



Africa Film Special – "New films from North and South Africa"

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ALGERIAN FILMMAKERS VISIT DISTRICTS OF CHORWEILER AND HAHNWALD

When the Algerian filmmaker and novelist **Anis Djaad** arrived in Cologne as a guest at FilmInitiativ's Africa Film Special 2013, he expressed his desire to first pay a visit to the city's "banlieues". It's not just the satellite towns on the outskirts of Paris that are known as "banlieues", but also those in his home city of Algiers, where his short film **Le Hublot** takes place, which he will introduce this evening (**Sunday, 15.9., 7:30 pm**) in Museum Ludwig's Filmforum.

Following a tour through the centre of Chorweiler, Anis Djaad visited the district's Northside youth centre. Employees at the centre told him stories of how the Cologne satellite town was created as a "modern housing scheme in a green area" in the 1960s for employees of the surrounding factories in Niehl (Ford) and Dormagen (Bayer) and was originally conceived to house "up to 100,000 people". But many of the tower block flats became vacant and were then bought up by dubious property developers and left to degenerate, so that in the end there were only 13,000 inhabitants in the centre of Chorweiler, "75 percent of whom were from a migrant background". Nabaz Saied, employee at Northside, told his Algerian guest about a project he developed with local teenagers about "experiences as migrants in Chorweiler", where "people from over one hundred different countries live together" (documented on the website: www.chorweilerstory.de). After visiting Chorweiler, Anis Djaad concluded that the function of "banlieues" is the same all over the world, that is to "dispel people on low incomes from city centres and to dump them in the suburbs". Yet it is "only locals, only Algerians" who live in the "banlieues" of Algiers. The inhabitants of Chorweiler, however, come from countries all over the world and are therefore "confronted with a double identity crisis". "They live far away from their homelands and are still pushed to the edges of society in Germany."

As a contrast, Anis Djaad then asked to be taken to a "rich district" in Cologne, as he was looking for a suitable place to shoot scenes for his new film. FilmInitiativ contributors therefore took him to the exclusive residential area of Hahnwald. His thoughts: "Even the ghettos of the rich are the same all over the world, with no people out on the streets, no shops, no cafés. Who wants to grow old alone in one of these lonely places? The whole area is like a cemetery for living people."

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