

In the category FIRST WORK

Au-delà du Mur

Danseuses

Le Temps d'après. Les Balkans de Predrag Matvejevic

Pic-Nic

Six Floors to Hell



Au-delà du Mur – Marie-France BARRIER

57 minutes, 2007

Production : PG Invest International – OM Gaia
Production (France)

Though fate decided they should be enemies, they have chosen to live in harmony. Bassam, Sharon, Aziz and Zohar were all born with dual Israeli and Palestinian citizenship, bearing the double stigmata of "victims" and "aggressors". "Au-delà du Mur" is the story of a universal task – forgiveness. It is set right at the heart of the Israeli-Palestine conflict, in which, as in a subtle game of shattered mirrors, one person's victim is another's aggressor. The film is built round the interwoven lives of four characters all of whom have directly suffered from the conflict. Two of them lost a brother: one is an Israeli woman, the other a Palestinian man. The two others were directly involved in armed confrontation, one as commander of the Israeli army's Special Forces, the other as a Fatah leader during the first Intifada. The first-hand accounts of these four people invite us to look again at the chronology of a process bogged down in pain and anger, though confrontation continues and some long-held beliefs crumble away, where today there is a real desire for dialogue and understanding.

Marie-France BARRIER is a young director whose sensitivity and power of observation have been deeply marked by several years travelling (Africa, Middle and Near East, India, South East Asia and Eastern Europe) while she was still a student of human geography. She wants her first film "Au-delà du Mur" to be the beginning of a body of work generating hope. Convinced that her role as young film-maker is to make people aware, to stimulate the best in everyone and to suggest new avenues of thought, she chose to pass on these messages of wisdom from the lives of almost ordinary people. At the moment she is collaborating on Nicolas Hulot's first film.



Danseuses – Céline BARGE

51 minutes, 2007

Production: Al Ayn Productions (Egypt)

They are between 17 and 40, young girls, wives, mothers from all over Egypt – all dance to live. All are popular dancers in Cairo. The film follows them to the hairdressers, in the hostels for dancers, at weddings, cabarets, on stage, back-stage – always aiming to show the richness of their lives concealed beneath the artifice of dance – and make-up. The reality is quite different from the stereo-types of oriental dance.

Céline BARGE is a researcher associated with CEDEJ, the French research centre in Cairo where she has worked for ten years. Her thesis research was on everyday mobility in Cairo. She is an associate producer at Al Ayn Productions and has collaborated on several films and documentaries in Egypt and in France. "Danseuses" is her first film.



Le Temps d'après. Les Balkans de Predrag Matvejevic – Graziano CONVERSANO

55 minutes, 2007

Production: Rai Educational and Movie Movie srl (Italy)

This is the pilgrimage of the intellectual and writer, Predrag Matvejevic, across the land of his birth, former Yugoslavia, a land divided and torn by history. It's about a people's identity deformed by a nationalist vision, a vision of a secular country

where the State is everything, a vision which has now given way to a multi-confessional society. From the old bridge at Mostar, destroyed and then after the war rebuilt, this journey to the heart of time takes us through Sarajevo, the city worst hit during the war, to arrive at Zagreb, the Croat town Predrag Matvejevic was forced to leave after loaded threats. Matvejevic believes we have to look at the past to learn about the present and move towards the future, for "a people do not exist without memory."

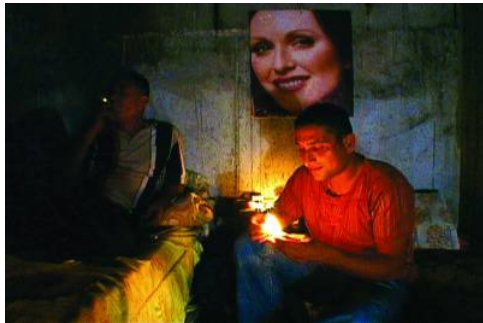
Born in Putignano (Bari) **Graziano CONSERVANO** studied at Rome's La Sapienza University, where he passed his masters in DAMS (faculty of art, music and theatre) with a thesis on digital cinema. In 1996 he obtained a sound recordist diploma at Bologna's Fonoprint Studio and in 1997 he made the short film "Fossili", which won him the prize at the "Vedo Corto" short film festival. In 2000 he wrote and directed the short film "Merendina" which won the prize at Milan's Festival of Independent Cinema and honourable mention at the Pesaro Festival of Alternative Film.



Pic-Nic – Eloy ENCISO
75 minutes, 2007
Production: I.B. Cinema (Spain)

A sceptic from Galicia, a bantering man from Madrid, an obstinate man from Aragon, an argumentative man from Asturia, a charlatan from Argentina and a man from Navarre. For several years all have come together on the same beach with the same obsession: to be the first to claim possession of part of their sandy territory. Each year these wandering knights, armed with parasols, struggle against an inescapable aspect of reality: the passage of time. Through these characters Eloy Encisco offers us a portrait of conservative Spain today.

Eloy ENCISCO graduated in documentary film-making from the International Film School in Cuba's San Antonio de los Banos. Pic-Nic is his first full-length film. He received the Benibecas Award 2004 for the best documentary project and also received the Panasonic Prize in 2005 in the Doc'Amateur Film Festival.



Six Floors to Hell – Jonathan BEN EFRAT
52 minutes, 2007
Production: Video 48 (Israel)

Jalal Hamdan is one of many Palestinians to slip into Israel to work. With hundreds of others he spends his nights hidden six floors below ground in the basement of an unfinished shopping mall near Tel Aviv. Jalal's dream is to earn enough money to be able to marry his fiancée. A journey into the shadows, where only the optimism of this young lover lights the way: "In the dark," he says, "the only thing left to think about is love."

Six Floors to Hell won the prize for Best Editing at Docaviv 2008, the Tel-Aviv International Documentary Film Festival. The jury justified its choice because *"this film shines light into the darkest corners of Israel today. It moved us as no other film through its emotional strength."*

Jonathan BEN EFRAT has been a journalist specialising in Gaza and the occupied territories (2000 – 2005) for the magazine "Etgar". He made the documentary "Breaking Walls", prize winner at the 2005 Grenada Festival and "The Mall", a short documentary commissioned by the WHO, also winning several prizes.