

PITCHING LAB 2025



About Pitching Lab 03

Meet our Tutors 05

Meet our Guest Tutors 09

Project List 11

About Pitching Lab

“Mastering the Art of Pitching is a necessary process on the journey to seeing your initial idea transformed into a film. There are no quick fixes that define a great pitch, but there is a definite path that leads to successfully communicating the crux of your idea and story”

Barbara Dukas
Head of DISFF Pitching Lab

Among many promising projects from creators with distinctive cinematic voices and a record number of submissions this year, ten proposals from around the world were selected. The final selection, made by the DISFF Pitching Lab team, reflects the intention to highlight diverse cinematic genres—from social drama to black comedy and hybrid documentary—as well as to support narratives that dare to explore complex and ever-relevant themes: identity, loss, coming of age, intergenerational relationships, the individual’s place in the machinery of history, love, and violence, all through personal and original narrative and aesthetic approaches. It also reflects our commitment to supporting creators who, through a human-centered lens, open up a dialogue with the new era ahead, raising questions about the world, the past, and human relationships, which now appear more fluid than ever.

Meet our Tutors

Tutors:

Barbara Dukas
Director, Educator

Georgina Kakoudaki
Dramaturg, Director, Educator

John Stephens
Educator, Script Editor
and Consultant

Guest Tutors:

Alexandra Hroncova
Cinefila distribution, CZ

Eroll Bilibani
Head of DokuLab at DokuFest, freelance producer,
XK



Meet our Tutors

Barbara Dukas

Director, Educator, Script Consultant

Barbara Dukas is a director and educator working in theatre, documentary, and short film, both in Greece and abroad. She also works as a script consultant and pitching expert. She teaches Directing, Acting and Screenwriting at various institutions and seminars, including the Hellenic Open University. From 2018 to 2024, she served as Artistic Director of the Municipal and Regional Theatre of Corfu. Since 2014, she has led the Pitching Lab of the Drama International Short Film Festival. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, researching dramaturgy in the context of augmented reality and emerging technologies. Head Programmer of DISFF Pitching Lab since 2014.



Meet our Tutors

John Stephens

Educator, Script Editor, Script Consultant

John Stephens is a Script Editor and Script Consultant with a passion for all things stories. English Language and Literature teacher, he specializes in story development. He has led workshops and delivered lectures in Greece, North Macedonia, and Armenia, including the A-Z Filmmaking Lab, Kine Nova, Across the Lake, and the Armenian Cinema Development Initiative. He has also mentored scripts for the Los Angeles Greek Film Festival and served as Film Selection Coordinator for Kine Nova.



Meet our Tutors

Georgia Kakoudaki

Dramaturg, Director, Educator

Georgia Kakoudaki is a dramaturg, director, and educator. She has collaborated on over 30 theatre and dance productions and has directed numerous performances for young and teenage audiences. She has taught in public adult education programs and international initiatives focused on theatre and film pedagogy. From 2006 to 2011, she lectured on film aesthetics and dramaturgy at Akmi Institute and authored the national curriculum for Theatre Directing and Film Aesthetics for Greece's Artistic Schools. She was Head of the Library and Archive of the National Theatre of Greece (1997–2004), co-authored two books on drama education, and has curated multiple Young Creators festivals. She served as Head of the Epidaurus Lyceum and Education Advisor to the Athens Epidaurus Festival.



Meet our Guest Tutors

Eroll Bilibani (Kosovo)

Eroll Bilibani is a film producer of award winning short films ON THE WAY, DISPLACED, IN BETWEEN, HOME. He is Head of DokuLab, the educational department of DokuFest where he leads programs that use cinema and storytelling to help young people and educators explore complex topics and encourage dialogue. He coordinates DokuFest's Short Film Forum, supporting filmmakers from the region in developing their projects and connecting them with industry professionals.



Meet our Guest Tutors

Alexandra Hroncova (Czech Republic)

CINEFILA is a dynamic film distribution company based in Prague, founded by Alexandra Hroncová, an experienced festival strategist and distribution manager. Drawing from over eight years of expertise in helping filmmakers, young talents, and film institutions succeed on the global stage, CINEFILA offers a comprehensive suite of services tailored for independent filmmakers, production companies, festivals, cinemas, and film schools.

Project List

10 projects from around the world

• AS IF I HAD YOU NEXT TO ME	12
• Charlotte	15
• Climate Change	17
• HYPERTRACTOR	19
• MOM IS ALIVE	21
• EO1	23
• MOONLIKE	25
• TAPLINE CINEMA	27
• Who Is Singing?	29
• WINDBAG	31

AS IF I HAD YOU NEXT TO ME

by Despina Ladi & Olga Stefatou



- **Production country** - Greece
- **Stage of production** - Script development, pre-production
- **Directors** - Despina Ladi & Olga Stefatou
- **Scriptwriter** - Despina Ladi
- **Tagline** - A portrait of the unconventional 90-year-old grandma Despina and an alternative portrait of Greece through telephone conversations between the grandmother and her immigrant granddaughter, who lives in England.
- **Synopsis** - Through excerpts from recorded phone conversations between Grandma Despina (90) and her granddaughter Despina - who lives in London - over the years, the unique personality and life philosophy of the grandma unfolds, while an alternative portrait of Greece also takes shape. But the phone communication between the two women comes to an end when the grandmother decides to leave her house and move into a care home. Following her death, as her granddaughter tries to piece together the story of their relationship through objects, letters, photographs and childhood memories, the film becomes a way for her to keep their conversation alive.

Director's CV:

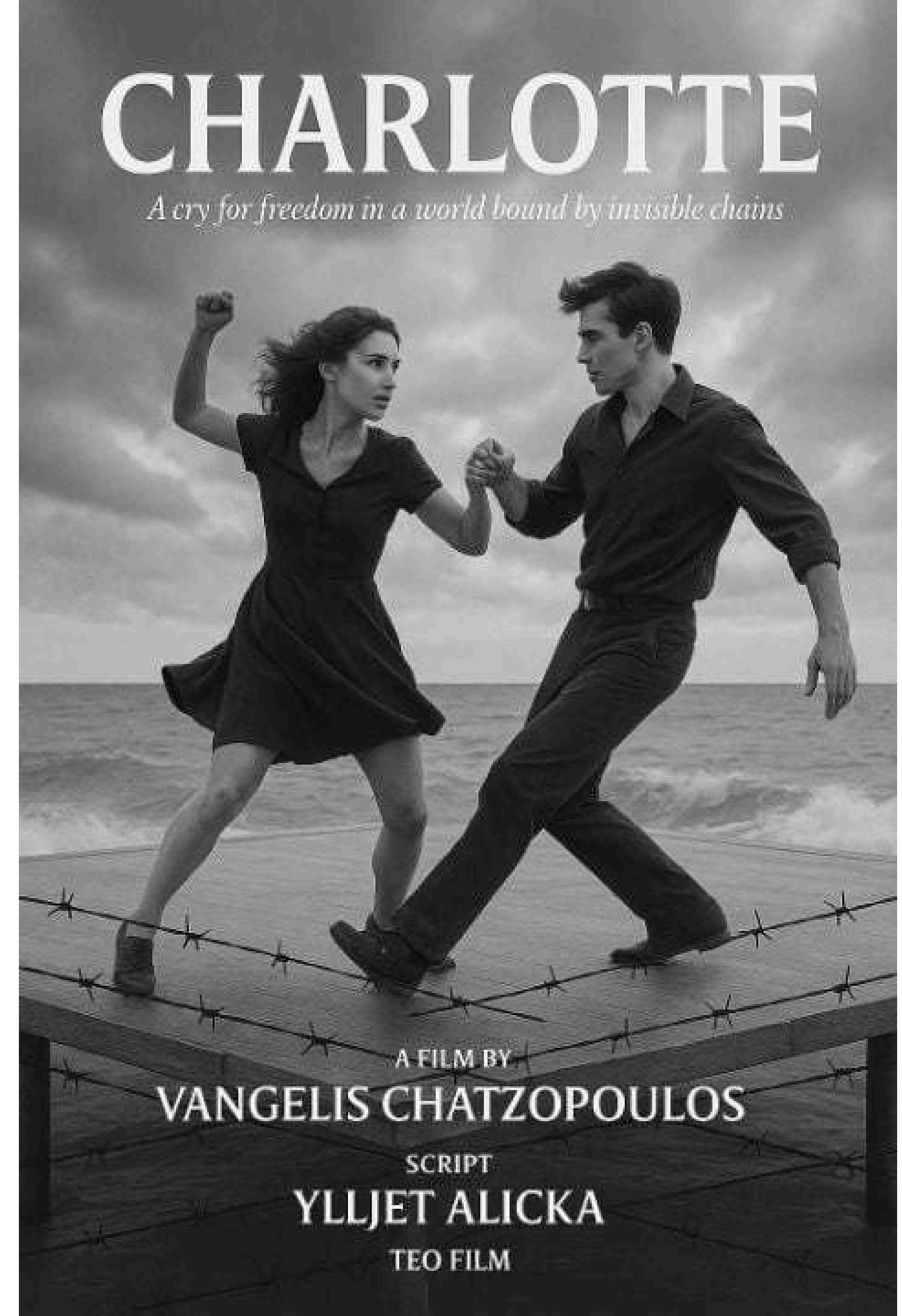
Despina Ladi is an award-winning Greek screenwriter and script editor based in London. She has worked on films that have competed at Oscar-qualifying festivals such as Tribeca, Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and Sarajevo Film Festival. She has collaborated with British screenwriter Tony Grisoni on various projects, including Paolo Sorrentino's television series *The Young Pope*. She is a freelance script reader for the Greek Film Centre and has also worked as a journalist (*The Guardian*, *Sight & Sound*), an assistant director in film, television and theatre and a production assistant on Alan Parker's feature film *The Life of David Gale*. She has a BA in Communication and Media from the University of Athens, and after taking screenwriting courses at NYU, she completed an MA in Screenwriting at the London Film School. She is an alumna of Berlinale Talents, Torino Film Lab, Series Mania, Doha Film Institute, Sarajevo Talents, the Mediterranean Film Institute and Sundance Collab. In 2023, she was selected for BAFTA Connect, BAFTA's career development program for emerging talent in the film and TV industry. In 2025 she was selected for the Wonder Women mentoring programme, the UK industry's only year-long programme supporting the next generation of female leaders.

Olga Stefatou is an award-winning photographer and multimedia artist based in Athens. She has presented her work at the Aga Khan Museum (Canada), Doha Fire Station Art Space (Qatar), Los Angeles Month of Photography, Head On (Australia), Gallery Negpos (France), Photon Gallery (Slovenia), Synthesis Gallery (Bulgaria) and Benaki Museum (Greece), among others. She has worked as a videographer on the documentary film *Krisis*, which was selected for IDFA DocLab, Hot Docs, FIFDH Geneva, and the Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival, among others. She also contributed to the award-winning collective multimedia project *The Prism GR2011*. She has experience in photojournalism, having collaborated with international media, most notably the German newspaper *Der Spiegel*. She has also worked as an assistant director in advertising. She studied photography at the University of West Attica, and earned her Master's degree in Multimedia Journalism from the University of Bolton, based in Beijing. Her thesis *Parched Homes*, focused on domestic violence against women through sixteen two-minute portraits. One of the portraits won the Davos Summit competition, a collaboration between the World Economic Forum and the Chinese platform Youku. The project was also shortlisted in the student category of the UK's One World Media Awards.

Charlotte

by Vangelis Chatzopoulos

- **Production country** - Albania
- **Stage of production** - script development
- **Director** - Vangelis Chatzopoulos
- **Scriptwriter** - Ylljet Alicka
- **Tagline** - Set against a backdrop of political repression, Martin's dance with Charlotte, a young foreign tourist, becomes a fleeting moment of freedom; a simple act that triggers consequences neither could have foreseen.
- **Synopsis** - Set in 1976 Albania under dictatorship, "Charlotte" follows Martin, a young man barred from university for his political background. While his friends celebrate their futures, he labors on the city railway. One night, at the Grand Hotel terrace reserved for foreigners, he sees Charlotte, a vibrant visitor, dancing to jazz. Drawn to her freedom, he joins her, defying fear and briefly escaping repression. Their dance, however, violates rigid rules. Security forces swiftly arrest him, punishing his rebellion. Through Martin's fate, the story reveals the peril and beauty of fleeting freedom, and how a single moment can define - or destroy - a life.



Charlotte

by Vangelis Chatzopoulos

Director's CV:

Vangelis Chatzopoulos is a Greek - Albanian film director who believes in the power of cinematic storytelling to capture the richness of diversity and the uniqueness of human experience. Born and raised in Athens, Greece, he grew up navigating multiple cultures while learning early on that each perspective holds its own truth. In 2023, his creative journey led him to Reykjavik and the Icelandic Film School, where he studied Direction and Producing. He has directed and produced short films ranging from drama (Non-disclosure Agreement, 2024), and experimental (Heartmachine, 2023) to horror (The Prey, 2023), while also working on documentary productions including Echoes on Ice: An Ice-skating Journey (2025), in co-production with Polarama Film Production Company and Abandonment (2025) with Teo Film, supported by the Albanian National Center of Cinematography. His graduation film Strangers in the Night (2025) was awarded the Bjarki Award for Best Graduation Film, as well as the Best Directing & Producing Award at the Icelandic Film School. Graduating in February 2025, he remains committed to creating films that explore the beauty, complexity, and unbearable lightness of human existence.

Climate Change

by Tamta Gabrichidze

- **Production country** - Georgia
- **Stage of production** - N/A
- **Director** - Tamta Gabrichidze
- **Scriptwriter** - Tamta Gabrichidze
- **Tagline** - A young scammer forced to destroy the lives of those who trust her the most.
- **Synopsis** - Natia has just completed her exams and dreams of studying abroad. To make her dream a reality, she works hard on a project while spending her free time speaking with a mysterious elderly woman, whom she deeply cares for. As the story unfolds, the truth is revealed: Natia isn't just caring for the elderly woman—she's part of a sinister operation that manipulates vulnerable people into investing in fake financial schemes. In a tragic final twist, the true cost of Natia's ambition becomes painfully clear.



Climate Change

by Tamta Gabrichidze

Director's CV:

Tamta Gabrichidze is an award-winning filmmaker from Georgia, known for her critically acclaimed documentary *The Trader* (Sovdagari), which won prestigious awards at Sundance and Hot Docs and became the first Georgian film available on Netflix worldwide. She is also the founder of WINECAST, Georgia's first international film and wine festival, blending cinema and wine culture. Tamta holds a degree in Film Directing, PR studies at GIPA, and further training at USC's School of Cinematic Arts. She has worked in various roles across film and television. As the head of MULBERRY Group, she collaborates with global organizations such as OSCE and USDA. In addition to her film work, she contributes to leading art magazines as a writer. Currently, Tamta is developing new documentary and fiction projects while curating the next edition of WINECAST.



HYPERTRACTOR

by IVAN MILOSAVLJEVIĆ

- **Production country** - SERBIA
- **Stage of production** - IN DEVELOPMENT
- **Director** - IVAN MILOSAVLJEVIĆ
- **Scriptwriter** - IVAN MILOSAVLJEVIĆ
- **Tagline** - After hyperinflation saps the value of her wallet, Nada, a history professor in sanctions-hit Yugoslavia, becomes a smuggler into neighboring Romania to find a New Year's gift for her five-year-old son.
- **Synopsis** - Yugoslavia, winter 1993. Hyperinflation destroys daily life, but Nada is determined to protect her five-year-old son's childhood. Jovan's New Year's wish –a yellow toy tractor–becomes her mission. After searching through empty stores, she crosses the Danube into neighboring Romania. Finally, she finds a toy tractor but then realizes all her money has been stolen. Shaken and desperate, she grabs the toy and runs. Overcome with guilt and shame for stealing, Nada throws it into the river and heads home. On the other side, Jovan waits. Snow finally begins to fall. A miracle rises from the water.

HYPERTRACTOR

by IVAN MILOSAVLJEVIĆ

Director's CV:

Ivan Milosavljević is a Serbian director and producer, born in 1990. He studied film editing at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. His short fiction film *The Inheritor*—which he also wrote and directed—was screened at seventeen international festivals and received four awards. In 2020, he completed his first documentary *Blue Frontier*, a poetic exploration of identity and borders, shot on the banks of the Danube. The film was screened at over 60 festivals worldwide, including Oscar qualifying Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, St. Louis International Film Festival, and AmDocs, earning twelve awards and praise for its visual style and emotional depth. Alongside directing, Ivan is active as a producer and continues to develop new creative projects through his company, Black Rooster Studio, aiming to bring unique voices and perspectives to the screen.

MOM IS ALIVE

by Antonis Goumas

- **Production country** - Greece
- **Stage of production** - Pre-production
- **Director** - Antonis Goumas
- **Scriptwriter** - Isavella Aivalioti
- **Tagline** - "These things happen"
- **Synopsis** - Elias is struggling to hold his family together after his wife's sudden death. His fourteen-year-old son has grown distant and resentful, their once-close bond replaced by silence and sarcasm. His six-year-old daughter, too young to understand the loss, is both carefree and anxious, reflecting the emotional chaos at home. Elias is overwhelmed by parenting alone, burdened by grief, daily responsibilities, and financial strain. As the funeral approaches, tensions build and frustrations mount. Yet in rare quiet moments, a spontaneous hug from his daughter or a softened glance from his son reminds him that love still exists within the brokenness.



MOM IS ALIVE

by Antonis Goumas

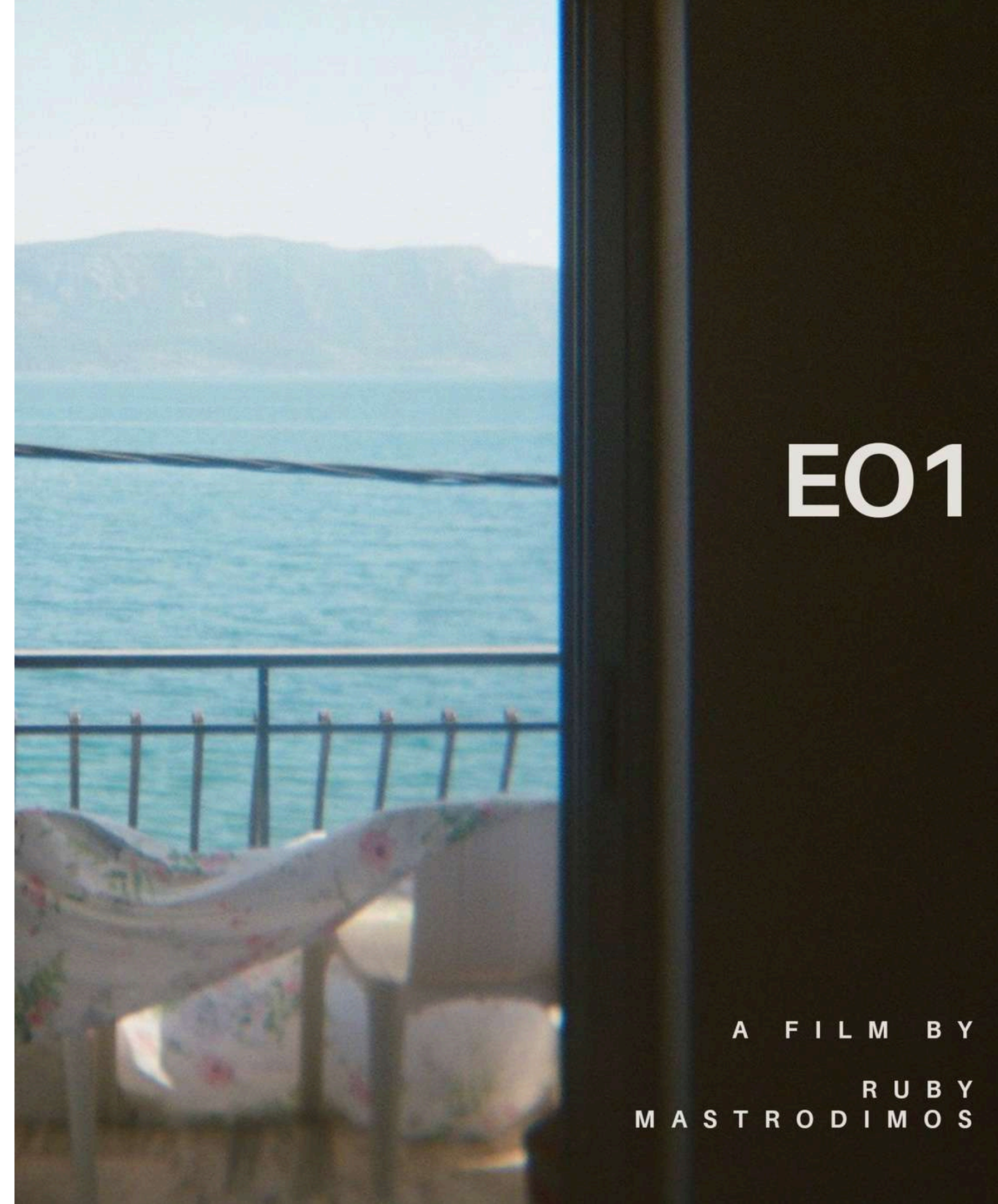
Director's CV:

Antonis Goumas is a 20-year-old Film student at the University of Athens (UoA), studying in the Department of Digital Arts and Cinema. He is actively involved in filmmaking, video production, and digital media, with a strong focus on writing and directing. He has directed several award-winning short films, recognized and screened at international festivals. His most recent work, *Ginger*, was selected for the official program of the Thessaloniki International Short Film Festival 2024 (TISFF). In addition to his own projects, he has contributed to the production of numerous videoclips and audiovisual works, building both creative and technical skills across multiple formats. Professionally, he worked as a production assistant on the second season of the MEGA TV series *Agios Paisios*, gaining firsthand experience in large-scale television production and collaborating with seasoned industry professionals. Antonis continues his academic journey at UoA, deepening his theoretical and practical understanding of filmmaking. His work demonstrates a strong commitment to storytelling across mediums, combining narrative innovation with a collaborative and professional approach to creative production.

EO1

by Ruby Mastrodimos

- **Production country** - US/UK/Greece
- **Stage of production** - script development
- **Director** - Ruby Mastrodimos
- **Scriptwriter** - Ruby Mastrodimos
- **Tagline** - In an empty vacation home, an itinerant squatter makes herself at home. But when the appearance of a cleaning lady leads to a bloody accident, the squatter must weigh what's worth more: her freedom or the life of another?
- **Synopsis** - Lena, an itinerant squatter roaming the Greek hinterlands, takes up residence in an empty apartment off the old highway EO1. But when the unexpected appearance of the apartment's Albanian cleaning lady, Dile, leads to a sudden and bloody accident, Lena finds herself with a moral dilemma: what does she value more, her independence or the life of another human being? When the latter impulse wins out, the two starkly different women fall into a sort of domestic routine as Lena tends to Dile's wounds.



EO1

A FILM BY

RUBY
MASTRODIMOS

EO1

by Ruby Mastrodimos

Director's CV:

Ruby Mastrodimos is a Greek-American filmmaker based in London. She graduated from Barnard College of Columbia University before receiving her MA in Filmmaking from the London Film School in 2023. Her work explores questions of class, feminized labour, physical ritual, as well as the space that the supernatural has in our daily lives and imaginations. Mastrodimos's films have been screened at Vienna Shorts, British Shorts Berlin, Kyiv International Short Film Festival, and Porto Femme International Film Festival, amongst others. She is incoming Artemis Rising Foundation Filmmaker Fellow at Barnard College for the Spring 2026 cohort. In addition to directing, Mastrodimos is also a sound designer and recently served on the pre-jury for the Golden Horseman Film Sound at the 36th Filmfest Dresden. Her continuing investigation of how we experience sound and its apparent absence is one of the many themes present in EO1.

- **Production Country** - Italy
- **Stage of Production** - development and funding
- **Director** - Francesco Lorusso
- **Script writer** - Patrizia Manconi, Francesco Lorusso
- **Tagline** - The Moon falls into nothingness. Berto the papier-mâché maker secretly builds a fake Moon to restore hope to his village: it seems exactly identical to the previous one.
- **Synopsis** - During a patronal festival the Moon vanishes beyond the horizon. The inhabitants hide in their homes, safe from consequences that never come. Unable to leave, they remain with questions. At night, the priest asks Berto, the papier-mâché maker, to build a new Moon in secret. Tormented by doubts, Berto raises it into the sky. Indistinguishable, the priest calls it a miracle and the village rejoices. Troubled, Berto shoots it, but it does not fall. Fear grips him: perhaps the old Moon was also false. Enraged, he fires wildly, striking a house. Through the hole, Berto discovers the village itself is papier-mâché.

MOONLIKE

by Francesco Lorusso

A black and white movie poster for the film 'Moonlike'. The background is a dark, textured night sky. In the center is a large, detailed image of the Moon, showing its craters and surface texture. To the left of the Moon, the word 'MOONLIKE' is written in a large, white, serif font. To the right of the Moon, the text 'a film by FRANCESCO LORUSSO' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

MOONLIKE

a film by
FRANCESCO LORUSSO

MOONLIKE

by Francesco Lorusso

Director's CV:

Francesco Lorusso was born in Gagliano del Capo in 1993. After studying philosophy at the University of Turin, he moved to Estonia to continue his studies in Semiotics and Moral Philosophy. He graduated with honors and specialized further in the philosophy of language and mind, while cultivating his passion for the folklore of small communities. In 2013, he co-founded the film association Broga Doite Film and the collective Broga's. In 2024, he established the production company Broga Doite Srl. Since 2014, he has been creating documentaries and short fiction films. His work often features a subtle magical realism, ranging from socio-cultural reflections to existential inquiries. His projects have been selected and awarded at international festivals including IDFA, MakeDox, Visioni Italiane, Torino Film Festival. He directs and post-produces awarded music videos for prominent Italian artists. In October 2024, he participated in a Gran Taller with Gianfranco Rosi in Cuba.

- **Production country** - Jordan – Spain
- **Stage of production** - Ready for shooting
- **Director** - Hadi Shatat
- **Scriptwriter** - Hadi Shatat
- **Tagline** - Three workers. One desert cinema. A clash with power that changes everything.
- **Synopsis** - 1958. Jordan is under martial law. In the middle of the desert, three workers decide to go to the cinema. What begins as a simple escape quickly turns into a life-altering journey when they clash with the forces of authority. In a land where freedom is fragile, the magic of cinema becomes an act of resistance.

TAPLINE CINEMA

by Hadi Shatat



Director's CV:

Hadi Shatat is a video artist, and filmmaker. He uses cinematic language in his artistic endeavors to convey the social, political, and cultural problems that people, particularly those in the Arab world face. He tries to cinematically translate the investigation of the relationship between the social and economic reality of groups and individuals in order to help bring about better change. Hadi earned a filmmaking diploma from the 'SAE Institute' in Amman. and a master's degree in the field of directing and writing at the 'Madrid Film Institute.



Who Is Singing?

by Ana Morina

- **Production country** -Kosovo
- **Stage of production** -Development, Funding phase
- **Director** - Ana Morina
- **Scriptwriter** - Ana Morina
- **Tagline** - Through their memories, through her song.
- **Logline** - Forty years after surviving a Yugoslav women's prison, two former political prisoners reunite in a park in Prishtina, silently recalling the day their loved one Afërdita was taken away for singing.
- **Synopsis** - Today, forty years after being imprisoned in a Yugoslav women's prison, Sadije and Ganimete reunite in a park in Prishtina, Kosovo carrying the same spirit of solidarity. They recall the secret messages, rhythmic knocks, and whispered words that helped them endure the brutal conditions and the day their sister and friend Afërdita were violently taken away for singing about freedom.

Who Is Singing?

by Ana Morina

Director's CV:

Ana Morina is a Kosovar-Croatian filmmaker and visual artist whose work explores social dynamics and cultural identities. Born and raised in Croatia, she began her artistic journey in high school with a collective known as "Videoaktivisti," focusing on youth and activism. She continued her higher education at the Cambridge School of Creative Industries, specialising in Film and TV Production, and later began her professional career in HETV. Currently based in Prishtina, Ana works with Oral History Kosova, contributing her expertise to projects that intersect with social issues and community development. She is active in the film industry as both a creative professional and a researcher. Her short documentary "Pashtriku" has had its success screening at DokuFest IFF, Gegenkino Leipzig and as part of lectures at the Institute of Albanology.

WINDBAG

by Fivos Imellos

- **Production country** - Greece
- **Stage of production** - Pre-production
- **Director** - Fivos Imellos
- **Scriptwriter** - Fivos Imellos
- **Tagline** - "Where mourning and silence linger, music and summer awaken."
- **Synopsis** - In a remote mountain village of Naxos, an introverted teenage shepherd struggles with his premature coming of age and the impending death of his father. At the same time, he experiences first love and the joys of an approaching summer. Caught between grief and life, he is called to turn the end of an era into the beginning of a new one.



by Fivos Imellos

Director's CV:

Fivos Imellos was born in Athens in 1998. He is a first-class honours graduate in Film Studies from Greenwich University, holding a Bachelor's degree. His film studies were conducted through New York College in Athens. During his academic years, he completed two short films as a producer, screenwriter, and director, while also contributing to the production of various short films, feature films, and television series. He currently teaches film at a drama school in Athens. He has recently completed his third short film, *Wings*, which was selected for the 46th Drama International Short Film Festival, the 29th Athens International Film Festival, 21th Tirana Film Fest, and 40th Interfilm Berlin. It was also a Finalist for the Best Short Fiction Film Award of the Hellenic Film Academy, among others. The film is now available on the Ertflix platform. His student film, *Violetta*, was screened and awarded in the Student Section of the 43rd Drama International Short Film Festival in 2020, receiving the Best Newcomer Director Award – Dinos Katsouridis. In 2021, it won the Iris Award for Best Student Short Film by the Hellenic Film Academy. Additionally, it received the Best Greek Short Film Award at the 15th Cyprus International Film Festival–Golden Aphrodite.

Pitching Lab Presentation and Networking Lunch

The Pitching Lab Presentation will take place
on Wednesday 10/9, 14:00,
at Eleftheria Hall (1st floor)

where participants will present their projects to an audience of peers and professionals
(5' presentation and 5' Q&A from the audience for each project).

Following the presentation, you are warmly invited to
join us for a **Networking Lunch.**

Join our Short Film Hub community!

We are delighted to invite you to participate in a 2h series of **1on1 meetings** (20-min each) with the participants of Pitching Lab on **Thursday 11/9**.

Be a member of our **Short Film Hub** to forge bonds between film professionals and the filmmakers attending the festival.

CONTACT: hub@dramafilmfestival.gr

Thank you

CONTACT US

E-mail: pitching@dramafilmfestival.gr

www.dramafilmfestival.com

The background consists of a solid blue field with pink geometric shapes. On the left, a pink shape extends from the bottom edge upwards and to the right, forming a series of steps. On the right, a pink shape extends from the top edge downwards and to the left, also forming a series of steps. These two shapes meet at a diagonal line that runs from the top right towards the bottom left.

DISFF