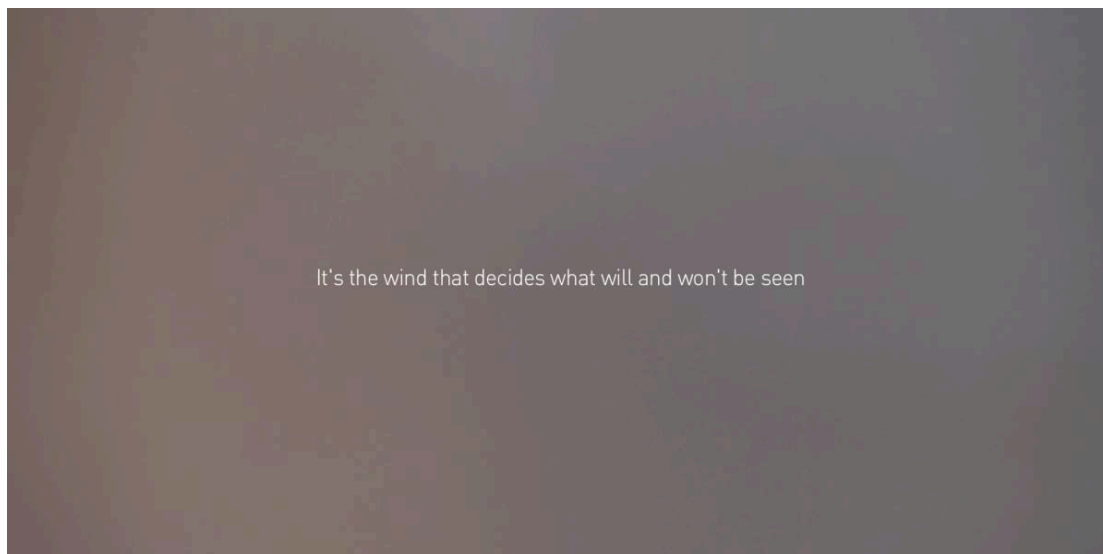


Introduction to *Foyer*



Ismail Bahri, *Foyer*, 31 minutes, 2016, colour, arabic

Foyer

Place where one builds a fire. Place for gathering, where the family lives. **Dwelling, home,** house, abode. By analogy with fire, that radiates energy. Place, spot from which heat and light radiate. **Source** of a foyer. **Focal.** Vertex of the conical beam formed by refraction of reflexion of a light beam, formed by parallel rays. *Foyer (focus) by reflexion* (mirror), *by refraction* (lens). *Virtual foyer (focus): where the reflected rays, once prolonged, meet.* Central point. **Centre.**

Foyer is a film resulting from experiments in filming with a sheet of white paper placed in front of the camera, a few centimetres from the lens. The intuition behind it, very simple at first, was to take the camera onto the streets of Tunis and observe the way that this dividing element taints itself with the surrounding light, vibrates according to the movements of the air, darkens with the passage of a cloud or when a person or object gets too close...

This experiment shifted when passers-by, attracted by this device, approached me to question me and talk. I then understood that these words and voices filled this blank paper both with poetic and political content, as subtle as it was unexpected. The film appeared somewhat in the way a roll of film is impressed by light when exposed to it : it was progressively affected by what happened to it, the environment in which it was shot.

Foyer

A film / a fire

The sheet of paper / the cinema screen

The film's title refers to the formation, however ephemeral, of a foyer of looks: the filmmaker and the passers-by look on together at the piece of paper, commenting the ongoing experiment. An experiment that will then be watched by the spectator in the cinema theatre. Like the fire around which we gather, the cinema screen becomes the foyer where varying projections meet, but also a place of divergence amongst this community of onlookers.