

Somewhere between here and now

A video screening & conversation
Thursday, November 20

LA Freewaves presents ***Somewhere between here and now***, an evening of video works and conversation curated by Suzy M. Halajian. Artists include Basma Alsharif, Marwa Arsanios, Marwan Hamdan, Joe Namy, Christine Rebet, and anthropologist and filmmaker Joanne Nucho. The event is located at the Hollywood Hookah Lounge.

“You’re watching through the cold and dark. You’re watching through the cold and dark. How can I reach you? You’re watching through the cold and dark. You’re watching through the cold and dark. How can I get through?...” – Christine Rebet, *A Lullaby*

Somewhere between here and now closely considers this opening inquiry. Rebet's appropriation of John Cage's *A Lullaby* (1993) is mimicked by a parrot, whose recital strips the words of their specificity while urging the viewer to listen to what is being said. Starting with this plea, the program presents works by five artists who present a refusal to define a specific place or site, and question what indefinable places and their layered histories can offer towards our understanding of charged, mediatized contexts, as well as the contested politics and images of protest that shape ideas of place. The program does not settle on a particular locatable geography, but rather presents various places that do not need to be defined nor determined in order to be understood.

The program brings together works that highlight a narrator's engagement with the actual telling of a story, suggesting that the narratives we create do not only circulate through the act of telling, but through the individuals, objects, and relics that inhabit our personal surroundings. By merging seemingly disconnected experiences and appropriating multiple accounts through a playful engagement with storytelling devices, the artists teeter the space between candor and artifice, offering subjective and varied relationships to the stories and objects that define us. They impress the notion that the past can be used to question what lies ahead. More pointedly, that we can get closer to understanding the present through restaging and reinterpreting past events.

Further responding to the hookah lounge as a communal place for gathering and game playing, ***Somewhere between here and now*** conflates the artist's or performer's private stories and the shared space of the lounge. It considers works that address the narrator's personal space as a poetic and emotional site where personal stories are created, imagined, performed, and internalized. While 'play' is enacted, it is performed as a critical and subversive tool that allows shifts in artistic persona and the assumption of numerous voices in a given story. The performer in costume, the confession of intimate secrets, and the presentation of indecipherable visual codes and landscape complicate these scenarios, and introduce strategies of dramatization and imitation. These acts not only point to the performer-staged center, but to the surrounding spaces where found and constructed structures are animated and abstracted. They call attention to the tenuous nature of these authored spaces, pointing to the way images and objects are fixed within a particular order, then suggesting alternative stories and meanings through their engagement with these personal sites of production.

Also, caption needs to be added:

Image: Christine Rebet, *A Lullaby*, 2012, HD video, 1:48 min. Courtesy of the artist.