

ARTINFO

SOMOGY
ART
PUBLISHERSSOMOGY provides translation, picture enhancement,
rewriting, customized catalogues & standard packages.

SEARCH >

ART+AUCTION | MODERN PAINTERS | CULTURE+TRAVEL | MYARTINFO

ART NEWS | PERFORMING ARTS | STYLE | ART PRICES | ART MARKET | ARTISTS | GALLERY GUIDE | ART CALENDAR | MUSEUMS | JOBS

[HOME | NEWS](#)[ART AND POLITICS](#)

At the Sharjah Biennial, Getting to Know the Intimate Side of Rebellion

Like

2

By Daniel Kunitz

Published: April 5, 2011

PRINT EMAIL

CLICK TO ENLARGE PHOTO



Photo by Elizabeth Rappaport

The opening procession of the 2011 Sharjah biennial

Your Views

Send a letter to the Editor

Share

 Save to Del.icio.us Digg this

Camp's video is an example of an oblique approach to politics employed by a number of artists here, an approach also exemplified by **Tom Molloy's** 2008 installation "Subplot." The piece's 117 framed drawings contain all the pages of **George Orwell's** "1984" but display only the text referring to a particular subplot: the love affair between Winston and Julia. Subplots, or rather the stories behind the politics, also form the basis for an extraordinary work by the Moroccan artist **Bouchra Khalili**. "The Mapping Journey Project," 2008–11, consists of eight videos running simultaneously, each recounting the story of a person's departure from a Mediterranean country. We see people's hands tracing their route out of, for example, Tunisia into Libya and from there to Italy as we listen to them intimately describe these often terrifying peregrinations, the humiliations they suffered, their detentions and escapes. Listening is also demanded by the women who populate **Judith Barry's** ghostly projections "Cairo Stories..." 2010–11. You come across them in odd places, the face of a woman on the wall of a souk, outside the men's lavatory in another market, each telling her tale, giving voice to women's lives in that Egyptian city that suddenly became central to lives around the globe.

Barry's piece, like so many others in this bazaar of plots that has taken over Sharjah, is about the projection (and reception) of culture. And isn't culture the sub-subplot of politics, the ground soil from which the affairs of the world spring? How we understand another culture and how we present ours color the relations between those countries. Watch the ways that the Egyptian actress **Soad Hosni** is portrayed over the course of her 82 films and you will learn a story of Arab self-perception and how it informs Western perceptions of Arabs. That, at least, is the hope of the Lebanese artist **Rania Stephan**, who in "The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni," 2011, constructs an extraordinary montage of the actress's work.

Listening to and reading all these stories of politics, subplots, and cultural projections — be they the hilarious vignettes of the Lebanese collective **Atfal Ahdath** or the poignant tales found in the notebooks kept by artist **Yto Barrada's** illiterate grandmother so she could identify her grandchildren — heightens your comprehension not of the Middle East or its politics per se but rather of people as people. These stories, these plots, conspire to bring you closer to others regardless of their ethnicity, and it is for this reason that the 10th Sharjah Biennial is such an intimate experience.

FONT SIZE (+) (-)



DO MORE WITH ARTINFO

Join us on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter
Follow us on Foursquare
RSS

Newsletter Sign-up
Submit Events
Submit Art Party Photos

ADVERTISEMENTS



ART+AUCTION

Subscribe to
Art + Auction and
save almost **30%**
off the cover price!

1 yr (11 issues) for \$80

[ABOUT US](#) [LOUISE BLOUIN FOUNDATION](#) [SUBSCRIPTIONS](#) [ART CLASSIFIEDS](#) [ART EDUCATION](#) [ADVERTISING](#) [CONTACT US](#) [RSS](#)

Copyright © 2011, Louise Blouin Media. All rights reserved.
Use of this site constitutes agreement with our [Privacy Policy](#) and [User Agreement](#).

ePublishing :: Hosted Content Management System, Hosted eCommerce Software, Web Design and Web Development