

Movie lights switching on and erasing the image or illuminating darkness

Anja Kirschner

During a three-week research visit to *Beirut* in February 2013, artist and filmmaker Anja Kirschner began working on a new video work that investigates how personal and political agency can be constructed through recourse to the horror genre—in an era of global recession, global revolts and the backlash of reactionary forces.

The preliminary idea is to produce a film in different chapters, each set in a specific country location between Egypt, Greece, Italy and the USA. The chapters will exist as standalone works and culminate in a feature-length film for theatrical release. The chapter set in Egypt will be co-commissioned by *Beirut* and developed in close and ongoing dialogue with local writers, filmmakers, journalists and thinkers.

*I'm into certain tendencies within horror cinema that make the genre porous and open towards reality. I'll show a selection of clips from horror movies to illustrate that idea, but also to think through it cinematically and from the excited distance that gives birth to monsters. The clips I'll be showing are seeping through the rational limits of post-war Japan, cold war Eastern Europe, infitah-era Egypt, post-junta Greece and sub-prime mortgage crisis USA - though they are not therefore un-rational. They are the first visual references I've collected, so I'm not going to give a straightforward talk but rather outline some notions I'm currently obsessed with and make an attempt at beginning a conversation. I'm frightened. Bring popcorn."*

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