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### Wiesbaden

Geboren 1969 in Dhaka  
Studium der Kunstgeschichte an der Freien Universität Berlin und  
Cinematography an der Filmuniversität Babelsberg Konrad Wolf

#### PROJECT

### o21 - Tehran and the Unwanted Music (ein Kino-Dokumentarfilm)

Ob im luxuriösen Norden Teherans oder in den Slums im Süden der Stadt - wenn die Nacht hereinbricht, wird gefeiert, getanzt und Musik gemacht, vorausgesetzt die Räume sind schallgeschützt. Denn die westliche Musik, egal ob Rock, Hip-Hop oder Rap, wird von den schiitischen Klerikern als Ausschweifung begriffen bzw. für "unislamisch" befunden und somit als eindeutig unerwünscht gebrandmarkt. Allein eine um den Hals getragene Elektrogitarre kann Ärger mit der Polizei provozieren.

Wo Verbote sind, da gibt es auch Wege, diese zu umgehen. "Zirzamini" (aus dem Keller), so nennen die jungen Iraner ihre Musik, die im Untergrund stattfindet. Das Wort ist über die Jahre zu einem Synonym für den aktiven Protest der zahlreichen jungen Iraner geworden, die nie aufgehört haben, ihrer Leidenschaft nachzugehen, illegal und im Untergrund. Im Moment erlebt die Kulturlandschaft der Stadt einen Boom an alternativen Ansätzen, die der konservativen Obrigkeit nicht unbedingt schmecken dürften. Allein in der 15-Millionen-Metropole Teheran soll es mehr als 500 verbotene Bands geben. Wie entgehen aber die jungen Musiker den Kontrollinstanzen? Wie gelingt es ihnen, geheime Konzerte zu organisieren, zu denen das junge Teheraner Publikum scharenweise kommt?

Im Jahr 2009 gingen viele dieser jungen Menschen auf die Straße und erschütterten das ganze Land mit der sogenannten "grünen Welle". Die Bilder gingen damals um die ganze Welt. Wie kam es dazu? Was war die Rolle dieser Musiker damals? Wie geht das Leben nach dem Scheitern der Bewegung weiter? Manche der Musiker sitzen wegen ihrer Songs heute im Gefängnis. Dennoch ziehen die jungen Menschen mit ihren versteckten Gitarren weiterhin durch die nächtliche Stadt, um irgendwo in einem Keller zu musizieren. Was treibt sie dazu? Was sind ihre Träume und Wünsche?

Anhand des Lebensalltags und der Biografien einiger Musiker, die in Teheran im Versteckten aktiv sind, möchte ich in einem Kino-Dokumentarfilm diesen Fragen nachgehen. Dabei sollen Einzelschicksale und menschliche Geschichten im Vordergrund stehen, die eine Bestandsaufnahme vom Leben der jungen Iraner entstehen lassen (Produktion: Nenok Film, [www.nenok-film.de](http://www.nenok-film.de)).

#### Filme

Dill-Riaz, Shaheen. Eisenfresser (Dokumentarfilm). ARTE/BR/RBB, 2008, 85 Min.

- . Korankinder (Dokumentarfilm). ZDF, 2009, 87 Min.

- . Fernglück (Dokumentarfilm). ZDF/3sat, 2015, 90 Min.

## My Unwanted Film / Observing an Observer

My talk will consist of two parts. In the first part, shorter than the second, I would like to brief you on the current status of my feature-length documentary "021-Tehran: The Unwanted Music."

I have spent a significant part of my stay at Wiko preparing this project, but unfortunately the broadcasting company which initially undertook to finance it will not now be doing so. The content of the first half of my talk will be my personal reflections on the arguments that the financiers employed to justify their rejection as well as sharing with you the aspirations that my producer and I now have for this project. The objective in presenting these reflections is not to vent my frustration as to this momentary failure but rather to describe certain significant aspects that are crucial to my creative work as a filmmaker. The long preparation time, the interesting outcome of the background research and the uncertain future of this project will tell you much about the process of documentary filmmaking in the European film industry and about the "freedom" or shall we say "non-freedom" of a filmmaker. It is in this connection that I will then show you the "video teaser" for the film that I edited in my first months at Wiko. This footage has never been shown before outside the immediate circle of my production team.

The second part of my talk will focus on another aspect of my work - as cinematographer-director: My initial training in film school was as a cinematographer, and it was toward the end of my studies that I started making my own films. Although I have functioned as director on all my films, it is as cinematographer that I have left my most indelible mark on them. I was hardly aware of this bias until I started work on my ongoing project "Past is Present," which was triggered by an event in my private life nine years ago. This film project forced me to question the activities of the entire film-team and particularly the behavior of the cinematographer - namely yours truly - during the shooting.

My ambition in the eight films I have made so far has been to tell stories through observations. For this I have had to put maximum effort into focusing on what happens in front of the camera. As a result, during the writing, shooting and editing of these films, my attention has been directed toward the protagonists, the space and conditions in which they were living. But what I ignored during this entire period was the interesting behavior of the observer himself - a behavior also inherent in the raw material, hidden in the images and their accompanying sound tracks. Most of the traces of his behavior, which was sometimes pretty shrewd though occasionally just plain weird, were deliberately eliminated during editing in order to serve the story of the protagonists. But after all these years I have finally gone in search of these traces in my old films to derive clues as to my own behavior. The reason why I am so desperate to find them is that I myself am one of the main protagonists in my upcoming film "Past Is Present."

But this film project has ground to a halt. This is not due to any lack of financing but mainly because I have reached a dead end in its development and am looking for a way out. How I ended up in this cul-de-sac is something that I would like to share with you in my talk. To do so I will show certain excerpts from the raw footage. Hopefully you will thereby be able to give me some feedback that will help me in finding an exit from my current impasse - and in forging a new path forward with my film.

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Dill-Riaz, Shaheen (Berlin, 2020)

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