



**Harun
Farocki
Institut**

ROSA MERCEDES 01: FAROCKI'S LIVING ROOM

“Hello Harun, Good to hear your voice this morning. I look forward to a repeat performance. For the record, I love to imagine future archivists sifting through these emails. I did not say that I am sick of intelligent films. I’m sick of clever films. Clever is a showy kind of intelligence, an intelligence that doesn’t serve any purpose except to flaunt itself. Clever films may ‘Wow!’ and surprise you, but they rarely make you think and they never make you feel. Perhaps I’m not using the right words but I hope you know what I mean.”

Marianna Maruyama (MM): This message was re-transmitted during “Farocki Now: A Temporary Academy.” We’ll hear more about that later. My name is Marianna Maruyama and I’m an artist based in The Hague. In this first issue of *Rosa Mercedes* I’ll be speaking with a few of the people who took part in “Farocki Now: A Temporary Academy” initiated by the Harun Farocki Institut in Berlin over four days in October 2017. Listening to the voices of the some of the people involved in this temporary academy attunes us to thinking about generational differences, possible changes to come, and the reason for getting together to study or learn in the first place. Over the next hour, we’ll hear from individual members of different study groups taking part in the academy, along with some of the members of the Harun Farocki Institut as well as some of its neighbors. The six study groups came from art schools, universities and self-organized spaces in Alexandria, Berlin, Jakarta, Philadelphia, and Potsdam.

Since such a wide range of people contributed to the educational, performative platform held in the House of World Cultures [Haus der Kulturen der Welt] and the silent green cultural quarter [silent green Kulturquartier] in Berlin, I took the opportunity to speak with a few of them. Most of their workshops, open conversations, group presentations, and screenings are documented and will be available at the Video Forum of the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.). I’d also like to mention that the framework of the temporary academy took place within the Harun Farocki Retrospective in Berlin. The first day of the “Farocki Now” academy opened at the

House of World Cultures, together with the opening event “Accessing Images.” Anselm Franke opened the evening, followed by an introduction by Tom Holert, Doreen Mende, and Volker Pantenburg. Sven Lütticken moderated the evening, which included re-orienting and highly relevant talks by Natasha Sadr Haghghian, Kodwo Eshun, Susan Schuppli, and Laura Mulvey. I won’t have enough time to reflect on these wonderful lectures, nor expand upon their deep relevance to the program as a whole, but I hope you will look them up in the Video Forum of n.b.k.

So this audio journal offers some of the atmosphere and sonic presence of the people who took part in the academy. Doreen Mende, Tom Holert and Volker Pantenburg, who comprise the Harun Farocki Institut’s Board of Directors, outlined the premise of this platform, explaining that it generated a space to “explore the contemporary relevance of Harun Farocki’s work, thought and practice by placing it in new contexts” and thereby “activating its productive potential.”

It seems to me that this academy was a kind of opening gesture, opening the door for diverse modes of thinking, and gathering people together in close proximity for a fairly short period of time. The newly-formed Jakarta-based collective Politicizing Image Ltd. [PiL] played with this proximity and conviviality in their presentation, inviting the audience to sit in informal groups on floor cushions, drink tea, crack peanuts and smoke clove cigarettes (or at least catch their scent) while they presented their ideas. While they weren’t the only ones drawing out the social aspects of this academy, they seemed to have taken notice of the social significance of the Harun Farocki Institut, what it means to the people who started it and what Farocki, in turn meant to them. I spoke about this in a conversation with the Jakarta-based Institute ruangrupa’s farid rakun. I asked him what questions he still had at the conclusion of the program, and what seemed to have been opened up by this convergence of people and places.

farid rakun (fr): One burning question for me that hasn’t been answered is actually the collectivity of Harun Farocki. For me, like how do people, this group of people – there’s something he lost there. Like, he left something behind that these people want to mobilize themselves, in order to – like they miss something when he’s gone. What was that? That, I am still assuming. There are only assumptions in my head. Besides the content, besides the cleverness, the intellectual part of everything, I think there is a certain type of forum or platform that he made, that these people miss greatly, that they want to recreate back with the institute. That’s my assumption.

MM: Do you see like, that there is a vacuum, and there is something that needs to be filled because he is gone?

fr: I wouldn't call it a vacuum, but maybe it is more like...a longing, because when someone dies – it doesn't matter, your mother, your father, your aunt – there is a space that they left behind that you cannot replace, but people want to memorialize these people in a certain way. In this way it becomes an institute that mobilizes people together. I hope it's not career-minded or economically-backed, which doesn't seem like that until now, or intellectually-based is okay, but I don't think it is that.

MM: I don't think so. I don't feel that.

fr: It doesn't feel like that. It's more social. Socially, there is something, more human-to-human based connections that it wants to create, using Farocki maybe as an alibi, I don't know, but maybe it's a good excuse anyway.

MM: Yeah, maybe it's a good alibi. He gave the reason.

fr: I would guess he created something. Tom and Doreen I talked a bit about this, and this is the way they are explaining. Like, we want to have that again, like the living room of Farocki or something, or the class of Farocki, you know, something like that. I think, because it is that important, I want to know how that can be recreated again and I want to learn from that. Maybe this is part of it as well. It needs to change into something else that is not 'replication of' the person who passed away already, but how could it be translated – in your case, it's your narration, it's your history again, in this case, it's their history as well. That's something that I'm going to pay close attention to them just because of that.

MM: Paying close attention to the moment of beginning, while something has already begun some time ago and with someone who is, *not* no longer with us, but with us in different ways that require learning on our part...seems then, to be part of our task. After talking with farid, I began to see how this temporary academy had to do with the institute announcing itself as a body-in-formation, making its presence known, creating new connections and strengthening existing connections between various geographies, modes of learning and teaching, and dealing with that elusive and ever-shifting thing called image.

In this audio journal, in addition to hearing from some of the people taking part in the temporary academy, you'll also hear from Stefanie Schulte Strathaus, one of the institute's neighbors. She is co-director of the Arsenal Institute for Film and Video Art. This collection of people and places, including another one of the Harun Farocki Institut's neighbors, the art space Savvy Contemporary, are at work forming this body. The temporary academy then, for all its temporariness, is in fact about something more lasting – it is about the institute proposing a possible role in the past, present, and future – and if we don't agree on the idea of the future, or the existence of one, then let's imagine it differently and just say it is proposing its role for an extended now. This social gesture of opening the door and inviting proximity then certainly concerns a process of finding a new vocabulary, operational terms to speak about this moment – an idea Doreen Mende suggests in her talk together with Tom Holert and Volker Pantenburg on the condition that is navigation.

Doreen Mende: But how can we speak about navigation if it is proposing the possibility, let's say, the potentiality of a new image regime? What was very important was to develop this kind of vocabulary in the form of a dictionary that allows us to enter that what navigation is, not by necessarily immediately defining what navigation is but by developing a language or a vocabulary to talk about what navigation is doing, in terms of its conditions of production but also in terms of the effects and affect of the constitution of subjectivity. Very important also what we discussed a lot is that – at some point we made the claim that navigation begins where mapping ends. So if we have the cartographic perspective of mapping, as a perspective from above, so to speak, the navigational perspective is from within. So what we have to do is to un-map this perspective of understanding space, and also maybe time.

Volker Pantenburg: An open question to me how the navigational thought or the paradigm of navigation on the one hand inherits these things that aren't there in the tradition of thinking and how it can be specified under exactly the conditions that Doreen laid out so beautifully, like the algorithmic, or however we want to call this contemporary condition of the image. So it's just a remark, it's not a statement, but it brings in this moment maybe.

MM: That was Volker Pantenburg responding to Doreen Mende, and bringing us to a shared moment of navigation as a lived experience. Oddly enough, the *lived* experience, for the attendees of the temporary academy these four days was mostly

spent in a place called silent green, a former crematorium, which is now a cultural quarter.

Coming up next, I'll speak with Marianne Fahmy, an artist and graduate of MASS Alexandria, an intensive, and by the graduates' accounts, "life-changing" independent studio and study program in Alexandria, Egypt. Marianne talked to me about her work and some of the themes she is trying to address with it. What struck me was the way she engages with – or navigates – the specific conditions of her local environment, specifically the harsh environmental changes taking place in Alexandria that have led to massive flooding. These changes are becoming harder to ignore and are due to a combination of rapid urbanization and global warming. Through her video work, she points to parallels between the precarious environmental situation right now and the Coptic language and its role as a living archive. I asked her about her interest in the Coptic language and found myself thinking about the "Farocki Now" temporary academy, and how, like the language, it also has to do with the transmission of a specific knowledge that asks to be put into use, integrated into daily life.

Marianne Fahmy: With the Coptic language you don't really have to give so much information on the background. It makes a statement of itself, of its history, so you can really go further with it and explore more, while in fact the language itself gives information. It holds a history in itself. The way we use it would make the difference, to change its context of the language because now no one is using it really, so giving it the ability to be communicated and used in daily conversations in a very simple way is actually a step for the language. So yeah, I guess this is a statement.

MM: Another kind of statement – going against – is most usually born of proximity or familiarity. I found it interesting that the groups based in Berlin and nearby Potsdam, who seemed to be most familiar with Farocki's oeuvre, were also the ones that seemed most eager to depart from his methods, and find their counter-relationship to them, either as individual researchers or as filmmakers. The projects from the European Media Studies Program of the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam actually took the word "against" as a starting point – thinking of it not only with the definition of working in opposition, but also for example, in the sense of "leaning against" or supporting something.

The group, led by Jan Distelmeyer of the European Media Studies Program, also dealt with the question of pedagogy, ways of seeing, and the politics of making visible, just to name a few topics. The seven participants framed their video projects and performances around the prepositional term “against” as an alternative to being “counter.” In their videos and discussion, they ask: How to reflect on media and with media? How to deal with the theory of practice and the practice of theory? In the next segment you’ll hear from Jan Distelmeyer, Judith Pietreck, and Daniel Paschen. Right now, Jan Distelmeyer will give us some background about his personal interest in the “Farocki Now” academy, and introduce some of the ideas the Potsdam-based group was working with.

Jan Distelmeyer (JD): Let me please say something personal, because the title, “Farocki Now” really moves me, because for quite some time, and still now sometimes, the terms “Farocki” and “now” in my experience form something like a tautology because it always fascinated me how much Harun Farocki was interested in current and upcoming developments in terms of culture, economics and political questions, and technology. And from our first meeting in the late 1990’s until the last discussion we had in May 2014, it was really electrifying to say the least, to talk with him, to laugh with him, and to experience seeing somebody whose antennas were always ready to receive. So Harun had a very special presence and it was especially tangible on the pitch when you played football with him. He was just really there. This presence and now-ishness that I am really associating with him, I think is also present in his dealings with archives. The historical past, the way of remembering and collecting it, was as important to Harun Farocki’s work as the link between these orders of the past with the present. So dealing with historical material is connected here with questions of actual urgency, with questions of the now, as in *Eye / Machine* just to name one example. So Harun Farocki was an ecologist of the present, as Christa Blümlinger has put it. At the same time, I would say, his work was a realization of the historical, so making the past present. A vital aspect of this interplay between past and present was his special awareness of the mediality and materiality of the material he was working on and working with. So, what could be done? How do words, images, and music act? How to make visible? And under which conditions and on whose cost? This self and media-reflexive struggle is of course one way to make aesthetics political.

MM: One of the highlights of this study group was the contribution from Judith Pietreck and Daniel Paschen. In their performance, *Unboxing the Archive*, they share

their experience of actually getting in that messy material, and finding the link between past and present. They ask what the archive has to contribute to, or against, Farocki's film, taking one specific film from 2001 to begin with, *The Creators of Shopping Worlds*, and end up looking at to-do lists, emails, and finding out about some of the other people involved in the film-making process.

Judith Pietreck (JP): So, as was mentioned before, Daniel and me we tried to look at the archive, which you can imagine, looks like this. We even got one box, which is actually quite interesting because Farocki himself took these boxes and filled them with all the research and all the material he had during the film. Maybe you want to take a look here inside later. It's just DigiBeta [digital betacam]. It's not that interesting, so we took a look at the interesting stuff for you so you don't all have to go down there. Because actually it is right down here, so we are really standing on top of Farocki's legacy, which in November 2015 came to this place, to the Harun Farocki Institut. So yeah, just so that you get a glimpse of how the archive looks. Actually, it's quite messy. It's a mean word, I don't know how you do research, but I guess it looks messy for most people.

MM: They explain that, for them, the most interesting parts of the archive were the daily to-do lists, letters, notes and emails that showed Farocki's collaboration and involvement with the people he worked with, but also how he had already imagined future archivists dealing with the material.

DP: So what else did we find during our visit of the archive? We've seen that we even got addressed in one mail from August 2000, which shows that he already thought about what would happen to the material in the future. *"Hello Harun, Good to hear your voice this morning. I look forward to a repeat performance. For the record, I love to imagine future archivists sifting through these emails. I did not say that I am sick of intelligent films. I'm sick of clever films. Clever is a showy kind of intelligence, an intelligence that doesn't serve any purpose except to flaunt itself. Clever films may 'Wow!' and surprise you, but they rarely make you think and they never make you feel. Perhaps I'm not using the right words but I hope you know what I mean."*

MM: This idea of a message to the future brings us to the next two projects, both of which deal with an imagined future. The *Live Action Role Play* initiated by the Lensbased Class of the Berlin University of the Arts, stressed that they did not wish to

articulate their relationship to Farocki's methods for the attendees of the academy to merely consume, but instead offered a role-play scenario for a limited number of attendees. The tension between consumption, something that burns up energy and resources, and role-play, something that generates possibilities and futures, even, came to a head in the space of the academy. Role-playing as an activity in itself implies an imagined future – a probable or improbable scenario that, while it is being tested, is actualized to some degree. This is a link between past, present and future, and it also shows the co-existence of various temporalities, something that keeps coming up in this academy. The other project from Berlin, which I will talk about now, also deals heavily with imagined futures.

The project by the Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin, with Vivien Kristin Horne, Julia Katharina Miz, and Ewelina Alexandra Rosinska, led by Michael Baute, took, as a point of departure, Harun Farocki's filmic methods in documentary film, in particular the film *Leben - BRD (How to Live in the FRG)* which Farocki shot in 1989. This summer, the group of three filmmakers produced documentary sketches updating the 1989 material. While that's where it began, another development came about in the process of shooting these sketches in public spaces in Berlin, and the three filmmakers Vivien, Julia and Ewelina began to position themselves as artists. When I asked them about how they related to Farocki, they spoke mostly about their divergence from his methods, what they did differently, and how they learned something by drawing out certain contradictions in their own practices. Julia spoke about the difference between a life imagined and a life visualized, asking who specifically, in the picture of the future is being imagined? Instead of looking for images that would serve as sketches of what might become a film, they searched for situations, role-plays, and settings that could operate as another form of observational cinema. They described their process as an ongoing negotiation, but I also I heard them speaking of it as a process of emancipation, how in a way it was good to leave Farocki at times - or the influence of that particular film and his methods - because they didn't want to reproduce or borrow work and ideas from him.

Vivien Kristin Horne (VKH): We also talked a lot about this term "update" and we didn't feel like just reproducing stuff and to borrow stuff from Farocki, but we also wanted to get in a dialogue with the images he created and the methods he used so we tried to also find images that reflect on life in 2017 but maybe in a different way than Farocki did it. I mean, because when we talk about Farocki, then we also talk about an

authorship in a way about...I mean you also see it if you see the cover of this retrospective with the gesture of sort of the hero that we really admire in a way, and we do, of course, but we also wanted to free ourselves, as we are three women making films. In these days we really wanted to get a self-confidence and for that and also make a journey through our own individual art that we do, in a way, and how we do deal with images, and how we are getting our own inspiration. We didn't only want to do it through a different person, but yeah, maybe through images from him, but we also wanted to be a bit more free in finding new approaches to how to live in 2017.

Julia Katharina Miz (JKM): And I think we find these contradictions interesting and I think we were not so keen to stick to the more dogmatic points in that proposal – sort of looking at or engaging with the situations that we were filming according to what the situations were giving us. So this is what we were talking about with regards to the camera – what does the camera do? It's not just on a fixed point in the room, but we had to engage with the situations a little bit more flexibly, I'd say.

Ewelina Alexandra Rosinska (EAR): It was also an interesting experience during this kind of emancipation of ourselves because in the middle of our process the retrospective began and everywhere were posters of Farocki and screenings, and so on, so it was also funny to experience that thing.

MM: They talked about their decision to work in public spaces in Berlin and how they ended up in situations and places that were unfamiliar and less accessible than they would seem to be. This collection of images takes me back to some of Doreen Mende's observations on navigation, where she talks about the notion of the collected image, which comes together from a variety of sources and perhaps also people and places, making it different from a collective image. Maybe Julia, Ewelina, and Vivien's video sketches could also be seen as a collected image.

It's clear that, for them, this project turned into a process of their own emancipation, of not putting themselves only in relation to one filmmaker, or one person. What struck me in their video sketches was their interest in not only the visual atmosphere but also the audible realm and also the psychological atmosphere of the places that they were shooting. In one of the sketches they visit a police office where a man is conducting safety courses for elderly people, telling them how to protect themselves from thieves and scammers, and avoid getting hurt. The specific environments they chose to shoot

pointed to some political aspects of the places that they hadn't been previously aware of because they were inaccessible for those outside of a targeted demographic.

MM: It's really interesting that you bring up this aspect of what you observed because it is no longer a visual aspect, it is a psychological or emotional aspect.

JKM: Absolutely, and that was also something that we didn't want to leave out and that comes back to the decisions we did take at that time and that for example, showed the hands in the police station. We were always not so sure about the shot, because it is something that is very un-Farocki in that sense. And it's that close-up, and it's an emotional close-up. But it's somehow in that setting, that's what it's about. It's about these people indulging in narratives about a possible worst case scenario and what that entails when someone is continuously in that setting being to what to expect if this and this happens. And they do engage in a way that is very physical, and that physicality plays a huge role, and that's why we left that in, it's something you had to look at.

MM: With Raslene and Anggraeni Dwi Widhiasih of the newly formed collective Politicizing Image, Ltd. [PiL] based in Jakarta, we met inside the art space Savvy Contemporary where the exhibition *El Usman Faroqhi Here and a Yonder: On Finding Poise in Disorientation* was on view. We spoke about how our reading of films is influenced by factors such as when we were born, and where.

For their presentation together with Farid Rakun, whom I spoke with in the beginning of this program, they explored Farocki through a back-to-back viewing of a highly influential Indonesian propaganda film called *Betrayal of the Communists* [*Pengkhianatan G30S/PKI*, directed by Arifin C. Noer]. The film, produced in 1984, was mandatory viewing during Indonesia's New Order regime, and broadcast annually on September 30, commemorating the anniversary of the failed 1965 coup. Even though it is no longer required viewing, the film, which seems to clearly have a life or spirit of its own, continues to resurface, and now, in its digital expression, comes across as a dubious yet terrific narrative that still manages to reach Indonesia's millennials. I spoke with Anggraeni, who is young enough to not have been obligated to watch this epic film, but who recently discovered it and has begun to approach it from her specific generational perspective.

Anggraeni Dwi Widhiasih (ADW): Actually this is all starting from my position as a generation, like I have told before in my presentation. I am not really experiencing – I didn't experience any of the moments where the films that are presented (*The Treachery of the Communist Movement*) as an event as something that we must watch every year, etc., so I came from a generation that was born in a democratic country, so I just know that we always have options, etc. But then, when it becomes necessary to study history, I mean to look back to our history, to acknowledge this and that, and then to do works of research, and then to understand more intimately about what happened in our society, and also in the aesthetic choices nowadays and in our contemporary era, and then this film came up to be studied in our project, and I'm thinking about how to approach this film. Actually that is my first question. Actually, when I studied about the diorama of this historical event, I also have that question, how can I approach this historical narration? How can I approach these objects that talk about a certain kind of history? And then through the film – at first I wished just to talk about the gesture that I found, because I am also quite inspired by *The Expression of the Hands*, Harun Farocki's film, so previously I wished to talk about the hand gestures, which appear very much in film. There are many close up shots in the film, but then it turns out that it is still not enough, it's something very technical. It doesn't really touch about how this film works. Meanwhile, what I understand about Harun Farocki is that he always talks about how [the] image and [the] regime of aesthetics works. So I come back to again to my previous questions. How can I approach this film to understand how this film works? How can a certain kind of regime of aesthetics work for my generation through this film?

MM: So starting from her generational position, as someone who is young enough not to have been forced to watch the three-and-a-half-hour film as a child, she asked herself how she could approach this film. I was especially interested in speaking with Raslene, who works with [Lab Laba-Laba](#), an independent film lab in Jakarta, about the question of the instability of film as a material, because the film they were discussing has already suffered from poor storage conditions, and is now only accessible as a digital copy. We also talked about whether this film could ever really disappear, since it is already a part of so many people's experience, and seems to kind of haunt the cultural and political atmosphere.

Raslene (R): In our country the preservation, those things are very bad. The conditions are really bad. The cinematheque doesn't work as it is. All I know is [that] the film

frame, the original one, is broken already. All we have now is the digital one that we have on YouTube. At least the physical one we can have it on VCD.

ADW: Well, talking about the disappearance and the re-emergence of this film...I must keep analyzing about how this occurred, for me actually. Because physically, in the matter of medium, like Raslene said, there is a problem of archiving, occurs in our country – because we have also the kind of climate that makes it challenging to do archiving, actually because the heat and warm weather, the moisture that keeps occurring, that's a problem of climate with nature.

R: The space is not proper to keep these films in an archive or film vault.

ADW: And also, after the New Order, film is not so much the interest of our state anymore. Yes, that the productions of film are more varied by the private companies, etc. But at the same time, because of the interest in works of audio-visual have been lessened, so the work of archiving has also been ignored. But at the same time, talking about this film as a history in its own – it is not being screened on TV for some time. And even for my generation, though I recognize there is this kind of film, but there is no willingness to see it at all. Like I have told you, I don't want to see this film, previously, because I don't think it's important. There is also a reluctance to see this image. So I don't know how to say it, is it really disappearing? Like seriously disappearing in our minds? And then physically disappearing? Maybe the celluloid doesn't exist anymore, but there are still hints there. Otherwise it cannot re-emerge at all. So I think it can re-emerge because it is still there. Traces, little traces that are not really visible but are really there.

MM: It's there in your body and in your memory.

ADW: And maybe it's not necessarily in ours – because we are the younger generation but in the older generation it is completely still there.

R: Very solidly.

ADW: And the problem of duration also is something else. The one that Kevin just screened is three and a half hours, but there is another version, four and a half hours.

MM: This is really fascinating, the idea that it is shifting, not only [in] length of time and duration, but also you said that the title changed. You showed me yesterday the contribution from the other member of your group. That was a dialogue, a kind of screenplay that was from a different year of production from the actual film – four years later. I liked how you described this mythology of the film, or around the film, and it gives it another dimension that is almost spiritual, kind existing in another atmosphere. And I was thinking again about how the kind of spiritual atmosphere in the film is also built up through the images in the film but it is also something that exists outside, in another dimension.”

ADW: Yes, because myth and ghosts – is something that maybe you can say ‘irrational’ exists and it is alive in our society. So in a way, this is part of our reality and it is also depicted in the film but not literally. It is more of a hint. That’s why also it is not a surprise that this film has its own myths.

MM: Maybe it has its own life.

ADW: Yeah, it has its own life actually.

R: Its own spirit.

MM: Still thinking about the supernatural dimensions of a film or an image, the afterlife, so to speak, I joined the group from MASS Alexandria to visit the film vault in the Arsenal Film Archive, a neighbor of the Harun Farocki Institut, located just downstairs in the former crematorium of the silent green campus. Stefanie Schulte Strathaus from the film archive explained a little bit about what they do, about the thinking behind the living archive, where she says that the main aspect is to let people into the archive, and let projects happen.

Stefanie Schulte Strathaus (SSS): We invite them because we figure that they bring in a lot of knowledge as archivists. For example, someone has been looking for a film all over the world without finding it, ends up here and finds it, and tells us that we have the only existing print, which for us is super important information because of course for us then we have another kind of responsibility and we have to do something about the film. So we need those people with their knowledge, but not only that, they also often come with a context, be it an academic context, a curatorial context or artistic

project, and together with those projects and collaborations with them, we can often raise money to re-digitize or restore a film to make those projects happen. So it is a kind of inert archive-funding through funding projects. It's kind of a win-win situation. The idea was to let them in, open the archive, and in the beginning other archivists told us, you are completely insane if you let people in they steal, they violate rights, they are potential criminals always, and everyone who wants to enter an archive is a potential criminal. Why would you otherwise enter an archive?

We had to kind of think about how to continue, and this is when a friend of mine gave me a call and said, "I could buy a crematorium." And I was like, "Yeah, a living archive has to go into a crematorium." We looked at the space and it was very creepy still. It was really – not like it is now, as if they had left the day before and it was difficult to kind of imagine we could have a life here, but Jörg is really a great dreamer, and he is amazing, and so he made [it so] that so we could come here and kind of fulfill our dreams by creating space.

We think that this is the moment of digitization, the chance to really enter the field and correct and re-write film history, and use this opportunity to start maybe at the edge and bring in something that has always been neglected and ignored. And so here we can have everybody come here. Participation, but also production, is important to us, so we are surrounded by the Harun Farocki Institut, by Savvy Contemporary, Music Board, and Studio !K7, a very old music label, and we all share a lot of visions and ideas so it is a very lively space for cultural production and knowledge production so we want our archive to be in such contexts and not somewhere outside of Berlin, on a boat, that nobody ever enters. So that's why we are here.

MM: For some participants of the temporary academy, being "here" meant being in an unfamiliar place where, after a lot of discussion, encounters with other people could finally happen. Gabriella Lopez from Philadelphia's Temple University spoke to me about how this platform let her test some ideas. She was one of the youngest members of the group of bachelors and masters students who collectively authored a video project titled *Borders in a Single Shot*, following the project begun by Harun Farocki and Antje Ehmann in 2011, [Labor in a Single Shot](#).

Gabriella Lopez: It's interesting because this is like, really my first time actually interacting with other people. You know, it's not this conceptual situation anymore,

and it feels good too because now I feel like I have the confidence...it's partially our job to think about every position and try to be courteous but I shouldn't feel guilt if I didn't think of something, you know? I graduate in the spring and I don't know what's next, but I know that I really want to keep traveling and be a part of these things. I am so grateful and appreciative that I got to share this interpersonal theory that – theory? – this idea that I had, this analysis that I made. It feels really good to communicate. But I think ideally, if I were to really do what I wanted to do, I would love to be able to get off the ground this collection of people – collection of people? – I want to have this collaborative project with a lot of people but I would want the borders for it to be really loose and for it to be some sort of...not a physical space, but maybe an interpersonal space where people can have dialogues and share these thoughts in whatever way that they want to – it's just a network, a community of people.

Kevin B. Lee (KBL): I guess it's really a question of pursuing a state-of-being versus letting something happen to you, states of activity versus passivity and to what extent does a state of being fixed in a position require you to enter a state of contemplation and reflection?

MM: You just heard from Kevin B. Lee, a filmmaker, critic, and video essayist who actually was the first resident of the Harun Farocki Residency in 2017. In one of his signature desktop-documentaries, he reflected on the events of the past four days, paying close attention to the question of the construction of cinema, gender, and sexual politics within the groups. In part this came up because of Anggraeni's careful attention to the gender roles in the Indonesian film she talked about the day before. There is, as Kevin will explain now, a kind of violence that happens on film and in social dynamics, at the level of representation – and determines who speaks and for how long. He applies analytic methods to his own subjective experience to arrive at difficult and important questions.

KBL: This is the kind of violence that gets played out all the time, and I think that somehow this really gets back to the question of the Farockian method, this detached observation, this ability to see a truth versus the more immersive approach, but then, what are we actually able to access or not access? So, I guess it's really presenting this question of: What are we expecting, what are we wanting out of this? What sort of ideal states of identity? What sort of presentations of identity are we really asking for?

MM: This difficulty, it seems, is what we need to embrace. Coming to the end of this extended hour, Anggraeni tells us a little more about what is needed.

ADW: Something that is quite surprising for me is to witness the various ideas of how to approach Farocki today. And here I also recognize – and this was also a surprise for me – that watching Farocki is not easy for me, for us, because [they are] very intelligent films, I think, in a way really talking about images and how they work. At the same time I see that also the other people, my own generation and other countries also experience the same position perhaps that, ‘I don’t want to take this legacy entirely but I need to translate it into something that today we face.’ That was a little surprise for me to see that we are in the same channel actually. How to digest this legacy and translate it into something that we really need today?

MM: Thanks for listening to the first issue of *Rosa Mercedes*. This is Marianna Maruyama, signing off.

[END]

Notes:

1) This is a full transcription of the audio journal. As such, minor corrections were made only in instances that demanded further clarity.

2) The first day of “Farocki Now: A Temporary Academy” opened at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), coinciding with the opening event titled “Accessing Images.” Anselm Franke opened the event with a welcome address, followed by an introduction by Tom Holert, Doreen Mende, and Volker Pantenburg. Sven Lütticken moderated the evening, which included four lectures: Natasha Sadr Haghigian’s “Misguided Eyes,” Kodwo Eshun’s “The Problem of the Negro for Cinematography,” Susan Schuppli’s “Planetary Processing,” and Laura Mulvey’s “Visualizing Surveillance.” Regrettably, the time constraints of this audio edition do not permit me to reflect on these lectures and their deep relevance to the program as a whole. I encourage you to listen to the recordings available at the Video Forum of the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.). -MM