



Notes from a Purgatory

William Dalrymple's seminal account, *The City of Djinn*, in an attempt to explicate its title, volunteers for its reader a singular urban legend: 'it is said', the book claims, 'that each house in Delhi has its own resident Djinn.' These omnipresent tenants are not however, the sole metaphysical proprietors of our imperial legacy; souls of various aggrieved British officers and their wives too roam the corridors of Delhi's ancient structures.

New Delhi is after all, rather fertile for trauma. It is a place where so much is left behind: its most prominent monuments, the gardens that outlay in front of these, its axial road network, its wide vistas – all of these are very present reminders of the city's recent trysts with imperialism. These symbols are all visible and present; they besiege and define the existence of the average citizen in Delhi. It is also true, however, that residents live lives that are bracketed within gigantic, invisible systems of a colonial origin: taxation, bureaucracy, primary education, laws that relate to expression and its curtailment, public transportation, etc.

It is not difficult to posit that all of these markers – whether visible or invisible – ambush the consciousness of the aware individual on a daily basis. The present series of films seeks to examine – beyond the anecdotal and the nostalgic – the mental collateral of several successive generations of imperialism. These will also contemplate how imperialist rule can essentially debilitate a society's confidence in itself. It is the concern of the series to investigate actively the extent of the crisis of identity prevalent in a society that persists in its efforts to move forward into the future, while lugging with it a past that rests heavy on its shoulders.

Films

Housemaids (2013) | Gabriel Mascaro | 76m

Gabriel Mascaro asked seven adolescents to film their family's housemaids for one week, and hand the footage over to him. Their images uncover the complex relationship that exists between housemaids and their employers, a relationship that confuses intimacy and power in the workplace and provides us with an insight into the echoes of a colonial past that linger in contemporary Brazil.

Trikal (1985) | Shyam Benegal | 137m

Set in 1961 Goa, this is a story of a rich and influential Goan family and what happens to them over a period of time. The movie is narrated in past-tense by one of the friends of the family.

Embrace Of The Serpent (2015) | Ciro Guerra | 125m

Filmed in stunning black-and-white, *Embrace of The Serpent* centers on Karamakate, an Amazonian shaman and the last survivor of his people, and the two scientists who, over the course of 40 years, build a friendship with him. The film was inspired by the real-life journals of two explorers who traveled through the Colombian Amazon during the last century in search of the sacred and difficult-to-find psychedelic Yakruna plant.

Gate Of The Flesh (1966) | Seijun Suzuki | 90m

In the shady black markets and bombed-out hovels of post-World War II Tokyo, a tough band of prostitutes eke out a dog-eat-dog existence, maintaining tenuous friendships and a semblance of order in a world of chaos. But when a renegade ex-soldier stumbles into their midst, lusts and loyalties clash, with tragic results. With *Gate of Flesh*, visionary director Seijun Suzuki delivers a whirlwind of social critique and pulp drama, shot through with brilliant colors and raw emotions.

The Mad Masters (1955) | Jean Rouch | 36m

This documentary short investigates one African response to colonial oppression. Around 1925 a cult was formed which went by the name of Hauka and whose members were possessed by colonial figures of power.

-----*double bill with*-----

Rouch In Reverse (1995) | Manthia Diawara | 52m

Malian filmmaker and New York University professor, Manthia Diawara critiques visual anthropology through the work of Jean Rouch.

The Films of Ana Vaz

Ana Vaz is an artist & filmmaker whose films, installations & performances speculate upon the relationships between myth & history, self & other through a cosmology of references & perspectives. Assemblages of found & shot materials, her films combine ethnography & speculation in exploring the frictions imprinted upon cultivated & savage environments.

The Wailing (2016) | Na-hong Jin | 156m

The arrival of a mysterious stranger in a quiet rural village causes suspicion amongst the villagers- but as they begin killing each other for no apparent reason, that suspicion turns to panic. When the daughter of the investigating officer falls under the same savage spell, he calls in a shaman to assist in finding the culprit.

Tabu (2012) | Miguel Gomes | 111m

A temperamental old woman, her Cape Verdean maid, and a socially-conscious neighbor live on the same floor of a Lisbon apartment complex. When the old lady falls ill, the other two learn of an outlandish episode from her youth: a story of love and crime set in Africa.