



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival
Proxima Competition

EMBR YO
LA RYVA
BUTT ERF LY

a film by KYROS PAPAVALASSILIOU

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PRESENT



EM BR YO
LA R VA
BU TT E RF LY

DCP - 91 mns - 5:1 - Drama - Original title: Embryo Larva Butterfly - Greek

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SCREENINGS AT KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2023

July, Monday 3 at 4pm Karlovy Vary Municipal Theatre (World Premiere)

July, Tuesday 4 at 12pm Čas Cinema (Public screening)

July, Wednesday 5 at 10am Lazne III Cinema (Public screening)

July, Thursday 6 at 11:30am Cinema B (Public screening)

Check out latest update for the Press & Industry screening

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SYNOPSIS

In a world where time changes arbitrarily, a couple's relationship is tested as their individual and shared recollections of the past, present and future change unremittingly.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The film is about resoluteness in situations where the outcome might already be decided. It is almost absurd to decide to change one's predetermined destiny, yet one must try, one must find a solution, one must at least offer a symbolic answer or prayer. This response to something predetermined is entirely unexpected, as it is not known beforehand. One is always required to improvise.





DIRECTOR'S Q&A

What is the meaning of "Embryo Larva Butterfly"?

The phrase "Embryo Larva Butterfly" reflects the insect life cycle, specifically holometabolism, which includes the stages of embryo, larva, pupa, and imago. The title chooses the first two stages and the final result - the butterfly, symbolizing the process of transformation or metamorphosis. The title also aligns with the structure of time - past, present, future, which is relevant in the context of the film. However, the Greek meaning of Larva as 'bride' is ironically connected to the film's protagonist, suggesting a life's journey towards a final stage. Despite these interpretations, the underlying sentiment is that these explanations may only serve to satisfy an urge for justification, reflecting the predicament of being misunderstood.

Having said all this, the main reason for choosing this title is that it sounds good to me, it sounds both harsh and elegant. I am more drawn towards its physicality, to its music, rather than to its meanings and analyses. I'm more drawn towards the less rational. I suppose I feel more at ease in a reality that is pre-linguistic and pre-understanding.

What inspired you to make this film?

The inspiration for the film came from my personal circumstances. Due to the economic crisis in Greece and other factors, I found myself returning to live with my aging parents. During this time, my father passed away, and my young nephews visited us daily. This situation allowed me to closely





experience both ends of life's spectrum - youth and old age - from my vantage point of middle age. I could project my own future as an elderly person and recall my past as a boy.

This perspective helped me distinguish the sacred from the futile in life and relationships. As I've grown older, I've realized the importance of enduring futile experiences, even when aware of their insignificance, as it aids in discerning what truly matters in life.

This necessity, this kind of determinism, is the fictional condition set upon the characters in *Embryo Larva Butterfly*.

How would you define *Embryo Larva Butterfly* in terms of style?

"*Embryo Larva Butterfly*" is defined by a fragmentary narrative style, lending it a unique, somewhat cubist quality. Visually, I aimed for a pleasing, gentle, and harmonious aesthetic reminiscent of a Botticelli painting. At certain dramatic points, this style transitions into a more cubist form of editing.

Like in your previous work, memory is a key element in this film. Where does it come from?

From Loss, Guilt and Longing.

What about the role of nature vs technology (and the seeming contrast between them) in this film?

In the film, nature versus technology isn't a simple contrast, but rather an exploration of our fundamental obligations. It resonates with the idea that "the cat is the law, the tree is the law," signifying a primordial responsibility towards nature that transcends any institutional or societal norms. We need to rediscover or reinvent ways of thinking and being, perhaps a form of meditation that we were meant for but have never utilized. Such pathways have always been sought by great visionaries.

It is not so much the problem that there is a distinction between nature and technology, but the fact that they become all the more commodified. They become numbers and digits, they become income, they become digital.

Yet, in the film, nature plays an important role. Understanding the voice of nature helps the protagonist interpret what is going on. The role of the character of the Translator of Silence (and particularly through her ability to translate the language of trees) is a key element in this process.

Can you say something about your contemplation on life and death in this film?

Life and death are correlated through memory and projection of the future. The film pushes you to think about the characters and thus about the people close to them. That one day they will die. You might imagine people close to you in their coffin. How they will look, how you will be watching





them. Or vice versa. That certainly makes them dear, loved, sacred. Life becomes more respected after that. This kind of thinking is clearly present in the film.

What kind of image of contemporary society did you want to project through this film?

There are two aspects of this society presented in the film. One has to do with the character who creates problems for the protagonist. He is not evil, nor is he a kingpin. He is a sort of selfish man v2.0. A man who just cannot see the struggle and pains of those around him. A man who overall presumes that he is a "good man".

The second aspect involves surrogate motherhood, a complex yet fascinating subject that can bring hope or catastrophe. Society's commodification of motherhood is highlighted, with instances like surrogate mothers and their newborns trapped in conflict zones, creating a paradoxical relationship between the child and the mother.

However, I refrain from taking a clear stance on surrogacy, as it's essential to acknowledge our limited understanding of others' experiences and needs. The film challenges viewers to feel and sense rather than rush to judgement, reflecting our society's tendency to hastily categorize and understand complex issues.

The film has distinctive shifts of tone and style, sometimes it is almost comic and ironic, at other times very serious and moving.

This reflects my view of reality, which is multifaceted, able to transform at any moment, and often embodying contrasting elements simultaneously. This complexity, also inherent in my personality, led to the creation of such a film. The intent was to address serious subjects in a lighter manner than my previous works, striking a balance between the moving and the comic. Embracing less rigidity in style and content opens up a diverse range of styles and emotions. A playful approach to creation is crucial for me, drawing inspiration from admired poets like Rimbaud and Thanos Kois.

How do you hope the viewer will experience this film?

I aimed to create a film experience that encourages viewers to immerse themselves in its diverse twists and turns, without the conventional obligation to track a linear narrative. The enjoyment lies in the journey itself, even if one loses narrative bearings. I believe that narratives, whether traditional, scientific, fictional, or philosophical, cannot be entirely logical, and we must appreciate their inherent imperfections and illusionary aspects.





DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Writer and director Kyros Papavassiliou was born in Cyprus in 1972. His short film "In the name of the sparrow" was selected at the Official Short Film Competition of Cannes Film Festival 2007. His debut feature "Impressions of a Drowned Man" had its world premiere at Tiger Awards Competition of International Film Festival Rotterdam 2015. Next to filmmaking, Kyros also directs and writes devised theatre performances. He has published a collection of poems by the title "Poneman."

Selected Filmography:

"Impressions of a drowned man" (Feature)
Tiger Awards Competition - IFF Rotterdam 2015

"In the name of the sparrow" (Short)
Short Film Competition - Cannes Film Festival 2007

"At Kafka's trial room" (Short)
Short Film Festival of Drama, 2005





CAST

Maria Apostolakea, Hristos Sougaris, Makis Papadimitriou, Stephania Sotiropoulou, Yiannis Niarros

CREW

Director Kyros Papavassiliou

Screenplay Kyros Papavassiliou

Producers Janine Teerling, Marios Piperides

Co-Producers Konstantina Stavrianou, Rena Vougioukalou

Director of Photography Thodoros Mihopoulos GSC

Production Design Contantina Andreou

Editor Giannis Halkiadakis

Casting Sotiria Marini, Akis Gourzoulidis (Greece), Maria Varnakkidou (Cyprus)

Music MMD

Costumes Joanna Syrimi

Make Up Dora Nazou

Hair Marios Neophytou, Sotiris Finiris

Sound Design Christos Kyriakoullis

Production Manager Zenon Hadjipavlou

Assistant Production Manager Dimitra Papouri

World Sales Cercamon

PRODUCTION COMPANY

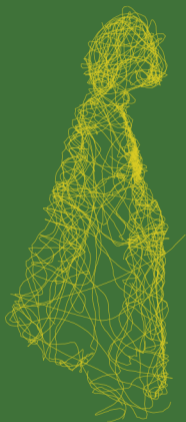
AMP Filmworks is a production company based in Cyprus. Now in our 18th year of operation, we have managed to break the barriers of the island's small industry, evolving from a local production house to successfully producing and co-producing feature films for the international market.

Our recent films include "Mediterranean Fever", which was part of the official selection at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival (Un Certain Regard) where it won the Best Screenplay Award, "Tel Aviv - Beirut" (2022 Tokyo International Film Festival), "Patchwork" (2021 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival) and Tribeca Film Festival 2018 Best International Narrative winner "Smuggling Hendrix". Our executive producing credits include the TV mini-series "Cathargo" by Tomer Shani (2023 Cannes International Series Festival) and Xavier Giannoli's "Tikkoun", which is currently in post-production. Titles in development include Cherien Dabis' "All that's left of you", Marios Piperides' "The Well" and Camille Vidal-Naquet's "Aref".

For the years to come, our vision is to continue (co)producing quality films with international appeal, combining both artistic and commercial success, while maintaining a creative environment where filmmakers can express themselves freely.

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MARIA APOSTOLAKEA CHRISTOS SOUGARIS STEFANIA SOTIROPOULOU YIANNIS NIARROS GUEST APPEARANCE MAKIS PAPADIMITRIOU
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY KYROS PAPAVALASSILOU PRODUCED BY JANINE TEERLING MARIOS PIPERIDES CO-PRODUCED BY KONSTANTINA STAVRIANOY
RENA VOUGIOUKALOU DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY THEODOROS MICHOPoulos PRODUCTION DESIGNER CONSTANTINA ANDREOU
EDITING YANNIS CHALKIADAKIS MUSIC MIMOS CASTING SOTIRIA MARINI (GREECE) AKIS GOURZOULIDES (GREECE) MARIA VARNAKKIDOU (CYPRUS)
COSTUME DESIGNER JOANNA SYRIMI MAKEUP DORA NAZOU SOUND DESIGN CHRISTOS KYRIAKOULLIS SOUND MIXING COSTAS FYLAKTIDIS
SPECIAL EFFECTS ARTIST GIORGOS ALACHOUZOS SCRIPT CONSULTANT GIOVANNI ROBBIANO WORLD SALES AGENT CERCAMON SEBASTIEN CHESNEAU
KARINA KORENBLUM DORIAN MAGAGNIN SUZANNE NODALE DIGITAL COLORIST ANGELOS MANTZIOS VFX PANTELIS ANASTASIADIS
POSTER, TITLES & CREDITS PHIL YIAN WITH THE SUPPORT OF CREATIVE EUROPE - MEDIA DESK S.E.E. CINEMA NETWORK
A CYPROT-GREEK CO-PRODUCTION AMP FILMWORKS IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH GRAAL S.A., PRODUCED WITH THE SUPPORT OF DEPUTY MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF CYPRUS
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