

Untimely Editings

Mary Jirmanus Saba, Kais al-Zubaidi and Ateyyat El Abnoudy at the intersection of alternatives voices

March 10–11, 2018
Beginning on both days at 5:30 p.m.

Spektakel Wien
Hamburgerstraße 14
1050 Vienna

In the presence of Kais al-Zubaidi

Entry fee: Free donations
All films in OV (Arabic) with english subtitles



A Feeling greater than love, Mary J. Saba, Lebanon 2017.

«The thousands who labour
don't dream of a butterfly's death,
nor of the violets' sorrows (...)
nor do they dream of a madman's romance with a shadow.»"

Abdelwahab al-Bayati, «The violets' sorrows» / «أحزان البنفسج»

These projections borrow from the movie *A feeling greater than love* its capacity to narrate the story of the early 70s differently, taking as a point of departure an unfulfilled cinematographic utopia and voices largely silenced by the traditional history – voices of women, working classes, Palestinian refugees. By extending Mary Jirmanus Saba's gesture within the film program throughout the two days, the moving images will suggest an understanding of the present oriented by the past and reciprocally.

This journey through the history of social and cinematographic movements will give a large space to the work of Kais al-Zubaidi, himself being the editor of *A Hundred Faces for a Single Day* (Christian Ghazi, 1971) and *The Leaves of the Poor Are Golden* (Kamal Karim, 1975), two movies quoted by Mary Jirmanus Saba in her film. Kais al-Zubaidi considers his only feature fiction movie *Al-Yazerli* (which portrays the world of work by adopting a child's point of view) to be a manifesto of alternative Arab cinema, a movement that also includes *Horse of Mud* by the Egyptian director Ateyyat El Abnoudy.

The program and discussions accompanying the films will also be guided by current problems of accessing these images related to a research of alternative film forms and the intention to question the ways in which cinema – and its own historiography – creates the story and history of protest movements.

Anaïs Farine, Curator. Translations: Kinda Hassan, Viktoria Metschl



Al-Yazerli, Kais al-Zubaidi, Syria 1974

Program

March 10, 5:30 p.m. – Film screening followed by a discussion with Kais al-Zubaidi and Anaïs Farine

A feeling greater than love, R.: Mary Jirmanus Saba (Lebanon 2017, 99')

A car with a loudspeaker on its roof is driving through southern Lebanon. The old man at the wheel is calling for people to join a demonstration to support their brothers and sisters who have occupied a tobacco company and are now being besieged by the army. His words come from the past, as he is referring to events from 1973 – events that only few remember today. Neither the protests made by the tobacco farmers from the south against the large landholders' monopoly nor the strike for better working conditions by workers at a Beirut chocolate factory are anchored in the country's collective memory. All recollection of this social movement was erased by the civil war and society has since been marked by deep sectarian divisions. Looking for both a lost era and strategies able to be applied to current struggles, the filmmaker sets out in search of clues. Starting from the death of a young woman killed during the strike, she asks questions of the activists of the time, archival photos, documentaries from the 1970s, her own person and the possibilities for militant action in film and society. The layering of these diverse materials allows the old man's pleas to reverberate in the present day.

Al-Yazerli, Kais al-Zubaidi (Syria 1974, 85')

Al-Yazerli is based on a novel by the Syrian writer Hanna Mina, who, like his character, dropped out of school very early to work as a laborer at Lattaquié docks before committing himself to the fight against French colonisation. Being a true aesthetic manifesto, *Al-Yazerli* has been made in the context of a research for an alternative Arab cinema. The film's poetic, non-narrative structure simulates the mind of young boy who is forced to leave school and find work on the docks. By adopting a child's point of view on economic difficulties, the hard truth about manual labour, and repressed sexuality, the movie takes a critical look at the grown-up world with ingenuity. *Al-Yazerli* has been banned as soon as it came out.

March 11, 5:30 p.m. – Short film Program in the presence of Kais al-Zubaidi

Far from the Homeland, Kais al-Zubaidi (Syria 1969, 11')

Focusing on life in the Sbeineh refugee camp near Damascus, *Far from the Homeland* gently parallels the daily life of the camp's children with a discussion of their hopes and dreams.

The Visit, Kais al-Zubaidi (Syria 1970, 9')

Poetic feature film about the question of the return of the Palestinians to the occupied territories, with poems by Mahmoud Darwish, Tawfiq Ziaad and Samih al Qassem.

Horse of Mud, Ateyyat El Abnoudy (Egypt 1971, 12')

In one of her earliest and most poignant works, veteran documentarian Ateyyat El Abnoudy captures the dignity of Cairo's poor. In this beautifully photographed document, the primitive process of brick-making is examined, revealing the monotonous choreography of a nonetheless meaningful social task. The sad dance of their fluid movements intermingled with personal stories deeply resonates.

Supported by ,Bezirksvorsteherung für Margareten, 5. Wiener Bezirk'

