

STAY SAD.

PITY

A FILM BY BABIS MAKRIDIS



INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
ROTTERDAM

FALIRO HOUSE PRESENTS A NEDA FILM PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH MADANTS & BEBEN FILMS THE ONASSIS FOUNDATION ERT SA STUDIO PRODUKCYJNE ORKA FILM PRODUKCJA FOSS
CO-FINANCED BY EURIMAGES GREEK FILM CENTER POLISH FILM INSTITUTE STARRING YANNIS DRAKOPOULOS EVI SAOULIDOU MAKIS PAPADIMITRIOU NOTA TSERNIAFSKI
GEORGINA CHRYSKIOTI NIKOS KARATHANOS EVDOKIA ANDROULIDAKI KOSTAS KOTOULAS PANAGIOTIS TASOULIS PRODUCTION MANAGER IOSIF ADALOGLOU MAKEUP EVI ZAFIROPOULOU
COSTUMES DIMITRI PAPATHOMAS ART DIRECTOR ANNA GEORGIADOU SOUND STEFANOS EFTHIMIOU SOUND DESIGN LEANDROS NTOUNIS MUSIC MIKOŁAJ TRZASKA EDITOR YANNIS CHALKIADAKIS
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY KONSTANTINOS KOUKOULIOS CO-PRODUCERS ONASSIS FOUNDATION/ANTHONY PAPADIMITRIOU AFRODITI PANAGIOTAKOU
PRODUCED BY AMANDA LIVANOU CHRISTOS V. KONSTANTAKOPOULOS KLAUDIA ŚMIEJA BEATA RZEŹNICZEK SCRIPT EFTHIMIS FILIPPOU BABIS MAKRIDIS DIRECTED BY BABIS MAKRIDIS



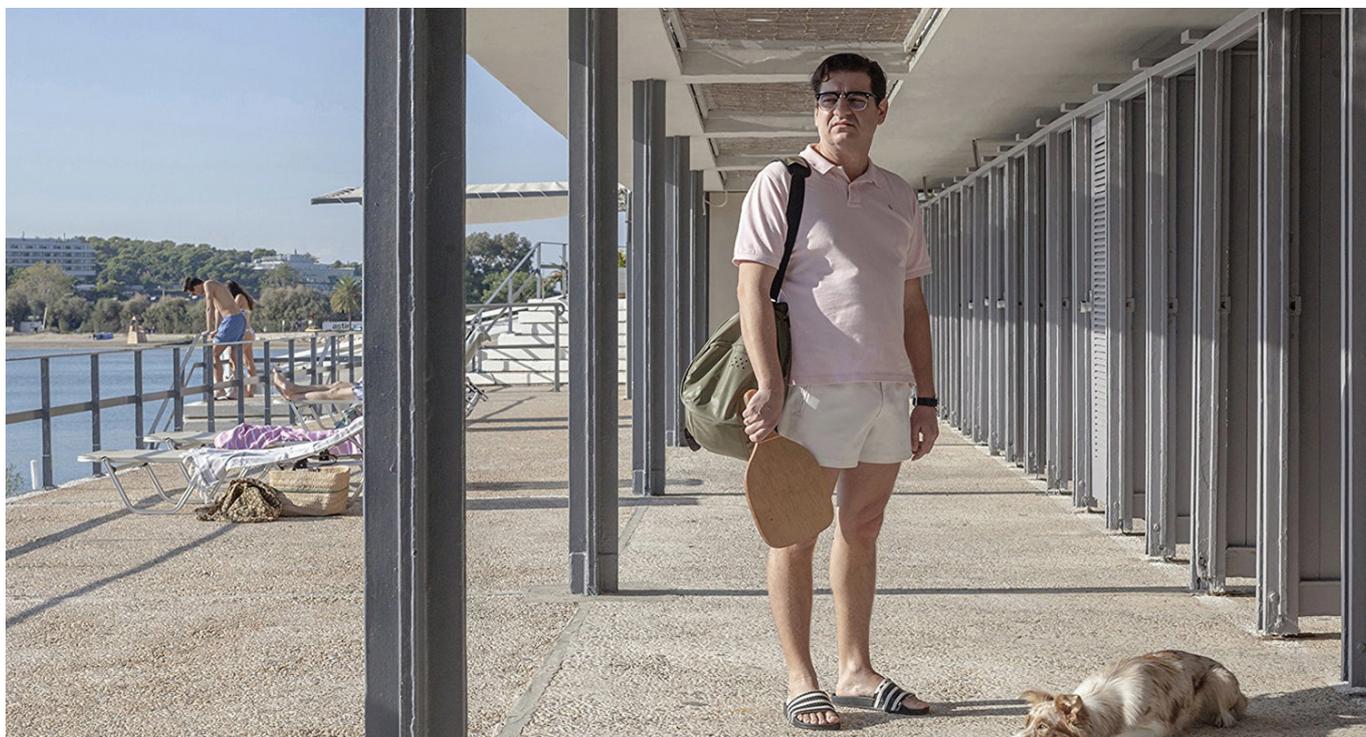
EEN FILMFREAK RELEASE

SYNOPSIS

Het verhaal van een man die liever ongelukkig is. Een man verknocht aan smart.

Als de vrouw van een advocaat na lange tijd uit een coma ontwaakt, moet hij het plotseling stellen zonder het mededogen dat lange tijd zo gul voorhanden was. Hij kan niet meer zonder, en neemt maatregelen om in aanmerking te komen voor meer.

Het script van PITY is ontsproten aan het wonderlijke brein van Efthimis Filippou, auteur van o.a. Dogtooth, the Lobster en the Killing of a Sacred Deer.



TECHNISCHE GEGEVENS

Een film van Babis Makridis

Met Yannis Drakopoulos, Evi Saoulidou, Nota Tserniafski, Makis Papadimitriou,
Georgina Chryskioti Evdoxia Androulidaki, Nikos Karathanos

Griekenland, Polen 2018 | Grieks gesproken | Speelduur: 99 minuten
Genre: Komedie | Formaat: DCP | Aspect Ratio: 1:1.85 | Sound: 5.1

Festival premières: Sundance 2018 World Dramatic Competition, IFFR Big Screen Competition
Releasedatum Nederland: 20 september 2018 in de filmtheaters en op Picl.

Bevestigde premièretheaters:

Rialto, EYE, Focus, Filmhuis Den Haag, Concordia, Filmschuur, LantarenVenster, 't Hoogt

Landelijke Persvoorstelling: TBC

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DIRECTOR / WRITER

Babis Makridis - Director /Co-writer

Babis was born in Kastoria, northern Greece, in 1970. He studied film direction at the Stavrakos Film School in Athens. He started working as a director in 2000 and since he has directed countless commercials and video clips. His short film *The Last Fakir* (2005) won the Newcomer's Prize at the Drama short film festival, Greece. His debut feature *L* (2012) was presented in competition at Sundance Film Festival, Rotterdam Tiger Awards and many other international festivals. *Pity* is his second feature film.

Efthimis Filippou - Co-writer

Efthimis Filippou was born in January, 1977. He is a writer, a screenwriter and a playwright. Oscar nominated for *The Lobster* (2017). He has worked as a freelance journalist for various magazines and newspapers. Films he wrote include *Dogtooth*, *Alps*, *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* (all co-written with Yorgos Lanthimos), *Chevalier* (co-written with Athina Rachel Tsangari) along with *L*, which like *Pity* was co-written with Babis Makridis.

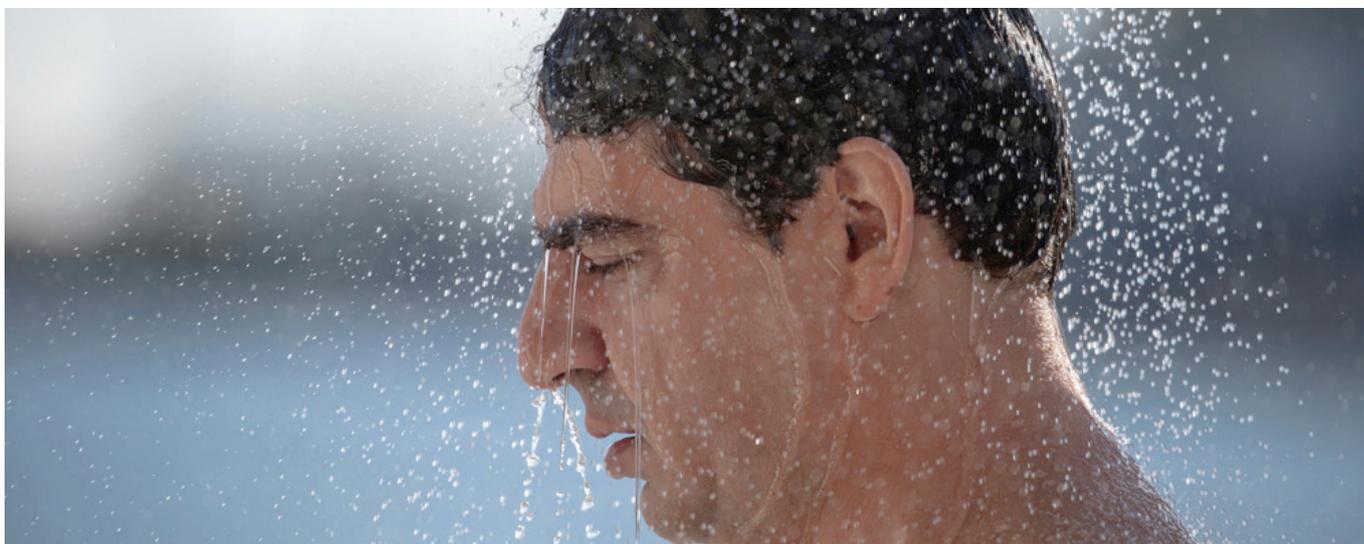
CAST

Yannis Drakopoulos - Lawyer

Yannis graduated cum laude from the New Greek Theater Drama School and the National Technical University of Athens. He has been working as an actor and director in theater, film and television, having participated, during the last twenty years, in over forty theatrical productions, seventeen short and feature films as well as twelve television productions. He has worked with directors such as Giorgos Armenis, Diagoras Chronopoulos, Lee Breuer, Athina Tsangari, Tasos Psaras, Nikos Perrakis, Vardis Marinakis, Damianos Konstantinidis, Nikos Zapatinas, Yorgos Servetas, Kostas Gakis and Vasilis Vafeas. From 1995 to 2010 Yannis delivered a series of seminars on theater games and pantomime, for the theater groups of the Athens University of Economics and Commerce, University of Piraeus and the National Technical University of Athens. He is also a contributing writer for *Nea Politiki* magazine in charge of the theater column.

Evi Saoulidou - Wife

Evi was born in Kavalla in 1977 and attended the Drama School Theater of Northern Greece on a scholarship from the School. Evi has been working in theater in Athens since 1999, appearing in countless productions of classic and contemporary plays both with Greek and foreign directors and she has also appeared in the ancient theater of Epidaurus. She has appeared in cinema in Pantelis Voulgaris' *Brides* (2004), Alexandros Avranas' *Without* (2009) and Christos Dimas' *Pokerface* (2011). Evi was awarded the prestigious Melina Merkouri Prize for her role in *Bella Venezia*, in 2007, and she has also been awarded the Best Actress Award for *Without* and Best Supporting Actress Award for *Brides* at the National Film Awards.



AN INTERVIEW WITH BABIS MAKRIDIS

While its subject is serious, at times Pity is also surprisingly funny. Was it something you anticipated?

What can I say – I am a funny guy [laughter]. I always say that for me, the script is a work in progress. When you work on something for a few years, you change as a person. You start putting in new ideas, so until the final mix anything can change. But with Efthimis Filippou (co-writer), we wanted the script to have a bit of humour because in our eyes, every movie is a comedy. So that's exactly what we told our crew. I would like to think that Pity has some Jacques Tati in it. I am a huge fan and when I shoot, I always feel he is right next to me, giving me advice. Or Buster Keaton! He influenced my previous films as well.

Buster Keaton was famous for always keeping a straight face. Your lead character, the lawyer, is like that as well – it's hard to figure out what is going on in his head.

I like mysterious characters, because that forces the viewer to make an effort and try to understand what is happening. That's the beauty of cinema: everybody can read it in his own way. I like to go out the door thinking about what I just saw. If you forget it after 5 minutes, it's a bad movie. The way I see it, films should only ask questions, not give answers. The other part – that's what Hollywood is for.

Just like your previous film, L, you co-wrote Pity with the celebrated screenwriter Efthimis Filippou. He is mostly known for his work with Yorgos Lanthimos – the figurehead of the so-called 'Greek Weird Wave'. Do you see yourself as a part of that movement?

I don't like to put labels on films. Greek film industry can offer so much nowadays: social dramas, family films and comedies. We are so much more than just this one movement. When we finished the script for my first film with Efthimis, after a year or so we started to talk about what our next project could be about. Ultimately we settled on Pity – it just seemed like the most interesting subject. We read some books about it, like for example Stefan Zweig's Beware of Pity. It was great, but it didn't bring us any closer to what we had in mind. You are showing that for some people, grief can easily turn into pleasure.

When I was young, it felt so good to listen to a melancholic song at a party. Just to have some preoccupied girl come over and ask: "Are you ok?" In those days, that's how you would get girlfriends [laughter]. It's not something we like to admit, but as human beings, we revel in other people's pity. It makes us feel important; like we are the centre of the universe. That being said, I believe there are two kinds of pity. One happens when you see a homeless person on the street, so you give him some money and you feel good about it. You – not him. The other kind is the one I decided to explore in the film. It's about the pity we are trying to get from the others and how far we are willing to go in order to get it.

Have you actually met people like that?

Oh yes. Which is also why I think that in comparison to my previous film, this one is much more realistic. Some people develop this need very early on. Imagine that you are 3 years old and your cat dies. Everyone around you suddenly starts to pity you, which to a child can mean that they are very nice and give you sweets or presents. This feeling is just like any other addiction – you can become used to it and then you can't live without it anymore. And that's when people start lying.

Is that why you are not telling the viewer where to look?

In most takes, the camera is completely still. I like when the camera doesn't participate in the action. I want it to watch, not interfere. With this film it was extremely important, because I didn't want to give too many clues. But I also didn't want people to leave the cinema thinking: "What the hell was that?" So I added some intertitles, which we wrote together with Efthimis. I didn't want to use a voiceover, but those sentences add something special to the film. They help you understand what is going on.

And so does the music. Did you always want it to be such an integral part of the film?

I used to say that this film reminds me of the opera – it's the music that draws you in. In the first part, what plays in the background is Beethoven's Ode to Joy. So you have this man that seems to be so sad, but the music is uplifting. In the second, when he has all the reasons in the world to be perfectly happy, it's Mozart's Requiem – the saddest music in the world. This contradiction shows you precisely what is really happening. It tells you what he feels.

Do you sometimes play something to the actors as well?

When we met for the very first time, I made them listen to a song by The Residents – this experimental band from the 70s. It was called Breath and Length. No one knows who they are – they always wear masks. But their music is funny and tragic; it has everything I needed for this film. I think the actors immediately understood what I was going for. Sometimes we would also play some music during the shoot, trying to help them to get in the right mood. I don't like to talk too much about the characters and their previous experiences, all that crap. I don't do rehearsals either. I trust my actors, especially because so many of them are friends of mine. They know my style and I let them do whatever they want, because I like when an actor comes to the set not knowing too much about what he is going to do. When they do, it often comes off way too stiff. In the film, very often we hear the main character before we can actually see him.



You are focusing on palm trees and the sea, but he can be heard in the background, crying. Why?

When you see a beautiful landscape and then hear someone cry, it's no longer beautiful – it's tainted. It's summer, everything is nice and he has a lovely house near the sea. Everything around him is beautiful. But he doesn't want beauty – he wants destruction. He likes to be sad. He is jealous of the sadness of others. Which is also why we decided to make him a lawyer, and not a musician or a teacher. This job is based on pity – you always try to get people feel sorry for your client.

Is that why you decided to include a scene in which he talks about the famous weepie The Champ by Franco Zeffirelli?

It was Efthimis's idea and I just thought it was very funny. It's such a sentimental film, The Champ – everyone cries when they watch it. So it was a perfect fit, because he really, really wants to cry. This scene is actually very important – it says so many things about the film. It's a turning point in a way, because that's when you realise he actually misses being sad. If The Champ would suddenly hit cinemas again, he would be there every day. Watching it in a loop and just crying his eyes out. Still, I do think that in the end, Pity is an optimistic movie. You will understand when you see the ending [laughter]

CREDITS

CAST

Yannis Drakopoulos: Lawyer
Evi Saoulidou: Wife
Nota Tserniafski: Sister
Makis Papadimitriou: Dry Cleaner Owner
Georgina Chryskioti: Neighbor
Evdoxia Androulidaki: Secretary
Nikos Karathanos: Brother

CREW

Director: Babis Makridis
Screenplay: Efthimis Filippou, Babis Makridis
Cinematography: Konstantinos Koukoulis
Editing: Yannis Chalkiadakis
Production Design: Anna Georgiadou
Sound Design: Leandros Ntounis
Production companies: Neda Film, Faliro House, Madants, Beben Films
Producers: Amanda Livanou, Christos V. Konstantakopoulos,
Klaudia Śmieja, Beata Rzeźniczek
Co-Producers: Onassis Foundation/ Anthony Papadimitriou,
Afroditi Panagiotakou Peter Carlton,
Magdalena Zimecka, Jacek Kulczycki, Stanisław Dziedzic

In co-production with: Onassis Foundation, ERT, Greek Film Center,
Studio Produkcyjne ORKA, Film Produkcja, Foss
Co-financed by: Polish Film Institute
Supported by: Eurimages

