

11th Arsenal Summer School 2019

August 22–24, 2019 at silent green and Arsenal Cinema

FILM AS POLITICAL PRACTICE: Production, Presentation, and Participation

Each year the Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art offers a Summer School. For three days participants engage with a topic located at the interface of theory and practice.

How can the medium of film make room for social discourse and political action in the cinema and in exhibition spaces?

The events and workshops of this year's Summer School take a look at variety of ways that artistic practice can influence social and political processes, be it through working in a collective, artistic actionism, or spectator-oriented aesthetic strategies that understand reception as participation. The focus is on films or film curatorial concepts that can be considered less as declarations than as political action. Using historical and contemporary examples, the school will look at what had to be done to get things moving in the interplay of image-politics and social practice.

Contributions by Filipa César, Tamer El Said, Katja Eydel, Stephan Geene, Nanna Heidenreich, Karrabing Film Collective, Birgit Kohler, Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese, Savvy Contemporary, Stefanie Schulte Strathaus, Clarissa Thieme, and Philip Widmann.

The presentations are partly in German language only.

All those interested can register at summerschool@arsenal-berlin.de

The number of participants is limited.

Program

Thursday, August 22

9:30, silent green Kulturquartier

Arrival and Welcome

10:30–12:30, silent green Kulturquartier

Archival Practice - Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst e.V. by Stefanie Schulte Strathaus

The film collection of the Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art encompasses around 10,000 titles from the history of independent cinema. If there's any common thread to them, it's the term "counter cinema." The films challenge the senses, enlighten, offer different narratives, break boundaries. They look to change things.

Any archival practice that seeks to do justice to these films must first of all maintain the spaces of possibility that they create.

Realities and the utopias of past times are reflected in archives—and at the same time archived knowledge influences the present. How do archives translate historical realities into present-day narratives? What can archives do for today's society?

12:30, silent green Kulturquartier

Lunch in Mars restaurant

14:00–16:00, silent green Kulturquartier

A-Clip - 53 Cinema Spots as an Intervention into the Advertising Clips at the Cinema by Stephan Geene and Katja Eydel

A-Clip was a project based on the idea of using the spectators' attentiveness in the darkened space of the cinema as a vehicle for political and subjective-artistic statements.

Short films were produced, modeled on advertising film aesthetics, and which they in part expand, parody, or break, all dealing with the topic of the "inner insecurity" that seizes people and keeps them from acting in solidarity. The individual clips, each about 50 seconds long, were interspersed among the advertising clips shown before feature films in cinemas. The producers of the A-Clips are filmmakers or artists that sought out new ways to produce a political public.

A-Clip, that is, the 53 A-Clips that were shown, were produced in three studios in Berlin, London, and Los Angeles—53 very subjective ways of engaging with the medium of film and the possibilities of cinema. The project A-Clip provided these clips access to a general public, beyond that of art spaces or festival structures.

A selection will be shown from the all three of the series that were produced (1997/1998/2002-03).

16:30–18:30, silent green Kulturquartier

**Ogawa Pro – Commitment in the Time of the Economic Miracle
by Philip Widmann**

The works of Ogawa Shinsuke (1935-1992) and his production collective Ogawa Pro(ductions) are among the most important positions in Japanese documentary film. Their series of films with the peasants from Sanrizuka struggling against the construction of the Narita International Airport during the 1960s and 1970s is an outstanding example of politically motivated film work. Later films by Ogawa Pro examined rural life over several years as a microcosm of the Japanese present and as a complement to the dominant postwar narratives of the economic miracle. The Arsenal Archive holds a number of films by and about Ogawa.

Film examples and short texts show the development and transformation of the work of Ogawa and Ogawa Pro between the mid '60s and late 1980s. What were the conditions that made the uncompromising commitment by Ogawa and his partners to their film objects and the people behind them possible? And how is this legacy shown and recontextualized today?

followed by a move to the Arsenal

20:00, Arsenal cinema

Films by the Karrabing Film Collective

WINDJARRAMERU (THE STEALING C*NT\$) (2015, 36 min) blends Indigenous storytelling with modern worries over environmental degradation and substance abuse in a story about a group of young Indigenous men hiding in a chemically contaminated swamp after being falsely accused of stealing some beer, while all around them miners pollute their land. WHEN THE DOGS TALKED (2014, 34 min) mixes nonfiction and fiction in a thoughtful yet humorous drama about the difficulties Indigenous communities have living within the strictures of modern white culture while maintaining a sense of their own traditions and relationship to the land. As a group of Indigenous adults argue about whether to save their government housing or their sacred lands, their children struggle with how the ancestral Dreaming makes sense in their contemporary lives filled with hip-hop and dinosaur bones.

Friday, August 24

10:00–11:30, silent green Kulturquartier

Ethan Jorrock, Angelina Lewis, Elizabeth A. Povinelli, and Kieran Sing for the Karrabing Film Collective in conversation with Filipa César

The Karrabing Film Collective is an Indigenous media collective founded in 2008 and based at the upper end of the Northern Territory in Australia. It sees itself as a grassroots movement that uses its aesthetic practice as a means to self-organization. Their films show their life, create connection to their land, and intervene in the global image of indigeneity. They develop their own artistic language between fiction and documentary as well as past and present, which can be understood as a new form of collective Indigenous action. The medium of film is a kind of survival strategy—a refusal to divest one's own land and a way to examine the social conditions of inequality.

11:30, silent green Kulturquartier

Lunch in Mars restaurant

13:00–14:30, silent green Kulturquartier

**"Can't You See Them?" – The Library Hamdija Kreševljaković Video Archive Sarajevo
Artistic Strategies with and Collaborations Resulting from Subjective Testimony
by Clarissa Thieme**

Clarissa Thieme has developed several artistic interventions over the last few years based on her intense engagement with the Library Hamdija Kreševljaković Video Archive, a private collection of amateur videos, in which the inhabitants of Sarajevo documented their lives during the siege (1992 - 1996).

She has been looking into whether making visible the subjectivity of the videos can be a possible strategy to critically oppose dominant discourses of objectifying history with the complexity of a polyphone of memories.

To this end she not only puts the testimonies deriving from the archive into dialogue with the present, but incorporates the same people who shot the material into her artistic process, adding a further temporal dimension of subjective testimony to their archival material some 25 years later.

14:30–16:00, silent green Kulturquartier

Savvy Contemporary

SAVVY Contemporary has defined as one of its focal points the urge to deliberate, experiment and experienciate on issues of conviviality and hospitality. Taking into consideration the rise of xenophobic and racial violence, widening gaps in class and economic realities, revamped hegemonial structures over the last years and decades, the necessity to reflect about hospitality seems to be more important than ever.

As an art space, discursive platform, eating and drinking spot, njangi house, space for conviviality SAVVY Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions and constructs of the West and non-West, primarily to understand and negotiate between, and obviously to deconstruct the ideologies and connotations eminent to such constructs.

An important part of SAVVY Contemporary's culture is working extradisciplinary. With team members from twelve countries and five continents trained as biotechnologists, art historians, cultural theorists, anthropologists, designers and artists, we think interdisciplinary work is not enough, one must be able to liberate one's self from the tight corset of one's own discipline.

In summary, SAVVY Contemporary gives space to reflect on colonialities of power (Anibal Quijano) and how these affect histories, geographies, gender and race. It is a space wherein epistemological disobedience and delinking (Walter Mignolo) are practiced, and it is a space for decolonial practices and aesthetics.

16:30–18:30, silent green Kulturquartier / Kuppelhalle

Screening: Mother, I Am Suffocating. This Is My Last Film About You. (2019, 76 min)

After the screening: Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese in conversation with Nanna Heidenreich

The people on the dusty streets of Lesotho stare inquisitively at the young woman, who, like Jesus, carries a wooden cross on her back. She looks back into their faces, at mystically beautiful landscapes, a herd of sheep, and a pair of hands that knit unceasingly. What she sees is rendered more visually precise by the black and white, more abstract by the slowed-down images, it is filtered through memories. A raw voice-over – aware that it is not being heard by those being addressed – structures the flow of images into a cinematic lament. In this essay film, Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese succeeds in creating the chronicle of a radicalising sorrow, which steadily increases in scope from a personal farewell to the mother to a politically aware defection from the motherland. The painful process of shifting from an internal view of the small African country to an external one is visualised and commented on in a profoundly personal way – from the perspective of today, in exile, in Berlin. A pretty angel accompanies the passage. In intense, aching fashion, this unusual lament on an African story of migration sheds light on an realm of experience that is taboo and not only in cinema. (Dorothee Wenner)

Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese was born in 1980 and raised in Lesotho, lives in Berlin.

MOTHER, I AM SUFFOCATING. THIS IS MY LAST FILM ABOUT YOU., his first feature-length film, had its worldpremiere at Berlinale Forum 2019.

19:00 Uhr, silent green Kulturquartier

Dinner together at the Mars Restaurant (included in the fees)

Saturday, August 24

10:00–11:30, silent green Kulturquartier

ONSHORE MEDIATHEQUE

by Filipa César

In dialogue with Cadjigue, a film collective based in Bubaque, Guinea-Bissau, Filipa César and Sana N’Hada initiated the project “Onshore Mediatheque” in order to establish an experimental and critical connection to the Bijagó, the local indigenous population, and their culture. In addition the plan for the future is to initiate a media center for film and audiovisual productions, a mediatheque should serve as an interface to provide space for developing web publications as well as the possibility for an artist-in-residence programme in Bubaque, the central island of the Bissago archipelago.

Creating such a media center, which also offers workshops with artists and others in the field of media practice, could be one way to support the development of an international network, which in turn supports the Bijagó as they articulate their own concerns both artistically and politically and presenting them to the outside world.

The aftereffects of colonial rule have led to neo-colonial efforts to further exploit and endanger nature, which the Bijagó are attempting to expose and resist in order to preserve their living environment.

In the frame of unavoidable contact with development and western civilisation, the Bijagó struggle is not about isolation anymore but rather how to imagine and design a place for exchange and relation not based on treacherous extraction. The project strives for a lively exchange between local media activists with students and artists in order to establish a long-term sustainable culture interface.

11:30–13:00, silent green Kulturquartier

**Participation
by Tamer El Said**

After a long preparatory phase, during which the revolution in Egypt took place, a group of independent filmmakers opened the Cimatheque - Alternative Film Centre in 2015 in downtown Cairo. With its cinema, a library, a laboratory, and a steadily growing archive, it serves as a dynamic working space where filmmakers, artists, writers, curators, and others interested in film can network, research, develop projects, and work. The basic requirements are now available: production facilities, resources, training, public screenings, and discussion events.

In particular by providing access to a “counter archive” as well as through curated film programs that create a close relation between the past and the present, new narratives are arising here against the backdrop of exchange and participation. Filmmakers enrich the archive with their private collections, visitors and users take part in shaping the program, knowledge is exchanged in events and workshops.

Co-founder Tamer El Said speaks about curatorial models based on participation that facilitate collective spaces of action.

13:00, silent green Kulturquartier

Lunch in Mars restaurant

14:30–16:30 Uhr, silent green Kulturquartier

Praxis-Workshop „What to do“?

Participants work on curatorial concepts, film ideas, and manifestos to reflect on and sharpen the thematic fields discussed and presented.

16:30–18:00, silent green Kulturquartier

Presentation and discussion of the results in the plenum

18:00, silent green Kulturquartier

Closing discussion

19:00, silent green Kulturquartier

Drinks

Attendance/Registration

The number of participants is limited (30 persons). Attendance fee: 135 Euro / 115 Euro (members, students, Berlin-Pass) / 95 Euro (members of arsenal-Freundeskreis)

Registration deadline is August 5, 2018**Venues:**

silent green Kulturquartier
Gerichtstr. 35, 13347 Berlin
& Kino Arsenal
in the Filmhaus at Potsdamer Platz
Potsdamer Str. 2, 10785 Berlin

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