

GIANNIS in the CITIES

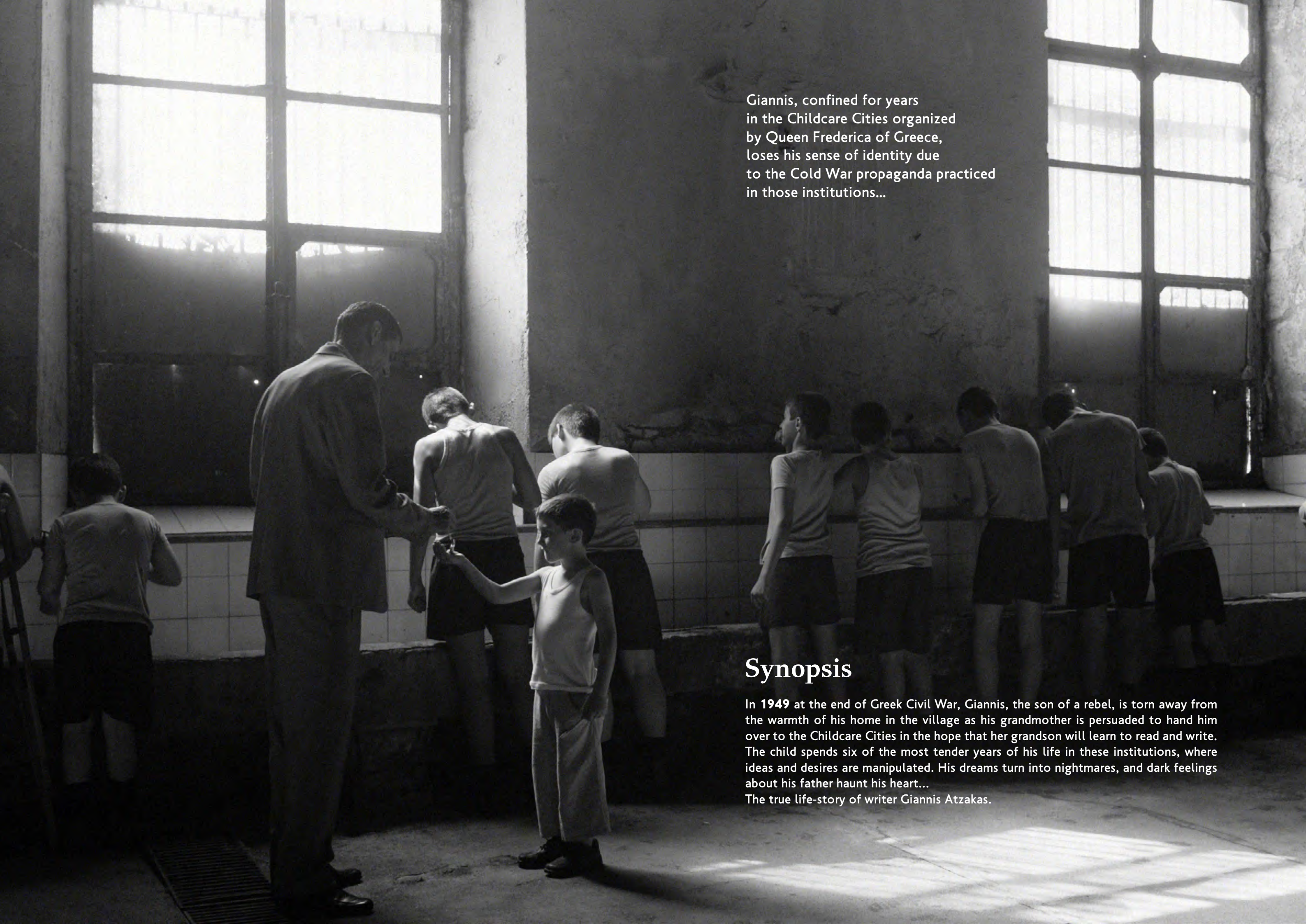
A film by Eleni Alexandrakis

Based on the books "Diplomena Ftera" & "Tholos Vythos" By Giannis Atzakas

script **ELENI ALEXANDRAKIS - PANAGIOTIS EVANGELIDIS** director **ELENI ALEXANDRAKIS**
direction of photography **DIONYSIS EFTHYMIPOYLOS GSC**
art direction **GIORGOS GEORGIU** costumes **DESPOINA CHIMONA** sound **NIKOS PAPADIMITRIOU**
editing **CHRISTOS GIANNAKOPOULOS** music **NIKOS XYDAKIS**
sponsored by **D SHOP** funded by **GFC - ERT** supported by **EKOME**
coproduced by **ALATAS FILMS - AUTHORWAVE - TAMARISK**

produced by **POMEGRANATE FILMS 2**





Giannis, confined for years
in the Childcare Cities organized
by Queen Frederica of Greece,
loses his sense of identity due
to the Cold War propaganda practiced
in those institutions...

Synopsis

In **1949** at the end of Greek Civil War, Giannis, the son of a rebel, is torn away from the warmth of his home in the village as his grandmother is persuaded to hand him over to the Childcare Cities in the hope that her grandson will learn to read and write. The child spends six of the most tender years of his life in these institutions, where ideas and desires are manipulated. His dreams turn into nightmares, and dark feelings about his father haunt his heart...

The true life-story of writer Giannis Atzakas.



Brief historical info

During the Greek civil war (1946- 1949) both the battling armies, the Conservative Government Army and the Army of Rebels called the Democratic Army, amassed children and removed them from their homes.

The government transported them to the “Childcare Cities” (Paidopolis), founded “under the high protection of Her Majesty the Queen”, who organized a fundraising to this purpose.

The Democratic Army moved the children out of the country’s borders, into similar institutions of the Eastern bloc countries.

The children who were moved away from either side were, in effect, both “saved” and “abducted”. They were saved because they were protected from the bombings , better fed than those left in their villages, and some of them received an education.

But they were also abducted, in the sense that both sides wished to train them according to their own beliefs, cage them into their world and inflict on them the propaganda of their policies. The protection they offered was such, as to make the “welfare” of those protected equal to the “welfare” of the protector.

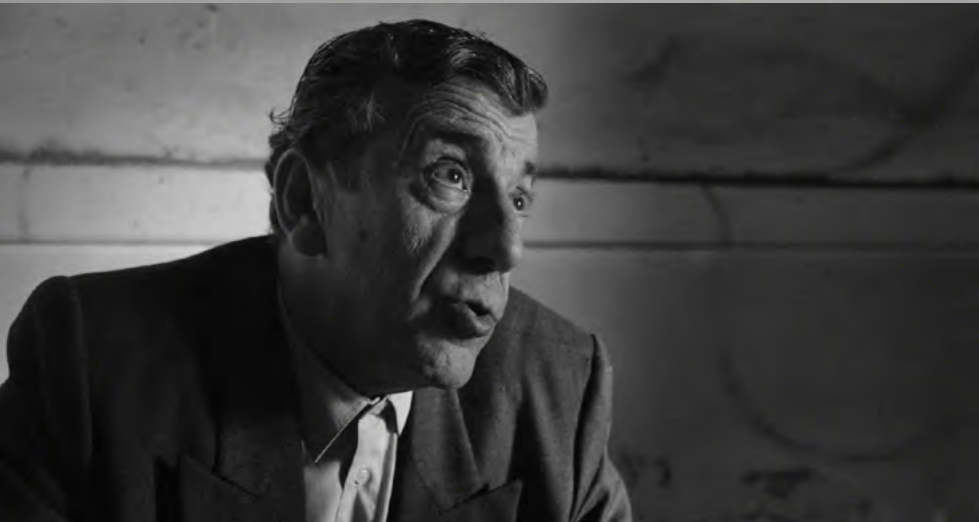
It is certain that many parents gave their children away with their own free will, but it is just as certain that many others did not wish to be separated from them and were forced to abandon them.

From the texts of Tasoula Verveniotis in the books:

1. “Representations of History through the Red Cross’ Archives - The ‘40s” (Melissa publications)

2. “History of Greece in the 20th century. Reconstruction - Civil War - Restoration 1945 -1952 (Bibliorama Publications)









Director's Note

My film "Giannis in the cities" is a free adaptation of the books "Diplomena Ftera" & "Tholos Vythos" by Giannis Atzakas and focuses on the life of Giannis, his thoughts, his soul, and his journey from the day he is uprooted from his natural environment and placed into an imposed world, to the moment he manages to confess all he has experienced to the man who has haunted him for years, by his absence.

Although the film refers to older times, no accurate historical representation is sought in its imagery. The indeterminate space, the shooting angles, the stillness of the camera and the lenses we used attempt to create the universe of the hero's mind. Reality, dreams, nightmares and fantasies emerge from his memory bottomless well...

I discovered the book THOLOS VYTHOS in June 2009, when my friend and writer Claire Mitsotaki invited me to its presentation. I knew nothing then about the author, the book, and the Childcare Cities. Thanks to the excellent presentation by Claire Mitsotaki, the historian Riki van Boeschoten and the late scholar Panagiotis Moullas, those of us who were present received a comprehensive and universal understanding of the historical context of the narrative, and also of the book's main character.

When, following this, the author Giannis Atzakas, true protagonist of his autobiographical story, spoke, I was impressed listening to him talk about his life and work.

He was genuinely uncomfortable, and you could see traces of an hermetically sealed memory and some repressed traumas, which he struggles to release and heal through writing.

Though I grew up in completely different social surroundings and at a later date, I felt a strange affinity with Giannis Atzakas. Perhaps because I went to school during the seven- year greek military dictatorship, and the obscurantism and historical lies we were taught back then were almost identical to the propaganda promulgated in the post-civil war Childcare Cities.

The idea of making a film based on Giannis Atzakas' book immediately caught hold of me; in addition to the seductive way with which the author transmits his experience and the past naivety of his childish thinking, I realized, reading it, that the protection of children is too often a cover for the exploitation of their innocence. This is an extremely serious issue that is unfortunately still relevant today. In fact, I was really shocked when, while researching for the script, I discovered many similar stories from all over the world, and at different times. Therefore before I made the fiction film "Giannis in the Cities", I made the documentary «Uprootings» which concerned the story of Giannis Atzakas, as well as other stories of uprooted children from different parts of the world who suffered as well, due to the ruthless politics of their countries.

Curriculum Vitae

Eleni Alexandrakis

Director, Screenwriter, Film Producer.

She was born in 1957, in Athens.

She studied Cinema at the Sorbonne, Paris I, (License 1980) and at the National Film and TV School in England (Graduated in 1985). She writes, directs, and produces both fiction and documentary films, because she believes there is no essential difference between the two. Her films have been awarded in Greece and abroad.

Partial filmography

GIANNIS IN THE CITIES

Fiction 2024

UPROOTINGS

Documentary 2022

Cosmocinema Award / London Greek Film Festival 2024

KOSTIS PAPAGIORGIS, the sweetest misanthrope

Documentary 2018

Panhellenic Union of Cinema Critics Award /

20th Thessaloniki Doc. Festival 2018,

1st Prize for Greek Doc / Aegean Docs Festival, 2018

Honorable Mention Docfest of Chalkida 2018

ANGEL AND THE WEIGHT-LIFTER

Fiction 2008

Gold Remi Award at WorldFest Houston 2009

THE WOMAN WHO MISSED HOME

Fiction 2004

Honorable Mention at Rhodes Eco Film Festival 2005

Greek State Prize for Music to Nicos Papazoglou 2005

THE HOLLY MYRRH

Documentary 2002

EASTER IS IN THE AIR

Documentary 1999

A DROP IN THE OCEAN

Fiction 1995

Mionneto Film Award / Forum / Berlin Film Festival 1996

Special Jury Award to Amalia Moutoussi

for her performance / Istanbul Film Festival 1996

TONIA MARKETAKI

Documentary 1994

THE CHILDREN OF GREECE

Documentary (series of 6x30') 1990

Cinema and Reality Festival Award 1990

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A film by Eleni Alexandrakis

Based on the books "Diplomena Ftera" & "Tholos Vythos" By Giannis Atzakas

2024

Duration: 90 min

Language: Greek

CAST:

In the role of Giannis:

Philippos Milikas (6)

Marios Konstantinos Gatetzas (9)

Konstantinos Athanassakis(13)

Aineias Tsamatis (adult)

In order of appearance:

Agni Stroumbouli, Evgenia Apostolou,

Giannis Kritharas, Mina Chimona,

Manolis Mavromatakis,

Simos Kakalas, Kostis Seiradakis,

Evi Saoulidou, Giorgos Tsiapogas,

Akillas Karazisis, Katerina Alexandrakis,

Aglaiã Papa, Promitheas Nerattini,

Vasiliki Skordali, Katia Leclerc O'Wallis,

Katia Goulioni, Themis Panou,

Giannis Kokiasmenos, Evdoxia Androulidaki,

Kostas Philippoglou, Maria Kallimani,

Andreas Marianos, Rafika Chawishe,

Kleopatra Markou, Stelios Mainas.

And the children:

Christiana Vasiou, Panos Thomopoulos,

Ermis Philippoglou, Marco Gonzales Soto,

Maria Karsioti, Nikoletta Stathopoulou,

Georgia Argyrou, Stella Trizoni, Giannis Tavoularis,

Giorgos Nakos, Vassilis Tavoularis,

Alexandros Milikas, Ilias Apostologlou,

Dimitis Konaxis, Anna Maria Zonara, Pavlos Figl,

Aris Georgiopoulos, Giannis Kriaras,

Alexandros Skourti, Dimitris Bogdanidis,

Loukas Alcan, Nikolas Faloutsos,

Konstantinos Sakelios, Konstantinos Kassios,

Orfeas Kassios, Konstantinos Pettas,

Lefteris Pettas, Giorgos Zoukagiem,

Thomas Vasios, Giorgos Theodoropoulos,

Alexandros Nerantzis, Platonas Sabrakos,

Emilia Tsorteki, Dimitra Gouvedari,

Nikoletta Roussopoulou, Anastasia Masiala,

Aggeliki Georgakopoulou, Stavros Georgoulas.

DIRECTION: Eleni Alexandrakis

SCREENPLAY: Eleni Alexandrakis, Panagiotis Evangelidis

CINEMATOGRAPHY: Dionysis Efthymiopoulos GSC

ART DIRECTION: Giorgos Georgiou

COSTUMES: Despina Chimona

SOUND: Nikos Papadimitriou

EDITING: Christos Giannakopoulos

MUSIC: Nikos Xydakis

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Gina Petropoulou

PRODUCER: Eleni Alexandrakis

PRODUCED BY: Pomegranate Films 2

CO-PRODUCED BY: Alatas Films (Greece),

Authorwave (Greece), Tamarisk (Greece)

CO-FINANCED BY: Greek Film Centre (GFC),

National Greek Television (ERT)

SUPPORTED BY: National Centre of Audiovisual Media
and Communication (EKOME)

KINDLY SPONSORED BY: D SHOP

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