The London Palestine Film Festival 2008

18 April - 1 May
The Story

By Kamal Nasser (1961)*

I will tell you a story ..
A story that lived in the dreams of people ..
A story that comes out of the world of tents ..
Was made by hunger, and decorated by the dark nights
In my country, and my country is a handful of refugees ..
Every twenty of them have a pound of flour ..
And promises of a relief .. gifts and parcels
It is the story of the suffering group
Who stood for ten years in hunger
In tears and agony ..
In hardship and yearning ..

It is a story of a people who were misled
Who were thrown into the mazes of years
But they defied and stood
Disobed and united
And went to light, from the tents,
The revolution of return in the world of darkness

* Kamal Nasser was born in Gaza in 1925. He worked as a teacher, studied law, was a newspaper editor and a parliamentarian. In 1967 Israel expelled him from his adopted home of Ramallah in the newly-occupied West Bank. He subsequently became editor of the PLO’s newspaper Fil astin Ath-Thawra, and a member of the PLO Executive Committee (1969-1971). He was assassinated by Israel whilst living in Beirut on the 9th April 1973, in an operation led by Ehud Barak, who would later become Israeli Prime Minister, and currently heads the Israeli Labour Party.
The Palestine Film Festival is organised by the Palestine Film Foundation in London (PFF), which was established in 2004 by the SOAS Palestine Society as a specialised body to promote and exhibit film and video work related to the subject of Palestine. The Festival runs for two weeks – April 18th to 24th at the Barbican Cinema, and April 25th to May 1st at SOAS University, Russell Square. Venue details can be found on the rear cover of this catalogue.

The 2008 Festival occurs in the year of the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe) of 1948. The Nakba saw the creation of the world’s largest refugee problem through the expulsion of some three-quarters of a million Palestinians from their homes. Many millions of these refugees and their descendents today live in abysmal conditions in camps across the Middle East, whether in Lebanon, Jordan, Syrian, the West Bank, or the besieged Gaza Strip. Realising the inalienable right of return of these refugees, who represent the majority of the Palestinian people, is fundamental to resolving the Palestine-Israel conflict. Several films have been selected for the 2008 programme in order to explore the many issues surrounding the Palestinian Nakba and right of return.

Meanwhile, one another important anniversary marked this year, that of the 1968 revolutionary agitation centred in France (see page 14).
The London Palestine Film Festival is the largest Festival of its kind in the world; this year 50 films are presented over two weeks and at least 15 speakers will be in attendance for Q & A sessions or panel discussions. The continued growth of the Festival has been made possible through the generosity of the many filmmakers and directors who, over the years, have allowed us to screen their work, often with fees reduced or waived.

The PFF would also like to thank the many guest speakers for their important assistance over the past year.

Our thanks also goes to Zaki Boulos, Hania Mroueh, Eyal Sivan, who edited the Arabic text of the programme. In Palestine, Alia Arasoughly and Soueif, who has been patron of the Festival since 2005. The PFF would also like to thank the many guest speakers for their invaluable contributions to the programme, and particularly Ahdaf Soueif, who wrote the translation of Jean Genet’s book ‘Prisoner of Love’, upon which this film is based, will introduce the screening (see p.18).

The following is a selection of the live highlights of this year’s programme. A series of short biographies of participants is included in the Festival programme along with the individual entries for each of the films screened in relation to these discussion sessions. These sessions provide an opportunity to view and discuss a broad range of artistic, technical, academic, and political aspects raised by the films included in the programme and are normally well attended.

The 2008 Festival programme includes a number of special “live” sessions with the participation of directors, scholars and curators. In all, the Festival is delighted to enjoy the participation of at least 15 international artists, critics and activists. These are mentioned in the Festival programme along with the individual entries for each of the films screened in relation to these discussion sessions. These sessions provide an opportunity to view and discuss a broad range of artistic, technical, academic, and political aspects raised by the films included in the programme and are normally well attended.

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Abdul Souef is the bestselling author of *The Map of Love* bestseller for the Booker Prize in 1999. He has written extensively about politics, culture and culture. A collection of his works, *Relations*, was published by the Common Ground, was named *The Reluctant Photographer* by the English translation of Mourid Barghouti. Besides his work, he has lived in London and Cairo and has been patron of the London festival. The movie festival. Since 2005.

Asad Rehman is a prominent human rights campaigner for human rights and political rights in the UK. In his role as a sociologist, he has been a member of a number of activist groups. His area of expertise is the Middle East, and he has been teaching cinema at Middlesex University. He has been a student of cinema and theory, and has been part of the Palestinian right of return. He is currently at the University of East London.

Elizabeth Peirce is a human rights lawyer. In a career spanning over 10 years, she has represented innumerable human rights cases and has been a leading member of the human rights movement. She has won several awards for her work in the field of human rights law.

Maai Masri is a Palestinian filmmaker who has directed and produced many award-winning films that have won over 60 international awards. She has directed *Jaber-Passing Through*, *The Last Interview*, *The Miles Davis Story*, and *The Development of the Modern Middle East*. She has written extensively about the current Palestinian-Israeli water conflict and its implications for water access in the Middle East.

Mark Zeitoun is a journalist and author who has worked extensively on the Middle East. His book *Deadly Playground* was a best-selling book. He has written extensively on the Middle East, and has won several international awards. His work has been published in several mainstream media outlets.

Mohammad Zaidan is the co-founder of the *Al Jazeera English* and has written extensively on the Middle East. He has been a member of the Palestinian right of return movement. His film *The Miles Davis Story* was a national Emmy award winner as the documentary of the year in 2001. He directed *I Love the London Water Research Group* and *The Genesis*. His film *The Development of the Modern Middle East* will come out in March; it explores the hidden power dynamics which have previously worked to sustain water access in the Middle East.

Mike Ibid is a film director for TV for almost 40 years on documentaries and short films. These include several films with John Berger, the sociology professor and author, and a film winning BBC series Ways of Seeing. His film *The Mile Davis Story*, his film on the legendary jazz trumpeter, received an International Emmy award as an arts documentary of the year in 2001. He directed Edward Said’s *The Last Interview*, now available on DVD.

Mohammad Zeidan is executive director of International Advocacy and Research Department at the Department of Human Rights in Nazareth. He has a BA in geography from Hebrew University, and an MA in sociology and African Studies, and the editor of the bulletin on-line monthly, A-Kalam / The World, an expert on the Palestinian water conflict. He has written extensively on the Palestinian right of return, and has been a member of the human rights movement. She has won several awards for her work in the field of human rights law.
soldiers and the secret service are all tirelessly on the
Muhammad they share food, belongings and stories, batteries they've scraped together. In
to the luxury apartment complexes they build by
night they sleep on the hillcrests in improvised huts
loaded with blankets and bags, they cross the hills
and cities. After an arduous and dangerous journey,
construction labourers, building Israel's settlements
compelled by economic necessity to work illegally as
In the West Bank, thousands of Palestinians are
beurier, thomas ellis & constantin simon (see p. 42).
by larissa sansour (see p. 31),
25 kilometers is a journey through the checkpoints and
rocky roads of the west bank. starting in ramallah, where the film-maker lives and works, this short film
discerns her attempt to reach her family's home in
beit sahur (near bethlehem). inside the west bank, palestinians spend considerable time either being forced
to avoid checkpoints or to wait in line. over these checkpoints have become a part of the daily routine
of thousands. this routine in itself gives rise to some
unexpected practices – some people try to joke about the
checkpoints, others feel powerless and even convince
themselves that this is part of a "normal" life. having
that privilege is part of a "normal" life. having
the privilege to leave palestine from time to time, the
film-maker came to believe that one of the worst things
that could happen to her is getting used to checkpoints, for
this would signal giving up hope for a normal life and a
future.
25 kilometers will be screened with land confiscation order 06/27/4 by lattisa samour (see p. 31), occupation by enas muthaffar (see p. 39), and palestines by etienne berurier, thomas ellis & constantin simon (see p. 42).
This short collective work assembles scenes of everyday life in the occupied Palestinian territories, using a dream-like visual language which evokes memories of home-movies from the 1960s. But instead of a day at the beach or in the backyard: a wall, an olive tree, a bulldozer, soldiers harassing grandmothers – a day in Palestine.

A Day in Palestine will be screened with the documentary Territories (see p. 48) on the work of Magnum photographer Larry Towell, and Meet Me Out of The Siege by Jessica Hrbie (See p. 34).

33 DAYS

Filmed in Lebanon during the summer of 2006, 33 DAYS follows the real-life stories of four people as Israel’s Second Lebanon War is waged around them: a director working with children who take shelter in a theatre after their homes are destroyed, a journalist for an underground television station struggling to cover the war, an aid worker coordinating emergency relief efforts for thousands of displaced people, and a newswide director trying to cope not only with the war, but with her new-born baby.

Renowned Palestinian director Mai Masri’s award-winning documentary is full of compassion and humanity, even as it follows the near devastation of a country and its people.

33 Days forms part of a special session on Lebanon – Summer 2006, and will be preceded by Katia Saleh’s Organised Chaos (see p. 40). Following the screenings directors Mai Masri and Katia Saleh will participate in a Q & A session on issues raised by both films.
A Grin Without a Cat: Scenes from the Third World War, 1967-1977

Chris Marker’s (Sans Soleil, La Jetée) epic three-hour elegy to the “New Left” which captivated the world’s revolutionary imagination from the late 1960s is a rarely-screened but legendary work of European political cinema. The director wrote at the time of its release that: “During the last ten years, some groups of forces (often more instinctive than organized) have been trying to play the game of politics themselves - even if they knocked over the pieces. Wherever they tried, they failed. Nevertheless, it's been their being that has most profoundly transformed politics in our time. This film intends to show some of the steps of this transformation.”

Beginning with Vietnam and ending with Allende, the films brings together startling footage of the most momentous events in the struggles of the global Left from 1967 to 1977, and asks what it was that led so much promise and energy to achieve so little. On the 40th anniversary of the May 1968 events in France, the PFF is delighted to be able to screen this important essay on the global Left and its waning fortunes.

“…it is there, in these unanticipated tremblings, that Marker regains the meaning of militant cinema: cinema that does not survey memory as an “exercise,” that evokes revolution not only as a mystique that has deteriorated into politics, but as a still living source of poetry.” - Noël Herpe, Libération

Director: Chris Marker
Duration: 180 min
Year: 1977
Type: Documentary
Date: Wednesday 23rd April
Time: 19:45
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3
Al Amari (After the Rain)

In the refugee camp of Al Amari located on the outskirts of Ramallah, the quality of living has dwindled since the beginning of the second Intifada – insecurity, unemployment, inoperative infrastructures... Along with a small digital camera and no translator, the filmmaker faces considerable difficulty comprehending this microcosm of the Palestinian refugee experience. Before long, the filmmaker meets up with Darwish Abu Al-Reesh, an out-of-work Palestinian filmmaker who becomes guide, translator, and subject as the film explores the social, political, and economic inner-workings of the refugee camp.

Al Amari (After the Rain) will be screened with My Palestine by Dima Abu Ghosh (see p. 35) and Stories from Behind the Wall by Alia Asroughly (see p. 46).

Director: Sylvain Calves
Duration: 52 min
Year: 2006
Type: Documentary
Date: Friday 25th April
Time: 18:00
Venue: SOAS, KLT

All That Remains

Palestinian Arab Bedouins once peopled the entire Naqab (Negev) Desert, a region which accounts for 60% of historic Palestine. With the creation of Israel in 1948, the majority of these Palestinians were uprooted. Those who remain are either being forcibly concentrated within one of seven designated townships; or – if they refuse to abandon their lifestyle and economy – end up living in one of 46 “unrecognized villages” lacking water, electricity, schools, roads or medical services. Nada El Yassir’s powerful documentary explores the struggle of these Bedouins of the Naqab against Israeli policies that aim to strip them of their land and their way of life.

All That Remains will conclude the 2008 Palestine Film Festival. Following the screening, there will be a panel discussion on “The Continuing Nakba” which will expand on the themes of the film to survey the ongoing processes of expulsion, exclusion, and discrimination which characterise the ethnic-cleansing of Palestine, past and present. Filmmaker Nada el Yassir will be joined by Mohammed Zeidan in a session chaired by Eyal Sivan.

Director: Nada El Yassir
Duration: 52 min
Year: 2005
Type: Documentary
Date: Thursday 1st May
Time: 18:00
Venue: SOAS, KLT

All That Remains
Aqabat Jaber: Peace Without Return?

The right to return of the Palestinian refugees, is at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and will determine the future of the Middle East. Having made the earlier film Aqabat Jaber, Passing-through (1987) just before the first Intifada, director Eyal Sivan returns to this refugee camp the day after the evacuation of the region by the Israeli army. A few kilometres from Jericho and built 50 years ago, Aqabat-Jaber is today a refugee camp under Palestinian control. Its 3,000 inhabitants have, however, not seen their status change. According to the peace treaty, they are still refugees and cannot go back to the villages from which their parents fled. Can peace between Israel and Palestine be possible without the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homeland, which has now become Israel? Does the return - either physical or symbolic - of people that suffered an injustice in 1948 when the state of Israel was created have to take place? This analogical film tells the story of the Palestinian refugees who, like all refugees, are the deported populations and displaced persons, and are the centre of the great conflicts of our time.

Aqabat Jaber: Peace Without Return? will be followed by a Q & A session with director Eyal Sivan.

Director: Eyal Sivan
Duration: 61 min
Year: 1995
Type: Documentary
Date: Sunday 27th April
Time: 18:15
Venue: SOAS, KLT
Channel Al Duwara

is based on the history of Al Duwara, a Palestinian village depopulated and destroyed in 1948, with the foundation of the Jewish state. On its land stands today’s Kibbutz Amir. Together with the physical village, all its real memories were wiped away from the official history of the Jewish state; in their place the myth of a “heroic” fight between Jewish pioneers and a barren, diseased, Arab land has been fabricated. The story of this Al Duwara is similar to hundreds of other villages. This short art work satirises and deconstructs the propagandistic narrative of the colonisers, combining Zionist rhetoric and PR movies from the 1950s with animated “ghosts” of a past denied superimposed on these images of heroism and might.

Channel Al Duwara will be screened with Rico in the Night by Mohanad Yaqubi (see p. 44), Untitled Part 3b: (As if) Beauty Never Ends by Jayce Salloum (see p. 54) and Notre Musique by Jean-Luc Godard (see p. 38).

Director: Ariel Mioduser
Duration: 10 min
Year: 2007
Type: Video Art
Date: Sunday 20th April
Time: 20:00
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

Dirty Pictures (Hotel Diaries 7)

Moving from one hotel in Bethlehem to another in East Jerusalem, the filmmaker encounters a series of problems involving a ceiling, a video camera and the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Dirty Pictures is the seventh episode in the Hotel Diaries series, an ongoing collection of video recordings made in hotel rooms which relate personal experiences to contemporary world events.

John Smith is a graduate of the Royal College of Arts and a leading UK video installation and film artist. “At once politically concerned and very funny, these brilliantly structured ramblings connect the observations of his surroundings with the horror of world events in consistently surprising ways.” (Maximilian Le Cain – Film Ireland)

Dirty Pictures (Hotel Diaries 7) forms part of a special all-day series of films concerning Jerusalem and will be screened with Jerusalem… The East Side Story by Mohammed Alatar (see p. 30). Following this session, a second Jerusalem double-bill will include Good Morning Jerusalem by Suha Arraf (see p. 26) and Quintessence of Oblivion by Najwa Najjar (see p. 29).

Director: John Smith
Duration: 14 min
Year: 2007
Type: Video Art
Date: Saturday 26th April
Time: 15:00
Venue: SOAS, KLT
Drying up Palestine

The question of access to, and control over, water is an intrinsic part of the Palestine-Israel conflict. This short documentary offers a portrait of the stresses and strains imposed on Palestinian society by Israel’s exercise of exclusive control over water and sewage infrastructures in the West Bank. Told through the testimonies of ordinary people, the film highlights the effects of a militarily enforced regime of resource theft, and reveals the ecological, human, and political costs of failing to address this core issue. Drying up Palestine will be followed by a panel discussion on water and the conflict, bringing together international and Palestinian experts on this question. Participants will include Tony Allen and Mark Zeitoun.

First Picture

Nour was born in Israeli’s Tel Mond prison, where his mother, Manal Ghanem from Tulkarm refugee camp, was being held. He lived for more than two and a half years with his mother in the prison before being separated from her while she remained in detention. The film joins Nour on his “release” and follows his first encounter with life outside an Israeli security prison. This beautifully composed debut documentary from Akram Al Ashqar, speaks of confusion and curiosity as Nour assimilates to a world populated not only by women, and where not all doors remain closed. Interviews with family members and friends provide a glimpse of his life inside the prison and reveal perhaps the most difficult aspect of all - the fact that Nour misses the place where he was born: his mother’s cell which represented his only “world”.

First Picture will be screened with The Zoo by Hayden Campbell (see p. 52) and Tunnel Trade by Laila el-Haddad and Saeed Taji (see p. 53).
Goal Dreams is a documentary about personal and national identity as seen through a football team like no other. Composed of multiple nationalities, the players of Palestine originate from the four corners of the world and are learning to forge a common identity. Together, through the universal language of football, the players of Palestine are discovering that lay within modern day identity. Will they qualify? Or will they do an England? Goal Dreams will be preceded by a screening of Hard Ball by Suha Arraf.

Goal Dreams

16:15

Director: Jeffrey Saunders

Screening of Hard Ball by Suha Arraf.

Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

Date: Thursday 24th April

Director: Richard Dino

Venue: SOAS, KLT

Date: Sunday 27th April

Date: Thursday 24th April

Time: 16:15

Time: 10:30

Venue: Ballroom, Cinema 3

Years: 2004

Type: Documentary

Years: 2006

Type: Documentary
Sha'ban is a fighter. Here in occupied Jerusalem, he appears as a Shakespearian hero, while on the public stage, he is followed by a fervent following among thousands of Palestinian fans across the country: Arabs in the country have experienced joy only twice in the past few hundred years: When Saladdin expelled the Crusaders from the country: «Arabs in this country have experienced joy only twice in the past few hundred years: When Saladdin expelled the Crusaders from the country.»

As part of the PeTA's 'Football Sunday', Hard Ball will be followed by a screening of Gaza Dreamz by Mayar Sanbar and Jeffrey Sansand. The second film covers the struggle of the Palestinian National Football Team in (exile) (see p. 25).
As part of a special session on Palestinian labourers in the Israeli sustains their impoverished families, it supplies the occupation cherish. This inner struggle of the workers remains silent given window on the sentiments of the workers for the land they still expanding onto their own village’s lands. In a day’s work, to work, against their own conscience, on the settlement day of work. Unemployed since the early days of the Second Sefer. In the early hours of the morning, construction workers Ramallah, a new city-settlement is under construction, Kiriyat In Working Progress

Jawhar Al Silwan (Quintessence of Oblivion) forms part of a special all-day series of films concerning Jerusalem and will be screened with Good Morning Jerusalem by Saba Anaf (see p. 26). Prior to this session, another Jerusalem double-bill will include Jerusalem… The East Side Story by Mohammed Alatar (see p. 30) and Dirty Pictures (Hotel Diaries 7) by John Smith (see p. 21).
Jerusalem…

The East Side Story

Alatar’s (The Iron Wall) new documentary seeks to demystify Israel’s colonial policies and their effects on the city of Jerusalem since 1967. Drawing on expert testimony from Palestinian and Israeli activists and planners, the film breaks down the objectives, methods, and consequences of a series of policies aimed at rendering the occupied city as demographically “Jewish” as possible. Home demolitions, settlement construction, the wall, and the economic closure of the city from its West Bank hinterland, are all explored in a straightforward yet compelling fashion. Like Alatar’s earlier work, Jerusalem… The East Side Story delivers its messages in a concise and matter of fact style; yet the message is devastating – Jerusalem’s Palestinian population is being forced out of the city systematically and rapidly.

Jerusalem… The East Side Story forms part of a special all-day series of films concerning Jerusalem and will be screened with Dirty Pictures (Hotel Diaries 7) by John Smith (see p. 21). Following this session, a second Jerusalem double-bill will include Good Morning Jerusalem by Suha Arraf (see p. 26) and Quintessence of Oblivion by Najwa Najjar (see p. 29).

Director: Mohammed Alatar
Duration: 56 min
Year: 2008
Type: Documentary
Date: Saturday 26th April
Time: 15:00
Venue: SOAS, KLT

Land Confiscation Order 06/24/T

In her video piece Land Confiscation Order 06/24/T, Denmark-based Palestinian video artist Larissa Sansour explores the notion of territory as constitutive of not only national, but also personal identity. LCO 06/24/T is a requiem for a small piece of land and a house made of stone. It in turn becomes a eulogy for the dream of viable statehood and exposes Palestinian identity as a block that not only political and cultural, but also geographical factors are chopping away at on a daily basis.

Land Confiscation Order 06/24/T will be screened with 25 Kilometers by Nahed Awwad (see p. 11), Occupazion by Enas Muthaffar (see p. 39), and Palestines by Etienne Beurier, Thomas Ellis & Constantin Simon (see p. 42).

Director: Larissa Sansour
Duration: 11 min
Year: 2006
Type: Video Art/Documentary
Date: Wednesday 23rd April
Time: 18:00
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3
Mafateeh

With the establishment of Israel in 1948, some one million Palestinians were expelled from their homes – most became refugees, a minority of these remained inside the borders of what became Israel. Today some 300,000 of these internal refugees reside in Israel, dreaming to return to their original villages and homes. Many of them still keep their old house keys.

Mafateeh tells the stories of these families, portraying the emotional turmoil encountered by people who are constantly flung between hope and despair, pain and longing, dream and reality. Director Salim Daw embarks on a journey around the Galilee through the remains of the original villages. A refugee himself, he contrasts his personal memories with those of the characters he meets, joining them in their struggle for equal rights in the present, and in their dream of returning to their villages, some of which no longer exist, and others of which have been rebuilt as Jewish towns and villages.

Mafateeh will be screened with Naim and Wadee’a by Najwa Najjar (see p. 36).

Mona Hatoum's video work Measures of Distance, traces a mother-daughter relationship. Links between the two women are played out across time and over geographical and cultural distance. This experimental video work by one of the most celebrated Palestinian contemporary artists comprises voices, images and layers of words. Barely visible behind a veil of Arabic letters (and arranged so as to give the impression of looking through a barbed wire fence), the artist’s mother is filmed taking a shower - a scene recalling a moment of intimacy in the artist’s home in Beirut. Now in “exile”, the daughter reads aloud in English letters received from home; sentence after sentence, the mother expresses her longing for her daughter. The video can be seen as a continuation of Hatoum’s earlier performance work: it represents a contrast between youth and age, between closeness and separation, homeland and exile.

Measures of Distance

Mona Hatoum’s video work Measures of Distance, traces a mother-daughter relationship. Links between the two women are played out across time and over geographical and cultural distance. This experimental video work by one of the most celebrated Palestinian contemporary artists comprises voices, images and layers of words. Barely visible behind a veil of Arabic letters (and arranged so as to give the impression of looking through a barbed wire fence), the artist’s mother is filmed taking a shower - a scene recalling a moment of intimacy in the artist’s home in Beirut. Now in “exile”, the daughter reads aloud in English letters received from home; sentence after sentence, the mother expresses her longing for her daughter. The video can be seen as a continuation of Hatoum’s earlier performance work: it represents a contrast between youth and age, between closeness and separation, homeland and exile.

Measures of Distance will be screened with Around by Mohanad Yaqoubi (see p. 19), SBARA by Larissa Sansour (see p. 45), The Shooter by Ihab Jadallah (see p. 51), and Tension by Rashid Mashrawi (see p. 47).
Meet Me Out of the Siege

Hani Zurob, one of Palestine’s most prominent emerging visual artists, has been stuck in Paris for more than a year. Originally travelling to France for a rarely permitted three-month stay, Hani has been unable to return to his wife and homeland due to Israel’s severance of diplomatic ties with the Palestinian Authority after the democratic election of the Hamas Government. Hani is joined in Paris by another deeply respected Palestinian artist, Kamal Boudlita, who shares his own story of an exile that began in 1967.

Meet Me Out of the Siege unravels the stories of both men, and observes as these two resilient and patient artists reflect on their origins of creativity, the pressures of everyday life under occupation, and the geometric language of exile.

Winner – Best Short Documentary – My Palestine

My Palestine

From the artist’s statement: “What does ‘Palestine’ mean to you?” The question sounded simple, even naive at the beginning. But after this journey into peoples’ minds, hearts, and memories, searching for the true meaning of Palestine, it no longer sounded so simple.” Abu Ghosh’s short consists of a mental and emotional search for what constitutes individuals’ understandings of their homeland Palestine, while statehood, borders, sovereignty and the other markers of a recognized national space remain absent.

My Palestine will be screened with Al Amai (After the Rain) by Sylvain Calves (see p.16) and Stories from Behind the Wall by Alia Assoughly (see p.46).

Meet Me Out of the Siege

Meet Me Out of the Siege will be screened with Testimonies by Mary Ellen Davis (see p. 48) and A Day in Palestine by Mary Ellen Davis, José García-Lozano and Will Eizlini (see p. 13).
Naim and Wadee’a

This documentary by director Najwa Najjar (Yasmine’s Song) returns to Yaffa (Jaffa) and to before 1948 by way of a portrait of the filmmaker’s grandparents Wadee’a and Naim Azar. Using the oral histories recounted by the three daughters of Naim and Wadee’a to tell the story of Jaffa’s social life, Najjar builds a compelling account of life before the Nakba in a prosperous urban centre. Visually striking, the film’s use of archive photographs and mementos of the city and the couple through which its story is told make it an intimate and captivating journey into the life of one couple, and one city, before the Nakba.

Winner - Hamptons International Film Festival, USA (2000)
Winner - Movimiento de Documentalistas, Argentina (2002)

Naim and Wadee’a will be screened with Mafateeh by Salim Daw (see p. 32).

Nakba Archive

A Documentary Report

Since 2002, the Nakba Archive has recorded over 450 eyewitness testimonies with Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. This screening consists of a selection of interviews taken from this growing resource. The collection of interviews reconstructs through personal memories the social, cultural and political life in Palestine prior to 1948, and documents the events that led up to the expulsions. These powerful materials combine to offer a unique audiovisual record for scholars, researchers, and campaigners working in this field, as well as a historical and political resource for future generations of Palestinians.

Nakba Archive will be screened with Women’s Testimonies of the Nakba by Raneen Geries (see p. 57) – both films will be followed by a panel discussion with filmmakers Diana Allan, Mahmoud Zeidan, and Raneen Geries, and historians Karma Nabulsi and Ilan Pappe. This special session on the Nakba and oral history video-documentation will open the 2008 Festival on Friday 18th April, and be repeated on Sat 19th – advanced booking is recommended.
Part poetry, part journalism, part philosophy, Jean-Luc Godard’s *Notre Musique* is a timeless meditation on war as seen through the prisms of cinema, text and image. Largely set at a literary conference in Sarajevo, the film draws on the conflagration of the Bosnian war, but also draws on the Israel-Palestine conflict, the brutal treatment of Native Americans, and the legacy of the Nazis. Notre Musique is structured via three Dantean Kingdoms: “Hell,” “Purgatory” and “Heaven.” In the film, real-life literary figures (including Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish and Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo) intermingle with actors – and documentary meshes with fiction. Through evocative language and images, Godard explores a series of conflicting forces: death-life; dark-light; real-imaginary; vanquished-victor; shot-reverse shot. These opposing movements make up “our music.”

Winner – FRIPESCI Film of the Year Award, San Sebastián International Film Festival, 2004

Notre Musique will be screened with *Channel Al Duwara* by Ariel Mioduser (see p. 20), *Rico in the Night* by Mohanad Yaqubi (see p. 44), and *Untitled Part 3b: (As if) Beauty Never Ends* by Jayce Salloum (see p. 54).
Masri's Organised Chaos explores the effects of the previous year's war. During the conflict between Israel and Lebanon in 2006, the director assembled a series of chapters which move between impressionistic studies of unusual spaces and structures observed in the occupied Palestinian territories, to informal interviews in which the narratives of Palestinians in the West Bank are presented. Unadorned. In one chapter, urban and landscape imagery is seen in stark black and white photographs, highlighting destruction and constructed obstruction as indelible markers of the West Bank occupation's visual language. In another, an unusual game of basketball carries in it both a routine surrealism and a horrifying truth... Palestine in Fragments promises to intrigue and amuse as without shying away from the often brutal realities it records.
**Palestines**

Directed by three young French filmmakers, Palestines is an arresting triptych-portrait of the daily lives of three Palestinians in the West Bank. Abeer, born in the Fata'a refugee camp, paints landscapes on walls – personally, she’s never seen a boat, but he thinks the kids at the school have. Ahmad, born in the Fara’a refugee camp, paints landscapes on walls – personally, he’s never seen a boat, but he thinks the kids at the school have. Three Palestinians who take their days into extraordinary places in the face of challenging situations – these warm portraits of ordinary Palestinians invite the viewer into the remarkable day to day of Palestinian, 2007.

Palestines will be screened with Land Confiscation Order 06/24/7 by Larissa Sansour (see p. 31). Occupation by Eran Mattuhalir (see p. 39) and 25 Kilometers by Nahed Awwad (see p. 11).

**Palestine**

Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

Time: 18:15

Date: 21st April

**Duration: 115 min**

Type: Documentary

**Year: 2007**

**Return To Haifa**

Kasem Hewald’s adaptation of the Chasam Kanafani novella Return to Haifa is a rarely-seen gem. Kanafani’s seminal allegorical story tells of Haifa and Gaza, who are forced by gunfire and artillery to leave their 5-month old son Khaldoun in the city of Haifa when they are expelled by the Israeli army. The story, and the film – which remains true to Kanafani’s style and purpose – proceeds to pursue impossible flights.

And, finally, what is the way to Return to Haifa?

The PIF is presenting both Return to Haifa and The Dunes by Tarif Qaleh (see p. 50) in the 2008 programme; both are adaptations of major works by Chasam Kanafani, written at the height of the Palestinian revolution by one of its most original and influential spokespersons.

Ebrahim (Rafik) Badwan stars in Return to Haifa, directed by Tarif Qaleh (see p. 50). August 1982 marks the 25th anniversary of the Nakba (the day of the Nakba). A stream of Palestinians continues to depart for Lebanon and Jordan, the former home of the Nakba.}

**Return To Haifa**

Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

Time: 18:15

Date: Monday 21st April

**Duration: 92 min**

Type: Documentary

**Year: 1982**

Directors: Eran Mattuhalir, Thomas Ellis & Constantin Simon

Screening:

Wednesday 21st April Time: 18:15 Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3
This short video-art collaboration between Yaqubi and French dancer-choreographer Jean Gaudin is evidence of a new standard and style of video art production being undertaken in the West Bank. Yaqubi places Gaudin’s enigmatic character Rico in the heart of a Ramallah night, setting the dancer’s staccato movements against a backdrop of the nocturnal city’s hospitals, empty market places, family homes, and refugee camp alleyways. Neither narrative nor entirely abstract, this is a mood piece in which Rico takes the audience on a surreal whirlwind tour of a city as close to sleep as it ever gets.

Rico in the Night will be screened with Notre Musique by Jean Luc Godard (see p. 38), Channel Al Duwara by Ariel Mioduser (see p. 20), and Untitled Part 3b: (As if) Beauty Never Ends by Jayce Salloum (see p. 54). Director: Mohanad Yaqubi Duration: 8 min Year: 2007 Type: Video Art Date: Sunday 20th April Time: 20:00 Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

Heavily referencing the 1980 cult classic The Shining by Stanley Kubrick, the video piece SBARA explores the castigation of Arabs in contemporary Western dialogue. By adding an audio montage combining historical and current quotes on the Middle East to footage paraphrasing scenes from the original film, SBARA seeks to expose the cyclical nature of Middle Eastern rhetoric and policies and emphasize the psychological terror inflicted upon those at the receiving end of this repetitively stagnant political discourse. Sansour is a Denmark-based Palestinian artist whose work has been exhibited internationally to much acclaim in recent years. SBARA will be screened with Measures of Distance by Mona Hatoum (see p. 33), Around by Mohanad Yaqoubi (see p. 19), The Shooter by Ihab Jadallah (see p. 51), and Tension by Rashid Mashrawi (see p. 47). Director: Larissa Sansour Duration: 9 min Year: 2008 Type: Video Art Date: Saturday 19th April Time: 20:00 Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3
Stories from Behind the Wall

This short documentary was made to highlight the medical impact of the closure of Jerusalem and the reinforcement of the Wall around the city and other Palestinian population centres. With testimonies from Israeli and Palestinian physicians, activists, and ordinary residents, it succinctly tells the devastating story of an essential healthcare system under a sustained assault – patients isolated from hospitals, doctors unable to reach their work, and permits denied to the most vulnerable.

Stories from Behind the Wall will be screened with Al Amari (After the Rain) by Sylvain Calves (see p. 16) and My Palestine by Dima Abu Ghosh (see p. 35).

Director: Alia Arasoughly
Duration: 24 min
Year: 2006
Type: Documentary
Date: Friday 25th April
Time: 18:00
Venue: SOAS, KLT

Tension

Palestinian director Rashid Masharawi conveys the palpable sense of tension that he perceives below the surface of daily life for the Palestinian population during the period of the “peace process.” The film focuses on the act of observation itself, eschewing spoken dialogue altogether for a narrative that is produced rather through the editing of images, music, and incidental sounds on the track. Tension is organized around the natural cycle of sunrise and sunset, restated in terms of another “natural” work cycle: the many waves of Palestinian day workers who move through gates and checkpoints to labour in Israel and return each evening. This is a far too rarely seen work of exceptional quality by one of Palestine’s foremost directors.

Tension will be screened with Measures of Distance by Mona Hatoum (see p. 33), The Shooter by Ihab Jadallah (see p. 51), Around by Mohanad Yaqoubi (see p. 19) and SBARA by Larissa Sansour (see p. 45).

Director: Rashid Masharawi
Duration: 26 min
Year: 1998
Type: Documentary
Date: Saturday 19th April
Time: 20:00
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3
Larry Towell is the only Canadian member of the legendary Magnum Photos agency, known for its humanist and universal approach. Towell belongs to this tradition. His curiosity may guide him sometimes to the heart of conflicts, but his works express a particular sense of intimacy. This documentary reveals the artist and the man through his photographic work and his open meditations on life and the creative process. The film was shot in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (West Bank and East Jerusalem), at the border between Mexico and the United States (States of California and Baja California), in New York, and in Southern Ontario, Canada. Towell’s breathtaking images are bound together in this work by multiple notions of territory – forbidden territories, occupied territories, creative territories, and territories of refuge.

**Territories**

Director: Mary Ellen Davis
Duration: 65 min
Year: 2007
Type: Documentary
Date: Tuesday 22nd April
Time: 18:15
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

**A Day in Palestine** by Mary Ellen Davis, José García-Lozano and Will Eizlini

**Meet Me Out of The Siege** by Jessica Habie
The Dupes

Based on Palestinian author Chasim Kanafani’s novel, Men Under the Sun, this stark black and white film traces the destinies of three Palestinian refugees brought together by dispossession and hope for a better future. The setting is Iraq in the 1950’s and the protagonists, concealed in the steel tank of a truck, are trying to make their way across the border into Kuwait.

The Dupes is one of the first Arab films to directly address the Palestinian predicament and remains today a landmark film and a political call to action.

“A classic masterpiece of Arab cinema” – Arab Film Net

“Skilfully directed and crisply photographed…” – Seattle Times

The Dupes will be introduced by the prominent scholar of Arabic literature Prof. Sabry Hafez.

Director: Tawfik Saleh
Duration: 107 min
Year: 1972
Type: Fiction
Date: Thursday 24th April
Time: 18:15
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

The Shooter

“Palestine is occupied by the international media. It is being staged by the international media for sensational newscasts. Palestinians have become “performers” of dramatic international evening newscasts…” Jadallah’s short film looks in this way to explode questions of violence, stereotypes, conflict, and consumer-media from the perspective of a new generation of aspiring artists based in Palestine. Detached from many of the daily horrors of the occupation, Ramallah filmmaker and artist Jadallah feels himself nonetheless compelled by producers, funders, collaborating artists, and viewers to present himself and his work in accordance with a “meta-script” composed of victims, violences, and shooters. The film is at once a parody and a rejection of these constraints.

The Shooter will be screened with Measures of Distance by Mona Hatoum (see p. 33), Around by Mohanad Yaqoubi (see p. 19), SBARA by Larissa Sansour (see p. 45), and Tension by Rashid Mashrawi (see p. 47).

Director: Ihab Jadallah
Duration: 8 min
Year: 2007
Type: Fiction
Date: Saturday 19th April
Time: 20:00
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3
The Zoo

A truly unique look at life in the West Bank through the eyes of Palestine’s one and only zookeeper–amburger. Like the town itself, the zoo has been hit hard by Israeli army raids; when its zebras succumbed to Israeli’s Wall. Within this urban canton lies Qalqilya Zoo. Like the town itself, the zoo has been hit hard by Israeli army raids; when its zebras succumbed to Israeli’s Wall.

The Zoo

by Hayden Campbell (see p. 52)

Tunnel Trade

explores how a handful of individuals from Rafah have gone underground to tunnel trade

Tunnel Trade

by Akram Al Ashqar (see p. 23).

The Zoo

Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

Type: Documentary

Duration: 43 min

Time: 15:00

Date: Saturday 19 April

Venue: Barbican, Cinema 3

First Picture by Akram Al Ashqar (see p. 23).
Untitled Part 3B: (As If) Beauty Never Ends

Working directly and viscerally as well as metaphorically, this video art short by Lebanese artist Jayce Salloum provides an eloquent response to the Palestinian dispossession. Moving among ambient imagery – orchids blooming – and news broadcast horrors – the aftermath of the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre – the study soon turns to the abstractions of space – clouds and satellite images. These images meet the voice over of Abdel Majid Fadl Ali Hassan (a refugee living in the Bourj El Barajneh camp) recounting a story told by the soon turns to the abstractions of space – clouds and satellite images. These images meet the voice over of Abdel Majid Fadl Ali Hassan (a refugee living in the Bourj El Barajneh camp) recounting a story told by the Palestinian-American university professor, who has lived in the USA for more than thirty years. The film covers Kafkaesque processes which forced Al-Arian, despite not being found guilty, to negotiate a pika bargain including his deportation.

USA vs Al-Arian

In 2003, Sami Al-Arian was accused of giving financial support to a terrorist organization and was held in solitary confinement for over three years. The case of Sami Al-Arian was one of the first major cases of the Patriot Act, passed hastily after September 11, 2001. Al-Arian’s six-month trial ended without a single guilty verdict. But because the jury was hung on some of the counts Al-Arian remained in jail as the prosecution threatened to retry him. This documentary is a close portrait of a Palestinian-American family facing terrorism charges levied by the U.S. Government. For years, Nahla Al-Arian and her children fight to prove the innocence of husband and father Sami, a Palestinian refugee and university professor, who has lived in the USA more than thirty years. The film covers Kafkaesque processes which forced Al-Arian, despite not being found guilty, to negotiate a pika bargain including his deportation.

USA vs Al-Arian will be followed by a Q & A session with the UK’s leading rights lawyer, Gareth Pierce, whose work with victims of miscarriages of justice, and defense of the right to due process of political and security detainees in the UK as well as abroad will allow her to bring the lessons of the Al-Arian case to bear on the realities of post 7/7 British judicial processes affecting Muslims and other minorities in the UK. The session will be chaired by Asad Rehman.
Directors: Ayreen Anastas & Rene Gabri
Duration: 118 min
Year: 2006
Type: Documentary
Date: Tuesday 29th April
Time: 18:00
Venue: SOAS, KLT

Directors: Raneen Geries
Duration: 10 min
Year: 2006
Type: Documentary
Date: Friday 18th April & Saturday 19th April
Time: 19:00 (Fri.) & 17:00 (Sat.)
Venue: Barbican, Cinema 1 (Fri.) & Cinema 3 (Sat.)

Women's Testimonies of the Nakba
This short documentary collects the oral history testimonies of the Nakba. The film aims to convey through these testimonies a sense of women's lives in rural Palestinian communities prior to, during, and after the Nakba, and by doing so to contribute to a fuller understanding of the different and vital roles played by Palestinian women during this period. The documentation forms part of a wider series of oral history projects undertaken by the Zochrot organisation in Israel.

Women's Testimonies of the Nakba will be screened with Nakba Archive – A Documentary Report by Diana Allan and Mahmoud Zeidan (see p. 37) - both films will be followed by a panel discussion with filmmakers Diana Allan, Mahmoud Zeidan, and Raneen Geries, and historians Karma Nabulsi and Ilan Pappe. This special session on the Nakba and oral history video-documented will open the 2008 Festival on Friday 18th April, and be repeated on Sat 19th – advanced booking is recommended.

What Everybody Knows
In the spring of 2006, Ayreen Anastas (Pasolini Pa* Palestine) and Rene Gae travelled to Palestine-Israel, searching, researching, and witnessing circumstances in the country. They created a series of videos that document their encounters with people struggling, resisting, surviving, and living everyday lives. They meet a geographer, a professor, an activist, a former detainee, an architect, bedouin. What Everybody Knows is an attempt to think about the question of Palestine and articulate it through the experiences that these characters offer. The video moves between documentary and experimental structures, and creates an immersive, psychological and geographical expanse as it brings these living testimonies together in an epic journey into the core of the Palestinian experience in Israel-Palestine today.
Syria on Screen
9th & 10th of May 2008

A weekend of experimental, art, documentary, and fiction Syrian films to be presented for the first time in London, featuring Hala al-Abdalla, Ammar al-Beik, and Omar Amiraly, amongst others.

At Khellili Lecture Theatre (KLT)
School of Oriental & African Studies
Thornhaugh St.
Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG

For further details and information please contact us at:
mia@khellili.com
Or visit our website at www.syrissionline.com

18 April - 2 May 2008

Homeland Lost

By Alain Gignoux

To complement the Film Festival, a free exhibition Homeland Lost will be on display in the Cinema 1 foyer. Homeland Lost is a photographic essay that juxtaposes portraits of Palestinian exiles with present day images of the places they left in 1948, as a result of the war that led to the creation of Israel. Gignoux's work provides an antidote to a western media saturated with images of exiled Palestinians as either extremists or victims, whereas the majority are individuals trying to build a life for themselves in complex circumstances.

The exhibition is organized by Palestine Film Foundation in cooperation with Nakba60.

www.nakba60.org.uk
Nakba60 is a London-based campaign organised by a group of activists and students committed to commemorating sixty years of the Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe). The Nakba refers to the events of 1948 when the establishment of the State of Israel caused the forced displacement and expulsion of up to two-thirds of the indigenous Arab population of Palestine from their homes, rendering them refugees. Sixty years on, Palestinian refugees remain the world’s largest refugee community, and the Palestinian people are still dispossessed of their basic rights.

Nakba60 is organising a series of cultural and educational events in the UK throughout 2008 involving prominent artists and intellectuals. These events will explore the silenced Palestinian narrative and historical experience of displacement and dispossession, and their importance for finding a just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Nakba60 will also highlight the vibrant contemporary lives of Palestinians, whether they are confined to refugee camps in the Middle East, unequal citizens of the State of Israel, struggling under Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, or dispersed around the world.

Above all, Nakba60 will celebrate Palestine’s rich culture and heritage, a living testimony to its people’s tenacious struggle for justice. www.nakba60.org.uk
Fri 18th April
19:00 Barbican – Cinema 1
The Nakba on film: Documentation, Memory and Return followed by panel discussion
Sat 19th April
15:00 Barbican – Cinema 1
The Zoo
• The First Picture
• A Tunnel Trade
17:00 Barbican – Cinema 1
The Nakba on film: Documentation, Memory and Return followed by panel discussion
20:00 Barbican – Cinema 3
Tension
• Manners of Distance
• SEARA
• The Shepherd
• Around
Sun 20th April
14:00 Barbican – Cinema 1
The USA Vs Al-Arian followed by Q&A with Gareth Peirce chaired by Asad Rehman
17:00 Barbican – Cinema 3
33 Day
• Organised Chaos followed by Q&A with Mai Masri and Katia Saleh
20:00 Barbican – Cinema 3
Notre Musique
• Channel Al Duwara
• Rico in the Night
• Untitled Part 3b: (as if) Beauty Never Ends

Mon 21st April
18:15 Barbican – Cinema 3
Return to Haifa
20:30 Barbican – Cinema 3
9 Star Hotel
• In Working Progress

Tue 22nd April
18:15 Barbican – Cinema 3
Territories
• A Day in Palestine
• Meet Me Out of Siege
20:30 Barbican – Cinema 3
Palestine in Fragments followed by Q&A with Dominique Daher chaired by Mike Dibb
Wed 23rd April
18:00 Barbican – Cinema 3
Palestine in Fragments followed by Q&A with Mai Masri and Katia Saleh

Fri 25th April
18:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Al Mari (After the Rain)
• My Palestine
• Stories from behind the Wall
Sat 26th April
15:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Jerusalem ... The East Side Story
• Dirty Picture (Hotel Diaries ?)
17:30 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Good Morning Jerusalem
• Lebanon Al Silva (Quotidian in Oblivion)

Sun 27th April
15:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Hard Ball
16:15 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Goal Dreams
18:15 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Aphal Jabber: Peace Without Return: Followed by Q & A with director Eyad Sivan

Mon 28th April
18:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Malachit
• Naim and Wadie’a

Tue 29th April
18:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
What Everybody Knows
Wed 30th April
18:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
Drying up Palestine followed by a panel discussion
Thu 1st May
18:00 Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS
All That Remains followed by panel discussion
**Tickets**

The Festival runs for two weeks, in two venues. In the first week, it is held at the Barbican Cinema; in the second, it moves to SOAS, University of London. Tickets for the first week are available from April 1st through the Barbican box office and the websites of both the Barbican Cinema and the Palestine Film Foundation. SOAS screenings in the second week are unticketed and free.

Tickets for screenings at the Barbican Cinema cost £7.50 (£5 concession) and a special 3-film pass is available for the discounted price of £18.

Barbican Box Office
www.barbican.org.uk/film
Tel: 0845 120 7530
(10am - 8pm Mon-Sat. & 12 - 6pm Sun.)
PFF (queries and contacts)
www.palestinefilm.org
E-mail: info@palestinefilm.org

**Barbican Centre**
Silk St.
London EC2Y 8DS
Nearest tubes: Barbican, Moorgate, Liverpool St.
Box Office: 0845 120 7530

**School of Oriental & African Studies**
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