



LIGHT FALLS VERTICAL



GRIS MEDIO, KABOGA ART & FILMS, NOVENA NUVE, THURNFILM, EUR FILM and WITFILM present:

LIGHT FALLS VERTICAL

Spain, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands / 2022 / 85 min.

PRESS NOTES

A film by
Efthymia Zymvragaki

World premiere
International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) 2022
IDFA Envision Competition

Press materials can be downloaded [HERE](#)

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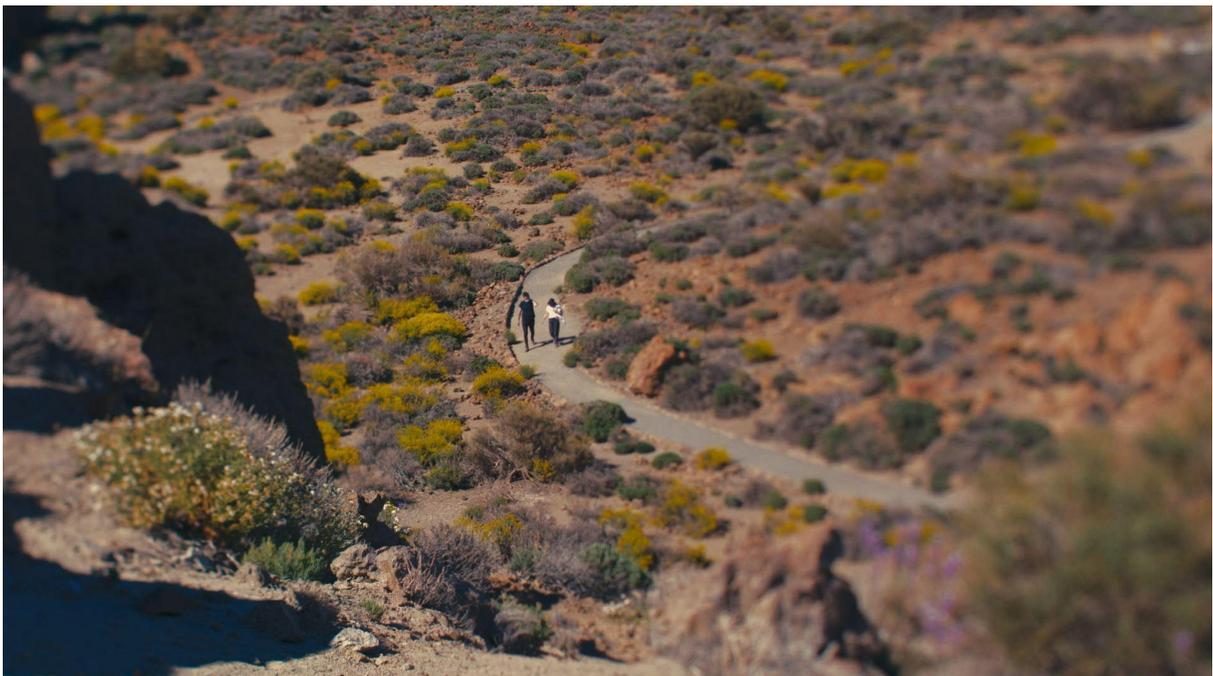
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SYNOPSIS

When I left the island where I was born, it wasn't a departure, it was an escape. Years later, I arrive on another island, a barren place that feels strangely familiar. I have come here for an encounter with a man. He says he is willing to expose the violence that he carries within. But when I venture to get closer to the harmful, desperate man, I realise that he also holds the key to my deepest fears, echoing in the violence of my own past. Now his story will never be separated from mine.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

One day a man who signed as Ernesto contacted me saying he wanted to make a film about his life. His message said that in the problem of domestic violence, there were always two parties - the victim and the perpetrator. He was the perpetrator.

I was intuitively drawn to this idea, and Ernesto and I agreed that I would make a film about his story, drawing inspiration from the autobiographical novel that he had authored. That agreement turned out to be only the pretext that allowed us to approach each other and gradually reveal the deeper motivations that attracted us to each other's stories.

While working on this film, I found myself in a very delicate position as Ernesto's facilitator, the man who grappled with facing violence that he carried out against his family, the violence he said he had inherited from his father. At the same time, I was confronted by the struggle of my own, coming to terms with the past that I had fled two decades ago.

Like Ernesto, I too am an islander. As a woman born and raised on the Greek island of Crete, my story is vastly different from Ernesto's, yet what we seemed to share were the memories of our fathers and patterns of violence that reigned in our families.

Suddenly, once a stranger, Ernesto became a familiar figure. Alternating between the roles of the victim and the perpetrator in the film, he reenacts scenes from his childhood, playing his mother and himself who suffered at the hands of his father. Then, in other scenes, which he directs, he is already an adult who commits violent acts against his wife.

Far from merely condemning Ernesto, I sought to draw parallels between our stories as a bridge of intimacy and understanding. This bridge is built slowly and delicately in the film, and it is left fragile, exposing our shared vulnerabilities. Through the narrative of the other, he who is most distant, I looked for answers in my own narrative, switching between the mirror and the magnifying glass. I allowed myself to lean on his recollections of violence to navigate the tumultuous waters of my own memories of it. As this project unfurled, my story became louder, intertwining with Ernesto's, until it brought home to me that we were interdependent in the process of healing.

'Light Falls Vertical' is a film about Ernesto and his struggle with his patterns of violence and abuse. It is also a film about his partner Juliane and her reality marked by the man's intense presence and absence in her life. And it is, finally and mainly, a film about me and my encounter with the agonies of my past, my perished father, the silences that permeated our dialogue and the circles of violence.

Efthymia Zymvragaki, October 2022

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Efthymia Zymvragaki

Efthymia got her Master's Degree in Artistic Productions and Research at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona and trained as a photographer at the Institut d'Estudis Fotogràfics de Catalunya. From the University of Crete, Greece, she got a degree in Psychology.

She is an alumna of IDFAcademy 2020; Circle - Women's Doc Accelerator 2020; Acció producció - Dones Visuals 2021; LIM Development Angels; and dok.incubator 2022.

She is attracted by social and gender issues and feels close to personal and sensitive approaches to complex and lesser known realities. She seeks to explore spaces of intimacy between and within people. She worked as a co-director of photography on the documentary *Serás hombre* by Isabel de Ocampo (2018) and was the DOP of the feature film *Rocco tiene tu nombre* by Angelo Orlando (2015). In 2015 she directed the documentary short *Refrán. Light Falls Vertical* is her first feature.



ABOUT THE PRODUCTION COMPANY

Gris Medio is a production company based in Barcelona specialised in creative documentaries and author driven feature films for the national and international market. The company focuses on the special characteristics of each project and strives for close collaboration with the filmmakers during development and an in-depth analysis of the plot. Films co-produced by them have been selected by festivals such as Sundance, IDFA, Vision du Réel and have received awards and a nomination for the European Film Awards.

Filmography

ROCCO HAS YOUR NAME (2015)

Feature film by Angelo Orlando, prod: Gris Medio, PREMIERE: RIFF 2015, Bengaluru International Film Festival, NY Independent Film Festival, Praga International Film Festival PIFF 2016 (Best Script and Best leading Actor).

IN LOCO PARENTIS / SCHOOL LIFE (2016)

Creative Documentary by Neasa Ni Chianáin and David Rane, prod: Gris Medio (Spain) and SOILSIUS FILM (Ireland) in coproduction with TVE. PREMIERE: IDFA 2016, Sundance, 2017, Hotdocs, 2017, BEST FILM AWARD Vision du R el 2017, San Francisco 2017, Sofia International Film Festival, 2017, Docville among others.

YOU WILL BE A MAN (2018)

Creative Documentary by Isabel de Ocampo, prod: Gris Medio, Orreaga Filmak, AdHoc Studios and Isabel de Ocampo, PREMIERE: SEMINCI 2018

CREDITS

Writer & director	Efthymia Zymvragaki
Producers	Angelo Orlando / Gris Medio Efthymia Zymvragaki / Gris Medio
Co-producers	Anna M. Bofarull / KaBoGa Patricia Sánchez Mora / Novena Nube Valentin Thurn / ThurnFilm Maurizio Santarelli / Eur Film Iris Lammertsma / Witfilm
Executive Producers	Babet Touw, Daan Odufre / Witfilm Ana Maria Pelaez Rodriguez / RTVE Jordi Ambròs Hortensi / TV3
Associate Producers	Tin Dirdamal Cristina Haglund Žofie Strachotová
Cinematography	Efthymia Zymvragaki
Editing	Tin Dirdamal
Sound Design	Tin Dirdamal, Alejandro castillo, Bojan Palikuća
Music	George Xylouris
Sound	Anna Bofarull
Additional sound	Pablo Cosco

FORUMS & MARKETS

The project has previously been selected for:

2022 : Mia C EU Soon, Ji.hlava IDFF New Visions Market, dok.incubator international workshop, Cannes Marché du film Docs in Progress (CIRCLE Women's Doc Accelerator Showcase), DOK.Fest Munich Marketplace

2021: L'Alternativa Cinema Pendent (winner of the *Premio Non Finito* and *premio 1er Test del festival REC*), MEDIMED, CIIF MARKET, REC 1er Test, Acció Producció (Dones Visuals), Residencias Walden

2020: IDFAcademy, CIRCLE Women's Doc Accelerator, Foro de coproducción de documentales LAU HAISETARA, WEMW, Coproduction Forum & Pitching sessions Trieste

2019: L'Alternativa Mentoring Projects