

Fili Olsefski-Director of Photography

Fili Olsefski was born in Lodz, Poland and grew up in Athens.

She studied painting at the Department of Fine and Applied Arts in the School of Fine Arts of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

She is a graduate of Talents Sarajevo.

She received the Visual Narrative Award from the Union of Greek Cinematographers (GSC) in 2019 for the film "Speak".

She participated in the program Meet The Future of the 61th Thessaloniki Film Festival, among 8 young Greek directors of photography.

Filmography

Maliovanka

2022, docufiction, 80 ', dir. Romanna Lobac

Farewell, Athens

2021, documentary, 70 ', dir. Emilia Milou My

My name is Andy

2021, found action footage, 9 ', dir. Andreas Vakalios, Fili Olsevski

The End of the Excursion

2020, drama, 12 ', dir. Thanos Psychogios

Giama

2020, drama, 17 ', dir. Andreas Vakalios

ENOMENA

2020, queer, 14 ', dir. Phaedra Vokali

Express Skopelitis

2020, documentary, 70 ', dir. Emilia Milos

Mila

2019, melodrama, 15 ', dir. Andreas Vakalios



From the photographer: Andreas Vakalios

How did you decide to work in this field and what difficulties did you face in finding a job in this field, if any?

I started painting. Photography came as a natural extension of painting. The canvas brought me to the camera. This continuation seemed obvious to me. With oil paint or film, with charcoal or with pixels, the ultimate goal is to produce an image.

Static photography brought me to animation. I needed to move and move the images I was imagining. The movement finally rescued me, as if I had legs and wings. And somehow, of course, easily or not, we make movies.

Because I did not follow the path traditionally taken by a young photographer (film studies, field work), and because we entered the film world another way, I did not find any particular difficulties. We just fell into the mud of the unfunded film and had a great time. I hope we continue to enjoy making movies like this.



From the photographer: Giannis Karpouzis

"I will talk about something that impresses and moves me. The most vulnerable of us - such as e.g. Survivors of sexual abuse or neurodiverse women show great tenderness and patience in their struggles to sculpt a better reality.

In cinema we see that this tenderness gives a different look of quiet observation. "People are not judged by anger for what they are."

As far as we know there are very few women directors of photography in the world and in Greece even fewer, how do you explain that?

This is a very interesting phenomenon. We see women in different parts of making a movie. Not many. But they are there. Why not elsewhere?

It seems that the cinematic status quo strongly discourages women. For various good reasons, they accepted them in production, in acting, in set designing. For various bad reasons, they excluded them from fields of directing or photography, areas "very difficult for women". Those they did not exclude, they hid.

The woman is the timeless persona non grata, unregistered and outdated. This situation is not new in a world built on the contradictions of capitalism.

As artists, we do not take the situation for granted. We participate in change. We are all the prospect for the best possible realization of cinema, of art, ultimately of humanity.

What advice would you give to a young woman who wants to get involved in the field?

I will talk about something that impresses and moves me. The most vulnerable of us - such as e.g. Survivors of sexual abuse or neurodiverse women show great tenderness and patience in their struggles to sculpt a better reality.

In cinema we see that this tenderness gives a different look of quiet observation. People are not judged by anger for what they are.

The truth of things tightens us before we are even born, it is inside us even when we forget it. In a world that does not easily accept diversity, our strength is precisely this diversity, our combative tenderness.

To what extent and in your opinion and according to your experiences is gender discrimination expressed in this profession? Was it something you experienced / noticed that you could share with us?

In film I found an embrace. People took me by the hand, trusted me and now I have the blessing to participate in the most magical art in the world: the art of making a film.

In our films we worked unorthodoxly and without the suffocating -for us- ISO. Our diversity was embraced in the warmest way.

But there are still guardians of stagnation. They hide in the most unlikely places. Mainly

in posts that have nothing to do with artistic brewing, but more with the technical preparation of a film.

There is these "rules": they say what should or should not be done in a film, in absolute denial of the historical and empirical certainty that in art there are no certainties, that there is no single way to make a work. There is your way and you fit too.

In many countries in recent years there has been an attempt to implement the 50/50 measure regarding the participation of women in film production and in the programs of international festivals, etc. In Greece so far there has been no such initiative at the institutional level. Is it something you would like to discuss with other filmmakers and people working in the field, or is it considered that the discussion has not even started yet?

We were handed humankind that is in a bad place. This also trickles down to film world, it really makes it heavy, unbearable, callous, cynical.

We often talk with our fellow artists about self-action, about the necessary need to take a position, about the most necessary need to build something of our own.

I would like to emphasize here that change is necessary on all fronts. In a mechanism that constantly produces inequalities, 50/50 can only provide temporary relief, as the alienation that afflicts humanity's thinking will continue to work, perhaps more effectively as long as there is the confidence that the injection of a temporary solution brings.

Yes, discussion is necessary. And it has already begun. I feel that the negotiating parties have come to the table tired, angry, heartbroken. We need a reset.

In the years you have worked, have you noticed an increase in the number of women behind the cameras and in various positions in the crew?

Yes!



From the photographer: Giannis Karpouzis

“Reading the history of cinema, we see that apart from women, one of the timeless victims of the dynasty of the hierarchical structure, were also the dops. They were not always treated as artists who transformed the meanings of the script, but rather as nannies of the camera. But we do not make movies for that. ”

What do you think are the characteristics of a successful collaboration between a cinematographer and a director?

We often say that the deckhand and the captain both work for the ship. For the ship, not for the captain. The captain on their end puts all their efforts on the ship. And the ship must arrive safely at the port.

On the ship of the movie, each of us is worthy. We all work for the film. For the movie.

Sometimes, the hierarchical structure produces a precedent of awkward correlations. Then, the relationships between creators are disturbed, the director acts like an uncontrollable captain, and everyone suffers under this dynasty: even the truth of the film.

Reading the history of cinema, we see that in addition to women, one of the timeless victims of the dynasty of the hierarchical structure, were also DOPS. They were not always treated as artists who transformed the meanings of the script, but rather as nannies of the camera. But we do not make movies for that.

The movie (should) carry meaning, a truth about life, or even a suggestion to navigate it. This truth is in the magic of the film, in the script. The direction of a movie lets this magic swell, the words grow and bake into something autonomous. But the words stop somewhere.

The cinematography starts where the words stop. Where nothing but the gentle and penetrating touch of the image fits.

In the next 5 years, what would you like to change for the better in Greek cinema?

The scripts. From scratch.

Can you tell us some filmmakers (directors, producers, photography directors, etc.) who are an inspiration to you and you would recommend watching their work?

I do not know if I can recommend, but I can talk about filmmakers that are relevant to me.

Andrea Arnold is an artist whose vitality concerns me a lot. Kelly Reichard too. And Shannon Murphy with *Babyteeth*!

Gena Rowlands is a huge artist. She resisted a very hard star system and claimed the obvious: absolute emancipation for the character we create. The film studio that was an extension of the house with Cassavetes, their film family continued and the end of their natural family. Thus, the cinema that Rowlands co-produced with Cassavetes was perhaps more real than life.

Carrie Fisher, a woman who graced American screenwriting with her thorough script doctrine. But it's not just that: she produced a multi-faceted work while suffering from mental illness. He showed us that we can, even when the paths of our heads are darkened. As a neuro-diverse person, I always felt that mental illness was not something I had to hide. I did not know why, but Carrie knew and gave us the words. She told us

that mental illness should not be experienced as a shame but as a sign of the ongoing war raging within us.

Tell us what you are currently working on?

This time we really want to talk about Anti: a teenage girl trapped in a child sex trafficking ring. One day, Anti decides to escape. She steals the cell phone of her persecutors and starts recording them. The escape leads to her persecution, until Anti changes the direction of the chase and she chases her pursuers.

We believe in Anti, since she is a creature that acts on its own, gathers all the forces it has and fights, turning the camera on herself.

We believe in Anti, because her initial audacity turns into self-sacrifice.

We believe in Anti, as she is the transfiguration of her redemption: Anti is our true friend and her shocking story assures us that we can dream of doing everything, from the worst to the best, and she tirelessly chooses the best.