

WIFTGR | WOMEN
IN FILM &
TELEVISION
GREECE



ΤΑΙΝΙΟΘΗΚΗ
ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ
> Μ Ο Υ Σ Ε Ι Ο
ΚΙΝΗΜΑΤΟΓΡΑΦΟΥ



ΒΑΛ ΚΙΝΗΜΑΤΟΓΡΑΦΟΥ
ΓΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ

With the collaboration of the

NEW PRESS RELEASE

5th WIFT GR FILM FESTIVAL

50/50 EQUALITY IN CINEMA

For the Elimination of Gendered Violence

online.tainiothiki.gr

24-28 NOVEMBER 2021

Following the great success of the previous years, **Women in Film and Television Greece (WIFT GR)** and the **Greek Film Archive** present the **5th “50/50 EQUALITY IN CINEMA” WIFT GR FILM FESTIVAL**, which is organised this year with the collaboration of the Thessaloniki International Film Festival, under the auspices and with the support of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sport, and under the auspices of the Hellenic General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality. It takes place **between 24 and 28 November 2021**, on the occasion of the **UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25/11)**. The Festival offers a tribute to the great documentarist **Kim Longinotto**, with a series of film screenings and a **masterclass (27/11, 17:00)**, as well as the **round table “No, You Are Not Wrong!” (26/11, 20:00)**, with the participation of **Sofia Bekatorou** and feminist organisations. **Twenty films** will be screened in all, short and full-length, documentary and fiction.

As always, all screenings and events of the Festival will be **free of charge**. Due to the pandemic, the Festival will be held online, at the screening platform of the Greek Film Archive online.tainiothiki.gr, with the exception of **the opening night (24/11, at 19:00)**, which will take place in the great hall of the Greek Film Archive. **Online screenings begin on Thursday morning (25/11, at 10:00).**

Below you will find the spots of the festival

Radio spot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6o9KJE9iync>

Video spot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWYaq2k5H6g>

Violence against women, as well as against anyone who does not conform with the social conventions of gender and sexuality, is a global scourge, with deep roots in history, which has recently become more visible. Sexist beliefs and misogynistic practices cross geographical, cultural and class borders. In Greece, the shockingly high number of gynocides, the alarming rise of domestic violence during the COVID pandemic, as well as the avalanche revelation of rapes and harassment in the workplaces, demand our decisive and urgent action. WIFT GR and the Greek Film Archive dedicate for a second year our Festival to the effort for the elimination of gendered violence. We wish to contribute to raising awareness with regard to this major issue, as well as to empowering practices. We invite you all to watch films with us, but also to share experiences and thoughts, and act, now!

THE FILMS (20)

KIM LONGINOTTO TRIBUTE

Women in Film and Television Greece offer Kim Longinotto the **WIFT GR Award for Lifelong Achievement** and an honorary membership to WIFT GR. We honour the great documentarist for her contribution to the art of cinema, as well as her contribution to the fight against gendered violence and for the empowerment of women worldwide. Longinotto is recognizable for both her penetrating filmmaking and the choice of her topics, that focus on issues of gendered inequality, oppression and exploitation, through portraits of feminist resistance. As an observational documentarist, she avoids intrusive techniques, putting forward the voice and presence of the women she films. Her often co-directorship collaborations, can also be interpreted as a feminist practice. Out of her more than 20 films, we screen the following **eight films**, which introduce us to the lives and struggles of women in Cameroon, Egypt, India, Iran, Kenya, and South Africa.

1. **Hidden Faces** (& Claire Hunt, 1990, 52 min)

Originally intended as a film about internationally renowned feminist writer Nawal el Saadawi, *Hidden Faces* develops into a fascinating portrayal of Egyptian women's lives. The film follows Safaa Fathy, a young Egyptian woman living in Paris, to her family home. Her mother's decision

to return to the veil after twenty years and her cousins' clitoridectomies reveal a disturbing renewal of fundamentalism.

2. **Divorce Iranian Style** (& Ziba Mir-Hosseini, 1998, 80 min)

This film is set in the Family Law Courts in central Tehran. Our three main characters are Jamila who punishes her husband for beating her, Ziba, a 16 year-old girl who is trying to get a divorce from her 38 year old husband, and Maryam who is fighting for the custody of her daughters.

3. **Runaway** (& Ziba Mir-Hosseini, 2001, 87 min)

This film is set in a refuge for girls in Tehran and follows the stories of five girls who come there, leaving behind them intolerable lives. The film explores their experience of male authority, their longing for respect and freedom, and their hopes for a brighter future, while also showing how rapidly their country is changing.

4. **The Day I Will Never Forget** (2002, 92 min)

The Day I Will Never Forget is a gripping feature documentary that examines the practice of female genital mutilation in Kenya and the pioneering African women who are bravely reversing the tradition. From gripping testimonials by young women who share the painful aftermath of their trauma to interviews with elderly matriarchs who stubbornly stand behind the practice, it paints a complex portrait of the polemics that have allowed this procedure to exist well into modern times.

5. **Sisters in Law** (& Florence Ayisi, 2005, 104 min)

In Kumba, a city in Cameroon, there has not been a single conviction of domestic violence in the last 17 years. But a public prosecutor and a judge are determined to change their city and, ultimately, their country.

6. **Rough Aunties** (2008, 90 min)

Fearless, feisty and resolute, the Rough Aunties are a remarkable group of women unwavering in their stand to protect and care for the abused, neglected and forgotten children of Durban, South Africa.

7. **Pink Saris** (2010, 96 min)

Sampat Pal married when she was a little girl and her new family systematically abused her, but resisted and eventually abandoned her in-laws. In time, she became known as a champion for beleaguered women throughout Uttar Pradesh. Such is the case of a 14-year-old Renu from the Untouchable Community, three months pregnant and homeless, and unable to marry her unborn child's father because of her low caste.

8. **Salma** (2013, 91 min)

Salma is a young Muslim woman from a village in southern India. When she was 13, her family locked her in the house for 25 years, barring her from studying and forcibly marrying her. During this time, words became her salvation. She began composing poems on scraps of paper, and secretly sneaking them out of the house, eventually managing to publish them. Against the odds, she managed to become the most famous Tamil poet, to shake up traditions and conventions, and to gain her freedom.

BEYOND THE STEREOTYPES

Six full-length films with unconventional views on gender and sexuality. Two of them have received the WIFT GR award.

9. **Cosmic Candy** (Rinio Dragasaki, 2019, 100 min) fiction.

Anna, an eccentric supermarket cashier, lives in Athens, alone in her parents' big apartment. One day she will be forced to take in the ten-year-old girl next door, after her father goes missing. At the same time, she will be confronted with her possible dismissal and the overwhelming scenario of a workplace romance.

WIFT GR Award in the 60th Thessaloniki International Film Festival (2019): "For a brave approach to difference and loneliness, as well as to transformative solidarity, friendship and responsibility, in a journey of coming of age and multi-levelled liberation." (Award committee: Lena Rammou, Rea Walldén, Manina Zoumboulaki)

10. **Days and Nights of Demetra K.** (Eva Stefani, 2021, 72 min) documentary.

Dimira is a sex worker and, for many years, she has been the president of the Union of Sex Workers in Greece. She enjoys her job and used to own one of the oldest brothels in Athens. The film draws a portrait of Dimitra by observing her for twelve years. Inevitably, the camera chronicles the way Athens is affected by the recent financial crisis. Getting to know Dimitra, we are confronted with stereotypes about sex, women's desire, individual freedom, and also the way history changes us.

WIFT GR Award in the 23rd Thessaloniki Documentary Festival (2021): "For its daring and tender gaze, which – transcending both prejudice and identification, and without smoothing out contradictions – draws the portrait of a woman, of a profession, and ultimately of Greek society. (Award committee: Rea Walldén, Polly Vlachou, Marina Stylianou)

11. **Orfeas 2021** (FYTA, 2021, 111 min) fiction.

The struggles of Orfeas, the first gay prime minister of Greece, against a history of oppression in the "land of heroes." The first queer opera in

Greek is a post-modern sci-fi experimental work, oscillating between baroque melodrama, DIY collage, post-internet and VR/AI aesthetics. The film is dedicated to the memory of activist Zackie Oh!

12. **Bebia, à mon seul désir** (Juja Dobrachkous, 2020, 113 min) fiction. Following the death of her grandmother (“Bebia”), seventeen-year-old model Ariadna returns to Georgia, her motherland, to attend the funeral. According to an ancient local tradition, Ariadna, as the youngest member of the family, is responsible for reuniting the body and soul of her grandmother by connecting a thread from the place of her death to the resting body. The film draws its inspiration from Greek mythology.

13. **Vera Dreams of the Sea** (Kaltrina Krasniqi, 2021, 87 min), fiction. Vera is a middle-aged sign language interpreter, who leads a well-structured life: a wife to a renowned judge, a supportive mother, and a caring grandmother. Her serene life is disrupted by her husband’s suicide followed by an unwelcome, menacing parade of men who claim to have ownership over their village family house. When the tendrils of an underworld scheme begin to surface, Vera’s world will face danger and seem ready to collapse. Fear and mistrust will force Vera to take the family’s fate into her own hands.

14. **Clara Sola** (Nathalie Álvarez Mesén, 2021, 106 min), fiction. Clara, a 40-year-old woman, withdrawn and with an intuitive relation to nature, is believed to have a special connection to God. Clara's sexuality is stirred by her attraction to her niece's new boyfriend. This new awakened force takes Clara through unexplored territory, allowing her to cross boundaries, both physical and mystical. Empowered by her self-discovery, Clara gradually frees herself from her role as "saint", which allows her to finally heal herself...

GREEK SHORTS

Four short films, by young Greek filmmakers.

15. **Amygdala** (Maria Hatzakou, 2021, 22 min)
Two sisters, Anna and Melina, spend the last days of summer at their summer house in Nea Makri. Anna is having a party for her 18th birthday and all she wants is to spend her day with Maria, her summer flirt. Melina loves Anna obsessively and does not understand why she is not invited to the party.

16. **I Don't Want to Forget Anything** (Vaggelio Soumeli, 2020, 5min)

Marialena is on the phone with Magda. The two sisters are on their way to their mother's funeral.

17. **Every Sunday** (Keti Papadema, 2020, 24 min)

A group of Filipino domestic workers in Cyprus prepare for a beauty pageant organised by their community, while a case of a serial killer targeting foreign female workers comes to the surface.

18. **A Summer Place** (Alexandra Mathaiou, 2021, 20 min)

Summer is a permanent state of mind in Limassol, a once small seaside town in Cyprus that has transformed into the oligarch paradise of the Mediterranean. Being both a player and a victim of this city's transformation as a food stylist, Tina is depressed. On the day of her birthday, she is ready to give up on everything, until an extraordinary encounter changes her life.

FEMINIST COLLABORATIONS

19. **CharactHer: Olympia Mytilinaiou** (Collectif 50/50, 3 min)

Collectif 50/50 is a French organisation advocating parity and diversity in the audiovisual industry. With the support of the **European Commission**, they launched the campaign entitled **CharactHer: empowering all talents in the film and media industries**. The campaign highlights 12 European women professionals from the film and media industries, who work in careers still commonly perceived as "masculine"; among them is the Greek cinematographer, **Olympia Mytilinaiou**.

20. **Over to Her: The Film** (Global Girl Media Greece, 30 min) in English **Global Girl Media** develops the voice, media activism and leadership of young women from under-served communities worldwide. In recognition of the **United Nation's 2021 Generation Equality Forum**, **GGM Greece** produced the project "**Over to Her**", showcasing feminist and gender equality groups in Greece – including **WIFT GR**.

THE EVENTS (3)

OPENING NIGHT

Wednesday 24 November, 19:00, Greek Film Archive (great hall)

Free entrance on a first-come basis. Come early!

A short interview of Kim Longinotto will be screened, and then the documentary "Salma" (2013, 91 min). An open discussion with the audience will follow.

ROUND TABLE “NO, YOU ARE NOT WRONG!”

Friday 26 November, 20:00, via zoom (in Greek)

Free attendance. Registration needed.

A discussion about domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gendered violence, and how to fight against them. Invited speakers: **Sofia Bekatorou**, Olympic Champion, #MeToo Pioneer; **Clio Papapantoleon**, Lawyer: “MeToo and criminal justice”; **Anna Michalakeli**, Social Anthropologist, Program Coordinator at the Centre for Research on Women's Issues “Diotima”: “Deficiencies and Resistances of the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Response and Support System”; **Alexia Tsouni**, Member of the Editorial Committee of the Women's Rights Association "To Mov": “Feminist solidarity, Targetting and Support”; **Carmen Zografou**, researcher-filmmaker, and **Myrto Tsilimpounidi**, researcher-photographer, members of the “Feminist Autonomous Research Centre”: “The Violence of Invisibility and Voices of Resistance”. The discussion will be chaired by the WIFT GR President, **Rea Walldén**.

You may register here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-cjsE5CATtGRaxyFVEkoAw

MASTERCLASS KIM LONGINOTTO

Saturday 27 November, 17:00, via zoom (in English)

Free attendance. Registration needed.

Kim Longintto will share with us the secrets of her craft!

You may register here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VEzKO2GGTE2TD4pCGCSpRw

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(For full Credits & Acknowledgements, see the Festival platform).*

