

PROGRAM 3

(Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal

Ana Hoffner

Transferred Memories – Embodied Documents, 2014, 14 min. 35 sec.

Transferred Memories – Embodied Documents explores the possible impact of a different understanding of performativity on the politics of memory. The video deals with Omarska, the infamous death camp run by Bosnian Serb forces in 1992, but does so by creating a queer relation between two performers who join to confront images of the atrocities and articulate their own memories. They both describe their perspective on these images and observe each other's reactions, making room for the recognition of the affective responses the images elicit. This recognition, however, does not depend on an identification with the bodies shown in the footage, nor on an identificatory relation between the two performers. What does it mean to look for queerness in the very process of remembering, to take this dimension of memory as a call for a rethinking of affect and temporality in the cracks between memory and neglect, knowing and not knowing? (Ana Hoffner)

Credits

Cast: Vivienne Löschner and Ana Hoffner
Camera: Judith Benedikt
Light: Hannes Böck
Sound: Lenja Gathmann
Hair and makeup: Regina Breitfellner
Concept, script and postproduction: Ana Hoffner

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Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk

Barra Fel'Share (Out on the Street), 2015, 71 min.

Out on the Street is a film about a group of workers from one of Egypt's working class neighborhoods, Helwan.

In the film nine working class men are participating in an acting workshop. Through the rehearsals, stories emerge of factory injustice, police brutality, courts that fabricate criminal charges and countless tales of corruption and exploitation by their capitalist employers.

On a rooftop studio overlooking the heart of Cairo presented as a space between fact and fiction the participants move in and out of character as they shape the performance that engage their daily realities.

Out on the Street interlaces scenes from the workshop, fiction performances and mobile phone footage filmed by a worker intended as proof for the courts to stop the destruction of his workplace. This hybrid approach aims to engage a collective imaginary, situating the participants and spectators within a broader social struggle.

“The idea for this project started with a sense of limitation in the making of documentaries. We’ve been working together on short videos since 2011, filming on the streets, in factories, joining marches and sit-ins in cities across Egypt in an attempt to document the issue of a wide variety of struggles. In the case of workers we went to listen, to film, and to try to understand the different dimensions of their protests. Where better pay or better working conditions are the tip of the iceberg, we wanted to know the unseen battles; hierarchies and social manipulations, work-caused illness and injuries and, in severe cases, death. It is always about exploitation and systematic corruption, the effects of capitalism creeping deeper into people’s lives, the closing down of a public sector, privatizing public land and industry for the sake of growth, investment, and the ‘economy’ rather than people. We were inspired by how courageous people are, how strong in the face of their bosses. These workers risk being demoted, losing their jobs, or being beaten by police, military, or hired thugs, arrested or tried before military tribunals. Over time we realized that filming, editing, and posting our material online or occasionally screening it in neighborhoods has its limitations in the audience that it reaches and the effect it has on people. There is only so much one can do with an online intervention or a few street screenings. We don’t want to make a film that turns that harsh reality into a spectacle, a source of entertainment, but a re-evaluation of the past and an imagining of what the future could hold. We believe the film will travel

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because the stories that emerge are not unique to a neighborhood or a country. The forms of exploitation, dispensability of people is happening across the globe, and this is our audience. It's this global audience that drives us to keep working on a project like *Out on the Street*.”

(Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk)

Cast & Crew :

Actors: Ahmed El Rubaa Ahmed El Nubi Aly Gharieb Hassan Gharieb Khalaf Ibrahim Mahmoud

Afify Mohamed Mahmoud Saeed Ramadan Sabry Hakiem

Filmed & Directed by: Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk

Produced by: Mostafa Youssef

Scenography: Hasan Sulaiman

Sound Design: Max Schneider

Editing: Louly Seif

Supported by: AFAC The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Crossroads Program Doha Film

Institute Rotana

Developed at: L'Atelier, Cannes Film Festival 2013 Dubai Film Market, 2012

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Marwa Arsanios

Olga's Notes, All those Restless Bodies, 2014, 3 min.

Olga's Notes, All those Restless Bodies is a video that takes as its starting point an article that appeared in *Al Hilal* magazine in January 1963 on the establishment of the ballet school in Cairo. The article describes the school, which was founded as part of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's larger plans for modernization and reform at that time, as a "factory of the bodies." Supported by major figures including the Russian choreographer and director Leonid Lavrovsky, the school was to become an important institution in Nasser's nation-state building project. The film script juggles between different dances and small stories linked to this history. It looks at dance from historical and political perspectives, and also at the body from the perspectives of dance, labour and exploitation; thus dance becomes an excuse to think about labour, and labour an excuse to think about dance and movement. The effect of political ideologies on the identity of the individual is here reflected in the body of the dancer. After years of training, rehearsing and performing, the dancer's body has become damaged—a metaphor for the violence of state projects and nation-state building that accompanies a capitalist ideology and a consumerist approach to the human form. In the film, Pierre follows the main ballerina from *The Fountain of Bakhshisarai*—the first major production, performed in the presence of Nasser, by the ballet dance group in Cairo where dancers were awarded Orders of Merit. Sandra re-enacts Yvonne Rainer's classic *Trio A*, which she had learned by heart in dance school, Jasmine does her usual pole dancing, while Natacha fails to remember her part in the harem dance and improvises. Cynthia appears from behind, dancing alone, and Alia stands still, re-enacting certain positions of dancers while they are not dancing. In their own way, each of these bodies attempts to find a history: a fragmented story of a damaged, colonized and incoherent body that has failed to remember, failed to perform, and is just sliding on stage. Here, different histories clash together side by side. (Marwa Arsanios)

Credits

Cast: Natacha Antonellou, Sandra Iche, Alia Hamdan, Cynthia, Jasmine, Pierre Geagea

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Isa Rosenberger

Espiral, 2010/13, 14 min.

Isa Rosenberger is on a quest for the visual and performative means of representing the intertwined and blurred processes that comprise the contemporary economic and political machine. Her video *Espiral* discusses how the invasion of Austrian banks affects the transitional processes in Eastern Europe. The video adopts and re-interprets the work *The Green Table: A Dance of Death in Eight Scenes* by the German choreographer Kurt Jooss, the inventor of political ballet in Germany during the Weimar Republic and the rise of National Socialism. In the original, Death dances self-assuredly around a succession of powerless protagonists who, like politicians or gamblers, gather around a green table again and again.

Here, the role of death is performed by the Chilean dancer Amanda Piña. The viewer witnesses an intimate rehearsal situation in which the dancer runs through the choreography in front of a video projection of a historical performance of the work. In a different scene, Piña performs her dance of death in front of the National Bank of Austria. The subtitles quote euphoric statements on the expansion of Austrian banks into south-east Europe. The title, *Espiral* (Spiral), is a reference to the dance school of the same name established in Santiago, Chile, by Patricio Bunster, a student of Jooss, which enabled children of underprivileged parents to get an education. *Espiral* is the artistic realization of a complex research effort addressing both transformative processes and economic interests in Eastern Europe. (Isa Rosenberger)

Credits

Cast: Amanda Piña
Camera: Reinhard Mayr
Concept, directing and editing: Isa Rosenberger

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Eske Schlüters

After the Rehearsal, 2008, 7 min. 30 sec.

After the Rehearsal depicts the actress Delphine Seyrig in rehearsal recordings for Chantal Akerman's iconic film *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, about a housewife and mother who occasionally prostitutes herself, and whose everyday life is shown in real time: "The overlay of rehearsal and recording time is transposed onto the simultaneity of playback and editing processes, of working time and life time." (Sabeth Buchmann)

Based on excerpts from the making-of reel of Seyrig's rehearsals for Akerman's film, combined with fragments from a documentary film on Seyrig herself, the work becomes a reflection on different forms of rehearsal, expanded upon by excerpts of texts dealing with theatre theories. *After the Rehearsal* focuses on the moment of rehearsing everyday life-routines. The (Brechtian) alienation effect, already inherent in the filmic dramaturgy, emerges particularly through isolation of those very scenes in which the actress rehearses her role for the camera. Eske Schlüters reflects (on) the task of the actor/actress to genuinely embody a role also on the level of the soundtrack, where she translates various texts on theatre theory from different languages in order to assemble them into a self-standing composition.

Credits

Voice-over: Zarah McKenzie

Produced by Kunsthalle für die Rheinlande und Westfalen

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