defence of biodiversity.
- The illusion of Abundance (60') By Erika Gonzalez Ramirez, Matthieu Lietaert, Belgium # Starting 12 years old  
Three women share a common goal: Carolina, Bertha and Maxima are leading today's fight against modern conquistadors. Whereas governments and corporations, trapped in a global race towards unlimited growth, need to get the cheapest raw materials, these three women tell us a story of tireless courage: how to keep fighting to protect nature when your life is at risk? When police repression, corporate harassment, injuries or even death threats are part of your daily routine?



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18:00 Opening of Local products and Food market

 Kobayat Silk Factory

19:00 **Creative performance by Akkari Women with The Knowledge Workshop**

 Kobayat Silk Factory

The performance is the result of creative activity organized by the Knowledge Workshop with Akkari women before the festival. It aims to employ various artistic and expressive tools, including creative writing, sensorial physical movement, and nature walks, to encourage participants to share stories related to our bodies, nature, land, and environment.

20:00 PERFORMANCE

**Origin of a tale by Collectif Kahraba**

"Origin of a Tale" is a creative project for young audiences combining storytelling, dance, and object manipulation by Aurelien Zouki and Éric Deniaud. The performance explores the genealogy of fables and their origins, reflecting on how simple wisdom has been transmitted through time and space, and how thoughts and stories continue to transcend borders.

 Kobayat Silk Factory


21:00 Film

E.O. (88 mn) by Jerzy Skolimowski, Poland, 2022, Jury Prize at the 75th Festival de Cannes, #Starting 12 years old

 Kobayat Silk Factory

The film follows a donkey who encounters on his journeys good and bad people, experiences joy and pain, exploring a vision of modern Europe through his eyes.

## Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of September

- 9:00      NATURE ACTIVITY  
The Earth Narratives followed by Geology trail in Karm Chbat  
Level : easy  
Duration : 3 hours  
 Meeting point : Kobayat Silk Factory - Prior registration required  
Geology Day starts with a meeting with Dr. Atta Elias from 9:00 AM until 10:00 AM, followed by a lecture about Akkar's geology and the geological transformations in Lebanon and the world. The lecture includes examples of observations and signs of these transformations and their imprints on nature and landscapes. Afterwards, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, there will be a field trip with Dr. Elias to explore the geological transformations on the ground in the highlands of the mountainous region, walking through Karm Shbat and along the Lemon Fault Line that divides the region into two large plates: the African plate moving in one direction and the Arabian plate moving in the opposite direction, leading to significant changes.
- 11:30      FILM  
Animal (105') By Cyril Dion, France  
# Suitable for youth  
 Kobayat Silk Factory  
Teenagers Bella and Vipulan travel to meet with scientists and activists around the world, searching for another way of living alongside other species, as co-habitants rather than predators.
- 18:00      BOOK SIGNING  
"The Last Film Screening, a biography of Cinema Tripoli" by Hady Zaccak  
  
MARKET  
Local products and Food market  
 Kobayat Silk Factory



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18h30 FASHION SHOW

"Rouh" from Fabric and Soul by Designer Rytta Couture



Kobayat Silk Factory

"Rouh", an Arabic word meaning both "soul" and "go", is a yearning for belonging. It's a collection almost entirely made of upcycled fabrics. "Rouh" is an invitation to reconsider everything around us! To upcycle our thoughts, to give a chance to ourselves and to our beloved country!

19:30 Screening of the films from the short length competition

#In the presence of the filmmakers

- The Migratory Bird (8') by Mourane Matar
- Drawing Fish (8') by Amir El-Shenawy
- Zaatara (10') by Adeeb Farhat
- How My Grandmother Became a Chair (10') by Nicolas Fattouh
- He Looked at me (11') by Evelyne Hlais
- Trinou (15') by Nejib Kthiri
- Trumpets in the Sky (15') by Rakan Mayasi
- Rest in piece, (9') d'Antoine Antabi
- Claw machine (14') by Georges Salameh
- Not Far From Here (14') by Jihad Saadé
- Memory of a Land (12') by Samira Badran



Kobayat Silk Factory

22:00

**FILM**

**The Dam (84') by Ali Cherri**



Kobayat Silk Factory

Every evening, a worker in a traditional brickyard by the Nile secretly builds a mysterious mud construction. 'The Dam' is a political fable about the power of imagination set against the backdrop of the Sudanese revolution.



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## Sunday 3d of september

- 9:00      NATURE      ACTIVITY
- The Artistic Trail with Hammana Artist House preceded by a presentation "Halsban Valley: Reality and Challenges" with Kobayat Cultural Salon  
Level : easy, Duration : 2h30
-  Meeting point : Kobayat Silk Factory - Prior registration required
- The Artistic Trail Organized by Hammana Artist House, it is a beautiful and easy trail in the Halsban Valley, with several artistic stations harmoniously integrated with the natural surroundings. A wonderful concept created by the House of the Artist and implemented in Hamanna, and now being applied for the first time here. The duration is two and a half hours, accessible to everyone. Halsban Valley: Reality and Challenges Organized by the Cultural Salon. At the end of the Art Path and within the vastness of the valley's nature, there will be a half-hour presentation about Halsban Valley, its natural, environmental, agricultural, heritage, historical, religious, and touristic significance. An overview of the work of the Halsban Valley Park group, the plans that have been made, the obstacles encountered, and the ongoing transformations."
- 11:30      NATURE ACTIVITY
- "Let's Plant Our Seeds" with Buzuruna Juzuruna  
# for youth
- Planting activity organized by Buzuruna Juzuruna. participants will learn more about seeds, planting different types of seeds in an informative and practical session. Participants will take their planting results home.
-  Kobayat Silk Factory
- 16:00      PRESENTATION
- From Plastic Waste to Durable Bench with Cedar Environmental
- This year's edition of REEF will showcase a live transformation of single use plastics into a durable bench. The team from Cedar Environmental led by Ziad Abichaker will install small machinery to showcase how single use plastics can be recycled into profiles and how these profiles can be manufactured into a long lasting bench.
-  Kobayat Silk Factory
- 17:00      PANEL AND SCREENING
- Food Sovereignty now!



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An overview of how agroecology leads to Food Sovereignty. A panel including a discussion, film screening, and Q&A about the realities in Lebanon and the region, practices, challenges, and solutions.

. Organized by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung – Beirut Office.



Kobayat Silk Factory

18:00 Local products and Food market



Kobayat Silk Factory

19:30 SHORT FILMS AWARDS

Two awards will be presented by a professional jury to the best short films: first prize and second prize.



Kobayat Silk Factory

19:45 FILMS



Kobayat Silk Factory

Sonic forest (35') by Josh Thome and Simón Hernández, Colombia, 2020

SYNOPSIS : Sonic Forest showcases the inspiring journey of Simón Mejía, founder of Latin music sensation Bomba Estéreo, deep into the jungles of the Colombian Pacific to discover the richness of Earth's most megadiverse places through its local music and its people: indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities who work every day to preserve their territories

Foragers (65') by Jumana Manna, Palestine

# in the presence of the filmmaker

SYNOPSIS: Foragers moves between documentary and fiction to depict the dramas between the Israeli Nature Protection Authority and Palestinian foragers. With a wry sense of humor, the film captures the inherited love, resilience and knowledge of these traditions, over an eminently political backdrop.





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21h30 FILM

**The Mountain (115') by Thomas Salvador, France, 2023, part of “Quinzaine des réalisateurs” at Cannes festival 2022, starting 14 years old**



Kobayat Silk Factory

Pierre, a Parisian engineer, goes up in the Alps for his work. Irresistibly attracted by what surrounds him, he camps out alone high in the mountains and leaves behind his everyday life. Up there he meets Léa, a chef of an alpine restaurant, while mysterious glows glitter in the deep mountain.

### Monday 4th of September

11:30 PERFORMANCE

Clown “Vol Terre” with Collectif Kahraba



Center city, Kobayat

Clown “Vol Terre” will visit Kobayat village and wander in its streets in a quest to discover the infinite forms of Love. “Volterre” will seize Kobayat people in an interactive encounter. “Vol Terre” is a clown on a quest for love, seeking it everywhere: in the streets, in grocery stores, in homes if invited, on trees, in hearts, and in retirement homes. The performance is not a show but an intimate interactive encounter, creating space for new stories, awakened memories, simple dances, and moments of silence to be cherished. Inspired by the experiences of a clown doctor, Marielise Aad, with hospitalized children and later with the elderly.

17:00 CONFERENCE

“What Remains of Ecology and Economy” with The Knowledge Workshop



Kobayat Silk Factory

During this talk, the conference will address the political economy of the agricultural sector and its transformations. From the family economy to the rentier economy, the panelists will discuss how our relationship with food is shaped and listen to the alternatives that environmental activists are working on, such as models of independent or liberal agriculture, model farms and participatory lands. Within this context, we will listen to the experience of ‘Daera’ collective and their work on the seed network, and finally listen to the experience of ‘Koni anti’ while supporting women and implementing environmental activities.



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19:00 Medium-length film award by “REEF young ambassadors”


 Kobayat Silk Factory

19:15 FILM

“This stolen Country of Mine” (93') by Marc Wiese, Germany – Ecuador

#Starting 12 years old

In Ecuador, an indigenous leader and a journalist fight against China plundering their country's natural resources and taking control of political events

 Kobayat Silk Factory



5<sup>th</sup> edition

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## REEF'S PROGRAM DAY BY DAY

### HERMEL 8TH TO 10TH SEPTEMBER 2023

#### Friday 8th of September

- 15:00 Correspondences between Women : 1-Minute Films Directed by Women from Hermel  
In preparation for REEF, a workshop was organized, under the guidance of Egyptian filmmaker Amal Ramsis, enabling Hermel residents to acquire basic techniques for using a camera and producing one-minute films under the title "Correspondences between Women." The workshop aims to facilitate dialogue among women from diverse backgrounds through the medium of videography.


#### Hermel's Young Talents in Stop Motion Creations

Organized by the Youth Animation Platform, a workshop was held prior to the festival, allowing young participants from Hermel to explore the realm of animation films. Under the guidance of Fadi Siriani, the founder of YAP, the participants gained fundamental techniques to create short animated videos to be showcased during the festival. These resulting stop-motion videos will be shown during the festival.

- 16:30 PANEL AND SCREENING  
Food Sovereignty now! #Organized by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung – Beirut Office.  
An overview of how agroecology leads to Food Sovereignty. A panel including a discussion, films screening and Q&A about the realities in Lebanon and the region, practices, challenges and solutions.

- 19:00 FILM: Foragers (65') by Jumana Manna, Palestine  
SYNOPSIS: Foragers moves between documentary and fiction to depict the dramas between the Israeli Nature Protection Authority and Palestinian foragers. With a wry sense of humor, the film captures the inherited love, resilience and knowledge of these traditions, over an eminently political backdrop.

- 21h Concert with the artist and oud player Hussein Khalil and Hermel's talents

All the day's activities will take place at :  Hermel cultural association



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## Saturday 9th of September

### 9:00 NATURE ACTIVITY

"The Orontes, between land and water"



Meeting at the Rafting Squat Club, #prior reservation is required

Equipment : bathing suit and water shoes

The path of the Orontes River Valley Starting from the club on the banks of the river to the historical waterfall of Hira The path is easy to medium During the path there are some natural caves and the Hamour waterfall.

### 11:30 STORYTELLING

Environmental Stories Activity # for youth #



Hermel cultural association

2 stories for children, from 7 to 12 years old, followed by an activity dealing with environmental issues at the muntada Center. Hermel.

### 15:00 FILM

**Dounia and The Princess of Aleppo (72')** by Marya ZARIF & André KADI, Canada

# Suitable for youth and children



Hermel cultural association

SYNOPSIS: A few nigella seeds tucked in the palm of her hand, 6-year-old Dounia leaves Aleppo with the Princess of Aleppo's help and travels towards a new world.

### 17h CONFERENCE

**The Endangered Gift of Hermel**

#with the Cultural Association of Hermel in partnership with The Legal Agenda



Maison de l'Oronte

A natural and economic resource for Hermel, the Orontes is threatened by serious pollution. The conference will address these vital issues for the region with a panel of experts.



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19:30 FILM

"Thank you for the rain" (87mn) by Julia Dahr, United-Kingdom, Norway,  
#Age limit : 13+



Maison de l'Oronte

Kisilu, a Kenyan farmer, uses his camera to capture the life of his family, his village and the damages of climate change.

21h30 FILMS



Maison de l'Oronte

Love in Galilee (20') By Nader Chalhoub et Layla Menhem, 2021, France

At the age of 28, Faten is pushed by her family to marry a man she has not chosen. Convinced that this new life could bring her a long-awaited freedom, she finds herself all alone facing her own disillusionment. That is when she decides to return to her hometown in South Lebanon in search of a love she never received.

Under the fig trees (92') by Erige Sehiri, Tunisia, France, Switzerland, Germany, Qatar,  
« Quinzaine des réalisateurs » selection at Cannes' Festival.

Taking place over the course of a day, UNDER THE FIG TREES presents an intergenerational dialogue between a group of teens and older folk as they work the summer harvest, catch feelings, attempt to understand each other, and navigate the complicated terrain of building deeper ties.

Sunday the 10th of September

9:00 NATURE ACTIVITY

**"Towards the Hills and Outskirts of Hermel" Hiking**

Duration : 4h, Level : easy to medium, bring a hiking stick, water and wear hiking shoes



Rendez-vous au Rafting Squat Club, sur inscription préalable

Half of the path rests at a rocky cliff that rises about 300 meters. The path passes through a forest of perennial cedar and lazzab trees.



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17h FILM

The Song of the Living (82mn) by Cécile Allegra, 2022, France, #Age limit : 14+



Hermel cultural association

Constructed through songs and memories, this acute musical film addresses the traumatic experience lived by young survivors from different parts of Africa. In the French village of Conques, a therapeutic space is provided to them so they might overcome their past and, by singing out loud, allow themselves to think and live a possible future.

REEF continues online until the 30<sup>th</sup> of September

Thanks to Aflamuna.Online, co-organizer of REEF, the Arab short film competition will continue online, with the possibility for internauts to vote for their favorite movie.

A selection of 9 short films can be viewed free of charge on aflamuna online.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

### REEF Kobayat

- All activities are free of charge.
- “Origin of a Tale” performance on September 1 and the creative performance by Akkari Women on September 7, are only accessible with registration, by calling 81 073 756.
- Hikes require prior registration on the following number: 81 073 756. Registered participants must arrive no later than 15 minutes before the time indicated on the program. The meeting point for hikes is located in the courtyard of the Silk Factory.

### REEF Hermel

- All activities are free of charge.
- The concert of the 8th of September is only accessible with registration by calling 71 246 296.
- Hikes and rafting require prior registration on the following number: 71 246 296. The meeting point for nature activities is the Hermel Rafting Squat Club.

> [Link to online program](#)

> Reservations for REEF can also be done through [IHJOZ.com](https://ihjoz.com)



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## REEF'S ORGANIZERS

- The Environment Council was founded in 1995 in Kobayat as a non-profit association. Since then, it has been working for 30 years to protect Akkar's natural heritage and raise awareness relating to ecological issues and the importance of forest resources. The association was the first in Lebanon to build a watchtower to prevent forest fires. It offers training courses for mountain guides and fire prevention and is involved in awareness workshops in Akkar schools. The Environment Council is also active in the development of eco-tourism activities and has forged numerous partnerships with environmental associations to promote the exchange of experience and mutual support.
- **AFLAMUNA** is a cultural nonprofit based in Beirut working to harness the power of independent Arab cinema to elevate the most pressing social, political, and cultural movements of our time. Established as a cooperative under the name of Beirut DC in 1999 by a group of Lebanese filmmakers and cultural organizers, it became a nonprofit organization in 2006 under the same name, launching multiple programs and initiatives that helped independent cinema flourish in the Arab region. Today, after over two decades, AFLAMUNA upholds this legacy while keeping an eye to the future.

## REEF'S SPONSORS IN 2023

- ❖ Cultural Ressource (Al Mawred Al Thaqafi)
- ❖ Rosa Luxembourg
- ❖ GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft Für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
- ❖ The Spanish embassy in Lebanon
- ❖ The British Council (agence officielle britannique pour l'éducation et la culture)
- ❖ Goethe Institute
- ❖ The French embassy – Institut français
- ❖ Horisis



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## REEF'S PARTNERS IN 2023

- ❖ Hermel cultural association (Mountada Al Tourath wal Thaqafa)
- ❖ Kobayat Salon culturel
- ❖ Legal Agenda
- ❖ Hamana Artist House
- ❖ Collectif Kahraba
- ❖ Cedar Environmental
- ❖ Join the circle

## WITH THE COLLABORATION OF

- ❖ Between Women Filmmakers Caravan
- ❖ Buzuruna Juzuruna
- ❖ LAMI Conservatory
- ❖ Front Row Filmed Entertainment
- ❖ The Knowledge Workshop
- ❖ Youth Animation Platform

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