

Film 17



## FilmHellenes

FilmHellenes - Greek Film Fest Chicago Board at their summer fundraiser, with their Guest of Honor, Academy Award® Winning Director Alexander Payne. (Top row, L-R) Chair/CoFounder Niko Franghias, ViceChair Zoe Iftsopoulos Borys, slightly at the back, Panos Fiorentinos, guest Director Alexander Payne, Demetra Markopoulos, Peter Kanelos, Andrea Granias, Conn Grapsas. (Bottom row L-R): Maria Constantinides, Dimitris Kostopoulos, Art Andros, Dino Vlahakis, FilmHellenes Secretary/Treasurer Terry Jacobs. Missing is George Garifalis and Cathy Hareas.

Photo courtesy of FilmHellenes

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## Lineup For Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012



CHICAGO—FilmHellenes has announced the film lineup for Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012, this October 4-8. Films will be screened at the National Hellenic Museum (NHM) in Chicago, Pickwick Theater in Park Ridge, IL and the Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago.

### INTRODUCING: CINERGIES

FilmHellenes is also pleased to introduce a new outreach initiative called Cinergies. Greek Film Fest Chicago! proudly welcomes the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece to join this year's festival, for the screening of the award-winning *KISSES TO THE CHILDREN* (2011), written and directed by Vassilis Loules.

The film follows five Greek-Jewish children saved by Christians in German-occupied Greece. Childhood was their Garden of Eden, even though they spent it in hiding—even though they lost it in the shadow of the Holocaust.

This partnership and screening is made possible with the collaboration of The Jewish Museum of Greece and the support of the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation, Greece; Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, Greece; Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece; the American Sephardi Federation; American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece and the

Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (I.T.F.).

This film will be shown at NHM on October 5 at 7:00 pm, introduced by Loules. The film will be presented also on October 8 at Film Row Cinema at Columbia College at 7:00 pm, also introduced by Loules, with a panel discussion to follow.

### OPENING NIGHT

This year's opening night selection is *UNFAIR WORLD* (2011), directed by Filippos Tsitos. This is the Chicago premiere of the award-winning film, which will be Greece's entry for the Academy Awards® 2013.

### CLOSING NIGHT

The closing night film is *FISH N' CHIPS* (2011), written and directed by Elias Demetriou. This is also the Chicago premiere for this award-winning production.

### HELLENIC CURRENT - FICTION FEATURES

These films are recent narrative features, short subjects, animation, feature and short length documentaries. This year's lineup includes: *WELCOME TO ALL SAINTS* (2011), written and directed by Sotiris Goritsas; *JERKS* (2011), written, produced and directed by Stelios Kammitis; and the Chicago premiere of *PARADISE* (2011), written and directed by Panagiotis Fafoutis.

### DOCUMENTARIES – FLASHES OF HISTORY

In the category of historical documentaries, films include *THE*

*OTHER TOWN* (2011), directed by Nefin Dinç; and *THE VISIT* (2012), written and directed by Stella Alisanoglou.

### DOCUMENTARIES – HELLENIC CURRENT

This group of documentaries includes the US premieres of *NOSTOS* (2012), directed by Nicolas Panoutsopoulos; and *DEAR ANCESTOR* (2011), written and directed by Menelaos Karaghliolis. Also showing, will be *PLAYING WITH SHADOWS (TA KOLITIRIA)* (2012), directed by Agnes Sklavos and Stelios Tatakis; and the Chicago premiere of the award-winning *SAYOME* (2010), written and directed by Nikos Dayandas.

### CHRYSOTHEKE – SHORTS

In this non-competitive category, the festival salutes Greek films recognized in notable European and/or International Festivals. This year's lineup includes the award-winning *THE PALACE* (2011), written and directed by Anthony Maras; and the Chicago premiere of *THE FOREIGNER* (2011), written and directed Alethea Avramis.

### HELLENIC CURRENT – SHORTS

These short films include *VICIOUS CIRCLE* (2011), written, produced and directed by Salvador Georgantas; and *COUNTER-CLOCKWISE* (2011), directed by Giorgos Korgianitis.

### YOUNG AMBITION PRESENTATION

The festival is pleased to introduce to Chicago audiences the work of a new talent, Kostas Chaliasas, 20, from Thessaloniki, Greece, who

is already being called a "Greek Spielberg". Chaliasas not only visualizes, writes, directs, does the cinematography, composes the music (getting all the right moods and transitions) and acts, but creates a universe. He has been creating narrative films since he was 13. His works have participated, won awards and special mentions at several International film festivals, like the Austin International Film Festival in Texas, the Seoul international Youth Film Festival, the Drama International Film Festival, and the Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People.

Chaliasas will make a special appearance at the festival, to introduce his award-winning film, *BEHIND THE SUN* (2011); as well as seven other of his films, including *AT THE MERCY OF GOD* (2006); *WINDOW ON NATURE* (2010); the award-winning *TURN OVER A NEW LEAF* (2011); and *RAUS* (2012). Watch for an interview with Chaliasas to appear in *The Greek Star* later this month.

Also in the Young Ambition category, is the Chicago premiere of *SUPER DEMETRIOS* (2011), directed by Georgios Papaioannou.

*The complete film and location schedule will be available in the next week. For complete film synopses, visit our website at [www.thegreekstar.com](http://www.thegreekstar.com) or at [www.greekfilmfestchicago.org](http://www.greekfilmfestchicago.org). The Greek Star is proud to be a media partner for Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012.*

## “Cinergies” Celebrates Cinema and Synergies Across Cultures

By Maria A. Karamitsos

CHICAGO—FilmHellenes is pleased to announce a new partnership, beginning with the Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012, coming up October 4-8. This outreach initiative, called “Cinergies,” celebrates synergies and cinema across cultures.

“We’re proud to announce the participation of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece to join the festival,” said Niko Franghlias, FilmHellenes co-founder and president.

The Friends will be on hand for the screening of the award-winning film, *KISSES TO THE CHILDREN* (2011), written and directed by Vasilis Loules.

The film follows five Greek-Jewish children saved by Christians in German-occupied Greece. Childhood was their Garden of Eden, even though they spent it in hiding—even though they lost it in the shadow of the Holocaust.

The Jewish Museum of Greece has been involved in many programs and hosted countless exhibits regarding the Jewish community of Greece and the Holocaust. In 2003, they hosted a traveling exhibit called “The Hidden Children of Occupied Greece.” The exhibition explored the lives of 16 Greek Jewish children in hiding during the German occupation, as seen through the emotionally-charged stories of the children. The American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece (AFJMG) is the only official representative of the Jewish Museum of Greece in the US. When Loules approached the Friends regarding the subject matter of the film, they quickly offered their support.

“When telling a wartime story, it is most often the loss that is portrayed. As an organization, AFJMG, aims to remind not only of the harsh discrimination and mass loss the Jews suffered in WWII and to honor the memory of the lives lost, but to also recognize the journey of those who survived,” stated Solomon Asser, President of the AFJMG.

“In doing so, we aim to recognize the selfless

acts of their saviors, who at the risk of their own lives, stood heroically to save the life of another regardless of religion or ethnicity. Of the thousands killed in Occupied Greece, many Jewish children were hidden by ordinary Greek families who also suffered capital punishment by the Germans for harboring people of Jewish faith. And of course we cannot forget the political and religious leaders, like Archbishop Damaskinos, Angelos Evert, Metropolitan Chrysostomos and Mayor Carrer, that inspired the simple citizens to do so,” Asser added.

“The Friends, along with the American Sephardic Foundation, have been an integral co-producing factor to this excellent documentary,” Franghlias added. “Cinergies is important and meaningful to the festival, to bring people together. We, the FilmHellenes, believe that cinema is the most influential art-form of our times, offering us experiences that we have never experienced before; a magical force, capable not only to offer entertainment but also a deep knowledge to our HEARTS and MINDS – a way of connecting with each other by becoming, each one of us, more humane, tolerant and wise. Loules’, film achieves exactly that. His story of Jewish children saved by Christians during the Nazi occupation of Greece is a perfect example of humanism. The film’s theme, I believe, is transgression, the heroism of the ‘other,’ who risks their life, independently of religion or nationality. This is a tremendous film to launch our Cinergies program. At the Greek Film Fest Chicago! we would like to invoke in the viewers of, *KISSES TO THE CHILDREN*, these very same ideals.”

This partnership and screening is made possible with the collaboration of The Jewish Museum of Greece and the support of the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation, Greece; the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, Greece; the

Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece; the American Sephardic Federation; American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece and the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (I.T.F.).

Loules will introduce his film at the National Hellenic Museum, 333 S. Halsted in Chicago, on October 5 at 7:00 pm. The film will also be presented on October 8 at Film Row Cinema at Columbia College, 1104 S. Wabash, 8th Floor, in Chicago at 7:00 pm, following a reception at 6:30 pm. A Q&A with the director and panel discussion with distinguished guests will follow.

For more information about Greek Film Festival Chicago! 2012, visit [www.thegreekstar.com](http://www.thegreekstar.com) or [www.greekfilmfestchicago.org](http://www.greekfilmfestchicago.org). The Greek Star is proud to be a media sponsor for Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012.

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## Celebrating Hellenic Storytelling

October 4th – 8th, 2012

### How to read the schedule

The schedule has been color-coded for your convenience. In the Festival's competitive categories, **Hellenic Current** are the recent narrative features, short subjects, animation, feature and short length documentaries; **Flashes of History** refers to historical documentaries; **Young Ambition** is the student entries; **Chrysotheke** is a non-competitive category that salutes films that have put Greece on the 'movie map.'

- To select a film by category, find the corresponding light colored box.
- Certain films are grouped together to form one showing.
- The schedule is subject to change without notice.

Please check [www.greekfilmfestchicago.org](http://www.greekfilmfestchicago.org) for the most up-to-date schedule information

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2012

#### GENE SISKEL FILM CENTER

##### Opening Night Film

8:15pm **UNFAIR WORLD**  
Greece / Germany, 2011, 107 min. Dir: Filippos Tsitos

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2012

#### NATIONAL HELLENIC MUSEUM

7:00pm **KISSES TO THE CHILDREN**  
Greece, 2011, 115 min. Dir: Vassilis Loules in attendance  
Q&A with the director - courtesy of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece

#### GENE SISKEL FILM CENTER

8:00pm **JERKS**  
Greece / Germany, 2011, 76 min. Dir: Stelios Kammitis

10:00pm **VIP Reception**

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2012

#### PICKWICK THEATER

2:30pm **THE OTHER TOWN**  
Turkey, 2011, 45 min. Dir: Nefin Dinç

3:15pm **DEAR ANCESTOR**  
Greece, 2011, 59 min. Dir: Menelaos Karamaghiolis

4:30pm **THE FOREIGNER**  
USA, 2011, 16 min. Dir: Alethea Avramis

4:46pm **THE PALACE**  
Australia / Cyprus, 2011, 17 min. Dir: Anthony Maras

5:02pm **PLAYING WITH SHADOWS (TA KOLITIRIA)**  
Greece, 2012, 52 min. Dir: Agnes Sklavos & Stelios Tatakis

7:00pm **WELCOME TO ALL SAINTS**  
Greece, 2011, 88 min. Dir: Sotiris Goritsas

9:15pm **PARADISE**  
Greece, 2011, 105 min. Dir: Panayotis Fafoutis

#### NATIONAL HELLENIC MUSEUM

##### YOUNG AMBITION SPECIAL PRESENTATION: 20 YEAR OLD KOSTAS CHALIASAS

6:00pm **BEHIND THE SUN**  
Greece, 2011, 13 min. Dir: Kostas Chaliasas in attendance

6:15pm **AT THE MERCY OF GOD**  
Greece, 2006, 15 min. Dir: Kostas Chaliasas

6:30pm **WINDOW ON NATURE**  
Greece, 2010, 5 min. Dir: Kostas Chaliasas

6:35pm **APPEARANCES ARE DECEPTIVE**  
Greece, 2008, 10 min. Dir: Kostas Chaliasas

6:45pm **FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT BORDERS**  
Greece, 2006, 15 min. Dir: Kostas Chaliasas

7:00pm **TURN OVER A NEW LEAF**  
Greece, 2011, 12 min. Dir: Kostas Chaliasas

## Q & A with filmmaker Kostas Chaliasas

*This week, The Greek Star's Associate Editor Maria A. Karamitsos caught up with Kostas Chaliasas, a young and talented filmmaker from Thessaloniki, who's being called a "Greek Spielberg"*

By Maria A. Karamitsos

**Where are you from?** Ioannina  
**How old are you?** I'm 20.

**When did you become interested in films?**

During the third grade, I had constructed a fake camera made of paper and carton. A year later my parents decided to buy me my first real camera with which I started experimenting with filming.

**What was it that drew you to films?**

Ever since the age of 9, little fairytale-like stories were driving circles in my mind. It didn't happen consciously but little by little they became a desperate need for expression to me, just like painting and music. It felt like, I wanted to give to those various happy and sad little stories, a tangible form.

**What inspires your filmmaking?**

I derive inspiration from various parts of life, such as a figure of a woman on the bus, a funny dog, a sick little girl to whom someone has to lie so as to make her life a little brighter. Very often even pieces of music like a little song or just an introduction, turn into images in my mind, which I often combine with personal life experiences and autobiographical elements.

**Have you received any training?**

I am basically self-taught; I've read several books on filmmaking and film acting. I've also attended some seminars for which I was selected, on casting, acting direction and script. And today I am practicing this knowledge, working as an assistant film director for an English speaking full length-feature movie, filmed in Greece, by Vassilis Katsikis.

**You're being called a prodigy. How do you respond/react to that?**

I don't perceive myself as a prodigy at all. It just happened that I discovered my wishes and wanted to fulfill my dreams at a very young age, and this is what I did, this is what I followed, so practically I'm just any person who decided about what he liked, probably a bit earlier than other people. I'm neither proud of that nor do I feel in a superior position to my peers.

**When did you make your first film?**

A soon as I purchased my first camera I made several efforts on shooting various short films but my first serious festival participation effort was at the age of 13 with the film FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT BORDERS.

**Tell us about that first film.**

FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT BORDERS is the story of a friendship between a young girl from Greece and an Albanian boy living in an orphanage. I saw it as a work against racism of all types, as a tribute to seemingly unsuitable couples. When the film was completed I sent it to the International Film Festival of Olympia, where it was awarded. That was the first "tap on the back" which somehow whispered to me to go ahead with more work.

**How many films have you made?**

I've made 7 films.

**How would you describe your work?**

All my films have a plot. And they usually talk about the beauty of life, friendship and love between people. They talk about a world as I would like it to be, a world full of supportive people, friends. A world without racism, wars, weapons, that's peaceful, happy and sometimes funny. I want the people who see my films to leave the theater with a hopeful smile on their faces.

**You've entered many film festivals. When did you begin submitting to festivals? Tell us about the awards you've won.**

Ever since I completed my first film I started sending my work to various film festivals. I won the first prize at the Austin Film Festival (Young Filmmakers Competition), and six other awards and special mentions at national and international film festivals.

**Are you going to school currently? Are you studying film?**

No, I'm not studying film. Currently I'm a student at the Department of Music Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, studying composition.

**Why music?**

I come from a family of musicians—my father is a musician, my mother is a singer of folk Greeks songs and my sister is studying ethnomusicology at the university. I believe it is totally natural that I'm following the same course of studies. But that was not the only reason. I feel that music is a part of my genes, and my second-to-none greatest love, together with filming, painting, singing and acting.

**Talk about the films you've submitted to the Greek Film Fest Chicago!**

I submitted AT THE MERCY OF GOD and RAUS. Both these films talk about two little boys forced to leave their countries, the former being from Kosovo due to war and the latter from Greece also due to war, but a financial one.

**Is this your first time to the US.**

It's my first time. I'm extremely excited about this visit. I already know that Chicago is home to one of the most vibrant and creative Greek communities worldwide, so I'm looking forward to meeting as many Greeks as I can there and hearing the opinions and comments on my films.

**What are your future plans?**

I'm about to start a new short film about how a child perceives the difference between good and evil. It will be my first professional attempt, with a multi-person crew and professional actors. Chaliasas will make a special appearance at Greek Film Fest Chicago! His films will be screened at the festival. The Greek Star is proud to be a media sponsor for Greek Film Festival Chicago! 2012.



Kostas Chaliasas



# Filmmakers to Attend Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012

CHICAGO---Five filmmakers will accompany their films to Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012, coming up this October 4-8.

**Nicolas Panoutsopoulos**

Born in Athens, Greece, Panoutsopoulos is a graduate of the National Technical University of Athens and has worked as a manager in the business sector. He studied film directing at the Hatzikou Film School in Athens. He has worked as a Hollywood correspondent and film critic for Greek publications and as a screenwriter, production manager and assistant director in various film productions in Los Angeles and Greece. His short film Blackberries won the 1st award in the program "Greeks of the World" in Drama Film Festival 2005 and has been screening in many festivals around the world. His documentary

NOSTOS (2012) will be presented under the Hellenic Current category of films. A cinematic journey through a Greek-American "network" in the capital of the US becomes a quest for the definition of an identity.

Also in attendance will be his wife, the film's producer, Lena Anastasiadou. While in town, the duo will shoot footage for their latest projected, entitled, "Greektown Chicago."

**Georgios Papaioannou**

Born in Kavala, Greece, Papaioannou studied Civil Engineering at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He holds a PhD in finite element procedures in steel structures. From an early age, he spent all his free time experimenting with digital audio/video and learning about filmmaking.

Since 2002 he has directed and produced numerous "no budget" digital videos, including films, music videos and concert/performance visuals.

His feature film SUPER DEMETRIOS (2011) will be shown under the Young Ambition category. In a surreal, parallel universe, Thessaloniki has its very own superhero: Super Demetrios. Posing as Dimitris Christoforidis, journalist for the Golden Jerusalem magazine, he fights for truth, justice and the 'Greco-Christian' ideal!

The zero-budget production was created via his independent company, OTiNaNai Productions.

**Vassilis Loules**

This fiction and documentary filmmaker studied Electrical Engineering and Cinema in Athens, Greece. He's collaborated with Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT) as Coordinator of the Short Films Program and with the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs Film Archive. He has directed historical documentaries based on personal narratives and testimonies. All of his short fiction films have won awards at festivals.

The documentary film KISSES TO THE CHILDREN (2011) has been screened and awarded at festivals in Greece. Submitted under the Festival's Flashes of History category, it's the subject of the festival's newest program, Cinergies, celebrating cinema and synergies across cultures. Five Greek-Jewish children are saved by Christians in German occupied Greece.

**Kostas Chaliasas**

At age 20, this filmmaker is already being called a "Greek" Spielberg. He's been making films since the age of 13, and has participated in many international film festivals. He's won numerous awards and special mentions. Not only does he visualize, writes, direct, do the cinematography, compose the music (getting all the right moods and transitions) and acts, Chaliasas creates a Universe.

Chaliasas is part of a special Young Ambition presentation at this year's festival. He will introduce his film BEHIND THE SUN (2011). Set in 1969, during the military dictatorship in Greece, a little girl is abducted from an orphanage. No one looks for her—except the other orphans. Searching for her, they realize how many things are still 'behind the sun'. This is a story about how children react to adults' indifference. A total of seven of Chaliasas' films will be screened this year.

Visit [www.greekfilmfestchicago.org](http://www.greekfilmfestchicago.org). The Greek Star is proud to be a media partner for Greek Film Fest Chicago! 2012.





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