



Video Art

from video-installation Besides the Sex Beirut (2008-09) by Nadia Hosni © Nadia Hosni

JULY 09

28

NisiMazine



Dossier - Video Art

THE TIME IT TAKES *by Nadia Hotait*

In video installations, as in any other artwork, every project has a different life. Many lie in notebooks for years or appear as a vision for a second until they are revisited in the studio. When I decide to work something out, it usually involves months of work. First, the image is written, then sketched up in drawings, then in video-sketches, sometimes scripted and, finally completely doubted and I rethink it all; a very similar process to that of filmmaking.

I worked for one year on "*Besides the sea*", the last video installation I did. It started after my last visit to Beirut. I thought about the political situation and the incertitude in which the life of my friends and family dwelled. I visualized a Beirut totally sunk in water where its people are trapped, suspended in a city-water political and social lab.

Then, I conceptualized the project and the next summer in Lebanon, and with

the help of my sister and filmmaker Laila, we shot in a pool at an apartment in downtown Beirut and convinced people to lay down fully dressed in a swimming pool.

Later, back in Chicago, some months passed before I could attack the piece. I knew it needed something else.

I realized I had to re-shoot everything. Again, a pool and more people. I edited the sound with Ryan Dunn, until the installation transformed into a giant size choir of 10 people singing under water. With any installation piece, unlike as in cinema, there is always a need to adapt to the space. Personally, I like to consider the architecture and its edges so I need to be wherever my piece is to install it. Last time I installed the piece in a gallery in Chicago, it changed from a 4 channel video to 1 channel.

And then other projects aroused.

from video-installation "Besides the Sea" Beirut (2008-09) by Nadia Hotait © Nadia Hotait

