

16 Beaver March 17 2011

**BETWEEN TWO THINGS CURATED BY:
Nasrin Himada and Vicky Moufawad-Paul**

This is a three-part screening and performance event that investigates the Palestinian Film Archive that was lost in the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The Palestinian Film Archive contained over 100 films that documented the daily life and political struggle of the Palestinian people during the heightened revolution beginning in the 1960s in Lebanon and Jordan. Several of the films presented here illustrate the (recently misunderstood) connection of Palestinian political endeavors to Marxism and the third world internationalist struggle. These films and videos—*Red Army/PFLP: Declaration of World War*, *Palestine in the Eye*, *Nervus Rerum* with performance by The Otolith Group, *My Heart Beats Only for Her*—are culled from the archive and from contemporary image-makers' mediations on the bits of archive available, as well as on the rumors of the images the archives contained. The works, dating from the 70s to the present, interrogate and often turn their backs on the pit falls of representation, while questioning the kinds of representations that are possible.

RED ARMY/PFLP: THE DECLARATION OF WORLD WAR

Directed by Masao Adachi

1971, 71 minutes, color, 16mm

Co-produced by Wakamatsu Production

Co-edited by Red Army (Red Army Faction of Japan Revolutionary Communist League) and PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine)



This film is a milestone of cinema as activism. Adachi and Wakayama went to Beirut on the way back from the Cannes Film Festival. There, in collaboration with the Red Army members and PFLP, they produced this newsreel film depicting the everyday activities of Arab guerrillas as a cinematic narrative on the world revolution. The film is a fusion of intense agitation and the ‘landscape theory’ approach inherited from Adachi’s “Aka. Serial Killer,” aimed to move the emphasis of film from situations to landscapes as expression of political and economical power relations. The film was conceived as a new form of news report, and was discussed in synchronicity with the Dziga Vertov Group and the revolutionary films of Latin America, transcending geographical distances. The film embodies the collaboration between Japanese filmmakers and Palestinians in that era, and is also a historical document of Palestine at the height of the Third World internationalist revolution.

Palestine in the Eye

Directed by Mustafa Abu Ali

1979, 27 minutes, B+W, 16 mm

Produced by the Palestinian Cinema Institution

Abu Ali is an important figure in the history of Palestinian cinema. He was one of the founders of the Palestine Film Unit, a cinema collective that emerged out of the revolutionary movements of the late 60s, based in Jordan, and that was made up of Palestinian filmmakers and artists. Palestine in the Eye is an homage to Hanni Jawhariah’s work. Jawhariah was one of the three founders of the Palestine Film Unit. He was born in 1939 in Jerusalem and died in 1976, while filming the battle of Ain Toura in the mountains of Lebanon. Jawhariah was the first to shoot and produce images of the Fidae’en (freedom fighters). All twelve of his films have disappeared and the only surviving work is the last five scenes he shot in Ain Toura as he died with his camera in hand. These last five shots have been included in this film. Jawhariah contributed immensely to the growing movement of revolutionary cinema of the late 1960s and through to the 70s until his death. This documentary film by Abu Ali marks a very important period in the history of Palestinian cinema, as it also pays tribute to one of the most important filmmakers of Palestinian revolutionary cinema.

Nervus Rerum

Directed by The Otolith Group

2008, 32 minutes



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. The film builds on the artists' remarkable *Otolith* trilogy of 2003–2008, for which its two members, Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar, exploited the critical potential of the “essay film”—a distinctive mixture of documentary and dramatic imagery accompanied by poetic, historical, and often autobiographical narration that, in the tradition of such diverse filmmakers and groups as Black Audio Film Collective, Harun Farocki, Jean-Luc Godard, Chris Marker, and Anand Patwardhan, works to disrupt the clear boundaries between fact and fiction, subjectivity and objectivity, the real and the imaginary. In the process, the Otolith Group has invented inspiring new political and creative possibilities for filmmaking as a critical and conceptual art. *Nervus Rerum*—its title borrowed from Cicero's Latin, meaning “the nerve of things”—confronts the problem of the representability of a people confined to a geographical enclave by a longstanding military occupation.

My Heart Beats Only for Her

Directed by Mohamed Soueid

2008, 87 minutes

In Arabic, English and Vietnamese with English subtitles



Inspired by the Vietnamese revolution, a call to transform every Arab capital into a 'Hanoi for the Palestinian Revolution' echoed far and wide in the 1960s and 1970s. This documentary delves into encounters between the Vietnamese and Palestinian experience. It traces remains of these encounters in today's Beirut, the Arab capital which most vividly lived out this notion of an 'Arab Hanoi' – from the outbreak of the civil war in 1975 until the withdrawal of Palestinian fighters in 1982.

My Heart Beats Only for Her focuses on the story of Hatem Hatem, known by his nom de guerre Abu Hassan Hanoi. Born in south Lebanon and affiliated with the Fatah political movement, Hatem fought for its brigades. After the Israeli invasion, he lost his connection with Fatah, returning to his native village and distancing himself from political activity. Throughout the film, Hatem's son Hassan examines the memory of Fatah's 'Vietnamese moment' in Lebanon. He travels between Beirut, Dubai, and Hanoi, contemplating these three cities' very different, and yet intersecting, relationships at the level of revolution, economy, war and urban development.

Mohamad Soueid is a pioneer of independent film and video production in Lebanon who has published extensively on Lebanese cinema and video art.