

Labour in a Single Shot
Workshop Presentation
Antje Ehmann & Harun Farocki

On this evening, esteemed German filmmaker **Harun Farocki** and author and film curator **Antje Ehmann** will be with us to talk about their two-week workshop "Labour In A Single Shot", which took place at Beirut in Cairo from 10-23 October 2012.

The task of the workshop was to produce short films that consist of one single shot and are no longer than two minutes. The subject of investigation was labour: paid and unpaid, material and immaterial, rich in tradition or altogether new.

The workshop's formal restraint draws on the method and decisiveness of the early 19th century films, for instance the Lumière brothers' "Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory" and "Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat". This leads right into the formal basics of cinematography and raises essential questions for the filming process itself: How to find a beginning and an end, particularly when dealing with a repetitive process? Should the camera be still or moving? How to capture the choreography of a workflow in a single shot in the best, most interesting way?

The cultural aspect of labour is a recurring theme in Farocki's film works and it also is the core subject of the long-term international research project which Farocki started jointly with film critic and curator Antje Ehmann in 2010 under the same title as "Labour In A Single Shot". With a series of workshops taking place in 15 to 17 cities around the world, the project aims to deal with and respond to the specifics of each city and region where the work takes place. It is vital to open one's eyes and set oneself in motion: Where do we see which kind of labour? What happens in the centre of the city, what occurs in its periphery? What is characteristic and what is unusual with regard to this city? What kind of labour processes could be an interesting cinematographic challenge?

The project outcomes are presented in various exhibitions, ideally in all cities where the films have ensued. A final large-format exhibition is planned for 2014 in Berlin. "Labour In A Single Shot" will be followed by a series of film screenings and talks in relation to Farocki's work during PhotoCairo5 in November.

All events are organized by Beirut in collaboration with the Goethe Institute Alexandria, CIC and Cimatheque, with the support of Goethe Institute and Rosa Luxemburg Foundation.

Harun Farocki is a German filmmaker and artist best known for his experimental documentaries produced since 1969. In more than a hundred films and installations he draws our attention to the visible and invisible complexities of everyday life, consistently pushing formal boundaries with the persistent eye of a critical observer to raise questions dedicated to social coexistence, power relations, politics, the horror and cruelty of warfare, and the dominance of growing capitalization. With his distinctive camera and montage techniques Farocki assesses the fabrication of perceptual habits and how it is altered by the advent of new technologies.

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