

# Costa Brava Lebanon

a Film by Mounia Akl



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E-mail: [mounia.akl@gmail.com](mailto:mounia.akl@gmail.com)  
Mob.: +1 917 664 2024  
[www.mouniaakl.com](http://www.mouniaakl.com)

## Festival de Cannes

5, rue Charlot, F-75003 Paris  
Tel. 33 (0) 1 53 59 61 20  
Fax 33 (0) 1 53 59 61 24  
E-mail:  
[residence@festival-cannes.fr](mailto:residence@festival-cannes.fr)  
[www.festival-cannes.org](http://www.festival-cannes.org)

Since 2000, the Festival Residence has provided each year accommodation and support to twelve selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. A jury presided by a film director sits twice a year, selecting these young filmmakers on the basis of their short films, or

even first feature film, and the merits of their feature film project. During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Cannes Film Festival, to bring their project to co-production status.

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## Technical Information

**Working Title:** Costa Brava Lebanon  
**Director:** Mounia Akl  
**Nationality:** Lebanese  
**Screenplay:** Mounia Akl and Clara Roquet  
**Genre:** Drame  
**Length:** 100 min  
**Shooting location:** Lebanon  
**Production Company (Lebanon):** About Productions  
Renno Building, First Floor, Gemmayze, Beirut, Lebanon  
Telephone/Fax: +961 1 58 78 24  
Email: [contact@aboutproductions.com](mailto:contact@aboutproductions.com)

## Director's Biography

Mounia Akl is a Lebanese director and screenwriter. She holds a bachelor's degree in Architecture from ALBA and a Directing MFA from Columbia University. Apart from directing, Mounia has taught film directing at the NHSI at Northwestern University in Chicago and was a preceptor in Screenwriting at Columbia University in New York where she was also Richard Peña's teaching assistant. Her short film, *Submarine* (2016), was in the official selection of the 69th Cannes Film Festival (Cinéfondation), South by Southwest, TIFF and DIFF where it won the Muhr Jury Prize. In 2017, Mounia took part in the Lebanon Factory and co-directed a short film *El Gran Libano* which opened the Directors' Fortnight at the 70th Cannes Film Festival.

### Main previous works:

*Submarine*, 20'50" - 2016

- 69<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival, Cinéfondation
- 41<sup>st</sup> Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)
- Jury Prize, 13<sup>th</sup> Dubai International Film Festival

*El Gran Libano (Lebanon Factory)*, 18'50" - 2016

- 70<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival, Directors Fortnight
- BFI, London
- Sarajevo Film Festival





## Synopsis

Lebanon, 2020. The trash crisis that started in 2014 has escalated to an unbearable point. It's hard to live in Lebanon in these strange days, but the Badri family has achieved to lead a peaceful existence away from the city's violence and rot. The parents, Walid and Soraya, his mother Zeina, and their daughters, Tala and Rim lead an idyllic humble life of isolation in their old family house that they have turned into a sterilized safe space.

However, when the government finally finds a solution to the crisis, it's not good news for the Badris. A big landfill will be built right outside their land, hosting all the rot and garbage that has piled up for years, bringing reality to their locked doors.

This political invasion will break the Badri's utopia, opening their closed doors on the people, the

past and the present they have avoided for years. This will shake the family's dynamics, driving them to extremes versions of themselves, awakening repressed feelings, making them realize the rot was not only outside their home.

## Statement of Intent

I was born the year the Lebanese civil war ended. In these post war years, I observed my parents' fear and their desire to dissociate. They never spoke about the war, were overprotective, and secluded my sister and I. They convinced us the only safe place was home. However, when their marriage crippled, our safe place exploded. The war zone was no longer outside our home, but inside our walls. Ironically, since then, the child in me created

parallels between the country and my home. Every time Lebanon suffered, my family suffered. My home was a microcosm of Lebanon and Lebanon, of the world. The divorce then introduced me to human complexity, and I developed a fascination for human flaws, and the truth that comes out of us in times of personal tragedies.

In *Costa Brava Lebanon*, we travel between the reality of a situation and transcendental moments inside our characters' minds, between the war at home and the one outside, between emotional violence and humor of discomfort, blurring the lines between the two creating a spectacle of love with zero heroes.

## Synopsis

Liban, 2020. La crise des ordures qui a commencé en 2014 a atteint un point insupportable. Il est difficile de vivre au Liban en ces jours étranges, mais la famille Badri a réussi à mener une existence paisible loin de la violence et de la pourriture de la ville. Les parents, Walid et Soraya, la mère de Walid, Zeina, et leurs filles, Tala et Rim, mènent une vie d'isolement idyllique et humble dans leur ancienne maison de famille qu'ils ont transformée en un espace sûr stérilisé.

Cependant, lorsque le gouvernement trouve enfin une solution à la crise, ce n'est pas une bonne nouvelle pour les Badri. Une grande décharge sera construite juste à l'extérieur de leurs terres, accueillant toute la pourriture et les déchets accumulés pendant des années, amenant la réalité à leurs portes verrouillées.

Cette invasion politique brisera l'utopie des Badri, ouvrant leurs portes fermées aux gens, au passé et au présent qu'ils ont évités pendant des années. Cela va ébranler la dynamique de la famille, les conduire à des comportements extrêmes, éveiller les sentiments réprimés, leur faisant comprendre que la pourriture n'était pas seulement à l'extérieur de leur maison.

## Note d'intention

Je suis née l'année de la fin de la guerre civile libanaise. Dans ces années d'après-guerre, j'ai observé la peur de mes parents et leur désir de s'en dissocier. Ils n'ont jamais parlé de la guerre, étaient trop protecteurs et nous ont isolé ma sœur et moi. Ils nous ont convaincus que le seul endroit sûr était la maison. Cependant, quand leur mariage n'a plus fonctionné, notre lieu sûr a

explosé. La zone de guerre n'était plus à l'extérieur de notre maison, mais à l'intérieur de nos murs. Ironiquement, depuis lors, l'enfant en moi a créé des parallèles entre le pays et ma maison. Chaque fois que le Liban a souffert, ma famille a souffert. Ma maison était un microcosme du Liban et le Liban, du monde. Le divorce m'a fait découvrir la complexité humaine, et j'ai développé une fascination pour les défauts humains et la vérité qui s'échappe de nous au moment de tragédies personnelles.

Dans *Costa Brava Lebanon*, nous voyageons entre la réalité d'une situation et des moments transcendants dans l'esprit de nos personnages, entre la guerre à la maison et celle de l'extérieur, entre violence émotionnelle et humour de l'inconfort, brouillant les lignes entre les deux et créant un spectacle d'amour sans héros.