

**Los Angeles Filmforum presents:**  
*minutes, hours, days*  
**Online, Saturday August 21–Monday August 23, 2021**

Los Angeles Filmforum is the city's longest-running organization dedicated to weekly screenings of experimental film, documentaries, video art, and experimental animation. 2021 is our 46<sup>th</sup> year. [www.lafilmforum.org](http://www.lafilmforum.org)

**Conversation: August 22, 2021 at 8pm PDT, In person via Zoom: Filmmaker Rania Stephan in conversation with Guest Programmer Zaina Bseiso**

This month marks one year since the Beirut port explosion. On August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, people took to the streets to mourn, remember, and grieve collectively; only to be met with tear gas and unsolicited violence. Events repeat themselves and the cycle of corruption and neglect continues without a trace of accountability. Past, present, and future are in constant collision—in Lebanon as in the films—as a result of consistently unresolved needs. This program lingers on the repetition of events and celebrates Lebanese filmmakers who poetically engage with the weighty task of remembrance. Their work counters violence with images of power, desire and unfolded memories. A Film Noir-like investigation, recollections of a city increasingly estranged to its own people, and children's drawings that complicate the relationship between reality and fiction ultimately point at Rania Stephan's question: "What remains of war, death, and love with the passing of time?" —Zaina Bseiso



**Red Chewing Gum**

by Akram Zaatari | 2000 | video, color, sound | Lebanon | 11'

Courtesy Video Data Bank at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

A video letter that tells a story of separation between two men, set within the context of the changing Hamra, a formerly booming commercial center. The video looks at image making in relation to consumption and the possession of desired subjects. It examines issues of desire and power, and the attempt to capture fleeting time.



**Memories for a Private Eye**

by Rania Stephan | 2015 | video, color, sound | Lebanon | 31'

The first chapter in a trilogy which investigates the filmmaker's personal archive. Evoking the language of film noir, it foregrounds the fictional detective Marc McPhearson from the film

*Laura* (1943) by Otto Preminger, to help unfold deep and traumatic memories. The film spirals around a lost image: the only moving image of the filmmaker's dead mother. How is absence lived? What remains of war, death, and love with the passing of time? These are the questions that are delicately displayed for contemplation. While dwelling onto the past, the film weaves together images from different sources – private archives, cinema, television, YouTube – unfolding into a labyrinthine maze, to create a blueprint of remembrance itself.



**Children of War** (Les Enfants de la Guerre)

by Jocelyne Saab | 1976 | 16mm, color/b&w, sound, screened as digital file | Lebanon | 12'

Days after the Karantina massacre in a predominantly Muslim shanty town in Beirut, Jocelyne Saab met children who'd escaped, and who were deeply traumatized by the horrific fighting they'd seen with their own eyes. She gave them crayons and encouraged them to draw while her camera filmed. She made a bitter discovery: the only games the children engaged in were war games, and the war would quickly become a way of life for them as well.

**Total Runtime:** 55 minutes

**Biographies:**

**Jocelyne Saab** is a filmmaker and a photographer. She was born in 1948 and grew up in Beirut. In 1973, she became a war reporter in the Middle-East. In 1975 she directed her first documentary, *Lebanon in Turmoil*. She then covered the Lebanese war for fifteen years, during which she directed almost thirty films, including *Beirut, Never Again*; *Letter from Beirut*; and *Beirut, My City*. She was awarded the Order of Chevaliers des Arts et des Lettres for *Once Upon a Time, Beirut*. Throughout her life, she organized a number of important events including rebuilding the Lebanese Cinematheque.

Born in Beirut, **Rania Stephan** is an artist and filmmaker working with still and moving images. She has directed art videos and creative documentaries. Her documentaries give a personal and poetic perspective to political events. Archival material has been an underlying enquiry in her artistic work. Her most recent work investigates forgotten images and sounds that haunt the present. By juxtaposing them with new ones, she explores a diversity of meanings, triggering renewed narratives and emotions. Approaching images like an editor – part detective, part cinephile, she traces absence and remembrance originary to those images.

**Akram Zaatari** is a filmmaker, photographer, archival artist and curator. He co-founded the Arab Image Foundation with photographers Fouad Elkoury, and Samer Mohdad. Akram has been exploring issues pertinent to post-war Lebanon. He investigates the way television mediates territorial conflicts and wars, and is particularly interested in logic of religious and national resistance movements, and the circulation and production of images in the context of today's geographic division in the Middle East. His work has been widely exhibited worldwide in biennales and venues such as the Centre Pompidou and is in the permanent collection of museums such as Tate Modern and the Thyssen Bornemisza Contemporary. Akram was selected to represent Lebanon at the 2013 Venice Biennale by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, curators for the Lebanese Pavilion.

**Zaina Bseiso** is a film director, producer, and curator working primarily in documentary and experimental cinema. Her work explores the relationship between the materialities of place and issues of memory, surveillance, corporeality, and nationalism. She received her Master's degree in Film and video from the California Institute of the Arts. Bseiso is based in Los Angeles and was raised in Egypt by Palestinian parents. Her practice mainly traverses among Egypt, Palestine, Cuba, Mexico, and the US. She is co-founder of Bahía Colectiva, a community of filmmakers that collaborate in practice and curation.

Organized by Zaina Bseiso

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Los Angeles Filmforum screenings are supported by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Department of Arts & Culture, the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts, the California Community Foundation, the California State Relief Fund, and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. We also depend on our members, ticket buyers, and individual donors.

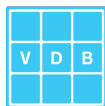
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Memberships available, \$40 Student \$75 Individual, \$125 Dual, or \$225 Silver Nitrate

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