



Thursday October 8th 4-6 PM The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Arts Center
 Montgomery College Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus King Street Gallery Auditorium 930 King Street, Silver Spring, MD

Bab Touma-Gate of Thomas Damascus by Nelly Sarkissian **Flamingo** by Robert Frank **The Dog Poem** by Sue Wrbcian
NYC Weights and Measures by Jem Cohen **Aliens Among Us** by Martina Radwan **p.s.beirut** by Michael H Shamberg

On Belonging

six short films questioning our whereabouts

“On Belonging” is a film program curated by Michael H Shamberg (Turtle) addressing concepts relating to The Floating Lab Collective’s “Space as Essay,” currently on view in the King Gallery in Montgomery College. This program takes a cue from “The American Landscape of Dreams,” featuring day laborers from CASA de Maryland in Baltimore, in which each worker was granted \$100 to build the house of their dreams. The houses then traveled to different places in the community such as the Enoch Pratt Library, The Butchers Hill Community Garden, Baltimore’s City Hall and numerous churches located in Southeastern Baltimore. The overall, evolving project served to further the public’s thinking of “belonging.”

Each film in “On Belonging” examines different aspects of the word, in countries near and far, whether creating a place for oneself despite the forces of nature, leaving and returning to a place that is not really home, finding oneself ostracized and harassed in a community that once held dreams or reclaiming a place charged with family history. Inadvertently each filmmaker questions “belonging” in terms of personal situations regarding social, personal and/or political circumstances.



in collaboration with



Floating Lab Collective’s Res Publica des Usonia: Space as Essay, a community arts initiative of Provisions Learning Project a research center for arts and social change with support from the Greater Washington Creative Communities Initiative, Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, and Tides Foundation.

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In order of appearance:

NYC Weights and Measures by Jem Cohen (6 minutes - 2006)

“While shooting from a train window in 2005, my film was confiscated and turned over to the Joint Terrorism Task Force and the F.B.I. This piece, which once might have been seen as strictly “lyrical,” is now also a reflection on these issues.” – Jem Cohen

The Dog Poem by Sue Wrbcian (6 minutes - 1999)

A canine “voice” mines deeper psychological concerns around the decision between breaking away from a destructive cycle of horrific dependence, by weighing it against the unpredictable search for something better within utter loss of hope.

Bab Touma - Gate of Thomas Damascus by Nelly Sarkissian (7 minutes – 2009)

Against the backdrop of Old Damascus, through the Gate of Thomas (Bab Touma as it was once called during the Holy Roman Empire), and within the confines of the Christian quarter, seven years of unpaid rent underscores the story of three women’s struggle: to preserve the family treasure that is their old grandmother’s villa.

Aliens Among Us by Martina Radwan (24 minutes - 2009)

Of the several hysterical responses our government made to the horrible attacks of 9/11, one was Attorney General John Ashcroft’s decision to register all people from 25 Middle Eastern countries, without any individual risk assessment. By following a handful of the thousands of people whose lives were disrupted by the Special Registration campaign, Radwan shines a fascinating light on a dark spot in our history. (Jed Dietz)

Flamingo by Robert Frank (7 minutes - 1997)

Frank’s poetic diary (with voiceover narration) recording the construction of a new foundation for his house in a remote area of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia; it silently describes the need to keep working in the face of nature and time.

p.s. beirut, chapter one by Michael H Shamberg (7-minutes - 2008)

a bricolage of scars, traces of repair
iconic meditations on the other side of war