

Cines de Afganistan: relatos de género y sociedad

Compilation by:

Sandra Schäfer

Organized by:

Independent cultural platforms workingimages (Barcelona) & mazefilm (Berlin)

In collaboration with:

Casa Asia & Semana Cine Experimental

The film programme was presented between 2010 and 2012 in Spain and Mexico

UNGEDULDIG / Impatient

made in the media educational project mokala/basis&woege e.V.

Germany 2007; 28'; German/with Spanish subtitles

"I can control my dreams, but not my reality. But it should be the other way around." A group of six young people from Afghanistan, India, Iran, and Sierra Leone call themselves Ungeduldig (impatient). Impatient because they are only granted exceptional leave to remain, they all live with an unsecured residence permit status. They are at home in Hamburg. But how can one live with the constant fear of being deported? "Exceptional leave to remain" means: no work, no education, not being able to do anything and not knowing what the future will bring. During the shooting, the right of residency was introduced, but under strict conditions. Chander and Sushil are now looking for a job in order to be able to apply for it. It will not be granted to Tanya.

11.000 KM FROM NEW YORK

Director, Script: Orzu Sharipov

Camera: Georgiy Dzalaev

Editor: Muborak Sharipova

Tajikistan 2005; 20'; Dari, Paschtu, Uzbek/with Spanish subtitles

A barren landscape in northern Afghanistan. Fighting is going on. What remains are charred landscapes and people fleeing to the most remote areas of the steppe. In November 2001, the bloody battles of the Taliban force thousands of Afghans to seek refuge near the border to Tajikistan. Orzu Sharipov documents everyday life in the refugee camps. Children are born, they play and go to makeshift schools. A performance takes place in a community square: An actor rehearses different ways of crying together with the audience. A high-rise is built using a tarpaulin. With flying cloths, two boys re-enact the airliners that then destroyed the towers.

DAR DEKADAYE KE NAAKEL AKLAM MINAMAND / Half Value Life

Script, Director, Camera: Alka Sadat

Production: Roya Cinematic House Production

supported by: WASSA (Women Activities & Social Services Associaton), Christian Aid

Afghanistan 2008; 25'; Dari/with Spanish subtitles

Mariya Bashir is the only women attorney in Herat. Alka Sadat follows her during her daily duties at work and at home. Even an attack on Mariya Bashir does not stop her to continue doing her work.

25 DARSAD / 25 percent

Director: Diana Saqeb
Camera: Malek Shafi'i
Production: CACA-Kabul
Afghanistan 2007; 35'; Dari/ with Spanish subtitles

Despite their many duties, which each of the six female Afghan members of parliament have in their private lives as wives, mothers and daughters, they do attempt to live up to their responsibility for society both within and outside of parliament in a traditional and male-dominated environment. Since the women are not acknowledged a position in society, they must first assert it.

PASSING THE RAINBOW

Director: Sandra Schäfer & Elfe Brandenburger
Germany 2007; 71'; Dari/ with Spanish subtitles

The film deals with performative strategies to undermine the rigid gender norms in Afghan society: on the level of cinematographic stagings, in political work and in everyday life. The protagonists of Passing the Rainbow include a teacher who is also an actress, a policewoman whose second job is working as an action film director, an activist of the organisation RAWA who advocates the radical separation of state and religion, a girls' theatre group in Kabul, and Malek_a who lives as a boy to earn a living for her family.

The directors show excerpts of films from the history of Afghan cinema, accompany the actresses during shooting and stage new scenes together with them. The local actors are co-producers and a corrective to Western perspectives. Passing the Rainbow is a film staging scenes from the actresses' daily life, reflecting on gender relations and opening new areas of action in fiction.

From the archive Afghan Films:

TALABGAR / The Marriage Candidate

Director: Khaleq A'lil
Actors: Kahn Aqasorur, Rasol Maimuna, Rafiq Sadek, Habiba Askar
Afghanistan 1969; 40'; Dari/with Spanish subtitles

Nasser, a confidence trickster and crook, wants to marry the student Sima, who comes from a middle-class family in Kabul. With his affected prestigious behaviour, he succeeds in impressing Sima's father. For Sima, however, happiness lies neither in wealth nor marriage but in education, and she rebels against the values of her parents. In the end, Nasser's swindle is revealed.

SAYEH / Shadow

Director: Nacir Alqas

Script: Siddiq Barmak (on a novel by Jalal al Ahmad)

Actor: Yasemin Yarmal

Afghanistan 1990; 23'; Dari/with Spanish subtitles

The new husband of a war-widow refuses to accept her son from her first marriage. With a heavy heart, the widow, played by Yasemin Jarmal, decides to abandon the boy at a busy bazaar. *Saya* addresses a common phenomenon during the Soviet occupation and the civil wars that followed. Many husbands lost their lives during the wars, and because of the strict social code it was difficult for the widows and children left behind to build new lives. The seemingly documentary setting and the lead actress's dramatic work recall the films of Italian neorealism.