

**Harun Farocki**

## **LA VERIFICA INCERTA**

LA VERIFICA INCERTA is a montage of pieces of different films from various genres. When we see it for the first time, we become aware of just how strict the rules of genre actually are. A Western can have a bathing scene, but it's not allowed to look like it would in a holiday film, just as it's fine for there to be a shootout in a holiday film provided it doesn't look like one from a thriller or a war film and so on.

LA VERIFICA INCERTA edits together its material in an elegant and polemic manner, with the shot/countershot technique being cheerfully dismantled in the process.

LA VERIFICA INCERTA is a precursor to the many other works which also re-edit films. It is worth investigating how something new emerges from material compiled in such a way and how the materials themselves are still able to retain their own individual value.

Fellow students at the dffb brought this film with them from Italy in 1966 or 67. Back then, the most likely interpretation of the film was that it was a happy manifestation of the downfall of the story film, the genre film and of pre-existing cinematic forms of expression. There was soon to be a new film language, yet that did not come about as expected.

But in the middle of the 1960s, all sorts of things did indeed change: films of many different types have been produced and no longer just by the monopoly companies. Ever since, world film production can no longer be overlooked. It is hardly possible anymore to write one version of film history or put together canonical lists and has hardly been attempted since then either.

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## **To Begin with the Archive**

In the context of Forum Expanded 2013 and referencing Avi Mograbi's chance-based film program in the Arsenal's film vault in Spandau in the summer of 2011 (p. 132), yet another chance-program was created. This time, Harun Farocki and the Dutch filmmaker and artist Wendelien van Oldenborgh defined the rules: From specially selected books, the audience chose words at random, which were then used as a search-term in the Arsenal film database. Excerpts from the selected films were viewed immediately, either projected from the projection booth or on a Steenbeck editing table in the auditorium.

Books and texts:

*L'etranger*, Albert Camus

*Absolute Beginners*, Colin MacInnes

*Erziehung als Praxis der Freiheit*, Paulo Freire

*Un Coup des Dés*, Stéphane Mallarmé

*Mut und Wahl*, Ludwig Hohl

Ausgewählte Filme:

ONLY THE BEGINNING (Newsreel Collective, USA 1971)

SOLL SEIN. JIDDISCHE KULTUR IM JÜDISCHEN STAAT

(Henryk M. Broder, Frans van der Meulen, BRD 1984–1990)

LA RÉGION CENTRALE (Michael Snow, Kanada 1971)

YEK ETTEFAGHE SADEH

(Ein einfaches Ereignis/A simple event, Sohrab Shahid Saless, Iran 1973)

NORMALSATZ (Heinz Emigholz, BRD 1981)

THE MAN WHO COULDN'T FEEL AND OTHER TALES (Joram ten Brink, GB 1996)