

Press Information

31 October 2016

Uncertain States. Artistic Strategies in States of Emergency “We Come as Friends” – Films and Discussions in Uncertain Times Tomorrow, 1 November 2016: Start of the film programme

Films in uncertain times – Akademie president and filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel, in collaboration with Ulrike Roesen, head of the Film Section at the Akademie der Künste, have curated a film series for the main fall programme *Uncertain States*. These works focus on some lesser considered aspects of current news reports on the immigration crisis. Eight films tell stories about leaving and living a life in a foreign place; about a lifelong existence in refugee camps, of experiences with violence that have led to flight, and of continuing conditions which are likely to lead to more of the same experiences. Journalistic, poetic, experimental or narrated with a light touch, these contributions are characterized by a special aesthetic relationship with their subjects. Films by Samir, Anne Poiret, Mahdi Fleifel, Hubert Sauper, Barbara and Winfried Junge, Heidi Specogna (camera: Johann Feindt) and Sonia Kennebeck have been selected. Discussions with the filmmakers follow the screenings, participants include Johann Feindt, Adel Karachouli, Wim Wenders, Andreas Schüller, Irit Neidhart, Dorothee Wenner and Rüdiger Suchsland.

The programme begins tomorrow with a general discussion. Focusing on the title “Nomaden – Migranten – Kosmopoliten” (Nomads – Migrants – Cosmopolites), the ambivalence of these definitions will be addressed. Media archaeologist Siegfried Zielinski and filmmakers Peter Lilienthal, Jeanine Meerapfel and Samir are all people whose biographies have been directly or indirectly affected by their experiences of flight. The event begins at 5 pm. The first film in the series, *Iraqi Odyssey* by the Swiss-Iraqi director Samir, will be shown immediately following at 7 pm. It is introduced by Rüdiger Suchsland.

Special Events Venue

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg 10, 10557 Berlin, Tel. +49 (0)30 200 57 2000

Press tickets: Tel. +49 (0)30 200 57-1514, presse@adk.de

Uncertain States. Artistic Strategies in States of Emergency

Exhibition and special events programme of the Akademie der Künste

15 October 2016 – 15 January 2017

www.adk.de/uncertain-states

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Press and Public Relations

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Tuesday, 1 Nov, 5 pm, Free admission

Nomads – Migrants – Cosmopolitans

Artist Talk with Jeanine Meerapfel, Peter Lilienthal, Samir and Siegfried Zielinski
The family of filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel fled from Nazi Germany to Argentina. Filmmaker Peter Lilienthal emigrated as a child from Germany to Uruguay in 1939 with his mother. In 1961 filmmaker Samir moved from Iraq to Switzerland with his family. In his philosophical work, media archaeologist Siegfried Zielinski has often addressed the phenomenon of “homelessness” and nomadism as a theory and construct. All four of them share the experience of foreignness – a topic whose ambivalence is explored in this discussion.

Tuesday, 1 Nov, 7 pm, € 6/4

Iraqi Odyssey Film by Samir, CH/D/IRQ 2015, 2D Version, 163 min., OV/GeS

In his film *Iraqi Odyssey*, Swiss-Iraqi director Samir recounts the history of Iraq since the end of the colonial period by tracing the trajectory of his own extended Iraqi family over several generations. His family came from a secular yet also religious middle class, which was always progressive and, at times, tended towards communism. Over the last fifty years, his family has been scattered across the globe. In exploring this theme, Samir’s film fuses the political and the private in an exceptionally vibrant way, testifying to an Iraqi modernity now seemingly forgotten.

Followed by discussion/Artist Talk with Samir and Rüdiger Suchsland

Thursday, 17 Nov, 5 pm, Free admission

Neue Heimat Flüchtlingslager by Anne Poiret, ARTE, F 2015, 71 min., German version

Worldwide, there are 17 million “unwanted people”. They are the refugees and displaced persons in long-term refugee camps, some set up decades ago. In this absurd parallel world, supplied and managed by the UN and international NGOs, the residents are doomed to inactivity, neither allowed to leave the camp nor to work. Using the example of camps in Kenya, Tanzania and Jordan, the film shows how a diversity of interests combine to ensure this state continues unchanged.

Thursday, 17 Nov, 7 pm, € 6/4

A World Not Ours by Mahdi Fleifel, LB/GB/DK/UAE 2012, 93 min., OV/GeS.

Year after year, Danish director Mahdi Fleifel returns to spend his holidays in Ain-el Helweh, where he grew up. Ain-el Helweh, founded over 60 years ago and with a population of well over 70,000, is the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon. For Mahdi Fleifel, “Ain el-Helweh is better than Disneyland”, but while he can leave any time, his friend Abu Eiad is tied to the camp. With an unusually light touch, this prize-winning film juxtaposes political events with the home videos enthusiastically shot by the men in the Fleifel family down the years.

Followed by discussion/Artist Talk with Mahdi Fleifel and Irit Neidhardt (mec-film)

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Tuesday, 22 Nov, 7 pm, € 6/4

We Come as Friends by Hubert Sauper, F/A 2014, 110 min., OV/GeS.

Austrian director Hubert Sauper made his reputation with *Darwin's Nightmare*. For his award-winning film *We Come as Friends*, he again travelled many times to Africa. In 2011, in a Sudan as yet undivided, he collected chance acquaintances. Through staged and, in part, absurd elements, the film reveals colonial patterns of thinking and shows the country as an epicentre of a new distribution battle between the major powers.

Sunday, 27 Nov, 3 pm, € 6/4

Syrien wie wir es einst sahen – Films by Barbara and Winfried Junge

Nicht jeder findet sein Troja – Archäologen DEFA 1989, 35 min.

In a short montage of leading excavation sites, this film from 1989 documents Syria's cultural riches down the millennia before exploring its main theme of the excavations, then on-going, at the site of Tell Abu Hgaira near Hassaké in former Mesopotamia – a cooperation between archaeologists from Syria and the former East Germany.

„... und der Vater blieb im Krieg“ DEFA 1989/90, 46 min.

In autumn 1989, the filmmakers, renowned for their long-term documentary *Die Kinder von Golzow*, returned to Syria. This time they met pupils at the so-called “School of Martyrs”, the elite boarding schools in Aleppo and Damascus offering social security and education for the children of Syrian soldiers killed in action. In touching scenes, the young people talk about their country, their hopes and their aspirations in a modern world.

Followed by discussion/Artist Talk with Winfried and Barbara Junge and the poet Adel Karachouli. Presenter: Detlef Nakath (Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung)

Tuesday, 29 Nov, 7 pm, € 6/4

Cahier Africain, by Heidi Specogna, Cinematographer: Johann Feindt, CH 2016, 90 min., OV/GeS

The inspiration for this film came from a small school exercise book containing the testimonies of 300 Central African women and girls. In it, they documented what Congolese mercenaries did to them in the wake of an armed conflict in October 2002. At the International Criminal Court in The Hague, the book became a crucial piece of evidence in the proceedings against Jean-Pierre Bemba, the first defendant facing prosecution for ordering the use of rape as a military strategy. Over a number of years, the director follows the women, bringing tangibly close their fate in a world imbued with the constant threat of forced migration.

Followed by discussion/Artist Talk with Heidi Specogna, Johann Feindt and Jürgen Runge, Presenter: Dorothee Wenner

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Wednesday, 11 Jan, 7 pm, € 6/4

National Bird, by Sonia Kennebeck, executive producers: Wim Wenders, Errol Morris, USA, 2016, 92 min., OV / GeS

Talking about her film, Sonia Kennebeck noted that, as often happens with the development of new military technology, combat drones changed warfare faster than the legal and moral codes could keep up. The film follows the journey of former US Air Force analysts set on breaking their silence over America's secret drone war. Unable to live with the guilt plaguing them over killing innocent bystanders at far distance sites of conflict, they decide to speak out.

Followed by a discussion with Sonia Kennebeck, Wim Wenders, Andreas Schüller (ECCHR) and guests.

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