



PORTFOLIO

VALENTIN

NOUJAÏM

INFO

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ARTIST STATEMENT

Born in France in 1991 to Lebanese and Egyptian parents, Valentin Noujaim studied political science at the IEP in Lille. During his studies, he completed a year-long internship in an art house cinema in Los Angeles and wrote a research paper on the representation of women in Italian cinema from 1944 to 1960.

After graduating in 2015, he moved to Berlin, where he worked alongside director Karim Ainouz; most notably, he was co-author and assistant on the documentary *THF Central Airport* (Berlinale Panorama 2018) and the film *Mariner of the mountains* (Cannes, official selection, 2021).

In 2016, he joined la Fémis (Paris film school), in the screenwriting department, from which he graduated in July 2020. Between 2018 and 2019, Valentin directed two self-produced films. *Before she forgets Heliopolis*, a documentary, premiered at Punto de Vista festival (Spain, 2020). The second film, *The Blue Star*, is an experimental sci-fi film, supported by the Doha Film Institute and AFAC. It was presented at the Visions du Réel International Festival in Nyon (2020) in international competition, as well as at the Saatchi Gallery in London and at DocLisboa.

His first short fiction film, *Daughters of destiny* (produced by Kometa Films and Iliade et Films) is in distribution. The film has received the support of the CNC and the Normandy region. Valentin is also writing his first feature film *The night of queens*, a French-Italian co-production. He is currently in residency at Artagon in Marseille, developing a couple of videos projects and an installation.

In 2022 he is part of the Montrouge Salon. In 2022/23 he will be in residency at Ateliers Medicis in Clichy-Sous-Bois to develop a dystopian Tv show around the revolt of french suburbs in 2005. He will also be attending Städelschule for three

semesters, following the class of Gerard Byrne. In June 2023 in will be at Villa Medicis in Rome for a month residency.

Valentin Noujaim's work focuses on three axes: anti-racist movements, spatial utopia and the disappearance of social group or individuals.

In all of his work, whether through his films or his video projects, the artist brings to life marginal and strange characters, in fantasized universes that are close to the tale, while relying on a research of format by mixing DV, 8mm, digital and special effects.

His work is marked by social and post-colonial issues, questioning the relationships of power and domination that function in French society, through the prism of a strong ideal: revolutionary love or the love of revolution.

ÉDUCATION

- 2022/23 **STÄDELSCHULE** - Guest Student in Gerard Byrne's atelier - Francfort, Germany
- 2016-20 **LA FEMIS** - Screenwriting Department, Paris, France.

RÉSIDENCE

- 2023 **VILLA MEDICI, ROME**
One month residency
- 2022/23 **ATELIERS MEDICIS, PARIS**
9 months residency
- 2021/22 **ARTAGON MARSEILLE**
18months Residency

COLLABORATION / WORK

- 2022 Published article for *Draft Magazine*
- Online article for *Blue Magazine*
- 2021 **BEHIND THE MASK** - co-writing with Marie Losier
- 2020 Co-organization of the Palestinian Cinema Day (La Fémis)
- 2018 Vjing for the High Heal collective (artistic and musical performances)
- Organization of the conference «Nights, kisses, devoured hearts» at the Fémis with Nicole Brenez and Yann Gonzalez
- Workshop on the film *Ultra-Pulpe* by Bertrand Mandico
- 2015-17 Assistant director to Karim Aïnouz in development and writing of 3 feature film projects:
- Neon River (Feature film) - Shooting in 2023
- Marine of the mountain.
- THF Central airport

EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 **CNAC MAGASIN – LA POSITION DE L'AMOUR, GRENOBLE**
Curator : Céline Kopp
- GALERIE AIR DE PARIS – RESISTANCE AU LIQUIDE, PARIS**
Curator : Florence Bonnefous
- SALON DE MONTROUGE, PARIS, OCTOBER 2022**
Curators : Guillaume Désanges, Coline Davenne
- GETTING REAL BIENNALE, LOS ANGELES, SEPTEMBER 2022**
Curators : International Documentary Association (I.D.A)
- FESTIVAL D'AUTOMNE INVITE LES CHICHAS DE LA PENSEE, PARIS**
Curators : Mehdi Meklat & Badrouline Saïd Abdallah
- CONFORT MODERNE, POITIERS, SEPTEMBER 2022**
Curators : Draft 001 & Caroline Honorien
- ARTORAMA, ARTAGON MARSEILLE, AOUT 2022**
Curators : Aurélia Defrance
- UTOPI.ES ART PRICE, MAGASINS GENERAUX, PARIS**
I slither to the flames to become birth - 3 chanel video installation around my film *Daughters of destiny*
- PARALLELE FESTIVAL, MARSEILLE**
Furie : a puppet performance with Neïla Czemark Icthi
- 2021 **THE SELF AND THE OTHER, SAATCHI GALLERY, LONDON**
Curator : Barbara Matas
- AFLAM FILM FESTIVAL AT THE MUCEM, MARSEILLE**
Screening of Arab Films
- 2020 **CHERISH TV – ART GENEVE**
Curator : Mohamed Almusibli
- 2020 **INSTITUTO MOREIRA SALLES, SAO PAULO**
Missao Persefone (Video Installation) By Karim Aïnouz

FILMS

- 2022 **PACIFIC CLUB (SHORT) IN POST PRODUCTION**
Produced by Iliade&Films
- SATURNALIA (SHORT,FICTION) IN DISTRIBUTION**
Produced by Morph Films, Copenhagen
- THE NIGHT OF QUEENS (FEATURE, FICTION) IN DEVELOPPING**
Produced by Kometa Films
- THE CITY OF THE STARS (TV SHOW, FICTION) IN WRITING**
Produced by Ateliers Medicis
With Fanta Sylla, Lina Soualem, Edwin Nasr.
- 2021 **DAUGHTERS OF DESTINY (SHORT, FICTION)**
Produced by Kometa Films and Iliade et Films
(CNC - Aide avant Réalisation, Normandy Region)
- 2020 **THE BLUE STAR (SHORT, EXPERIMENTAL)**
Autoproduction - Supported by the Doha Film Institute and the Arab Fund for Arts & Culture (AFAC)
Visions du réel 2020 - Festival international du cinéma de Nyon (Suisse) - Compétition internationale ; DocLisboa 2020 - Green Years ; FIFIB 2020 - Compétition Court-métrage.
- 2019 **BEFORE SHE FORGETS HELIOPOLIS (SHORT, DOCUMENTARY)**
Autoproduction.
Punto de Vista 2020 (Espagne), Ecrans du réel Beyrouth 2020 (Liban), Documed 2019 (Tunisie)

CRITIQUE

Valentin Noujaïm does not wish to be encumbered by the rules of cinema, shorts or so-called experimental cinema, categories that, after all, organize the possible and the forbidden, those defined by a milieu, by the authorities that legitimise and finance, by the so-called structural. This is also why he has decided to fluidly splice the landscape of contemporary art and to make patient journeys between formats that borrow each other's codes. His latest film, exhibited at Montrouge as an installation, allows for a presentation of both the film – whose narrative should be able to be followed in a rather classical way – and extractions of hypnotic moments.

What do Valentin Noujaïm's films speak of? His obsession for what disappears. A bar that closes, a love that does not immediately reappear, an entire social class that is displaced. The disappearance is then a political, social and sentimental event. And what do his films show? People who are close to him: they are young, they are not white, nor cisgender. But to say that is already saying one thing too many, that many films that are usually geared to a general public and made by middle-class people, and which are the norm, would be more normal. So, if Noujaïm's films deal with disappearance then his aesthetics fit in with what he is. Of course, this "what he is" can appear as a political theme, for example the abused waitresses in *Saturnalia*, outraged by the behaviour of a minister, who finally organise their revolt, seem to embody "martial ethics of the self" as defined by Elsa Dorlin: "buried practices in which the fact of defending oneself by attacking appears to be the condition of possibility of one's survival as well as of one's political becoming." Yet, in Noujaïm's case, this is not the point, since it is too obvious. On the other hand, there is something that seems even more important: a colour, a brightness, a melancholy. There is also a tenderness.

Noujaïm's latest film *Le Pacific Club* is a documentary that shows a man called Azzedine, a meditation on the architecture of La Défense, and a dance, with animated voluminous drawings, all of this to tell the story of a nightclub that is now closed, and of a generation, Azzedine's generation, who was 18 years old in 1983. The film opens a new chapter in his reflection as a filmmaker: he allows himself to be completely nourished by the encounter with his protagonist, who narrates the film. It is a hybrid video-documentary, a new way of writing that accepts to be surprised by the filmed subject: Azzedine. He is unexpected and obscure and tells the story of the hours of partying spent at The Pacific, one of the

first clubs to welcome young Arab boys and girls from the suburbs, the first generation of sons and daughters of immigrants, before arriving at what haunts his story: the brutal outcome of the dream of integration, racism, AIDS, heroin. Azzedine speaks of a lost place and of all the dead.

Noujaïm's cinema speaks and thinks with purple goddesses that rise to the surface, it speaks of all that we have lost, and especially of the feeling of having lost it, a feeling that suddenly, as if by a miracle, becomes a trembling image before our eyes.

One... two. One... two...
This is a coup.

Eva Barois De Caevel

PACIFIC CLUB

in production

17 minutes - Creative documentary

16mm et VFX

Recipient of a grant from the Doha Film Institute

Recipient of the FORTE grant from Paris

Recipient of the post-production grant from the Ile de France Region

Synopsis

1980s. The business district of Paris, la Défense, is in full expansion. During the day, men and women come to work. At night, the district empties. Meanwhile, French President François Mitterrand proudly launches the monumental Grande Arche de la Défense in honour of the French Revolution : «Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité». At the same moment, under one of the towers of La Défense, the Pacific Club opens. It was the first nightclub to welcome young Arab boys and girls from the suburbs, usually banned from Parisian nightclubs. For a decade, they danced under the glass and steel towers. They represented the first generation of sons and daughters of immigrants who dreamed of integrating into France but who soon came face to face with racism, the AIDS epidemic and heroin. Guided by the voice of Azedine, 18 years old in 1983, the film highlights the segregation of Parisian nightlife, mixing archive footage and wanderings. The Pacific Club is a testimony, on film, of these forgotten and hidden places where immigrants lived, danced and fell in love.

This version is a work in progress

no sound editing, no color grading,

<https://vimeo.com/700724144/c24d7d91c8>







SATURNALIA

in post production

11min

Fiction, Digital

Produced by Morph Film, Copenhagen

With

Nadia Teheran, Marie Lydie, Cleopatra Mendès, Victoria Carmen, Rasmus Botoft

Original music composed by Nene Hatun

Synopsis :

One night in an opulent restaurant. Malina, Zenobi and Attila do their best to serve the customers who look like ogres wearing expensive jewelry. But tonight, the minister comes to dinner. The lovely evening soon turns into a bloody feast.

<https://vimeo.com/714600259/b113ebda34>







DAUGHTERS OF DESTINY

2021/22

Fiction (28min) and a 3 channels installation (17min)

Produced by Kometa Films and Iliade & Films

Distribution by Aspect Ratio NYC

Beneficiary of a production grant from the Centre National du Cinéma

Beneficiary of a production grant from the Normandy region

With

Djamila Imani, Djamel Djabou, Yuming Hey, Cleopatra Mendes, Aaliyah Lexilus, Tya Deslauriers, Leana Zeitoun

Original music composed by Crystallmess

Exhibition :

Utopi.e Art Price, Magazin Généraux, Paris 2022

Galerie Air de Paris, Paris, 2022

Festivals :

Lille International Short Films Festival, National Competition, Lille 2022

Smell Like Teen Spirit, Paris 2022

Fringe(s), London 2022

Les Mains Gauches, Marseille 2022

Synopsis :

On the night their favorite bar closes, Eden, Crystal, and Ibtissame, three young Arab and black girls, experience strange events: Crystal mysteriously disappears, kidnapped by a purple star.

Eden starts looking for the one she loves, until she discovers that she is trapped in another fantastic and strange world...

<https://vimeo.com/584891110>

password Daughters@2021









3 channels installation
for Utopi.es Art Prize - Magasins Généraux
in Paris, May 2022

VENUS RETROGRADE

2021

4 minutes

Fiction, 16mm

Co-directed with Nicolas Medy

Produced by Iliade&Films

With

Sonia Icti, Romy Alizée, Maxime Mallet, Myriam Taider, Cherry B Diamond, Yacine Jamoui, Deeqa Hussein

Festivals

Festival du film de fesses, Paris, 2022

Toronto Queer Film Festival, 2022

FIFIB, Les nuits du FIFIB, 2021

Imagine-Nation, Montréal, 2021

Synopsis :

Midnight strikes.

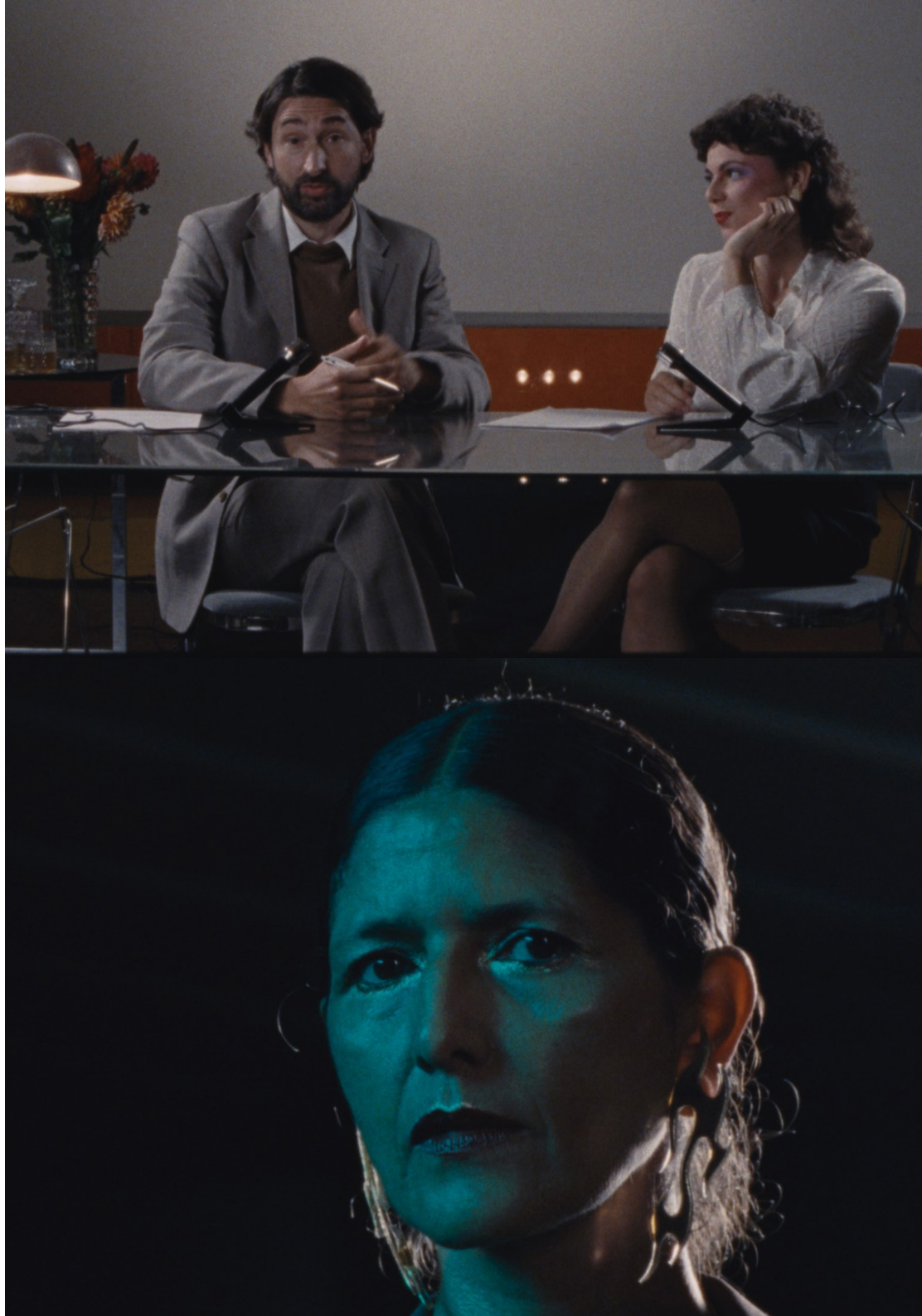
Two radio journalists are hosting a deadly boring cultural program.

The lights go out. A gang of women invades the studio to broadcast a message:

«one...two...one...two...this is a coup d'état»!

<https://vimeo.com/631870034>

password : VR2021







THE BLUE STAR / النجمة الزرقاء 2020

17minutes

Experimental documentary - 8mm, DV, 3D

Recipient of a grant from the Doha Film Institute

Recipient of a production grant - Arab Fund for Arts & Culture

Lebanon, Qatar, France

With

Denis Lavant, Ali Cherri, Annie Melza Tiburce

Exhibitions

The Self and the Other (International Student Film Showcase), Saatchi Gallery, London, Barbara Matas, August 2021

Festivals

Visions du Réel, International Competition, Nyon, 2020

FIFIB, Short Film Competition, Bordeaux, 2020

DOCLisboa, Green Years, Lisbon, 2020

Festival des cinémas différents et expérimentaux de Paris, 2020

Qumra, Doha, 2021

AFLAM, in partnership with the MUCEM, Marseille, 2021

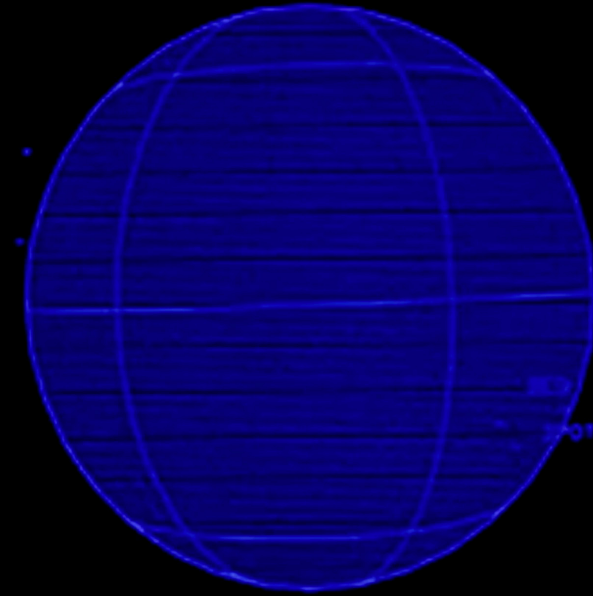
Synopsis :

It all happened on a dark night. The Man was too tired to be a stranger, too tired to be insulted by others simply because he spoke Arabic with a wife who spoke French with their beloved mixed race son.

He looked at the sky and shouted. But that night, far in the cosmos, a voice answered. The Blue Star promised them a new world; safe and without fear. He starts to dream about escaping forever there...

<https://vimeo.com/361382124>

Password : bluestar



TIME BEFORE ENCOUNTER = 0 DAYS 2 HRS 50 MIN



«A night like this one, a man screamed, the man couldn't stand being different, being the outsider. Far out in the universe, someone heard his call.» The film opens with the story of this desperate cry, as are, perhaps, all the cries of exile. The story of a «brown man» who dared to love a white woman. He speaks Arabic, his wife French, their distant voices intermingle, like a whisper, to tell us about their banished love. Valentin Noujaim dives into his family's archives to question the history of immigration in France, a country where his family has never been able to truly find its place. The film begins with images of a seemingly happy past - the birth of a forbidden love, a vacation by the sea... - but this happiness will soon turn to despair.

The Lebanese man, exhausted by the rejection of his new country, implores the sky to show him a parallel universe. A promised land for those who do not find their place on earth. The family film thus becomes a fantastic story and a political tale of an unexpected color. A blue star.

Elena López Riera - Visions du Réel





BEFORE SHE FORGETS HELIOPOLIS 2019

23minutes
Documentary - 8mm, digital, 3D
Egypt, France

Festivals

Punto de Vista, Spain, 2020
Documed Tunis, 2020
Ecrans du Réel, Beirut, 2020

Exhibitions

Cherish TV, Art Genève, Online, Mohamed Almusibli 2020
Filles de Bledards invites Leaving Dakota, Voiture 14 Marseille, Curator: Alexia Fiasco, 2019

Synopsis

My family has forgotten about Egypt.
I ask my grandmother, Malo, to tell me about the first part of her life, in Cairo.
I am confronted with the confused memory of an exiled Christian Arab woman, lost in a turbulent sea of memories soon to be erased. A troubled sea, between colonialism and confused heritage of Christians. An Egypt takes shape where her past, my childhood fantasies and my present merge, and where an imaginary future is created.

It is a film before the night follows.

<https://vimeo.com/329073802>

Password : malo2019





