



Workshop 1 report October 11 2017

Participants

Mona Achache, director and screenwriter
Lisa Azuelos, director, screenwriter, and producer
Tine Byrckel, Danish screenwriter, journalist and philosopher
Ron Dyens, producer, Sacrebleu
Fabien Gaffez, head of programmes at Forum des images
Johanna Grudzinska, director
Judith Nora, producer, Silex film
Marianne Slot, producer
Fanny Yvonnet, producer, Les 3 brigands, «Ava»

Observers

Guillaume Calop, Le Lab, Les Arcs European Film Festival
Françoise Delbecq, journalist, ELLE
Geoffroy Grison, screenwriter, Le Deuxième Regard
Clémence Leveau, journalist, ELLE active

Hosts

Emmanuelle Chateau, coach
Fabienne Silvestre-Bertoncini, Le Lab, Les Arcs European Film Festival, coach

The issues «put on the table»

The “invisibilisation”: how come women disappear so often from history? 10 years from now, except Agnès Varda, which women will be featured in the cinema encyclopaedias? What to do to make sure that in the future an equal number of women and men appear in encyclopaedias and dictionaries?

The issue of time: the timing of a film is not necessarily adapted to a woman's timing. One of the participants was criticized for taking too much time to make a film because she had a child. She eventually achieved it, by hiring women for every position, taking her time and shaking off her insecurities.



The issue of silence in the Weinstein affair and more generally on sexual harassment, in the cinema industry and beyond.

The issue of women having difficulties of going further than a second or third film. What happens? We need to look for answers!

Awarding a prize sponsored by a cosmetics brand to a female filmmaker is an issue (for one of the participants): this says something that is clearly against what we are fighting for.

The Lab and Sisley answered the comment:

Regretting that there are no brands from other industries that want to support the initiative.

By mentioning that the partnership ties firstly people with matching principles; between the teams of Sisley and Les Arcs, it is about personal relationships and friendships that have grown for more than 5 years around the love of cinema and around the same idea of a fairer world. Sisley is not in an approach of branding, with the Lab not having its name and the sponsorship being operated through the Foundation Sisley-d'Ornano.

The good news

The good news is what is happening in the TV series industry. A large number of female producers, directors... In terms of content as well, there are many more interesting female characters; women have more modern roles more often, less stereotyped. In cinema, a film is often reduced to the fact that it was directed by a woman (more personalisation of a female screenwriter/filmmaker). There's a kind of anonymity in TV, so there's less discrimination.

There's a shared feeling that young women are feeling more empowered, they question themselves less, which is reassuring for the future.

There is a benevolence among the new generation. Women read each other's projects, they give time to each other. There are now structures where producers share their means and talents. There is an alliance and a benevolence between women and men in the new generation.



Nugget Quotes

"There are less un-castrated men than un-castrated women. Little girls should have the right to dream of driving big engines!"

"I am a producer and gender is never a question for me, it's so natural that it makes me uncomfortable: should I do something?"

"Giving women their rightful place in cinema is not a battle but an alliance. I'm happy I'm not feeling alone."

"I'll keep writing characters for realistic and mature women."

"I'm pragmatic; I'm annoyed by the fact that all the team leaders in my crew are men. Can I go against this? No, but I'll favour women in the least expected positions, especially in the technical jobs. Parity everywhere."

"In this kind of gathering, you don't feel comfortable as a man. How can I favour women's place without going against men? Uncomfortable with the idea of quotas and positive discrimination."

"My male friends ask me to read their projects to get a female point of view, that's an improvement."

"The question of quotas is lurking, a little like the reintroduction of wolves in the Pyrenees. Between sheep farmers and ecologist activists, everyone loves nature but nobody agrees."

"I leave with more openness, especially on the question of parity. What I can do is to keep an eye out on these matters, more benevolent and more open to discussion, also on programming and on who I assign to speak."

"I leave not without a clear conscience, but with a clear confidence in the new generation, even if it has to be maintained."



Ideas

Parity

Parity in the selection committees for festivals (for instance for Cannes).

Parity in the committees and alternating presidencies for the CNC.

Anonymity for the first committee of CNC grants, on directors and producers: trial period.

Parity in the film crews: favour female team heads. This dialogue must include men.

Quotas

Quota for a determined period on public grants: a trial period of 5 years and a follow-up.

Battling the “invisibilisation” in cultural heritage, or rather “sheritage”

Making movies on the subject. Telling the story of discrimination.

Start to sensitize film critics on the issue, most of them being men.

Doing a study on the tools that engrave women into history. And to give them visibility.

Networking/mentoring

Developing networks, discussions, talking groups on the matter.

Maybe associate women committed to the matter, but from other sectors (politics/industry) so they can share their experience, what worked for them and what must be avoided.

Creating writing workshops for women. There needs to be more female screenwriters.

Creating a lab for financing films so they gain a better understanding of the market (for screenwriters/directors).

Creating the “Cleopatras”:

A new prize, more towards the audience, more modern, awarded by an institution gathering well-known figures of the new generation, to promote films with different criteria: “feel-good films”, which would certainly allow a better male-female balance.

*For your consideration: confidentiality and publication rules of the Lab:

We use the Chatham House rule, from the famous British think tank.

This rule is used in order to regulate the confidentiality of the information exchanged during a meeting. The principle is the following: when there is a meeting under the Chatham House rule, the participants are free to use the information they collected on this occasion, but they're not allowed to reveal the identities or affiliation of the source of that information. This allows a greater freedom of speech and stronger stances.

The list of the participants to the workshops is nonetheless public, in order to highlight the diversity and the quality of the attendees, and to give value to the ideas produced.