

# Material Traces of Lebanon: A Documentary Aesthetics of Feeling in the Art Gallery

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*Tess Takahashi*

Since the mid-1990s, artists have explored the status of documentary reference and the material trace in the gallery with increasing frequency. In part, this line of investigation stems from a situation in which the power of documentary images has been met with a widespread cultural uncertainty about their trustworthiness. As Hito Steyerl and Maria Lind write: ‘The double bind is strong: on the one hand documentary images are more powerful than ever. On the other hand, we have less and less trust in documentary representations’ (2008: 1). In response to this uncertainty, artists and filmmakers alike have turned increasingly to playful structures that challenge the traditional documentary modes that Bill Nichols has described as ‘discourses of sobriety’, those that ‘regard their relation to the real as direct, immediate, and transparent’ and are ‘seldom receptive to “make-believe” characters, events, or entire worlds’ (Nichols 1992: 3–4). Elsewhere, I have described this trend as a ‘speculative’ form of documentary, one that challenges sobriety, in that it utilises experimental modes to speculate about the line between fiction and non-fiction, employing structures like ironic framing, fantasy, imaginative reenactment, lyrical interpretation, invented characters, fake documents, experimental animation and the creative deployment of found footage (Takahashi 2011). While many critics have attributed this recent explosion of speculation in the arts to epistemological anxiety spurred on by the proliferation of digital media, I should point out that such experiments with documentary, mockumentary and overt fakery are part of a long tradition within documentary cinema. What, then, is at the root of artists’ recent documentary investigations of the material trace?

Speculative forms of documentary art open up room for independent critique by emphasising not only the uncertain boundary between fiction and fact, but the indefinite margin between evidence and affect housed in the material traces of traumatic historical events. In the mid-1990s, artists' interest in the status of documentary evidence coincided with the digital image's supposed loss of photographic indexicality as a guarantee of presence.<sup>1</sup> While anxiety about the ontological differences between digital and chemically developed photographs and film alike has largely dissipated, the material trace continues to have an uncertain, even paradoxical status in the work of many contemporary artists. These documentary artists frequently interrogate the authenticity of found objects and analogue image technologies like 8mm celluloid reels, chemically developed contact sheets and family photos. Yet even as such speculative art works routinely question the material trace's capacity to serve as evidence, the emotional force of the indexical sign never appears to be doubt.

Rather, the often fictionalised, speculative stories that regularly frame the traces of political events and national traumas in contemporary art seem tailored to amplify their affective resonance, working to produce a new contingent form of documentary assurance that relies on the spectator's strong emotional response.<sup>2</sup> By documentary assurance, I mean the ways in which a documentary secures its evidentiary status – a function that continues to remain important, even in work that relies heavily on fictional modes. It may seem ironic that these playful documentary artworks evoke the weight of political and emotional magnitude via their speculation about material traces associated with 'sobering' events, such as war, genocide and the displacement of whole populations. However, I believe that this coming together of epistemological uncertainty with emotional force in the form of the material trace performs two important functions: it simultaneously re-grounds its documentary assurance in feeling and opens up a safe space for independent political critique under conditions where such speech might have unwanted consequences. I call this ambivalent rhetorical form a documentary aesthetics of feeling.

Speculative forms of documentary have been employed especially by artists whose work considers recent events in the Middle East. Such forms have been used by independent documentary artists like Emily Jacir, Walid Raad, Michael Rakowitz, Julia Meltzer and David Thorne and Paris- and Beirut-based Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige. Speculative modes of political independent documentary have become the subject of an array of recent international art exhibits, including Bard College's 'The Green Room: Reconsidering the Document and Contemporary Art' (2008), the Institute for Contemporary Photography's 'Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art' (2008) and 'Documenta 13' (2012), as well as a host of smaller galleries.<sup>3</sup> Exemplary of this trend toward speculative forms of

documentary that incorporate fiction, irony and affect in an effort to produce a safe space for political critique is the work of artists Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, who use speculative forms of documentary to examine the legacy of the Lebanese Civil Wars via its material traces.

## DOCUMENTARY IN LEBANON: THE ANECDOTAL AND THE LATENT MEMORY

Hadjithomas and Joreige belong to a group of artists who explore the history of the Lebanese Civil Wars and their aftermath through to the present day, among them Walid Raad, Rabih Mroué, Akraam Zataari, Jayce Saloum and Jamelie Hassan. The Lebanese Civil Wars (1975–91) were a time of continual uncertainty, when a number of secular and religious factions vied for control, a situation accompanied by random violence, politically motivated detentions, individual disappearances and widespread displacement of the population. Part of the challenge of producing documentary about the Lebanese Civil Wars has to do with the complicated nature of the conflict. As Alan Gilbert notes, the roster of players included:

Various Lebanese political parties and their militias (Lebanese Forces, Mourabitoun, Amal, Hezbollah, Communist Party, and Progressive Socialist Party, among others), armies (Lebanese, American, French and Israeli, among others) and additional Arab militias, armies and parties (Palestinian, Syrian, Iranian, Libyan, Iraqi and Saudi, among others). (2002: 38)

‘If that last sentence seems somewhat dizzying’, Gilbert continues,

It only hints at the tangled historical knot that is the Lebanese Civil Wars of 1975–91. The many factions and their various backers, as well as the reasons and motivations for their decade and a half of internecine combat, may never become clear. (2002: 38)

In their exploration of the contested historical versions of the Lebanese Civil Wars and its ongoing repercussions, Hadjithomas and Joreige, like many of their peers, utilise speculative, playful, fictionalised forms of documentary that inquire about what can be known, rather than insisting on facts. Hadjithomas and Joreige employ both actual and invented documents, mixing them with fictional, often absurdist rhetorical modes. Walid Raad speaks for many in this generation of artists when he argues that his own imaginary organisation, The Atlas Group:

Produces and collects objects and stories that should not be examined through the conventional and reductive binary of fiction and nonfiction. We proceed from the consideration that this distinction is a false one – in many ways, not least of which is that many of the elements that constitute our imaginary documents originate from the historical world. (Gilbert 2002: 40)

Some critics of this mode, like artist Jamelie Hassan, have insisted that it is dangerous to produce fictionalised accounts of the history of the Lebanese Civil Wars, for fear that such interpretations could raise doubts about the real suffering and injustices that occurred (Hassan 2005). However, Raad insists that fictional framings of actual events and invented materials do attempt to get at the real physical and psychological effects of the Lebanese Civil Wars on a traumatised population (Gilbert 2002: 40). Understandably, such intimate and immaterial affective responses rarely make it into official government histories. Rather, they live on in individual memory, as well as in cycles of popular memory and material culture. On a practical level, the lack of documentation of affective experience (the feelings of doubt, uncertainty and fear that imbue Lebanon's still recent and devastating history) has prompted many Lebanese artists, including Hadjithomas and Joreige, to examine the intersection between the material trace, immaterial affect and the function of memory. In so doing, they attempt to represent the historical memory of intimate, personal experience and translate it into the realm of the social, in order to produce a form of testimony that intervenes in the contemporary political sphere.

Hadjithomas and Joreige investigate the subversive potential of the historical remnants of the Lebanese Civil War through two recurring concepts: the 'anecdotal' and the 'latent'. The anecdote's personal, minor, unofficial status can present potential resistance to official state histories. Because it lacks the supposed rigour and careful evidence of an academic history, the anecdote is fragile and malleable, travelling through time, by word of mouth, based on individual memory and hearsay. While the anecdote can move through cycles of elaboration and across social fields like gossip, however distorted and fictionalised, it carries a grain of emotional truth that can attain the power of cultural myth. Citing Hannah Arendt, Hadjithomas and Joreige write that anecdotes are 'moments of truth . . . moments [that] arise unexpectedly like oases in the desert' (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2003b: 63). The concept of latency, like the anecdote, suggests a truth that can come to the surface unexpectedly. For Hadjithomas and Joreige, the latent implies the potential of that which lies in waiting, sometimes barely visible, unconscious or dormant. It offers a confirmation of presence that requires neither complete legibility, nor full comprehension. Like the anecdote, the latent carries a grain of emotional truth that is sensed, rather than observed or proven. Like memory, both the

anecdotal and the latent function in temporal cycles, as they arise and reveal themselves when triggered by outside events. In their documentary work in the gallery, Hadjithomas and Joreige engage the cyclical temporality of the anecdotal and the latent through the structural repetition of the digital loop as a way of exploring the traces of memory, emotion and division that continue on after the end of the conflicts.

For Hadjithomas and Joreige, the emotional resonances of the anecdotal and the latent function in ways that are both subversive and political in a space that is largely independent. In looking to other means of writing history and telling the stories that matter most, Hadjithomas and Joreige examine the physical and affective remnants of a formerly full and living experience via film, video, photographs, manipulated postcards and maps, rolls of unprocessed film, physical ruins and personal testimony. The work described in this chapter was installed in *Videoworks: Wish We Could Tell* at A-Space Gallery in Toronto in conjunction with Images Festival (20 March to 17 April 2009) and consisted of a range of Hadjithomas and Joreige's installation works made over the previous decade; all but one, *Khiam 2000–2007* (2008), were no more than a few minutes long.

In part, the gallery space of a small, not-for-profit artist-run centre, such as that of A-Space, can be considered 'independent' because its curatorial choices are not subjected to a long chain of approval, making such institutions somewhat freer to exhibit what they want. While Hadjithomas and Joreige have exhibited widely on an international scale in venues both large and small, such independent galleries remain important for documentary art. To some degree, one might assume that the supposed independence of the art world from politics is enough to produce a safe context of reception for political art. However, I would argue that the speculative formal structures employed by many documentary artists who take up Middle Eastern politics allows them to speak critically in ways that are both earnest and ironic, thereby opening up a space for independent political critique that slips under the radar of government censorship. One of the formal structures that encourages the undecidability between straightforward and satirical forms of speech is that of the loop.

#### THE SPECTATOR IN THE GALLERY, THE LOOP AND THE MATERIAL TRACE

The structure of the loop is thematically important for the work of Hadjithomas and Joreige, who look to the aftermath of the Lebanese Civil Wars and the cycles of memory and cultural practice that underlie present conditions. For these reasons, while they have also made documentaries and narrative features, their use of the digital loop in the independent space of the gallery constitutes

an important part of their practice. However, for many artists, the loop functions as no more than a convenient technological set-up to accommodate the peripatetic wanderings of the gallerygoer (and the limited labour of gallery staff). Since the mid-1990s, the moving image loop has become a fixture, whose iterations generally fall in two patterns.<sup>4</sup> First, there are those installations that approximate cinematic conditions, in which spectators sit, walk or stand in relation to a single screen, upon which an image plays in the ubiquitous looping form. Unlike traditional cinema, in the gallery the ambulatory spectator can move around and stay for whatever length of time he or she chooses, in a room that may be darkened or illuminated. However, the orientation of the spectator focuses on a single screen. All of Hadjithomas and Joreige's loops employ this mode. Second, there are single 'works' in the gallery that assemble a multiplicity of screens, objects and/or text in a space that the spectator must navigate. This second category draws on a form of mobile spectatorship that is crucially linked to our physical navigation of the ongoing proliferation of mobile screens, where our bodies and our attention moves in and around screens.<sup>5</sup> While the works by Hadjithomas and Joreige that I examine here are described as distinct works, their proximity to one another in a larger exhibition means that a spectator must navigate the demands of competing works and read them in relation to one another, an activity that encourages multiple interpretations.

The speculative documentary status of all of Hadjithomas and Joreige's work is complicated by anecdotal accounts of characters who are overtly fictional, such as Abdallah Farah. In this way, speculative documentary often functions as a parable in the form of a short allegorical story that illustrates a greater emotional truth. Hadjithomas and Joreige posit Farah as a pyromaniac photographer, who during the Lebanese Civil Wars allegedly recorded the devastation of Beirut by altering old tourist postcards to reflect the city's changed state. In the aftermath of the wars, Farah supposedly continued to take, but no longer develop, the photographs he shot. Rather, he made careful records of the latent images and placed the rolls in a drawer. Hadjithomas and Joreige ask: 'At what moment, and to what purpose, would Abdallah Farah choose to develop his films – to subject his images to light?' (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2002: 45) Such a revelation, they suggest, could only take place once the circumstances of the country and the conditions for encountering images became conducive for such a 'revelation' to occur. These images of concealment expose Farah's aborted process and the ongoing trauma that supposedly prevented him from displaying his photographs to the world. This withholding of images produces in the spectator feelings of curiosity, empathy and loss, even as she understands Farah as fictional.

These photographs of the material traces of Farah's inability to move forward also point metaphorically to the emotional consequences of the

Lebanese Civil Wars on a generation of artists. As Hadjithomas and Joreige write, they come from a ‘region where it is not always easy to make images – or rather show images’ – due to ongoing censorship and what continues to be an uneasy truce between various political and religious parties years after the end of the Lebanese Civil Wars (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2003b: 71). Through the figure of Farah, they suggest that the conditions are still not yet conducive to having certain images – straight, sober documentary images – come to light. However, the indirect authorship attributed to fictional characters like Farah allows art-making to function as a safe and independent form of political speech about the continued danger of direct expression.

The fictional story of Abdallah Farah in this ‘documentary frame’ has the effect of a parable, pointing to a real loss that continues through to the present. It produces an aesthetic of feeling that evokes an emotional truth. In the following section, I examine how Hadjithomas and Joreige use the gallery loop to connect the political and affective registers of experience. For them, the loop functions as a structure that reflects upon changes in material traces of past conflicts as they cycle through the points of the calendar, the rituals of politics, the time of emotional memory and the progression of history. As we shall see, the structure of the loop also allows for the spectator’s reception of the work to vacillate between reading it as straightforward political critique and as personal meditation on loss.

### CYCLES OF POLITICS, MEMORY AND AFFECT

In the context of fictionalised authorship, invented images and uncertain rhetorical framing, Hadjithomas and Joreige’s digital loops portray the ephemeral material traces of a legacy of feeling in the larger population of Beirut. In this work, which draws on real events and situations, Hadjithomas and Joreige utilise the loop in two major ways: first, as a way of describing the cycles of politics and the ongoing political, religious and emotional divisions that have continued long after the Lebanese Civil Wars came to an end; and, second, as a way to trace the succession of individual and collective memory and affect. *Always with You* (2001–8) and *Distracted Bullets* (2005) are short video pieces that draw attention to ongoing social, religious and political divisions within Lebanon.

*Always with You*’s six-minute loop begins with a silent tracking shot through the streets of Beirut, past a sea of red and blue election posters bearing strangely sentimental slogans and the faces of candidates running for election to Lebanon’s Parliament in 2000. The posters seem to be everywhere and impossible to escape; indeed, they are ‘always with you’, as the campaign slogan of one candidate promises. The tracking continues, and the

once-bright posters become faded and tattered. Soon it becomes clear that this footage crosses not only the geographical space of the city, but also traverses an unidentified period of weeks or months, as one track fades into another. At the close of *Always with You's* loop, all that remains are red and blue scraps of paper peeling away from the stone walls of buildings, mere palimpsests of a long-past election. The material traces of these now long-gone posters are captured here. At this point, the loop begins again, as does the historical cycle of political elections, the hopes they raise and the differences they make visible.

Like *Always with You*, *Distracted Bullets* points to ongoing political tensions without taking sides. *Distracted Bullets's* digital loop documents an unofficial and ephemeral form of public display that is tied to historical cycles of celebration, and reveals lingering frictions among the many political and religious factions that call Beirut home. The piece presents a series of statically framed videos of the Beit Mery Metn area of Beirut taken over five nights of celebration: the Feast of the Cross; the night Emile Lahoud was re-elected President of the Republic; New Year's Eve; the night Nabih Berri was re-elected Speaker of the Parliament; and the night Samir Geagea, head of the Lebanese Forces, was released from prison after eleven years in jail. Each event, celebrated by a different group in the city, is marked by fireworks and shooting in different, but proximate, neighbourhoods (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2005). Shot in the dark from a ridge above the city, the flares and sparks of fireworks and bullets flash and fade in distinct pockets of the city below, as other neighbourhoods remain dark and quiet, revealing ongoing religious and political tensions years after the war's official end. The guns raised to express celebration, the artists note, are most likely the very same ones used during the Civil War. The linked videos 'establish a topography of the town and its divisions', Hadjithomas and Joreige write, 'the parts of the town which joyfully celebrate and those which remain silent in the face [of] that same event' (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2005). The evidence of that celebration is fleeting, mere flashes of gunfire and fireworks that die in an instant. The title of this piece, *Distracted Bullets*, is a literal translation of the Arabic term for 'stray bullet'. The artists imagine the potential these celebratory bullets have to create unsuspecting victims and the conflict that could easily erupt. While the casual viewer may not understand the political subtleties, the cyclical, calendric display of political and religious division rings clear as the loop begins again.

*Always with You* and *Distracted Bullets* capture minor events and ephemeral occurrences in order to challenge the proposition that the divisions that fuelled the Lebanese Civil Wars have been resolved. These works gesture toward the cyclical nature of public political life and the simmering differences that remain in a city torn apart by civil war for much of the past forty years. In this way, they capture a larger picture of a politically and emotionally fractured society. Two other pieces by Hadjithomas and Joreige, *Lasting Images* (2003a)





Figure 12.1 Night view of fireworks and bullets in Beirut in *Distracted Bullets* (dirs Hadjithomas and Joreige, 2005). Courtesy of CRG Gallery (New York), In Situ (Paris) and The Third Line (Dubai).

and *Khiam 2000–2007*, use the loop in a related way, telescoping in from the overtly public sphere to examine the function of personal memory, the trace and the status of witnessing that individuals continue to work through today. *Lasting Images* and *Khiam*, which I examine next, explore the ways in which material traces of historical evidence bear witness to the personal, affective experience of political kidnapping and detention.

Unlike *Always with You* and *Distracted Bullets*, which were shot and screened on digital video, *Lasting Images* was shot originally on Super 8 film and screened as a digital transfer on a gallery loop. *Lasting Images* presents a different kind of ephemeral document, an original Super 8 film that was supposedly shot by Joreige's uncle, Junior Kettaneh. Kettaneh, like 17,000 other Lebanese citizens, was kidnapped during the Lebanese Civil Wars and never heard from again. The story goes that in 2001 – a decade after the war's official end – the artists discovered the undeveloped film amongst the remnants of a fire, sixteen years after Kettaneh's 1985 abduction. The images it housed remained latent until chemically developed by the artists. Due to the fire's heat, they write: 'The film came out veiled and white, with a barely noticeable presence that vanished immediately from the screen. We searched within the

layers of the film itself, attempting to create the reappearance of lasting images' (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2003a).

As one watches the short loop over and over again, the ghosts of recognizable figures appear: 'a shadow, a hand can be seen, a boat, the port of Beirut, the roof of a house, a group of three persons, soon joined by a fourth' (Hadjithomas and Joreige 2003a). In themselves, these shadowy images tell us very little about Joreige's uncle, the circumstances of his abduction or the state of the country then, now or at the time of its discovery. The original Super 8 film bears the marks of the fire, whose heat obliterated its images, just as the events of the Lebanese Civil Wars resulted in obliterated documents, halted lives and forgotten stories. Like memory, these Super 8 images are blurry and fragmentary. More important than legibility, the piece suggests, is the continued and cyclical process of searching and the sense that certain things must not be forgotten. As Joreige said in a talk at A-Space Gallery, Jalal Toufik writes that we become zombies when we can no longer see ghosts (Joreige 2009). The story that surrounds the 8mm celluloid film, as a material trace of Kettaneh's existence, makes it a particularly resonant and poignant object that produces its veiled, but powerful political critique in the form of a personal memorial.

Like *Lasting Images*, *Khiam 2000–2007* – the longest piece installed in the A-Space exhibit – also interrogates the politics of latency, the material remnant of past events and the cyclical shifts in the way we remember.



Figure 12.2 White and veiled images of a group of three people in *Lasting Images* (dirs Hadjithomas and Joreige, 2003). Courtesy of CRG Gallery (New York), In Situ (Paris) and The Third Line (Dubai).

*Khiam 2000–2007*, which bears the name of an Israeli-run detention camp in southern Lebanon, was presented as a double-channel work with attached headphones and a bench, one screen showing the original fifty-two minute documentary from 2000, the other a shorter loop shot in 2007. The first channel features the talking-head testimonies of six former, long-time inmates of Khiam. Significantly, five of those chosen by Hadjithomas and Joreige are Communists – a group whose history during the Lebanese Civil Wars has been largely erased. In these first interviews, held shortly after their liberation from the camp, the former detainees focus not on the political conditions of their detention, but on the importance of their own secret creative activities in a place where tools and pencils – and thus writing and art – were forbidden. The tape includes very little of the inmates’ descriptions of the regular torture and interrogation they suffered. Rather, their stories detail processes like the removal of lead from a small battery to make a pencil, or the time spent rubbing an olive stone against the floor of a cell in order to polish it into the bead of a necklace. The piece ends with static close-ups of the delicate, fragile, decorative objects they created: a tiny woven basket, a crocheted flower and a comb adorned with carvings. These are supposedly the only material traces of the inmates’ creativity and will to survive.



Figure 12.3 Khiam detention site in *Khiam 2000–2007* (dirs Hadjithomas and Joreige, 2008). Courtesy of CRG Gallery (New York), In Situ (Paris) and The Third Line (Dubai).

*Khiam 2000–2007*'s second channel features a second round of interviews, taken seven years after the first. In it, the former detainees of Khiam are older, and they no longer focus on the objects that once brought joy and purpose to their lives. Instead, they focus on the absence of the physical site of the camp itself, which was destroyed in the war of 2006, leaving it a mere pile of rubble. Surprisingly, the former detainees say that they would have liked to keep the Khiam detention site exactly the same, to have the space that bore the marks of their creativity and ingenuity left intact. Hadjithomas and Joreige assert that the physical structure of the camp, only visible to the outside world between its liberation in May 2000 and destruction in July 2006, now exists as an image latent in the testimony and memory of these former detainees. In the installation of *Khiam 2000–2007* as a double loop, Hadjithomas and Joreige stage the relationship between historical time, emotional time and the material traces of the Lebanese Civil Wars. By focusing on the inmates' affective relationship to material objects and physical structures, Hadjithomas and Joreige allow their political critique of the conditions that led to the detention of these six inmates to resonate at a latent level. Through this kind of testimony, Hadjithomas and Joreige also comment on the absence of official accounts of torture and detention, which now survive only in the memories of those who lived it – and in documentaries such as these.

#### CONCLUSION: SPECULATIVE DOCUMENTARY AND AESTHETIC OF FEELING

The looped video works by Hadjithomas and Joreige discussed in this chapter formally and rhetorically allegorise the cycles of public and private memory under which material and affective traces of the Lebanese Civil Wars continue to circulate. It is these emotional, political and religious affinities that underlie official histories of a period characterised by, as Gilbert asserts, a complexity that makes any stable account of these conflicts impossible. However, in some ways the very instability of the official history opens up space for independent critical intervention. Documentary installations like those of Hadjithomas and Joreige, with their seemingly problematic conjunction of material trace and fiction, intellectual understanding and ephemeral feeling, invite the spectator to meditate on the bewildering emotional and epistemological status of the events of the Lebanese Civil Wars and their aftermath.

Today, in our fragmented, seemingly endless and increasingly redundant visual field, the omnipresent loops of the gallery installation, such as those used by Hadjithomas and Joreige, may seem to simply add to the visual noise we encounter on a daily basis. However, I suggest that the gallery loop not only mimics the conditions of, but counters, what Aylish Wood has described

as the ‘distributed attention’ of our contemporary encounters with images and information (Wood 2008: 220). On the one hand, our glances at the looping image as we move quickly through the space of the gallery can result in distraction and incomprehension. On the other hand, sustained time spent watching a short loop over and over, as one can also do in the space of the gallery, may facilitate a critical understanding that resonates at both an emotional and critical level. Either way, the latent political critique of Hadjithomas and Joreige’s images can rise to the surface unexpectedly, reverberating between those registers. In this way, such speculative documentaries produce parables of the political events they reference in ways that evade government censorship.

This is the kind of space galleries provide to the documentary: not only a space where installations and loops replace theatrical spectatorship, but also a place enabling a blurring of fiction and documentary that produces new affective significances in regards to sobering historical experiences. The gallery has emerged as a space where these emotional truths, grounded in real or imagined memories, can more easily eschew governmental control. In this context, the work of Hadjithomas and Joreige prompts us to think not only about how we produce the authenticity of a material document in the digital age. Rather, the formal conjunction of material trace and uncertain framing exemplified in Hadjithomas and Joreige’s video work produces in the spectator less a concern for the distinction between fact and fiction, than a prompt to consider the kinds of rhetorical and emotional value that we attach to various forms of documentary art.

## NOTES

1. Carrie Lambert-Beatty describes these as ‘para-fictional’ modes. To a large degree, I concur with her assessment that such practices emerge from a period characterised by ‘the epistemological shock that the rapid mainstreaming of the Internet has caused’ (Lambert-Beatty 2009: 78).
2. While I cannot pursue them here, there are suggestive affinities with Raymond’s ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams 1977: 128–9).
3. See also the Greek National Museum’s ‘Testimonies: Between Fiction and Reality’ (2003–4), the Australian Center for the Moving Image’s ‘Proof: Pictorialised, Constructed, The Act of Seeing With One’s Own Eyes’ (2004–5), the Toronto Power Plant’s ‘Not Quite How I Remember It’ (2008), Berlin’s KW Institute for Contemporary Art’s ‘Seeing is Believing’ (2011) and the last three Documenta exhibitions (2002, 2007, 2012).
4. For an expanded discussion, see Turvey et al. (2003).
5. Certainly, various forms of mobile spectatorship have been around since the beginnings of the moving image, with early cinema spectators encountering moving images at fairgrounds in the form of the kinetoscope, where one moved from one standing device to another. Spectators also encountered situations similar to those produced by present-day moving-image installation in the form of Hale’s Tours, where spectators were seated in train cars. As

historians of the function of the cinema in modernity have argued, both the seated spectatorial conditions of the theatre and the shorter, looped structures of the kinoscope, phenokistoscope and zoopraxiscope worked to negotiate the shocks of modern city life. See also Benjamin and Adorno's writing on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1960s and 1970s, gallerygoers encountered video art on monitors in a range of configurations, many of which was thematically, formally or technologically connected to the apparent 'nowness' associated with television and new modes of surveillance. This can be seen in works that incorporated live televisual feeds, live feedback loops and taped recordings.

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## FILMOGRAPHY

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Hadjithomas, J. and Joreige, K. (1997–2006), *Wonder Beirut* [Installation, including photographs, burned originals, lightboxes], Beirut/Paris, New York: CRG Gallery.

Hadjithomas, J. and Joreige, K. (2001–8), *Always with You* [Video installation, DVD], Beirut/Paris, New York: CRG Gallery, 5 mins.

Hadjithomas, J. and Joreige, K. (2003), *Lasting Images* [Video installation, Super 8 film transferred to DVD], Beirut/Paris, New York: CRG Gallery, 3 mins.

Hadjithomas, J. and Joreige, K. (2005), *Distracted Bullets* [Video installation, DVD], Beirut/Paris, New York: CRG Gallery, 8 mins.

Hadjithomas, J. and Joreige, K. (2008), *Khiam 2000–2007* [Video installation, DVD], Beirut/Paris, New York: CRG Gallery, 103 mins.