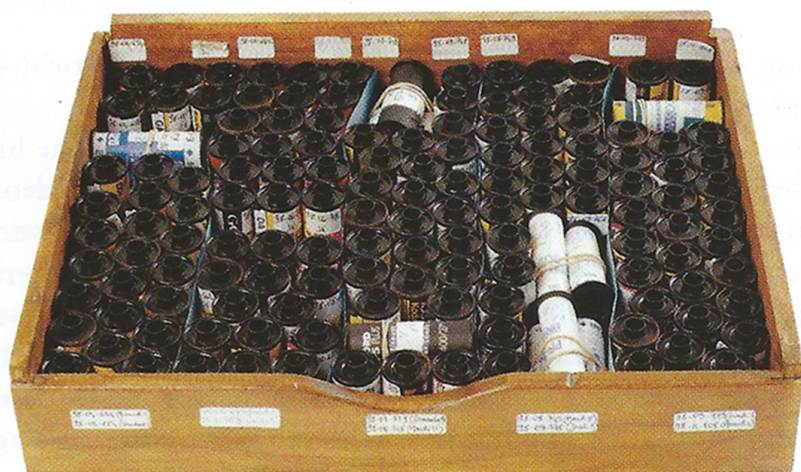


JOANA HADJITHOMAS AND KHALIL JOREIGE



Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, *Latent Images, Drawer of Films (Extracts)*, Films from 4/11/98 to 11/04/99 (#809-956), 1997–2006, C-print, 18½ × 22⅞". From "Wonder Beirut," 1997–2006.

FOR TEN YEARS, between 1997 and 2006, we took photographs of our daily life in Beirut. We never developed these images, however; instead, we wrote descriptions of each snapshot in a series of notebooks, creating a photographic diary that could be read but not seen. It was an attempt to capture the feeling of latency that haunted Beirut, an effort to show the complexity of the city, the density of situations, the aftermath of the war and its consequences for representation.

We took the photos under the guise of a fictional character named Abdallah Farah. The project is therefore a kind of journal—his journal—one that narrates his life and our history, the disappearance of argentic photography, the politics and society of Beirut.

We stopped producing these "Latent Images" (which belonged to a larger project called "Wonder

Beirut") with the outbreak of the 2006 war. We realized we had to produce other strategies, other images in an effort to enlarge our territory, which we felt was shrinking.

Today, the images that come from our region are terrible to see. How can we counter them with different pictures, ones that are more complex and poetic? How can we conjure history, reminding ourselves that today's conflicts are not those of yesterday, that wars mutate and identities shift?

We are often asked under what conditions the latent images could be developed, what changes are required for them to be revealed. Our performance during the Venice Biennale will be a possible answer. We hope it will be a moment of sharing a common space, a common time.

JOANA HADJITHOMAS AND KHALIL JOREIGE ARE FILMMAKERS BASED IN BEIRUT AND PARIS.