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I arrived in Lebanon at a very particular time, in September 2006, just after the end of the war, and, having worked in Israel and Palestine over the last 7 years, I wanted to see the consequences of this act. I wanted to see and to try to understand. I stayed three weeks and my work took place during a transition period, from the end of the war, and Hezbollah celebrations, the speech given by Nasrallah in south Beirut, the arrival of the different United Nations contingents, the retreat of the Israeli army and finally the deployment of the Lebanese army to South Lebanon

I photographed Dahiyeh, a Southern suburb of Beirut and I travelled to the south of the country. I stopped in Sawane, a village in the South of Lebanon, in Gabal Amil. There I concentrated my work around a house that was bombed on the 11th day of the war, and which received six shells. This house was constructed around a key stone/crown arch, the foundation of this architecture. It belongs to the great grandchild of Gabal Amil's Shiite cleric.

I followed the first phase of the clearing of this house during which time the owner attempted to recuperate his mother's carpets buried under the debris, and I photographed the surrounding trees, the presence of which was often more disturbing than the destruction.

South Lebanon is an isolated region, separated from Beirut and from Palestine, towards which its landscape naturally tends. It's a region with valleys hemmed in by hills, it has remained wild, and due to the Israeli occupation, preserved from urbanisation. The gentleness of these places, the September light and the period of Ramadan which offered moments of fabulous silence in the evening before the end of the fasting period, was in total contrast with the devastated environment. I will remember the silence of these days, but also the noise of the cranes, of the fragmentation bombs that Hezbollah and the Lebanese army were exploding in order to destroy them. I will remember the deafening, slow and invisible noise of the Israeli airplanes flying over the South.. I ask myself what effect this recurrent noise might have on the people who lived the war, what sort of message might be received.

Anne-Marie Filaire

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