

GUTTERMOONS

A Festival of Activist Cinema

19th – 21st September, 2014 | Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, Saket

INTRODUCTION

It is as difficult to trace a history of activism in the cinema as it is to trace a history of activism in the world. There is a reason why the popular perceptions of *activism* ascribe it a political or a social connotation; the same reason that 'activism' as a verb evokes an entrenched, unchanging set of fragmented images: protesters, fire, slogans, placards, violence – it is because 'activism' remains one of those concepts that the contemporary society is desperate to seek a proper, universal definition of. This is a war waged on the pages of the dictionary – it is the belief of the 21st century that if it can allot a word space in this big book of definite meanings, it would no longer have to deal with its conceptual, sinister implications. So too with 'activism'. For it is perhaps easier to acknowledge activism as an area of human activity, with its own dress code, rules, procedures and stereotypes, than to acknowledge the other, scarier truth: that the qualities of inquiry, argument, opposition and resistance occur naturally in the human psyche; that these aren't anomalous or abnormal to his very state of being.

Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and Lightcube present **Gutter Moons**, a series of films that are activist – not because they pursue a strict, single code that all activist material must, but because in their very molecule of existence and the state of their being, these films, like *Boudu*, are fundamentally at loggerheads with the world around them. Their 'activism' is not therefore an agenda, as much as it is a trait; not as much as their instrument, as their very nature.

SCHEDULE

19th September, '14

5 PM

***The Inextinguishable Fire* / Harun Farocki, 22'**

Farocki names names: the manufacturer is Dow Chemical, based in Midland, Michigan in the United States. Against backdrops suggesting the laboratories and offices of this corporation, the

film proceeds to educate us with an austerity reminiscent of Jean Marie Straub. Farocki's development unfolds: "(1) A major corporation is like a construction set. It can be used to put together the whole world. (2) Because of the growing division of labor, many people no longer recognize the role they play in producing mass destruction. (3) That which is manufactured in the end is the product of the workers, students, and engineers."

5:30 – 5:45: The Mute Anarchy, a video-montage of the sequences of destruction in Chaplin.

5:45 PM

Ms. 45 / Abel Ferrara, 80'

A shy and mute seamstress goes insane after being attacked and raped twice in one day, in which she takes to the streets of New York after dark and randomly kills men with a .45 caliber gun.

20th September, '14

5 PM

Statues Also Die / Alain Resnais, Chris Marker, 31'

African tribal masks from Gabon and Benin had a major influence on Picasso and Georges Braque. Although unmentioned in the film, Resnais' composition and editing emphasizes this modernist legacy. The film devotes a section to the anti-naturalist forms and shapes in human representation. We see the beauty and fierce imagination in these detailed works, originally made for tribal rituals but stripped from context become relics which are dimly understood. *Statues also Die* was a strong enough critique of colonialism that it would be suppressed by the French government.

5:30 – 5:45: Rioting in the Cold, a video-essay on Pussy Riot.

5:45 PM

Introduction by Yusuke Kambe.

Harakiri / Masaki Kobayashi, 143

An elder ronin samurai arrives at a feudal lord's home and requests an honorable place to commit suicide. But when the ronin inquires about a younger samurai who arrived before him things take an unexpected turn.'

21st September, '14

5 PM

Contra City / Djibril Diop Mambety, 22'

A somewhat-humorous look at the city of Dakar, its people, architecture, politics, social behavior, and even the white French tourists, and especially the influence of France's culture and its contrast with the indigenous culture of Senegal pre-colonization but still present in Dakar.

5:45 PM

Special Screening

Kiran Nadar Museum of Art | 145, DLF South Court Mall, Saket, New Delhi
Video Essays, Lectures, Interactions with Directors | **19th September -21st September** | Starts **5 PM**
*For free registrations/schedule, contact: 011-49160000 | 7838340196 | suraj.prasad@lightcube.in
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