

multiplicity of meanings that the sea can assume: It is life-giving as a source of food, income and manly adventure, as experienced by Samuele's dad; but also terrifying, menacing and fatal for thousands of destitute migrants. Filmed not in summer, when Sicily may pose as an attractive holiday destination, but in ostensibly colder, rough weather, *Fire at Sea* zooms in on ordinary life in a traditional fishing community that has unwillingly, and seemingly unawares, been re-coined a symbol for Europe's failure of solidarity. Samuele's and his friend's blissfully oblivious games of war with self-made slingshots and imaginary pump-guns on the Lampedusian coastline feel emblematic of European leaders' utter denial of one of the biggest humanitarian crises of the present.

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*The Land Between.* Dir. David Fedele. Prod. David Fedele. thelandbetweenfilm.com. 78 mns. French with English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Arabic and Chinese subs. 2014.

*The Land Between* is a 2014 documentary film by David Fedele that traces the lives of Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. In the forests of the mountains of Gourougou overlooking the Spanish enclave of Melilla, hundreds of migrants are stranded, trying to scale the barriers put up by Spain and the European Union in order to prevent migrants from illegally entering the EU.

The movie starts with a breach of the fences. Grainy images of a security camera show a faceless mass climbing the barriers and entering the enclave. This is the goal of all those, mostly men, living in the mountains, dreaming of a better life in Europe. Until their chance comes, however, they are stranded in Morocco, the land between their homes in Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. The documentary mainly follows Yacou Traore and Aicha Barry. Traore left his home in Mali for economic reasons and, at the time of shooting, had been living in the forests for two years. Barry had fled the Ivory Coast, where her husband had been killed in the civil war. Together with others they talk about their everyday lives and hopes. Referring to themselves as 'clandestines', they speak about the brutality of the Moroccan police and military as well as of the Spanish Guardia Civil; the threat they face from bandits; the fact that they have to beg for money and eat food out of the garbage; and their hopes of finding work in countries like Germany, France, Italy or Great Britain. A recurring topic is resignation and despair, but there are also frequent references to those that have managed to enter Europe. The film follows the migrants in their everyday activities, such as cooking, washing-up, praying; but also while they produce bracelets to earn money to pay a trafficker; build a ladder to climb the fences, and try to organize themselves to increase their chances of success. Some of the interviewed persons report that they had already succeeded in entering Melilla, but that they were caught

and sent back. They show injuries they say the Moroccan border forces inflicted on them, and mourn a killed friend.

In depicting all of this, the film stays completely neutral. There is no commentary and only absolutely necessary background information is provided. The documentary focuses on the individuals, their lives and their stories, and leaves the interpretation to the audience. The film does not assign guilt for the overall situation, nor does it include official Moroccan or European statements pertaining to the situation. Instead it gives faces, names and histories to the faceless mass streaming into Melilla in the initial sequences of the documentary. When the documentary was released, it won several international film prizes and was shown at several film festivals; four years later the film has unfortunately lost nothing of its humanitarian relevance.

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*Only the Dead Return Home: Insights into the Kurdish Resistance in Turkey*  
 [Nur Die Toten Kehren Heim: Einblicke in den kurdischen Widerstand in der  
 Türkei]. Dir. Tina Leisch and Ali Çan. Prod. Şahin Okay and Özge Taş. Kinoki.  
 81 mns. German with English subs. 2015.

*Only the Dead Return Home* is a documentary about Kurds from Turkey now living in exile in Europe. Since the 1980s, director Tina Leisch has befriended politically-active Kurds. The idea for a documentary, however, came only after her first trip to the Turkish city of Diyarbakir in 1991, when she learned about the following incident: Once, on a trip to Austria, the mayor of Diyarbakir forgot his suit in a hotel in Vienna. The co-director of this film, Ali Çan, who had been living in Austria for a long time, decided to return the mayor's suit, but was held up at the airport in Istanbul and was denied entry into Turkey. Consequently, he had to stay overnight in the airport transit space, where he happened to be among African refugees, before being sent back the next day to Vienna. This inspired Leisch and Çan to portray the social situation of Turkish Kurds living in Europe.

Over one million Kurds live in exile in Europe, many of them as political refugees who cannot return to Turkey without fear of immediate imprisonment. Kurdish freedom fighters are also prosecuted as terrorists in many EU countries. This documentary shows the lives of these exiled Kurds, as well as their original homes in Kurdistan, to which they cannot return. The film also portrays the Kurdish civil society's resistance against the authoritarian, minority-hostile, Turkish state. In this film, we meet people like the mayor of the city of Nusaybin, who was elected with 80 per cent of the votes, but who is kept under the Turkish police and government's control with threats and intimidation. Moreover, we also meet a liberation movement that is as much inspired by democratic, multi-ethnic and feminist ideals as it is by a struggle for the Kurdish language and culture.