

- Nowadays, film has become a much more democratic art, any creative kid can make a movie using his phone. Do you feel envious of this privilege the young have now or do you think directing films requires a certain maturity and life experience?

It certainly requires maturity and life experience but many many more. Making movies is is not so difficult. But making a good movie is very difficult.

- What were your favourite subjects when you were doing more photography? Is film a way to go further than where you felt photography was taking you?

Photography is like a therapy for me between films. I don't try to be deep or complex there. And I must say I don't have time to do it seriously. And also I must say I don't find photography as powerful as film art. I feel it does not have the same potential to express the complex and enigmatic dimension of life.

- As your films got more script-based, how did the writing process change?

Not much change. Only that, as I am getting more confident in years I try to go into more complex matters I suppose. This makes the writing process getting longer and longer. I especially try to write the dialogues more precise and completed now.

- A more dialogue-based movie also demands another kind of filmmaking. Was that something you planned, like saying "from now on, I'm going to do films in another way"?

No. I don't have the ability to plan anything. I am the slave of my instincts. But the dialog increase in my late movies was a kind of challenge for me and once you have a lot of dialogues in the scripts, you have to make them work anymore. This reality imposes a little bit of its own reality on you. You may have to compromise the stlistic considerations considerably in order make the dialogs work in the best possible way.

- Your films (especially the latest) look so "controlled", but you also seem to have a personal quest for authenticity, for moments of bliss. How do you manage to mix these two things go along together?

Even if you control things obsessively, you try to inject kind of life smell into the every shot you make. For that you got to be awake all the time and you have to search for it.

- How do you transition from a very small film crew and casting your own family to a big team? The gains can be more obvious, what would you say are the losses?

I coul not realize how this transition occurred actually. I am surprised myself as well. And I am not sure if this is good or bad. Probably there are good sides and bad sides. But the spirit of small crew was great. I miss those old days sometimes.

- The couple from "Climates" has a really hard time and the things that they are going through are often painful to watch even for the viewer. How was it for you and your wife to play the main characters and why did you take this casting decision in the first place? Were you also trying to push some boundaries in your relationship? Would you say that experience was therapeutical in any way?

Therapeutical? No. We did not need to push boundaries either in our relationship. There were practical and logistic reasons behind it. And when the shootings start, our first son was just two months old. It was a bit difficult for Ebru to stay away from her child and this made her a bit nervous. That was the only difficulty perhaps.

- The main character of "The Wild Pear Tree" reminded me of the filmmaker going back to his hometown from "Clouds of May" and also of the atmosphere from "Kasaba". Is there some kind of connection between "The Wild Pear Tree" and your very first movies?

Yes. Firstly all these three films had been shot in the same place. In my home town. Secondly all three films have great amount of autobiographic elements in them.

- Your movies usually depict more mature, middle-aged men. How did you come to tell the story of a much younger guy?

Actually we started this film to tell the story of the father who, in real life, is a teacher married to one of my relative. But when I talked the son of this man who is a local writer about this idea, I decided to take the son into the center of the film. And I also invited him to write the script together. So eventually we wrote the

script together him, my wife and me. The whole story is here in this link:
<https://www.filmcomment.com/blog/making-wild-pear-tree/>

- “The Wild Pear Tree” also has some political commentary (I’m thinking, for example, of the character of Sinan’s former classmate, who is a riot cop and is beating up protesters). Did you have any trouble with censorship? If not, do you think you have a privileged status in any way?

I did not have much problem with censorship myself, since my films does not have direct or harsh political references, or sexual or violent contents anyway. But that does not mean nobody has any problems of censorship here.

- Speaking of censorship, do you find it harder now for an aspiring filmmaker to make a movie in Turkey compared to when you started making cinema?

No. In spite of everything, it is much easier now. In one way or another everybody who wants to make a movie, can manage to make it somehow. Just the digital technology is enough reason for that. First of all, it was very expensive to make a film those days. It used to be just 5-10 movies in one year those days, now it is more than a hundred films a year in Turkey.

- In the past, you declared yourself a fan of Romanian cinema, especially of Cristi Puiu’s. Do you stand by this affirmation? What recent Romanian films did you like?

Yes. Of course. I still like the serious Romanian cinema.

- What is the main drive behind you making films?

I don’t know. I could not find something better to give meaning to life yet.

- Can you please describe to me the last image that haunted you?

- I don’t know.