



Digger

a film by Georgis Grigorakis



cinéfondation
LA RÉSIDENCE

Georgis Grigorakis

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Since 2000, the Festival Residence has provided each year accommodation and support to twelve selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. A jury presided by a film director sits twice a year, selecting these young filmmakers on the basis of their short films, or

even first feature film, and the merits of their feature film project. During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Cannes Film Festival, to bring their project to co-production status.

Technical Information

Working Title: Digger
Director: Georgis Grigorakis
Screenplay by: Georgis Grigorakis
Format: 4K, Anamorphic
Length: 90 min
Shooting location: Greece
Shooting date: Autumn / Winter 2016-2017

Production Company: Haos Film (GR)
www.haosfilm.com
Producers: Athina Rachel Tsangari
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Director's Biography

Georgis studied Social Psychology before he completed an MA in Directing Fiction at the National Film and Television School (NFTS). He has written and directed 8 short films, which have been garnered international acclaim. His second short, *N' Me For Myself* (2009), won the Greek Film Academy Award and was distributed to Canal +, Cinefil TV, Wholphin DVD and VOD. His next short, *Reverse*, was produced by Sarajevo Film Festival, where it premiered in 2010. His latest short, *45*, was characterized by *Le Monde* as one of the little diamonds of Clermont-Ferrand ISFF 2013; it was distributed in TV and the French cinemas. All three films have been screened in total in more than 100 festivals worldwide and won over 20 awards. His debut feature *Digger* has been granted the Nipkow Programme fellowship, support from the Greek Film Center and the Slate Media Development Fund and has participated in the 2015 Sundance Institute Screenwriters Lab in Italy.



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Synopsis

A postmodern western. A farmhouse in the middle of a forest. On the gate, a wooden sign reads: “Nowhere”. There lives Nikitas, an enigmatic, solitary outcast. In close proximity of lush flora, wildlife and wet mud, a big gold-mine company is expanding aggressively and threatens his property. But the biggest threat comes out of nowhere with the arrival of his son Johnny. He returns after 20 years of absence to claim the share of the farm he inherited after his mother’s death. Nikitas denies his son, but Johnny occupies a caravan at the backyard and refuses to leave. They develop an ambivalent relationship, slowly becoming enemies living in the same house. Within the surrounding context of a civil war atmosphere at the border of exploding, the two men confront each other head on, digging deep into mud to reconnect with their past and find where they belong.

Statement of Intent

Digger is an archetypal story about the eternal father-son conflict with social, political and almost metaphysical layers, applied to an ostensibly straightforward narrative. Centered on the themes of fatherhood and adulthood, the story examines issues of guilt, violence and acceptance. *Digger* digs deep into the mud to explore what is “Home” and where one belongs. Having grown up in a single-parent family, I experienced at an early age the inherent ambivalence of family: the tragedy and the tenderness. The protagonists’ relationship becomes a vehicle through which to reflect on a society recently torn apart by an identity crisis. The social context is inspired by true events. The story is set in a rural area that feels abandoned and haunted. There is a mysteriously dark undertone and a sense of urgency in every scene, building a visceral experience through

the slow-burning tension of the narrative. Equally important to the plot is the atmosphere and feelings that will be created by a highly stylized visual narrative and an esoteric use of sound, lending a more poetic dimension to reality, adding to each character’s inner world and to the audience’s imagination. The climax remains raw, with a twisted sense of redemption.

Synopsis

Un western postmoderne. Une ferme au milieu d'une forêt. Sur la porte, un panneau en bois indique: « Nulle part ». C'est là que vit l'énigmatique Nikitas, un paria solitaire. À proximité de la flore luxuriante, de la faune et de la boue humide, une grande société d'exploitation aurifère s'étend et menace sa propriété. Mais la menace la plus grande arrive avec l'apparition soudaine de son fils Johnny. Après vingt ans d'absence, il revient pour réclamer sa part de la ferme dont il a hérité après la mort de sa mère. Nikitas renie son fils, mais Johnny refuse de partir et occupe une caravane dans l'arrière-cour. Ils développent une relation ambivalente, devenant lentement deux ennemis vivants dans la même maison. Dans cette ambiance de guerre civile sur le point d'éclater, les deux hommes s'affrontent, fouillant profondément dans la fange pour se réconcilier avec leur passé et retrouver leurs racines.

Note d'intention

Digger est une histoire archétypique sur l'éternel conflit père-fils, faite d'éléments sociaux, politiques, et presque métaphysiques, dans un récit apparemment simple. Centrée sur les thèmes de la paternité et l'âge adulte, l'histoire interroge les thèmes de la culpabilité, la violence, et de l'acceptation. *Digger* fouille profondément dans la boue pour explorer ce qu'est « la maison » et ce que signifie l'appartenance. Ayant grandi dans une famille monoparentale, j'ai vécu à un âge précoce l'inhérente ambivalence de la famille: la tragédie, et la tendresse. La relation entre les protagonistes devient un moyen par lequel se réfléchit une société récemment déchirée par une crise d'identité. Le contexte social est inspiré de faits réels. L'histoire se déroule dans une zone rurale que l'on sent abandonnée et hantée. Il y a un relent mystérieusement sombre et un sentiment

d'urgence dans chaque scène, construisant une expérience viscérale à travers la tension à combustion lente de la narration. Tout aussi important pour l'intrigue, sont l'atmosphère et les sentiments générés par une narration visuelle hautement stylisée et une utilisation ésothérique du son, donnant une dimension plus poétique à la réalité, rehaussant le monde intérieur de chaque personnage et l'imagination du spectateur. Le point culminant reste à vif, avec un sens amer de la rédemption.