

Record, Reproduce, Record...

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Facing incessant destruction, looting, and denial, Palestinians have maintained a steadfast resistance against the project of erasure and forgetting employed by Israeli settler-colonialism. Rituals and classes, theatres and photographs, walks and ruins, melodies and stories are all mobilized for the spectres of memory to stay woke.

In *States of Fantasy*, Jacqueline Rose writes that it is precisely that memory evaded, that archive burned, that place destroyed, that evidence buried which returns to haunt. In *Capture Practice* and *Archive*, Arkadi Zaidés' work becomes the channel through which collectively evaded memories are not only captured and inscribed, but also displaced, abstracted and released in their most haunting form; undeniable, indestructible.

The footage from which these works emerge was filmed by Palestinians who witnessed or were subject to violence and human rights violations committed by the settlers and soldiers that sustain the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank. The events of everyday violence and crime recorded in these videos are denied, or at best overlooked. The organization distributing the cameras to Palestinian volunteers, and collecting and disseminating the videos is an Israeli information center for human rights, B'Tselem, whose aim is, through the Camera Project, to produce evidence towards accountability. The Palestinian camera operator, trained from an early age to fight against collective amnesia, offers the reach into the point of view from her or his home or street, and with the films, raises a mirror for the Israeli public to face its least acknowledged self.

Zaidés approaches the mirror, extending it into the body of every viewer. Selecting footage recording only Israelis, he extracts the gestures of violence and, as the performance progresses, draws a portrait of the Israeli/colonial collective body.

The *raison d'être* of every archive, of every inscription, is its' potential destruction. In *Archive Fever*, Jacques Derrida links the forgetfulness that is inherent to the archive to Freud's death drive (or destruction drive). The destruction of evidence—as truth manipulation reigns—is not limited to the material dismembering or turning into ashes of films and their traces on the Internet. The destruction of the archive occurs also when evidence is *reassigned*: displaced, stripped of meaning, depoliticized and charged with alternative signs. The denial of crime through the *reassignment* of its evidence leaves a lesser trace than ruins or ashes, as it is from the ashes that emerges the specter of that which is denied.

*Capture Practice*, like this spectre, is the ultimate preservation of this evidence, where memory is not only viewed and analysed but also internalized, performed, embodied and distributed. Zaidés identifies the movements of the perpetrators, extracts and analyses them, learns, imitates, and repeats them. Through his own body, and to exhaustive repetition, the archive is at once recorded and reproduced. As Zaidés learns and repeats each movement, initially awkwardly, eventually precisely, the viewer participates in the learning: recording the gestures and able now to reproduce. Repetition reaches the point that Frédéric Pouillaude refers to in his text "Dance as Documentary" as *condensation*, where the bodies and movements of various perpetrators are condensed into a choreographed representation of a collective body. While assuming responsibility for the violence inherent to the Israeli body as a tool for colonial domination, Zaidés' own becomes the site of inscription, a *lieu de mémoire* of the violence exercised on Palestinian land and people, now collectively learned and inscribed.