



Image credit: Lina Selander, video stills from *Around the Cave of the Double Tombs*, 2010.

Frames of War

January 18 – March 23, 2015

Curated by Natasha Marie Llorens

**Participating artists: Ala Eddine Slim, ismaël and Youssef Chebbi
Chitra Ganesh and Mariam Ghani, Helene Kazan, Chelsea Knight
Jeewi Lee, Lina Selander, SITU Research**

OPENING: January 18th, 6 – 8pm

SCREENINGS + DISCUSSION: February 6th, 7-9pm & February 7th, 3 -7pm

framesofwar.net

* The website was created by the curator and artists in conjunction with the exhibition.

How do we recognize a photograph of war? Is it possible to make an image of the trauma that lingers in its wake? "Frames of War" proposes that picturing war's reverberations, and not only its sensational moments of acute crisis, is crucial. This exhibition takes its title and its premise from Judith Butler's eponymous book, in which she argues for the need to widen our range of recognition both of war and of the vulnerable bodies, populations, and histories that war produces. We need to see more, not less. This does not mean that we need to see the violence of war in more graphic detail. It means we need to understand the breadth of violence more clearly, to acknowledge it even in its most excruciatingly banal manifestations.

The artists in “Frames of War” suggest that this violence marks urban life far beyond the moment when actual explosives and shelling have ceased to be part of the everyday. **Helene Kazan** presents two short videos that investigate the impact war has on our ability to imagine coherent domesticity. **Lina Selander**’s silent film was shot in Hebron, in the West Bank, as a record of war’s architectonics: a military checkpoint trying to adapt to its historic (Islamic) architectural surroundings, a chain link fence above a busy commercial street. **Jeewi Lee**’s performative drawing of soldiers on the walls of an abandoned building in what was Berlin’s Jewish Ghetto is meant as an analogue to the Stolpersteine, individual cobblestones marking the place of Jewish residents persecuted by the Nazis. Both are insufficient to the task of memory, and necessarily so, yet both testify to how the past persists in the space of the city. *Babylon* is the filmic portrait of an informal city, one constituted almost overnight in the border zone between Libya and Tunisia. **Ala Eddine Slim**, **ismaël**, and **Youssef Chebbi** capture the informal economies and violent language games of a place forcibly suspended from time, a humanitarian zone.

If war today is inescapably urban, it is also obsessed with the flow of information. The debate about contemporary media coverage and the almost instantaneous global distribution of violent images focuses on one aspect of this flow, but its importance is also—more subtly, perhaps—constituted by the distinction between stories that are told and stories that are erased, withheld, and obscured. **Mariam Ghani** and **Chitra Ganesh** photocopy heavily censored national security documents that have been “released” to the public. They make images of war’s conspicuous absence from its own documentation. **Chelsea Knight** juxtaposes scenes of military interrogation with domestic negotiation, drawing parallels between the ambiguous forms of (rhetorical) power deployed in each instance. Her film seems to ask, ‘what do you need to do/say to get the story you want?’ Brad Samuels from **SITU Research** will speak about the Left to *Die Report*, which includes trajectory visualizations of a boat that was allowed to drift in the Mediterranean without rescue for days and on which 63 migrants eventually died. The report also reconstructs the paths of various French and UN vessels that claim not have encountered the stranded ship. In all three projects, the underlying motivation is in part to remind the viewer of the body that information describes, controls, makes invisible.

Ala Eddine Slim (Sousse, 1982) is a video artist and filmmaker based in Tunis. He has directed three short films, *L’automne*, *Une nuit parmi les autres* and *The Stadium*. **ismaël** makes video art and experimental films, working in conceptual and documentary photography as well as installations. He is also a poet, with a published collection entitled, *Letters to death* (Toulouse, 2009). **Youssef Chebbi** is a director, writer and composer. He directed two short movies, *Heading North* and *The Depths*, both in 2012. Their joint project, *Babylon*, won the Grand Prix at the FIDMarseille International Film Festival in 2012 and the Universities Price at the DocLisboa International Film Festival, also in 2012.

Chitra Ganesh and **Mariam Ghani** have collaborated since 2004 on Index of the Disappeared, which is both a physical archive of post-9/11 disappearances and a mobile platform for public dialogue. Ganesh was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, where she currently lives and works. Her drawing, installation, text-based work, and collaborations seek to excavate and circulate buried narratives typically excluded from official canons of history, literature, and art. Ghani was born in New York and lives in Brooklyn. Her research-based practice spans video, installation, performance, photography, and text, and operates at the intersections between place, memory, history, language, loss, and reconstruction.

Helene Kazan is a multidisciplinary artist who uses research and archival material in her practice to generate moving image and multimedia installations. Kazan recently participated in “Urban Encounters 2014: Movements / Mobilities / Migrations” at the Tate Britain in London, “Forensis” at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, “Exposure” at Beirut Art Center, Lebanon and “It’s Always too Late: Archiving the Anthropocene” at the Showroom in London. Kazan is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Chelsea Knight was born in Vermont and lives and works in New York. She received her B.A. from Oberlin College and her M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Knight completed residencies at the Whitney Independent Study Program (2010) and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2008), and was a Fulbright Fellow in Italy (2007). Solo exhibitions and performances include: The St. Louis Art Museum, The Brooklyn Museum, Aspect Ratio Gallery (Chicago), Momenta Art (Brooklyn), and Night Gallery (with Elise Rasmussen). Knight has exhibited and screened her work in group shows including Nouvelles Vagues at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Anti-Establishment at Bard CCS Hessel Museum, the Young Artists' Biennial (Bucharest), and the 10th Annual Istanbul Biennial. Knight will be a Spring 2015 Artist in Residence at the New Museum (NYC).

Jeewi Lee is an artist based in Seoul and Berlin. She graduated from Universität der Künste with Fine Art and completed her Meisterschueler degree. She is currently doing her MA in post-graduated study called "Art in Context". In 2012/13 she also visited Hunter College NYC. Lee works with different mediums such as painting, video, installation, and happening. Her works are thematically focused on social phenomenon, and visual perceptions. Representative motifs in her works are various and camouflage patterns. Her art pieces have been exhibited in group-shows in various cities and two solo-shows "Spurenlauschen" and "Abrieb" in Berlin in the past years.

Lina Selander works mainly with moving images in film and video, but also with photography, text and sound. Her works are often installations where these different media and components converge. She is interested in the image's ability (or lack thereof) to reproduce time, experience and memories, and in exploring the transformation of narrative forms. Selander's work has been shown at Index, The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Moderna Museet and in international group shows, biennales and festivals, for example in the Seoul Media Art Biennale 2014, Manifesta 9-European Biennial of Contemporary Art 2012, and the Bucharest Biennale 4, 2010. She will represent Sweden to the Venice Biennial in 2015.

Bradley Samuels is a Partner at SITU Research - an interdisciplinary practice working in design, visualization and spatial analysis. Focused on developing innovative strategies and new tools, SITU Research leverages a strong foundation in architecture, materials and digital instrumentation to collaborate with and contribute to a diverse array of fields. A core value of SITU Research is the applied nature of its work - the studio seeks to address challenges grounded in urgent contemporary spatial issues - be they social, scientific or artistic.

Natasha Marie Llorens is an independent curator and writer based in New York. In 2014, she curated "Prove It To Me," at REVERSE Gallery in Williamsburg, and co-curated "Failing to Levitate" with Kerry Downey at the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts Project Space in Manhattan. Upcoming exhibitions include "Threshing Floor," at the Cuchifritos Gallery. She teaches art history and theory at The Cooper Union and curating at Eugene Lang. She is a graduate of the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College and a Ph.D. candidate in art history at Columbia University. Her academic research is focused on violence and representation in the 1970s and 1980s.

Momenta's programming is supported in part by: NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Brooklyn Arts Council, the Foundation For Contemporary Arts, the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation, the Greenwich Collection LTD, The Jerome Foundation, The Lily Auchincloss Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, The New York Community Trust, The New York State Council on the Arts, and individual contributors including Agnes Gund, Jim Hodges, Robert Longo, Ray Mortenson & Jean Wardle, and many others .

