

May Invitational #3

Seasonal Selections curated by Beirut

Viafarini DOCVA, Milan

The non-profit art organization **Viafarini** in Milan invited *Beirut* to host a screening program and present its activities to a local audience, combined with studio visits with artists currently on residence. Seasonal Selections shared highlights from *Beirut's* program through filmic contributions by artists and filmmakers selected from different exhibitions and screenings that were on display between October 2012 and May 2013.

**Carlos Amorales**, *Supprimer, Modifier et Preserver*, FR, 29min., 2012

An updated version of the French Civil Code was printed with graphite and then given to different lawyers to erase, modify or preserve the laws that each one considered fundamental. The French Civil Code (for long known as the Napoleonic code) enacted in 1804 and considered a product of the French Revolution, has been highly influential in the development of civil codes in much of Europe, South America, Africa and Asia. “Supprimer, Modifier et Preserver” is a work that deals with and challenges the notion of right as an independent, organic, rational and complete system, as well as how much and to what extent it can be considered an expression of the will of the ‘people’. Given that codes and constitutions are important historical documents influencing society and over determining its values, this work encourages re-thinking the social rules that govern us, individual responsibility within larger political debates, the importance of a sharp division between public and private law and of the making and meaning of such constructs.

**Abbas Kiarostami**, *First Case, Second Case*, IR, 45min, 1979-1982

The opening scene sketches two cases of a situation, hence the title, and calls for taking a moral position on either side. What follows is a series of interviews and conversations with various people who have contrary opinions about the situation, their responses being mostly evasive and defensive at first. As the film moves on, the responses become more decisive when the question is extended to a variety of public figures, many of them well-known today as some grew to build a career within the Islamic republic or were taken to the courts and put to death due to their political positions. Kiarostami's film stays unbiased when depicting the mindset of a group of people from various sects of Iran's political spectrum, challenging the interviewees as well as the spectators to project themselves into the situation and the consequences their decision would have. The film was banned by the Iranian authorities shortly after its premiere and considered lost for almost 30 years until it

reappeared online in June 2009 at a time when the Iranian Green Movement was on the rise.

**Oliver Laric**, *Versions*, DE, 6min., 2009-2012

Oliver Laric's ongoing *Versions* (2009-2012) reflects the conditions of our digital world: how original and copy, thing and thought, event and document, are collapsed in a flattened information space where everything is a click away from everything else. Laric's sculptural and online-based practice—including the website VVork—addresses how information networks afford new logical, epistemic, and affective patterns of experience and understanding. Described by the artist as “a series of sculptures, airbrushed images of missiles, a talk, a PDF, a song, a novel, a recipe, a play, a dance routine, a feature film and merchandise,” *Versions* confronts the mutability and variation of images. Laric's work evinces how images and objects are continually modified to represent something new, from Roman copies of Greek sculptures, to doctored and augmented images, remixes, and gifs. The differing versions of *Versions* themselves address this ongoing history of iconoclasm and copyright. Laric's exploration of the nature of images and objects in digital space reveals the internet as not merely a space of representation, but of direct experience, as the real world is increasingly mediated by screens, and knowledge is replaced by searching.

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