UNTITLED PART 9

DIRECTOR
Jayce Salloum

DURATION
6:13

YEAR
2020

CATEGORY
Documentary



DESCRIPTION
Out of the mouths of rural boys, finding the incomparable Mulla Nasrudin in Afghanistan.

After my first year of art school in San Francisco in 1978, I quit, and headed to the Banff School of Fine Arts to do a year-long residency program. The instructor Hu Hohn got me hooked on Sufi stories such as, The Exploits and Subtleties of the Incomparable Mulla Nasrudin. Mulla Nasrudin is a Sufi wise-fool, trickster-like figure. These books were chock full of funny little contemplative mediation stories. I would read these riding the bus at night and such, to get me through trying days. Later in 2008, I'm in the central highlands of Afghanistan, in Bamiyan, where the colossal Buddha statutes were destroyed by the Taliban. A stark, arid, severe, beautiful landscape, people scrapping by, subsistence farming, much like my grandparents did in Syria. I'm filming scruffy little country boys in a new school built by Western troops. The boys are speaking Hazaragi (a Farsi dialect), via my translator but never having the time to translate responses. At the end of each session, we ask them to tell a joke or a song, something other than the conversation we've tried to record. Six months later when I'm back home and the rough transcript translations have been sent to me from Quetta, I discover, lo and behold, then and there, were the very same Sufi stories – thirty years later – being told by these scruffy little country boys at Laisa-e-Aali Zukoor boys school, Bamiyan, Hazarajat, Afghanistan.

These few days I've been working with my Afghan collaborator, Khadim Ali; he's based in Sydney currently. We're trying to work through the time zones, which goes hand in hand with the other displacements of the overarching pandemic time and space. Many thanks to the impeccable Khadim Ali, and to the translator and eternal wunderkind Muzafar Sanji; to Mohammad Zia, our stalwart driver and safe-keeper who deftly transported us over unspeakable rutted goat trails aka roads; and to all who shared with us a mat to rest or sleep on, stories, food, curious minds, and warm hearts. – Jayce SalloumAfter my first year of art school in San Francisco in 1978, I quit, and headed to the Banff School of Fine Arts to do a year long residency program. The instructor Hu Hohn got me hooked on Sufi stories such as, "The Exploits and Subtleties of the incomparable Mulla Nasrudin". Mulla Nasrudin is a Sufi wise-fool, trickster like figure. These books were chock full of funny little contemplative mediation stories. I would read these riding the bus at night and such, to get me through trying days. Later in 2008, I'm in the central highlands of Afghanistan, in Bamiyan, where the colossal Buddha statutes were destroyed by the Taliban. A stark, arid, severe, beautiful landscape, people scrapping by, subsistence farming, much like my grandparents did in Syria. I'm filming scruffy little country boys in a new school built by Western troops. The boys are speaking Hazaragi (a Farsi dialect), via my translator but never having the time to translate responses. At the end of each session, we ask them to tell a joke or a song, something other than the conversation we've tried to record. Six months later when I'm back home and the rough transcript translations have been sent to me from Quetta, I discover, lo and behold, then and there were the very same Sufi stories – thirty years later – being told by these scruffy little country boys at *Laisa-e-Aali Zukoor* boys school, Bamiyan, Hazarajat, Afghanistan. These few days I've been working with my Afghan collaborator, Khadim Ali, he's based in Sydney currently. We're trying to work through the time zones, which goes hand in hand with the other displacements of the overarching pandemic time and space. Many thanks to the impeccable Khadim Ali, and to the translator and eternal wunderkind Muzafar Sanji; to Mohammad Zia, our stalwart driver and safe-keeper who deftly transported us over unspeakable rutted goat trails aka roads; and to all who shared with us a mat to rest or sleep on, stories, food, curious minds, and warm hearts.

IMAGE FORMAT
16:9

SOUND
Stereo

SHOOTING FORMAT
HDV

FURTHER INFORMATION

#dangersofhumans
#as_we_are_apart
#throughthelight
#forhopeiseverlasting
#covid19willpassbutwehavetomakesurewechangeforthebetterofall

KEYWORDS
Landscape, Middle East, Myth, Poetry, Religion/Spirituality, War, Youth/Childhood

THEMES
Art and culture
Identity