





Tokyo Reels Film Festival

A PROGRAMME OF FILM SCREENINGS AND TALKS AS PART OF TOKYO REELS – PROJECT BY SUBVERSIVE FILM – a documenta fifteen lumbung artist

June 15–19. + Every Wednesday throughout 100 days of documenta fifteen

The Tokyo Reels Film Festival is organised around the Tokyo Reels, a collection of twenty 16 mm films made by filmmakers from the UK, Italy, Germany, Palestine, Egypt, Iraq and Japan, exposing the internationalist scope of militant filmmaking during the period of 1960–1980’s.

Programme

15 June 2022

Opening Night

Cinema Gloria
Languages: English, Arabic & Japanese, with English translation

14:00-16:00 • **Screening of R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity**
followed by Q&A with Mohanad Yaqubi, moderated by Fadi AbuNe’meh

Mohanad Yaqubi is a filmmaker, producer, and one of the founders of the Ramallah-based production house, Idioms Film. Yaqubi is also one of the founders of the research and curatorial collective Subversive Films which focuses on militant film practices and recently is a resident researcher at KASK, School of the Arts- Gent, Belgium.

Fadi AbuNe’meh is a PhD candidate in Film and Moving Image Studies at Concordia University, Montreal. With his background in film production, he was invited to participate in Home Workspace, an annual art study program at the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts. He then worked as a Film Studies teacher at the Ramallah Friends School and as an Associate Producer at Idioms Film. He is also a member of Subversive Film.

16:00-16:45 • **Reception**

19 June 2022

Day 4 & Closing Night

Cinema Gloria
English, Japanese, Arabic & German, with English translation

17:00-19:00 • **Screening of Programme 7 + Programme 8**
War in Lebanon – Beirut 1982 – The Road to a Palestinian State (Overseas Reporting: Middle East Today | Episode 1) – Palestine and Japan

19:00-21:00 • **Panel with all guests**
moderated by Subversive Film

21:00-22:00 • **Reception**

Installation Tokyo Reels at Hubner Areal
throughout the 100 days of documenta fifteen

Symposium on August 12–14 with interventions, research and talks by **Markus Nornes**, **Rasha Salti**, **Aoe Tanami** and **Subversive Film**.

Reels

R. 21 AKA RESTORING SOLIDARITY

a film by Mohanad Yaqubi, 65 min, 2022
English, Arabic & Japanese with English subtitles

After screening his latest film [Off Frame aka Revolution until Victory] in Tokyo, the film director was approached by someone, who left him a package, and with no more context, she disappeared in the crowds of Shibuya station. *Reel no. 21 aka Restoring Solidarity* is a film essay that explores questions of transnational solidarity by gazing at 16 mm films that have been collected and projected by a Japanese solidarity group. The film serves as a time capsule with unique archival images from the Palestinian visual history, captured by Arab and International filmmakers from the beginning of the 20th century until 82.

Programme 1

LEBANON 1982: UNRWA EMERGENCY OPERATION

Produced for UNRWA, 13 min, 1982
English

Produced by UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East), this film documents the agency’s emergency operation following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The living conditions of Palestinian refugees are addressed through a discourse of aid. Footage of food distribution centres, temporary schools and provisional water supplies are merged together to promote UNRWA’s presence and activities.

LAND DAY

Japanese version: 48 min, 1983
original film Aftermath by Samir R. Hissen, 44 min, 1967
Japanese with English subtitles

The original film was shot around the time of the first commemoration of Land Day in 1977, and it documents the different events taking place in Palestinian cities and villages of the Lower Galilee region in occupied Palestine. The remembrance events are used to garner witness accounts to what happened in 1976 during the demonstrations against the continuous land grab of Palestinian land. Other interviews with mayors and heads of local councils provide context and a history of Land Day. The screened version is the Japanese adaption of the original “Land Day”, produced six years later with additional historical context of the Palestinian struggle and Land Day itself.

Programme 2

KUNEITRA: DEATH OF A CITY

a film by Jim Crammer, 26 min, 1974
English

Kuneitra: Death of a City was made by the American Peace Committee to document the UN-commissioned forensic investigation of the atrocities committed by the Israeli army in the town of Kuneitra in the occupied Golan Heights. Shots of the remnants of destruction of religious sites, graveyards and homes interlace interviews that were made with the town residents with their recollections of what had happened.

Viewed as a unique and single collection, the films will be screened as a proposal, a suggestion to contemplate the narrative of the solidarity movement in Japan with Palestine during a transformative political period. There is an array of film styles, formats and languages, ranging from experimental short films, essay films, “traditional” documentaries, and promotional and institutional films for tourism.

The festival opens with the premiere of “R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity”, a film that inserts itself as the twenty first reel of the collection, an epilogue of the collection, a gesture of solidarity.

16 June 2022

Day 1

Cinema Gloria
English & Japanese, with English translation

17:00-18:00 • **Screening of Programme 1**
Lebanon 1982: UNRWA Emergency Operation – Land Day

18:15-19:00 • **Talk with Mineo Mitsui**
moderated by Subversive Film

Mineo Mitsui was born in 1956 in Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan and now lives and works in Tokyo. For five years, he was active in documentary film production. As a film crew member, he participated in the coverage of Algeria, Syria and Lebanon in 1983. Later, Mitsui founded an independent printing company, producing books and other publications.

19:30-20:45 • **Screening of Programme 2**
Kuneitra: Death of a City – Temptation to Return

21:00-22:00 • **Reception**

100 Days

Wednesday screenings

JULY

- **wednesday 6th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 1
- **wednesday 13th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 2
- **wednesday 20th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 3
- **wednesday 27th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 4

AUGUST

- **wednesday 3rd**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 5
- **wednesday 10th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 6
- **wednesday 17th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 7
- **wednesday 24th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 8
- **wednesday 31st**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 1

SEPTEMBER

- **wednesday 7th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 2
- **wednesday 14th**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 3
- **wednesday 21st**
Screening of *R.21 aka Restoring Solidarity* + Programme 4

TEMPTATION TO RETURN

a film by Victor Haddad, 32 min, 1966
English

Temptation to Return promotes the cultural and historical sites of Iraq and announces the country’s readiness to welcome tourists and guests from around the world following the country’s independence from the British Mandate, and thus ending centuries of colonial oppression (by the Ottoman Empire, previously). The film’s compelling voiceover was scripted by the esteemed Palestinian novelist Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, through which he presents a new reading of Arab history, connecting Iraq’s past to its present. The film was produced by the film department of the Iraq Petroleum Company, which later became the film department at the Ministry of Information following the company’s nationalisation.

Programme 3

PALESTINE: THE PATH TO TRAGEDY

a film by Don Catchlove, 21 min, 1970
English

Commissioned by the Arab League, the director Don Catchlove repurposes the colonial British archives to explore the Palestinian question, starting from the British Mandate and followed by the Palestinian uprising against the mandate and the creeping Zionist settlement project. Although made by a British director, the film is considered as one of the early attempts to decolonise the archives in relation to Palestine, presenting a narrative of resistance that comes from within the archive itself, countering the western narrative about the events that led to the colonisation of Palestine.

WELCOME TO JORDAN

a film by Tom Hollyman, 26 min, 1964
English

A newsreel documentary produced in 1964, Welcome to Jordan was made to promote tourism in Jordan, exposing the political aspirations of the newly established Hashemite kingdom. The geography to which travellers are invited also includes the West Bank, which was under the administration of Jordan at the time, masking those parts of Palestine as the holy land of Jordan.

THE FIELD

a film by Sabih Al-Zoohiri, 11 min, 1977
No Dialogue

Produced by the Iraqi Cinema and Theatre Institute, this short fiction film was made as a melody for resistance. With no dialogue, and no character to follow their story, the film directly addresses the question of Palestine through a story of a farmer and his family, who were forced to stop ploughing their land because of the sudden arrival of Israeli army vehicles.

Programme 4

SCENES OF THE OCCUPATION FROM GAZA

a film by Mustafa Abu Ali, 13 min, 1973
Arabic with English subtitles

A rare film by the legendary filmmaker Mustafa Abu Ali, one of the founders of the Palestine Film Unit, the first filmic arm of the Palestinian revolution. Shot by a French news team,

The screenings are joined with a discursive programme, during which conversations with filmmakers, researchers and cultural organisers share histories of solidarity making, filmmaking and friendship making.

The 16 mm reels underwent digital restoration by CRAMP (Centre for Research of Audiovisual Memory Practices) and are screened during documenta fifteen in 2K and newly translated subtitles. How does restoration relay the history of cinema produced during a liberation struggle? And how does it relay solidarity exchanged through cinema, between Japan and Palestine?

17 June 2022

Day 2

Cinema Gloria
English & Japanese, with English translation

17:00-18:00 • **Screening of Programme 3**
Palestine: The Path to Tragedy – Welcome to Jordan – The Field

18:15-19:00 • **Talk with Monica Maurer**
moderated by Subversive Film

After concluding her studies in Sociology and Communication Sciences at Munich and Berlin University, **Monica Maurer** worked as a journalist for several newspapers in Germany and for the US radical magazine “Ramparts”.

Monica has been an independent filmmaker ever since the 60s and between 1977 and 1982 she made films in cooperation with the Palestinian Cinema Institution and the Information Dept. of the PRCs.

19:30-20:45 • **Screening of Programme 4**
Scenes of the Occupation From Gaza – Kufr Shuba – Why

21:00-22:00 • **Reception**

the footage was edited by Mustafa in Lebanon to produce one of the earliest films on the occupied territory in Gaza. Scenes of Occupation from Gaza employs experimental editing techniques to produce a cinematically and politically subversive film. The film won the prize as best film at the Damascus Film Festival in 1973 and was screened at multiple festivals. It was the only film produced by the Palestine Cinema Group, which in 1974 came to the Palestine Cinema Institute.

KUFR SHUBA

a film by Samir Nimr, 35 min, 1975
Arabic with English subtitles

An iconic work produced by the Palestine Cinema Institute in Beirut, the film is directed by the Iraqi filmmaker Samir Nimr, and is titled after the small village of Kufr Shuba in South Lebanon, the site of solidarity between the Lebanese people and the Palestinian resistance following a battle that has devastated the village. The film is a poetic testament to the steadfastness of people, a liberation struggle and their love for their land.

WHY?

Japanese version: 28 min, 1982
a film by Monica Maurer
Japanese with English subtitles

After a successful collaboration in The Fifth War (1979) and Palestine Red Crescent (1980), filmmaker Monica Maurer teams up again with Samir Nimr, an Iraqi filmmaker, to make WHY?. The film portrays a revolution under siege, and its efforts to manage the survival of the people of Beirut. The film was shot and released during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and is permeated by the urgency of communicating the daily struggles to the rest of the world and rallying support for the Palestinian revolution. Simultaneously, the film is loaded with the unforeseen agonies of a future that is yet to come, the seeds of a massacre that has yet to happen.

Programme 5

BEYOND THE WAR

Japanese version: 29 min, 1977
original film Aftermath by Samir R. Hissen, 44 min, 1967
Japanese with English Subtitles

This UNRWA production documents and promotes the agency’s response to the Six Day War. In 1967, Palestinian people are displaced and dispossessed yet again nearly 20 years after the Nakba in 1948. In *Beyond the War*, we are shown this exodus as seen from Jordan, to where the refugees fled. Reports, interviews and portraits constitute the analysis of a historical moment.

BLOWN BY THE WIND

a film by Jacques Madoy, 18 min, 1971
English

A series of vibrant drawings painted by Palestinian children are brought to life in *Blown By the Wind*. The montaged still images glimpse at their everyday lives, their memories and imagination following their displacement and seeking of refuge in Lebanon following the Six Day War in 1967. The film was officially selected for the Venice Film Festival and won awards at the Leipzig Film Festival, as well as in Czechoslovakia and Tunis.

Programme 6

THE GAME

a film by Shirak, 16 min, 1973
No Dialogue

“The game they play is the game of war itself”, writes filmmaker and scholar Qais Zubeidi. In 1973, Shirak directed this short film in which the games of Palestinian children increasingly merge with warfare. Remnants of combat, such as bullets and tanks, are the toys of a group of young boys. When one of them finds a remnant of a bombshell, their band disperses into a haunting game of hide and seek.

STAGE OF HOPE

a film by Khaled Siddik, 16 min, 1969
No Dialogue

With a 16-minute track overlaying the entirety of the film, The Stage of Hope is a promotional film for the Compound of Special Needs Institutes in Kuwait. It documents the inauguration of the centre and the elaborate ceremony that was attended by Kuwaiti monarchy and state officials. Throughout the film we see the deaf community, both children and adults, in speech therapy, other activities, and the workshops organised and offered by the centre. Yet another testament to the progressive modernisation of the nation states in the Arab World following their independence from the various colonial mandates and regimes, the state-produced The Stage of Hope is a reflection of a wave of nationalising tendencies at the time.

COWBOY

a film by Sami Al-Salamoni, 15 min, 1973
No Dialogue

Cowboy begins from American cinema, as an exposure of the country’s settler colonial structure and its ability to depict genocidal acts through camera framing. The film, directed by



18 June 2022

Day 3

Cinema Gloria
English & Japanese, with English translation

15:00-17:00 • **Screening of R. 21 aka Restoring Solidarity**
followed by Q&A with Mohanad Yaqubi, moderated by Casey Asprooth-Jackson

17:00-18:00 • **Screening of Programme 5**
Beyond the War – Blown by the Wind

18:15-19:00 • **Talk with Kassem Hawal**
moderated by Subversive Film

Kassem Hawal (1940) is an award-winning Iraqi director currently based in the Netherlands. He studied theatre acting and directing at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. He left Iraq in 1970 and travelled to Lebanon and Syria, where he focused on the making of political films. He directed 25 documentaries and five features, among them films by the PLO.

19:30-20:45 • **Screening of Programme 6**
The Game – Stage of Hope – Cowboy – The Urgent Call

21:00-22:00 • **Reception**

the renowned Egyptian film critic Sami Salmouni, reflects his theoretical critique of Hollywood through heavily edited scenes and shots from mainstream motion pictures. Salmouni manages to take the audience through the history of commercialised image production towards a transnational solidarity image production as a response.

THE URGENT CALL

a film by Ismail Shammout, 6 min, 1973
English

During his time as the director of the Cultural Arts Section of the PLO, the Palestinian painter Ismail Shammout also actively engaged with the film unit of the organisation. In this short film, we see the Palestinian singer Zeinab Shaath performing her song The Urgent Call of Palestine. This song became an important solidarity ballad, urging the world to hear the Palestinian call. When the ballad is swiftly interrupted by Kamal Nasser, we hear him say: “We want the world to know that we have a cause”.

Programme 7

WAR IN LEBANON

a film by Baker Sharqawi & Samir Nimr, 65 min, 1976
Arabic with English and Japanese subtitles

The war referred to in the title is what Lebanese historians call the “Two Year War”. This armed conflict took place between 1975 and 1976, ending with the split of Beirut into West Beirut and East Beirut, and the further separation of Lebanon into two regions: one controlled by the Lebanese Nationalist Movement and the other by the Kataeb Party [Lebanese Phalanges Party]. Produced by the Lebanese communist party and the Palestine Cinema Institute, this film follows the daily events of the war. A very sharp statement, a manifesto of sorts, *War in Lebanon* is a clear declaration of the position of the Lebanese progressive Left vis-à-vis the war, a position which has been historically undermined in regional politics.

BEIRUT 1982

a film by Ryūichi Hirokawa, 18 min, 1982
English

Beirut 1982 was filmed by Ryūichi Hirokawa together with Tetsuro Nunokawa, a central figure in the Japan Documentarist Union. The former narrates his personal account of the lives of Palestinians and their resistance in Beirut following the massacre of Sabra and Shatila in 1982. Via a voice-over, Hirokawa reports to us in solidarity with those confronted by the sudden and horrific destruction of life.

Programme 8

THE ROAD TO A PALESTINIAN STATE (OVERSEAS REPORTING: MIDDLE EAST TODAY | EPISODE 1)

an NHK production, 29 min, 1974
Japanese with English subtitles

The first episode of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation’s *Middle East Today* television mini-series (December 197 – February 1975), *The Road to a Palestine State* reports on the future of a Palestinian state following the international recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. The episode opens with Yasser Arafat’s speech at the UN in 1974. Throughout the film, the reporter meets and speaks to a Palestinian doctor, a community organiser and members of political factions, particularly from the leftist PFLP and DFLEP, to show the disagreements within the internal politics of the PLO. We see shots from the streets of Beirut, the city and refugee camps, to relay the sense of the everyday life of Palestinians following the international recognition of the PLO.

PALESTINE AND JAPAN

a film by T. Maki, 20 min, 1979
English

The film bridges the distance between Japan and Palestine and foregrounds the political links between the two countries. Made following the opening of the Palestine Liberation Organisation office in Tokyo, we are informed of the different solidarity networks in Japan. Reflections on the prospects of children in both countries form the lead to make statements about imperialisms, mutual understanding and the will to strengthen bonds.

Subversive Film

Graphic design
Elettra Bisogno
Photography of the reels
David Denil

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