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# Mleeta

## Sandra Schäfer

2016, 2-channel video installation, color, 12 min., Arabic. **Producer** Sandra Schäfer, Ekaterina Degot, Caroline Kirberg. **Production companies** mazefilm (Berlin, Germany), Akademie der Künste der Welt (Cologne, Germany). **Written and directed by** Sandra Schäfer. **Director of photography** Sandra Schäfer. **Sound** Sandra Boutros. **Sound design** Martin Ehlers-Falckenberg. **Editor** Sandra Schäfer, Janina Herhoffer. **With** Amer Mohtar.

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During the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon (1982-2000) the mountain Mleeta was right in the middle of the occupied zone. 35 km from Israel to the south and 40 km from Syria to the east, Mleeta provided Hezbollah with a haven and thus was also a site of real struggles.

Today the "Museum of Resistance" can be found at the tip of Mleeta, a propagandistic re-enactment that reproduces landscapes and military scenarios. Visitors to the building, which is set up in the style of a theme park, assume the role of both observer and performer. In an auditorium, lavishly produced films dramatically tell the history of the past battles, and guns and other weapons are integrated into the museum's architecture. The installation *Mleeta* examines the script of the theme park with its perspectives, stagings, and narratives and concentrates on creating affective perception.

The video installation *Mleeta* thematizes the sightlines that structure the space of the theme park, drawing a distinction between vertical and panoramic space.

### The verticality of space

In the theme park “Mleeta” the verticality of space is depicted in an original tunnel and bunker system used by Hezbollah fighters during the war. Evergreen trees protected the men from getting recognized by the thermo cameras of the overflying military as the leaves masked the heat signature of the human body. Now, in the scenario “The Abyss” Hebrew letters and writings address the camera gazes of the overflying Israeli drones and airplanes, as well as the camera gazes of the satellites.

### The panoramic space

A panoramic platform is located at the former outpost, the highest point overlooking the landscape at a 360-degree angle. “Expansive panoramic space is always haunted by the threat of collapse or counter-expansion. Thus the panorama is always implicitly or explicitly militarized.” (Allan Sekula). In the park the militarized gaze overlaps with the tourist gaze. “The panorama is paradoxical: topographically ‘complete’ while still signaling an acknowledgement of and desire for a greater extension beyond the frame.” (A. S.).

Sandra Schäfer

Sandra Schäfer, born in 1970 in Altkirchen, is an artist who lives in Berlin. Her artistic works deal with the production of urban and transregional spaces, history, and visual politics. Her works are often the result of longer projects in which she researches the processes of unwrapping and re-reading documents, images, and spatial narratives. Her works have been shown in exhibitions internationally. She has been a member of the feminist distribution project Cinenova in London since 2010.

### Films

1996: *Doch bin ich wirklich* (38 min.). 1997: *England–Deutschland* (171 min.). 1998: *Mensch, Tanja!* (video installation). 1999: *Kontaktfreudig, offen und gewandt im Umgang* (7 min.). 2000: *Die unsichtbare Dienstleistung* (4 min.). 2001: *A country's new dawn* (5 min.). 2004: *The Making of a Demonstration* (10 min.). 2006: *Traversée de la Mangrove* (38 min.). 2007: *Passing the Rainbow* (71 min.). 2008: *to act in history* (21 min.). 2011: *on the set of 1978ff* (58 min.). 2013: *Notes on Pasolini's Form of a City. Sana'a, Sabaudia, Rome* (25 min.). 2014: *Başakşehir: An Urban Model* (video installation). 2016: *Mleeta*.