

No Man's Land / Everybody's Land – Glaring in Defiance

Join us at T2F for 3 days of film screenings exploring partitions, on the occasion of Lines of Control, an exhibition project by Green Cardamom

Friday 30th January 2009

5 pm: Welcome and introduction to the film programme and its relation to the exhibition Lines of Control, by Nicole Wolf

5.30 pm: TEMPORARY LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

D: Monica Bhasin, 35 min, MiniDV/Pal, colour, India 2005

Criss-crossing the boundaries of internal and external spaces of people in exile, the film explores the ideas of borders, boundaries, limits and forbidden spaces and touches upon the migrant conditions existing in the world today. It locates itself in the Indian subcontinent, tracing the Partition of India of 1947 into the post-colonial/partitioned times. The film is constructed through the juxtaposition of several elements like found footage of Independence/Partition 1947, abstractions of abandoned spaces or spaces of refuge and constructed narratives of refugees, speaking of longing, belonging, home and honour, loss and betrayal, boundaries and crossings. It gives voice to some of the most affected communities in the region in their own spoken languages.

6.05 pm: THE HALFMOON FILES

D: Philip Scheffner, 87 min, DigiBeta Pal, Germany 2007

An experimental search tracing voices to the origin of their recordings; voices which were recorded 90-years ago in the Halfmoon camp, a camp for colonial soldiers of the First World War. The recordings were produced as the result of a unique alliance between the military, the scientific community and the entertainment industry. Like a memory game - which remains incomplete right until the end – the film uncovers pictures and sounds that revive the ghosts of the past. His protagonists' words intersect along the concentric spirals the story follows. Those who pressed the record button on the phonographs, on photo and film cameras, were the ones to write official history. Mall Singh and the other prisoners of war of the Halfmoon Camp disappeared from this story. Their spirits and ghostly appearances seem to play with the filmmaker, to ambush him. They pursue him on his path, to bring their voices back to their home countries.

8.00 - 9.00 pm: Talks and discussion with Hammad Nasar, Kamila Shamsie, Adnan Madani and Nicole Wolf

9.00 pm: HAD-ANHAD: Journeys with Ram & Kabir

D: Shabnam Virmani, 105 min, MiniDV/Pal, colour, India 2008

Kabir defied the boundaries between Hindu and Muslim, refusing to be labelled himself and sharply criticizing sectarianism. His name and upbringing were Muslim but his poetry often uses Hindu concepts and Hindu names for God, especially Ram. This film journeys in search of the "Ram" invoked in Kabir's poetry, delving into the heart of divisive Hindu-Muslim politics of religion and nationalism, encountering singers and lay people in India and Pakistan, probing the forces of history and politics that have created disputatiously diverse Rams, while also spawning many Kabirs.

Saturday 31st January 2009

12.00 Noon: THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WALLS

D: Eyal Weizman, 35 min, slides and MiniDV, UK, Israel 2008

Negotiations around the 'best of all possible walls' between humanitarians and military officers. A conflict between the parties that took place in court, on a physical terrain model.

A WORLD APART WITHIN FIFTEEN MINUTES

D: Enas Muthaffar, 4 min, MiniDV, Jerusalem 2006

Between Jerusalem and Ramallah, not only is there now a huge existing wall on the ground, but also a non-tangible wall in the people's minds. It is only a short drive between those two cities, yet when those living in Jerusalem were asked whether they knew the way to Ramallah, none of them could answer. To them, Ramallah sounds far, seems far. It is a world apart within 15 minutes.

NECESSARY JOURNEYS

D: Oreet Ashery, 14 min, colour, MiniDV, UK 2005

The video is a travel diary to Palestine/Israel featuring Oreet crossing Qalandia checkpoint and meeting with the architect Sameh Abboushi in Ramallah, a visit to the Old city with Oreet's father in search of the location of his grandfather's old shoe shop in the Muslim quarter, and a visit to Pqqaain; the only indigenous village inhabited by Druze, Muslims, Christians and Jews. The travel diary is seeking to document a process of placing Oreet's family history within the wider context of the Middle East. Part of ACE and BFI black world Necessary Journey project.

Coffee/Lunch Break and Casual Discussion

2.00 pm: EIN-BLICK/ IN-SIGHT

D: Gerd Conradt, 10 min, 35mm, Germany 1989.

For a time span of twelve hours a film camera is looking from a house in West-Berlin at a house in East-Berlin. Each second an image is taken. In between the houses is the wall.

AFTER THE FALL / NACH DEM FALL

D: Frauke Sandig & Eric Black, 85 min, 35mm, colour, Germany 1999

Ten years after it fell, the Berlin wall has, it seems, disappeared without a trace – at least as far as exteriors are concerned. The area that was once a deadly no-man's land is now Europe's largest building site. The site is now in the throes of enormous changes and doesn't appear to want to look back at its past. The film tells a story from differing perspectives; it is a subjective search for what's left of the wall both in the city and in the minds of the people who live there. The film is an attempt to regard the wall as if it were an ancient myth, some ghastly fable, an unbelievable and absurd tale of yore. One of the most important perspectives in the film is however that of the camera itself, which captures Berlin in images that are both lyrical and poetic. A dream like musical journey along the border that once was.

4.00 pm: SEAVIEW – a place to wait for asylum

D: Paul Rowley, 82 min, 35mm, colour, Ireland 2007

An hour north of Dublin beside the sea is a bizarre looking collection of grey cement buildings with brightly painted doors, and rusting fairground rides. Opened in 1948, Mosley was a Butlin's holiday camp, a place where Irish families would escape the daily grind for a week in order to relax, dance, and enjoy themselves. A visit to Mosney today presents a radically different picture, but still a picture of escape. This former holiday camp is now a camp of another kind, a holding center for asylum seekers from all corners of the globe. We are introduced to the camp by some of the long-term staff, touring cavernous, abandoned kitchens, and circling collapsing perimeter fences. We move quickly to intensely close conversations that reveal individual stories of the residents, from the epic to the everyday.

<http://www.fdk-berlin.de/forum/programm/hauptprogramm/seaview.html>

6.30 pm: THE WALL

D: Simone Bitton, 95 min, DigiBeta, France/Israel 2004

'Wall' is a personal cinematic meditation on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in which filmmaker Simone Bitton documents the construction of the massive separation barrier that is destroying one of the most historically significant landscapes in the world. Bitton utilises her shared Jewish-Arab identity to talk impartially to people on both sides, blurring the lines of hatred in this troubled region. She highlights some of the ironies – from the Palestinian construction labourers grateful for the work, to the concrete factory where the business is booming – and also examines how the wall represents security for one people and virtual imprisonment for the other. Compelling and thought-provoking, 'Wall' offers a last glimpse of the beauty of this land and the humanity of its inhabitants as they disappear behind a shield of iron and concrete.

Sunday 1st February 2009

12 Noon: WAY BACK HOME

D: Supriyo Sen, 120 min, MiniDV, India 2003

In 1947 after a protracted struggle India achieved freedom at the cost of dividing the Nation in two. Thousands of people were killed on the wake of violent communal riots and millions of people became refugees. The director's parents too had to leave their ancestral home for an unknown future. After more than fifty years they are going back to their homeland in Bangladesh. The film is about this journey, memories and sense of history that arises from personal recollections.

Coffee/Lunch Break and Casual Discussion

2.30 pm: THE HOUSE ON GULMOHAR AVENUE

D: Samina Mishra, 30 min, MiniDV/Pal, India 2005

The film is set in a part of New Delhi called Okhla, an area that is predominantly inhabited by Muslims, and one that is sometimes also called 'Mini Pakistan.' The film traces the personal journey of the filmmaker through the ideas of identity and belonging. Encounters with other residents of this area and a quiet presence of the political context in India today are woven into the journey. The filmmaker's personal history is a hybrid one but she grew up as a Muslim. The film traces her awareness of this part of her identity and connects her personal journey to the lives of other people in the area, in an effort to understand what it can mean to be a Muslim in India today.

3.00 pm: MANY STORIES OF LOVE AND HATE

D: Shyamal Karmakar, 52 min, MiniDV, India 2008

The story of a young woman from Kolkata and a young man from Kashmir are interwoven here. They both talk about their concepts of love while at the same time embodying situations of hate and violence, in two different states in India, through two different stories impacted by politics. Karmakar's camera explores his characters as deeply as the urban and rural landscapes of Calcutta and Kashmir and hereby provokes a surprising closeness of two very different characters. The camera's move from being violent to caressing vis-a-vis the found footage from film and news media addresses the aggression that can lie in image making in an intricately self reflexive manner.

4.00 pm: THE SUBVERSIVE CAMERA, THE SUPER-8 FILM SCENE IN THE GDR

D: Cornelia Klauss, 44 min, miniDV, colour, Germany 1996

Various filmmakers who were seeking artistic expression under the censor and control of the Stasi are talking about their experiences, their approach to filmmaking and how their work supported and hindered their lives. In a country where all art was subject to state control, the Stasi paid close attention to such films, and especially to the rebellious

artists' scene. The film also includes rarely seen footage from 80s underground films and explores the relationship between image experimentation and critique.

KONRAD! SPRACH DIE FRAU MAMA ...

D: Ramona Koeppel-Welsh, 9 min, Super-8, GDR 1989

Found footage, old home movies from the family, glancing outside the window where the street has been deserted, mixed with short fictional sequences - a filmic metaphor about life in the formally walled Eastern Germany.

5.00 pm: - NERVUS RERUM

D: Otolith Group, 30 min, MiniDV/Pal, Palestine/UK 2008

Nervus Rerum uses sound, image and text to explore the scarred landscape of Jenin Refugee Camp in Palestine. In the film, various routes through the camp that lead to dead ends are explored and juxtaposed with spoken excerpts from the writings of Fernando Pessoa and Jean Genet.

6.00 pm: Coffee Break followed by Q&A with Amar Kanwar via webcam

7.00 pm: - LIGHTNING TESTIMONIES

D: Amar Kanwar, 115 min, MiniDV/Pal, India 2007

Why is one image different from the other? Why does an image seem to contain many secrets? What can release them so as to suddenly connect with many unknown lives. The Lightning Testimonies reflects upon a history of conflict in the Indian subcontinent through experiences of sexual violence. As the film explores this violence, there emerge multiple submerged narratives, sometimes in people, images and memories, and at other times in objects from nature and everyday life that stand as silent but surviving witnesses. In all narratives the body becomes central - as a site for honour, hatred and humiliation and also for dignity and protest. As the stories unfold, women from different times and regions come forward. The film speaks to them directly, trying to understand how such violence is resisted, remembered and recorded by individuals and communities. Narratives hidden within a blue window or the weave of a cloth appear, disappear and are then reborn in another vocabulary at another time. Using a range of visual vocabularies the film moves beyond suffering into a space of quiet contemplation, where resilience creates a potential for transformation.

9.00 pm: Final Round of Discussion with Hammad Nasar, Amar Kanwar (if available online) and Nicole Wolf