

وجهة نظر POINT OF VIEW

DOX BOX News

- Lina Al-Abed (Noor Al-Huda), Patricio Guzman (The Battle of Chile), Rania Stephan (Wastelands) and Thomas Lauterbach are giving Q&A sessions following their film screenings on March 6th and 7th.
- DOX BOX is concluding its film screenings in Homs and Tartous after screening 15 films in Homs (March 4th to 6th) and in Tartous (March 5th to 7th).
- American filmmakers D. A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus are giving a masterclass in Cervantes on March 7th for the participants of the Campus and Takween.
- Chilean filmmaker Patricio Guzman is giving a masterclass in Cervantes on March 7th for the participants of the Campus and Takween.
- DOX BOX is organizing a cup of coffee with ARTE on March 6th and JVF and AFAC on March 7th in Oscar hall, Fardoss. Young directors and producers who participated in "writing the documentary" workshop will present their film projects to a professional committee.

Power of Speech by Chilean director Francisco Hervé

A man selling a sewing kit, a flute player, a clown, a ragged man updating the sleepy passengers on the latest sports news; a group of people who've got nothing in common but the struggle for their daily earnings in Santiago's traditional yellow buses. But for the government, these people working place is only driving Chile backwards. So something had to be done in order to give way to Chile in getting the place it deserves in the modern world.

So, the government decides to introduce a modern public transport system in Santiago that will bring Chile to the forefront of the South American transport sector, which will, in turn, make up for all the struggles that Chileans had to go through throughout their challenging history.

That, of course, cannot be accomplished without providing big capitalists with new business opportunities, so they answered the call and came bidding from all over the country to take part in this national festival!

Indeed, this historical event reaches its objective in reviving the Chilean national spirit of thousands of vendors, who demonstrate all over Santiago defending their daily bread that the new transport system will not allow them to get. The government, however, keeps working on its ambitious system. Even the Chilean president announces its launching in a public speech. In no time, the new buses with their elegant corporate ads replace the old yellow buses' random graffiti indicating that the regular protesting methods

6TH MARCH آذار



سينما الكندي | ALKINDI
مسرح الحمراء | ALHAMRA

16:00 - 17:00	NEW SKIN / بشرة جديدة	France / فرنسا	13 m
	VIDEO MAPPING: AIDA PALESTINE خرائط فيديو: عايدة فلسطين	France / فرنسا	46 m
17:30 - 19:00	NOUR ALHUDA / نور الهدي	Syria / سورية	20 m
	1958 / ١٩٥٨	Lebanon / لبنان	66 m
19:30 - 21:00	ZIDANE / زيدان	France / فرنسا	91 m
16:30 - 18:00	KING OF PASTRY / ملوك المعجنات	USA / الولايات المتحدة	84 m
18:15 - 19:45	FREETIME MACHOS / رجال الوقت الضائع	Finland / فنلندا	86 m
20:00 - 21:30	THE BATTLE OF CHILE (III) / معركة تشيلي (III)	Chile / تشيلي	82 m

7TH MARCH آذار



سينما الكندي | ALKINDI
مسرح الحمراء | ALHAMRA

16:00 - 17:30	ONCE UPON THIS TIME / كان يا ما كان في هذا الزمان	Tunisia / تونس	85 m
18:00 - 18:30	WASTELANDS TERRAINS VAGUES / هوامش الساحة	Lebanon / لبنان	30 m
18:45 - 19:45	AUNT HALA / العمه هالا SAMIA / سامية	Lebanon / لبنان Syria / سورية	14 m 40 m
20:00 - 21:30	12 ANGRY LEBANESE / ١٢ لبنانياً غاضباً	Lebanon / لبنان	78 m
16:30 - 18:00	BASTION OF SIN / معقل الخطيئة	Germany / ألمانيا	78 m
18:30 - 20:15	HOLD ME TIGHT, LET ME GO / ضمني أفنتني	UK / المملكة المتحدة	100m
20:30 - 22:00	HOUSING / إسكان	Italy / إيطاليا	90 m

were of no use for the vendors. So they decided to revive the old Chilean union tradition, to start a maneuver based on a modernized democratic system.

While the new investment company helps the employees in making their paradigm shift through meditation and other professional training methods, the vendors union works to catch up with the wave of modernization. They get themselves a communication expert, so the battle between the vendors and government starts. A battle they can only win by their power of speech...

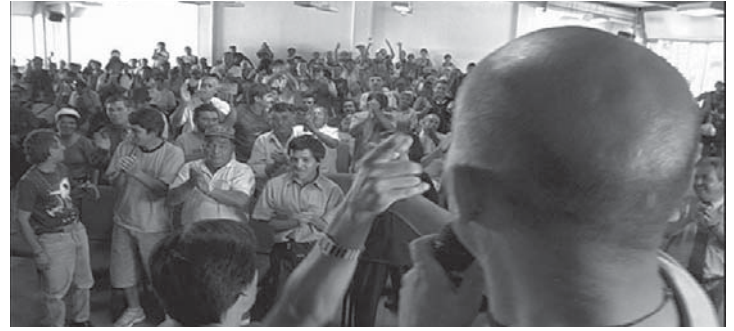
POINT OF VIEW

issue 02 عدد

وجهة نظر

This crisis that caused insufficiency of transport, and cost the government terrible losses, is what Francisco Hervé presents to us cunningly in this film. Through the sequence of actions and alternation of imagery, he was able to reveal the contradictions lived by Chileans, just like any others living in developing countries, in their struggle modernize and transform Chile into a fully developed country.

By Kinana Issa



Patricio Guzman

The period between 1970 and 1973 of Chile's history was of significant importance internationally speaking. Chile was the main symbol of the conflict between the right and the left, the popular liberation movements and the Cold War. The victory of its former socialist president Salvador Allende in the elections was celebrated by socialists all over the world as a proof that left was indeed a popular choice, when people were allowed to choose.

It was in this very same historic period that Patricio Guzman, who had just returned from studying documentary filmmaking in Madrid, started his career in cinema. With two shortfiction films under his belt, "torture and other forms of dialogue" (1968) and "the great paradise" (1969), Guzman drifted towards the "documentary"...for good!

Following the students' revolutions, there was a general political outrage among the people of Chile which coincided with the rise of cinema verite in the world. Approaching the truth and the daily political history was a must for so many people, and it wasn't any different for filmmakers. Guzman finished his first documentary "First Year" in 1971 and managed to screen it in the theatres of Santiago.

In a stroke of luck, established French filmmaker, Chris Marker, happened to accompany some friends who were shooting a film in Santiago. After watching Guzman's film, Marcer asked for the filmmaker's address. And when Guzman opened his door, he found one of the greatest documentary filmmakers at his doorstep congratulating and encouraging him to continue his work. This coincidence greatly impacted Guzman's future career in filmmaking.

The Chilean crisis erupted in 1973 when Allende's opposition started expressing its resentment and began receiving strategic support from the US which eventually led to toppling the democratic regime in Chile and in Salvador Allende committing suicide. During this emotionally-charged historical period, all classes of Chileans felt the urge to move, express their choices and protect their interests.

Armed with his camera, young Patricio Guzman documented this battle. Chris Marcer, meanwhile, supported the film from Paris by providing the crew with film stock. Together with a dedicated crew, Guzman documented an unforgettable moment of their country's history. In fact they became so closely involved in it that two of the crew members: cameraman, Gorge Muller and actress and assistant director Carmen Bueno, disappeared or most probably got killed. Muller had worked with Guzman previously in his first



fiction film and with a number of renowned documentary filmmakers such as Raúl Ruiz, Shaul Lanado and Miguel Liten.

As the country's crisis drew to an end, Patricio Guzman was imprisoned along with thousands of people in Chile's National Stadium in Santiago (today known as Victor Jara Stadium). After two weeks of detention, Guzman managed to escape and had to flee his country towards Cuba. Taking his film footage along with him, Guzman was well received in Cuba and provided with enough resources to execute his master piece "The Battle of Chile". It took Guzman eight years to make the three parts of "The Battle of Chile" which quickly won international acclaim.

The films were screened in more than thirty countries and were reviewed by some of the most influential cinema critics worldwide earning Guzman a reputations as one of the landmarks of the international cinema industry. Following his success, Guzman made a number of documentaries. The latest of which won international acclaim forming yet another trilogy about Chile: "Chile obstinate memory", "Pinochet Case" and "Salvador Allende". (screened in Dox Box's first edition)

Since the political change in Chile in 1990, Guzman returned to his mother country where he established the "International Documentary Festival of Santiago" (FIDOCs) and contributed to training and teaching a new generation of filmmakers. Patricio Guzman lives and works with his partner, Renate Sanchez. They've produced a long list of film s together. Today, Guzman is working on a new film project which will see the light in 2010.

By Orwa Nyrabia, Translated by Sarah Abu Assali



Nour Al-Huda by lina Alabed

The Syrian young director Lina Al-Abed's camera followed the story of Noor-Al-Huda, a young girl living with her poor family in an illegal house. A one-kidney father, a brother with cerebral palsy and Noor, a young girl dreaming of completing her studies and living in a house with four walls. A dream that came true after the movie premiere!

How did you come up with the idea of your film "Noor Al-Huda"?

It was a mere coincidence, I was driving around a poor area when I noticed a huge pile of garbage facing the parking entrance. I was so curious to discover what's behind that pile, I was shocked to see a "residential area" stacked in what looks like a hole. The place was so poor that even the color of the sky seemed different!

Noor El-Huda was the first person I met from the residents and she invited me to her house. This was the beginning of a long friendship. However, I only thought about making a movie when she told me she was afraid of the rain!

Once it starts to rain, Noor and her family run to collect their IDs and school bags, ready to evacuate the place fearing that an electrical short circuit might occur or that the tin ceiling might collapse over their heads! When I heard this I realized that their story deserves to be turned into a film.

How did you finance your project?

I waited for two years until I got the funding from Al Arabiya Channel; the funding was a result of my participation in a cinema workshop organized by the channel in 2008. The condition of funding was that the duration of the movie must not exceed 20 minutes. That's why I asked them to grant me the freedom of reusing what is shot in a longer version of the movie later. Once I got the funding, I had to convince Noor's family to shoot the film. Thanks to my strong friendship with Noor and the fact that the movie will not be screened on local channel, they agreed to participate.

Nevertheless, shooting the movie was not easy because Noor's neighbours didn't let me shoot outside Noor's house as they feared it might get them into trouble.

Furthermore, by the time I got the funding, the spontaneous, young and innocent Noor I met two years ago grew up to become a woman

and she lost a lot of children's spontaneity in front of the camera

"Noor-Al-Huda" was a turning point in the family's life. After less than a year of the film premiere, the family moved to a house and the sick brother started to receive medical treatment, How did that happen?

I received a call from a Qatari man after one day of the film premiere; he donated 100,000 dollars to the family. Two months later I received a call from a man from the royal court of the UAE, He donated a one year house rent, he bought them furniture and promised to buy them a house soon. The third caller transfers a monthly stipend, he had also sent them a physical therapy equipment for Noor's brother.

Now, I am planning to produce longer version of the film to illustrate the changes that occurred in the family's life after moving into a real house and starting a new life.

In your opinion, Can documentary cinema be a tool of social change?

That varies according to the subjects of the films. Maybe making the film was a kind of selfishness. Because making Noor's story public is in a way or another causing her a scandal for the sake of donations that might not happen. I did not personally expect the reaction that the film achieved.

The conditions under which Noor's family lived is not what motivated me to direct this movie, such houses do exist in Spain, America and other countries. It was Noor and our personal relationship that motivated me the most. I didn't want her to drop out of school and get married at the age of 16 and become a mother with 4 children when she is 20.

Noor needed, just like many young people, support to achieve what she wants. I wanted her to get out of her hideaway and face her problems. When she accepted to participate in the movie, I asked her why?, She replied: "let everyone know that I live here, I can no longer lie and I will not deny my reality anymore" and then she started to sing.

By Nadia Muhana, Translated by Mahmoud Al-Nouri



Interview with Zeina Daccache, director of “Twelve Angry Lebanese”



An all-male group of adult inmates residing in Roumieh Prison experience the pioneer practice of Drama Therapy Theatre in 2008-2009 led by the female drama therapist Zeina Daccache. For 15 months, the inmates rehearsed for the production of 12 Angry Lebanese, an adaptation of Reginald Rose's 12 Angry Men and performed it to the external audience at the end of the project.

In the film, the drama therapy sessions, the interviews with the inmates, and the interaction with both director and audience, convey a message of hope, forgiveness and change. Through their artistic journey, these “murderers, drug dealers and rapists” reveal kindness and faith in life.

Point of View sat down with the drama therapist and the film's director Zeina Daccache to find out more about her film.

1. How was the idea of the film born?

Since the first day I started working in prison (February 2008), I decided to have a camera during the theatre rehearsals, meetings, etc. The experience was too exceptional and “it would be great to keep record of it”, this is how I thought about it then. However, it was only in March 2009 (at the end of the theatre project) and when I realized that I had over 85 hours of footage, that I decided to start working on the feature film.

2. “You watch out! I’m a murderer, I could kill you!” one of the prisoners told you jokingly. I can’t help wondering how could a woman stand her ground among tens of men convicted for murder, rape and illegal drug trade many of whom haven’t met a woman for the last 18 years? In fact, your relationship with the prisoners became so close that they even nicknamed you “Abu Ali”. How did you achieve this?

I don’t know sincerely how to answer that question. I believe it is all in the approach, being caring, but at the same time tough and teaching them about rules and discipline... .

Being a woman, I was for them, the mother, the sister, the friend, and maybe in the beginning of the project someone they could seduce... However, fast enough, they realized that this woman could be mostly “Abu Ali”, which means in a slang language: a strong guy from their community, who had a word in this community....

The whole story behind “I’m a criminal I could kill you”, began on selection day, when I had the list of persons who will participate in the project... So one guy said before I read the list: “if I’m not selected, I will kill you”. My answer was: “unfortunately you won’t cause you’ve been selected!”

3. Prisoners are often defined by their crime. In your film, you didn’t present prisoners only as criminals. Rather, as human beings with a past, a present and a future. To what extent can a film change how society views prisoners, what was people’s reaction to your film?

Reactions from the audience started during the first performance of the play inside Roumieh. It was the first time the audience saw any work from them (the play). Then there were reactions to the film when the film was screened 10 months later.

In both cases (performances and screenings), the public had many reactions in common, such as:

“But they really deserve a second chance!” “How can we help in improving the prisons conditions?” “Look at them! They look like us!” “They taught me what freedom is like! They seem freer than I am, me who is living outside the bars”

And one of the best reactions, which proved that these guys’ work can give hope to others (a person from the external society said): “they have achieved a piece of work that I was never able to achieve!”

And undeniably, the film serves as a great tool to raise awareness among students on the verge of delinquency.

4. While “12 Angry Lebanese” is a film documenting the drama therapy project organized in the Roumieh prison, it is to a great extent an activism film defending the rights of prisoners in better living conditions in prison and in determining the length of life imprisonment among others. Indeed, after staging the play and screening your film, a law concerning prisoners was amended. How does this amendment affect prisoners?



It's not an amendment. Rather, it's an implementation. Here is the story: there's in Lebanon a law for the reduction of sentences, it is law number 463. Even though it was declared officially in 2002 it was never implemented.

In the play, the inmates perform a scene about that specific law stating that its implementation is much needed, because so far no inmate benefited from a reduced sentence. 2 months after the play (which definitely contributed in part) the law started to get implemented with the help of the ministries and different organizations.

5. Some of the prisoners complained that there's no place for rehabilitation in prison. Rather, punishment. What's the role of prison in your opinion? Do you consider your project as a kind of a rehabilitation program?

Drama therapy aims for the rehabilitation of the individuals residing there. However, the whole project had different positive effects on the prison as a whole. It reminded society that prisoners exist, and that we can't deny that anyone from our family, neighbors, friends might end up behind bars and that society is responsible in part of

this reality.

Personally, I believe imprisonment should be a kind of school and not only punishment otherwise crime will only grow bigger.

6. One of the prisoners said "We fear that the project will end and we'll be forgotten". Were they? Did you continue the project? What happened to the prisoners who took part in the drama therapy project?

Catharsis, the association I founded in 2007, is still working inside the prison now with a larger number of inmates though. A large number from the first group that you saw in the film is still working with us inside, and many of them who have finished their sentences are working with us from outside prison. For example, an ex inmate, who was in the play and who is a student at an audiovisual faculty in Beirut worked on the editing of the film.

The new drama therapy sessions as well as the film and the other activities are all funded by the Italian Development Cooperation Office/Embassy of Italy in Beirut in the framework of ROSS Emergency program.

By Nadia Muhanna

Interview with Samer Barkawi, director of "Women Talk"

Syrian director Samer Barkawi sheds light on the *conditions of women in the Jazeera area, highlighting the contrast between what men think, and what women tell.*

You used in your film title an Arabic word for women that translates into English as "harem". Why did you choose the word "harem"? Don't you think that it might imply that you are adopting a patriarchal viewpoint?

I chose the word "harem" because I wanted to ask two important questions: Who are "harem"? and Where are they? That is why their appearance is delayed until the last third of the film, the word "harem" comes from three words (deprivation, prohibition and forbiddance) the same three words that the film is about.

The film dealt with various topics, like polygamy, negligence of girls' education, the problem of having many children, the suffering of rural woman in general... Do you think that one film can deal with all these topics? Are the 23 minutes enough?

I was asked by the UNFPA to merge all these topics in one film. I did not want to present all these problems in detail. Rather I used the film to ask questions that need many films to research. I tried to illustrate the contrast between the world of man and the world of woman by highlighting the difference what men think and what woman say.

You used silent images and words in your film, How did you maintain the balance between the two?

I worked hard to achieve this balance between image and words in order to create two contrasting worlds. I also tried to build



a relationship between the characters and the camera. The characters' response, enthusiasm and the ability to deal with the camera reflected the difference between the man and woman worlds. While men like to be in the spot light, women turn their backs to the camera since they have more important things to do.

Why did you choose "Zor Shummar" village in the Jazeera region in Syria to make your film?

We chose to make the film in the Jazeera region because we were asked to make a film about women's rights in that region. As the film editor "Adnan Owdeh" comes from that village, it was easier to penetrate its community. We worked very discreetly to make sure women were comfortable enough to speak up. Still, it took us several long talking sessions to make "Women Talk".

You did not conduct a complete interview with any of your

film characters, you had multiple characters talking about the same idea, Why did you use this method instead of a direct interview?

Even though I conducted a big number of interviews and showed images of different men; one wearing gloves, another lining up with his wives and children for a family photo, and one waiting for a guest who never shows up, all these men think in the same way. I also discovered that women have the same problem after I listened to their talks, whether they were mothers, sisters or aunts, they all worry about the same thing: "We are fed up of living like sheep".

By Rama Al-Jarmaqani, Translated by Mahmoud Al-Nouri



Men of the city by the British director Marc Isaacs



A financial director at London Stock Exchange (LSE), a debt-collection employee and a worker holding a restaurant advertising signboard; three men from different cultural, social and familial backgrounds, who have nothing in common apart from money, or, to be more accurate, their struggle to get it!

By following the lives of the three men, British director Marc Isaacs highlights the inhuman consequences of the global economic system on people who are now living according to the law of jungle where the survival is for the fittest. It's a message wittily expressed by Isaacs through filming a working day in the London Stock Exchange.

With lots of close ups, Isaacs depicts the faces of the waylaying men, the movements of their hands that resemble war signals. Indeed, war soon beaks out as the trading session starts and Isaacs mixes the traders screams as they pounce at their phones with that of wild animals. This wild and violent scene reaches its peak with the closing shots that depict scars on the faces of the exhausted traders.

Isaac's camera keeps moving between the lives of the three men and different rain shots. He depicts raindrops jostling forcefully on the glass, threads of water hitting the ground like flying sparkles, and crashing waves on the Thames River. The

rain scenes accompanied by an escalating music reflect the feeling of malaise in a city drowning in the economic crisis! Life during the economic crisis is perhaps best portrayed through the Bangladeshi worker who sits holding a restaurant sign throughout the day. Once the clock hits 3pm he rushes to the nearest restaurant to quickly eat and then hurries back to his seat to continue his work. It's a short life that people live during their work break.

Different from the three men is the sweeper, a calm man quietly sweeping London's streets and contemplating the tired faces of passers-by.

"How could a sweeper enjoy his job? He's supposed to be very miserable! Well that's the way the system expects you, that's the way most of the people you'll find in the city will do. Feel that I should be that way, but why should I?" asks the street sweeper.

It's this question that perhaps best reflects the core idea of the film which Isaacs ends with a romantic scene completely contradicting the grim context of the film. The tax collection employee quits his job and takes his long forgotten motorcycle out of his garage to practice his old hobby and the financial director spends the day photographing his rarely seen children. As the children's laughter grows louder, the dark clouds broke and a beautiful rainbow appeared announcing the end of the rainfall.

By Nadia Muhanna, Translated by Mahmoud al-Nouri

