

The Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, Ashkal Alwan, presents

VIDEO WORKS

2011

@ Metropolis Empire Sofil, Achrafieh, May 18–21, 2011- Opening Wednesday May 18 at 8:30pm

The Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, ASHKAL ALWAN is pleased to present its 3rd edition of VIDEO WORKS, opening Wednesday May 18 and featuring 8 new works from artists **Roy Dib, Wajdi Elian, Raed & Rania Rafei, Rami Sabbagh, Tamara Stepanyan, Siska, Colin Whitaker, and Cynthia Zaven.**

The first 3 nights will screen the 8 new works commissioned by Ashkal Alwan for VIDEO WORKS 2011, while the 4th night is dedicated to premiering a selection of recently produced videos by **Akram Zaatari, Ahmad Ghossein, and Rania Stephan,** all works screening in Beirut for the first time.

Programme

Wednesday May 18, 2011

8:30pm

Under a Rainbow – Roy Dib [17', 2011]

8:50pm

Prologue – Raed & Rania Rafei [49', Colour/ Black & White, 2011]

Thursday May 19, 2011

8:30pm

Beirut Phantasy – Colin Whitaker [10', 2011]

8:45pm

February 19 – Tamara Stepanyan [42', 2011]

9:30pm

Dear Victoria – Cynthia Zaven [8', 2011]

Friday May 20, 2011

8:30pm

A Place to Go – Wajdi Elian [17', Black & White, 2011]

8:50pm

EDL – Siska [21', 2011]

9:15pm

The Last Hero – Rami El Sabbagh [28', 2011]

Saturday May 21, 2011

8:30pm

Tomorrow Everything Will Be Alright – Akram Zaatari [12', 2010]

8:45pm

My Father is Still a Communist: Intimate Secrets to be Published – Ahmad Ghossein [32', 2011]

BREAK

9:30pm

The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni – Rania Stephan [70', Colour/ Black & White, 2011]

VIDEO WORKS is a production grant established by the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, Ashkal Alwan, in 2006 to provide a sustainable support structure for video production by emerging artists and filmmakers based in Lebanon. VIDEO WORKS 2011 marks its third edition and screening event.

VIDEO WORKS 2011 is produced by Ashkal Alwan with the support of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Jury: *Mirene Arsanios, Tony Chakar, Sandra Dagher, Ghassan Salhab, Christine Tohme*

Artistic Director: *Ghassan Salhab*

Project Team: *Christine Tohme, Amal Issa, Nada Al Jobaily, Alexandre Paulikevitch, Vasco Puddu*

For more information: +961-1-360251
info@ashkalalwan.org – www.ashkalalwan.org

Under a Rainbow – Roy Dib

[17', Arabic, English & French with English Subtitles, 2011]

Editing: Nour El Amin & Roy Dib

I did not grieve over the civil war, since I did not experience it. But along with my cousin, I always liked to pretend that our parents were killed in the war so that we could be like Remi.

Roy Dib was born in Rasmusqa, Al Koura, North Lebanon in 1983. In 1999, he made his first visit to Beirut.

Prologue – Raed & Rania Rafei

[49', Colour/Black & White, Arabic with English Subtitles, 2011]

Cast: Firas Abdallah, Nassim Arabi, Rita Hodroj, Rawan Kashmar, Maarouf Mawloud, Sandra Njeim, Yusri Al Shami (alias Molotov), Nizar Suleiman, Assaad Thebian – Image: Nadim Saoma – Sound: Fadi Tabbal & Stéphane Rives (Tunefork Recording Studios)

In 1974, a year before the start of the Lebanese civil war, the country witnessed massive protests by student and labour unions. In March of that year, amid deep divisions along social, political and ideological lines, a group of student activists rebelled against the administration of the American University of Beirut.

Raed Rafei was born in 1977 in Tripoli, Lebanon. Since 2004, he has worked as a journalist for local and international publications, covering various political, social and economic issues.

Rania Rafei was born in 1979 in Tripoli, Lebanon. She holds a degree in Audio-Visual and Cinema Studies from the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA). She has directed three short films: *Harissa Texas* (2004), *The Dish* (2005) and *Manchette* (2005), as well as several videos, including *Minimum Precautions* (2006) and *The Four Seasons: Summer 2006*, *Brain Cells* (Video Works 2007). Her documentary film *Notes on Love in Copenhagen* was screened in Beirut during Home Works 5: A Forum on Cultural Practices (2010).

Beirut Phantasy – Colin Whitaker

[10', English, 2011]

Featuring the voice of Simone Fattal

This film explores the interiority of life in a place where there is no security. The artist moves construction netting and paints transparent sheets in front of the camera, while filming his own renovated Beirut apartment, as well as the destroyed apartment directly above his. He then digitally removes the netting and the paint so that the two spaces are collaged together in a kind of dance. The result is a conversation between two conflicting fantasies: perfection and destruction.

Colin Whitaker was born in 1980. He is an American filmmaker and artist currently working in Beirut. He studied Film at New York University and has exhibited at the PS1 Clocktower (New York, 2008), 98Weeks Research/Project Space (Beirut, 2010) and the Contemporary Art Museum (St. Louis, 2009). He has made a number of short films and music videos for artists such as Antony and the Johnsons (Another World, 2008), Palms (New Moon, 2008) and Sahra Motalebi (Migrators, 2009).

February 19 – Tamara Stepanyan

[42', 2011]

Cast: Ofelia Zakaryan & Vakhtang Harutiounyan – Music: Cynthia Zaven – Image: Tammam Hamza – Sound Design: Raed Younan

A train between Yerevan and Tbilisi.

Anna and Alex.

And a wall. A cold, white wall.

Tamara Stepanyan was born in Armenia in 1982. In 1994, she moved to Lebanon with her family where she has been living and working ever since. She graduated with a degree in Communication Arts from the Lebanese American University (LAU) in 2005. Her works include *The Last Station* (2005), *My Beirut*, a multimedia installation that was part of Badguer I (2009), and most recently *Little Stones*, a documentary shot in Denmark and screened at Née à Beyrouth, The Cinema Days of Beirut and CPH DOX in Denmark (2010). Stepanyan is currently completing a documentary titled *May 9*.

Dear Victoria – Cynthia Zaven

[8', 2011]

Camera: Victoria Zaven/Cynthia Zaven – Sound, Music & Editing: Cynthia Zaven – Sound Mixing: Nadim Mishlawi-DB Studios

Based on the 8mm footage my grandmother shot during a trip to Armenia and the images I took during my journey there 36 years later, *Dear Victoria* investigates notions of belonging and alienation through an encounter between two worlds. I only recently discovered my grandmother's footage and never thought we would be exchanging views across temporalities one day.

Cynthia Zaven is an artist, musician and composer based in Beirut. Her installation-based work combines a variety of media that explore the relationship between sound, memory and identity. She has written soundtracks for documentaries, experimental and feature films that have been screened in festivals worldwide, including the International Documentary Film Festival (IDFA, Amsterdam, 2002), Videobrasil (Sao Paulo, 2005), Modern Art Oxford (2006), The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA, London, 2007) and the Tribeca Film Festival (New York, 2008). *Dear Victoria* is her first video.

A Place to Go – Wajdi Elian

[17', Black & White, 2011]

Cast: Ahmad Ghossein, Mohamad Soueid, Hanady El Cheikh, Ahmad Hafez – Image: Bassem Fayad – Animator: David Habchy – Sound Design/Composer: Jawad Nawfal – Editing: Robert Nield/Wajdi Elian

Ziad is a solitary character living an organized, unadventurous, routine existence. One day, his rhythm is disrupted by a series of minor accidents that bring a peculiar street cat into his home, for better or for worse...

Wajdi Elian was born in Beirut in 1976. After completing a degree in Cinema Studies at the Institute of Scenic and Audio-Visual Studies (IESAV), Saint Joseph University in Beirut, he collaborated on several documentary film projects including *23km* (work in progress), *I See Heroes* (2009) and *A Spell of Absence* (2011). He has also collaborated with the electronic music act MUNMA on a number of albums and live performances, including *34 Days* (2007) and the Paris Autumn Festival (2007). *A Place to Go* is his first short fiction film.

EDL – Siska

[21', 2011]

Sound Composer: Christian Blumberg

Lost in time and translation, images transport us on a journey behind the modernist façade of Beirut's electricity building. The images shot on Super 8 are accompanied by droning noises reminiscent of the experimental, electronic sounds of the 1950s and 60s.

Siska (Alexandre Habib) was born in Beirut in 1984. He studied Film at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA). As a filmmaker, he is interested in the combination of light, sound and action in moving images. By connecting fiction and visual art with the moving image, his work strives to create a platform for new modes of storytelling. He currently lives and works between Beirut and Berlin.

Tomorrow Everything Will Be Alright – Akram Zaatari

[12', English, 2010]

Image: Muriel Aboulrouss – Editing: Serge Dagher – Sound Design: Nadim Mishlawi

One evening, an iconic story of love, loss and longing unfolds through an intense exchange. An unsettling use of communication technology, recording and writing makes the film fluctuate between a dream, a script and a love everyone longs for. It is a tribute to Eric Rohmer and the attention he paid to the details of our daily lives.

Akram Zaatari was born in Sidon, Lebanon in 1966. His work is tied to the practice of fieldwork and of collecting. Zaatari is deeply invested in researching photographic practices in the Middle East, examining how photographic records serve to shape notions of aesthetics, postures and social codes. He has made over forty videos including *Nature Morte* (2008), *In This House* (2005), *This Day* (2003) and *All Is Well on the Border* (1997).

My Father is Still a Communist: Intimate Secrets to be Published – Ahmad Ghossein

[32', Arabic with English Subtitles, 2011]

Editing: Vartan Avakian – Image: Karam Ghossein – Sound Mixing: Ramzi Mady – Commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation

All that remains of Rashid Ghossein and Maream Hmadeh's relationship is a large collection of messages recorded on audio cassettes over a period of 10 years, and sent as love letters during the time of the civil war in Lebanon. "When I was a child I invented stories about a father who was a war hero fighting with the Communist Party." – Ahmad Ghossein

Ahmad Ghossein graduated with a degree in Theatre Arts from the Lebanese University. He won the award for Best Director at the Beirut International Film Festival (2004) for his short film *Operation No. ...* Ghossein has since directed several documentaries and videos including *210m* (Video Works 2007), *Faces Applauding Alone* (2008), *What Does Not Resemble Me Looks Exactly Like Me* with Ghassan Salhab and Mohamad Soueid (2009) and *An Arab Comes to Town* (2008), a documentary filmed in Denmark and produced by DR2.

The Last Hero – Rami El Sabbagh

[28', 2011]

Cast: Khalil Hassan as "Dziga", André Najem as "André" – Sound Design: Stéphane Rives – Editing & Post-Production: Vartan Avakian – Image: Sarmad Louis

A security guard for a corporate center shares the night shift with an employee from a law firm. One night, he decides to save the world.

Rami El Sabbagh was born in Beirut in 1979. In 2004, he graduated from the Institute of Scenic and Audio-Visual Studies (IESAV), Saint Joseph University in Beirut. His videos include *C'est de ta faute, quelque part* (*It's Somewhat Your Fault*, 2003) and *2mg of Rotten Blood on Pure White Snow*, which was commissioned by Video Works in 2007, and shown at Meeting Points 5 the same year.

The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni – Rania Stephan

[70', Arabic with English Subtitles, 2011]

Editing, Sound & Image: Rania Stephan – Mixing: Rana Eid – Produced by JOUN FILMS – Co-produced by the Arab Fund for Arts & Culture (AFAC), The Postoffice and Forward Productions – Co-Commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation

Pieced together exclusively from VHS footage of Egyptian films starring Soad Hosni, *The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni* is constructed as a tragedy in three acts in which the actress tells her imagined life story through dialogues from her films. The film proposes a singular and poetic rewriting of a golden period of Egyptian cinema as enacted by an exceptional artist, a tragic star and a symbol of modern Arab womanhood.

Rania Stephan studied cinema at Latrobe University in Melbourne, Australia and at Paris 8 University in France. She worked as first assistant to Simone Bitton (*Citizen Bishara*, *Wall*, and *Rachel*) and Elia Suleiman (*Divine Intervention*). Her films include *Tribe* (1993), *Attempt at Jealousy* (1995), *Arrest at Manara* (2003), *Kimo the Taxi* (2003), *Wastelands* (2005), *Lebanon/War* (2006) and *DAMAGE: For Gaza "The Land of Sad Oranges"* (Ghassan Kanafani), (commissioned by Video Works 2009), among others. *The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni* was recently awarded one of the first prizes at the 10th Sharjah Biennial (2011).
