

OFF/FFA 16 – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019

## STAFF AND COACHES



JENNI KOSKI Proiect Leader, Producer. Vice Chair, WIFT Finland incubator@wift.fi

Producer Jenni Koski is a freelance filmmaker and she graduated with distinction as Master of Creative Media from RMIT University in Australia in 2009. Jenni is a new generation creative producer who recently has been producing a Finnish Development Incubator IN FOCUS during which two long tv series and two feature films were developed.



**HELI TAMMINEN** Proiect Coordinator, Screenwriter. Vice Chair, WIFT Finland

Heli Tamminen is a screenwriter based in Helsinki and she graduated with Master of Arts in screenwriting from Aalto University in 2007. For the past decade she has worked as a screenwriter and co-organized workshops, master classes and other functions at festivals and industry events in Finland and abroad.



ANNA MÖTTÖLÄ Helsinki International Film Festival Executive Director anna@hiff.fi



MARIA PIRKKALAINEN Producer Finnish Film Affair maria@hiff.fi



JANA WOLFF OFF/FFA Coach

Jana Wolff has a master's degree in Communication in Social and Economic Contexts from the Berlin University of the Arts. For almost two decades she has been working for Berlinale and the EFM and also had various positions in other national and international film festivals. She was Head of PR & Festival Distribution at the German Film and Television Academy (dffb), Head of Acquisition & Sales at Pluto Film Distribution Network and is now in charge of Marketing at the European Film Market.



**LEANA JALUKSE** OFF/FFA Coach

Leana Jalukse is an Estonian screenwriter and script consultant. She holds a BA in Broadcast Media and an MA in Film Arts, majoring in screenwriting, and has been active in the film industry since 1997. Mother, her debut as a writer on a fulllength feature film, premiered internationally in competition at Tribeca, USA, won Best Feature in Kitzbühel, Austria, Best Estonian Feature at Tallinn Black Nights, Estonia, was selected Estonia's national entry for the Oscars, and nominated for Best Screenplay at Estonian Film and TV awards.

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## INTRODUCTION

Celebrating its 5th year anniversary, Women in Film & Television Finland ry (WIFT Finland) is all the more focused on changing structures to promote gender equality in the audiovisual industry. WIFT Finland together with other organisations in the field create networking opportunities, advance and advocate women's professional development and follow the trends and practices in the audiovisual sector. One of the dilemmas regarding the employment of female filmmakers is linked to the public funding system in Finland. WIFT Finland has had an instrumental role in contributing to both the research and impact work regarding parity in project financing. The latest contribution is partnering up with the Action! project, a three-vear collaboration between WIFT Finland and Aalto University, aimed at advancing the employment and equal career opportunities of female filmmakers. Action! is funded by the European Social Fund, Aalto University and WIFT Finland. As the first project initiative WIFT Finland started a new collaboration with Helsinki International Film Festival - Love & Anarchy and Finnish Film Affair, in order to boost networking opportunities for female filmmakers who have faced barriers in financing and completing their films. With this collaboration emerged OFF/FFA development clinic, which offers coaching, pitching and visibility to the filmmakers and their films at an international industry event.

OFF/FFA development clinic is aimed at projects that at some point in their development have received public or private funding, but seized from receiving any further grants or never progressed into production due to gatekeepers. Other selection criteria entailed a team with 50% of female participation as well as one team member being a WIFT Finland member. In the application phase four interesting fiction film projects were selected with the majority of female participants in their teams. The films and the filmmakers are presented in this WIFT Finland Book of Projects. During OFF/FFA the teams will be offered the opportunity to pitch, receive consulting and coaching from international industry professionals.

We hope that the projects selected to OFF/FFA development clinic will raise international interest. and find new paths into production. Together we can build bridges over barriers!

Jenni Koski & Heli Tamminen Women in Film & Television Finland





ja työllistymisen hanke









minorities in the film industry is on-going and we would like it to continue even further. The recent research findings in the Western film world are too daunting: there are still too few women working behind the camera compared to men. There is a plethora of reasons for this; for instance in Finland the amount of public funding going to female directors is one quarter compared to that given to men's projects

(Cupore, Tarja Savolainen 2017). Because of the lack of diverse storytellers, there is also a lack of versatile viewpoints. It is encouraging to see that the more there are females working as directors, producers and screenwriters, the more variety of representation we will see on the silver screen. To work towards

this equal goal, we need initiatives such as OFF/

FFA. I wish all the selected OFF/FFA participants and

Helsinki International Film Festival - Love & Anarchy

will join the esteemed group of film festivals this year

when we sign the 5050x2020 pledge. At this stage

there are festivals such as Cannes, Berlinale and

Gothenburg who have already signed this pledge.

With 5050x2020 we are committing to promoting

gender equality in all of our activities and making our

work visible to everyone. Equality is one of the core

values of Helsinki International Film Festival and in

the future we want to collaborate further to increase

diverse voices in cinema and help changing structural

The discussion around the position of women and

problems within our industry.

Anna Möttölä

Helsinki International Film Festival - Love & Anarchy

projects the best of luck - and lots of followers!



# ORIGINAL TITLE THE BLACK SUN GENRE ART HOUSE DIRECTOR MARIA RUOTSALA WRITER MARIA RUOTSALA LANGUAGE OF DIALOGUE ENGLISH SCHEDULED RELEASE SUMMER 2020 PRODUCTION BUDGET 1.2 M€ STATUS OF THE PRODUCTION IN DEVELOPMENT LOOKING FOR PRODUCER. CO-PRODUCER.

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#### REPRESENTATIVES AT OFF/FFA







ULRIKA ENCKELL, Editor

## THE BLACK SUN

The Black Sun is an art house fiction film. In the past Aaron (14) found Father dead on the floor and Sara (7), with a knife, sitting on shocked Mother's lap. Aaron thought that Sara had killed Father, defending Mother. The siblings never realized that their Father was anything but just a scary sadist. Now Aaron (28), a popular artist during the totalitarian era, is an art community outcast. The Siblings' lives change when a young man looking like a Greek god, Stefan (30), wants to help them, until he is revealed to be a traitor, an ex-KGB spy. His only "wound" seems to be the cut on his face from a plastic surgeon's knife. When the siblings find out the Truth of how the KGB murdered their Father, a poet, and tortured their Mother, a pianist, Aaron thirsts for revenge, while Sara (21) starts to rebel against her brother, looking to prevent the past from repeating itself.

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

A polemic and a poetic film, a triangle drama containing powerful emotions. An artist and her sister discover their places in a former totalitarian state going through a period of transition and change. It's about the way the unsolved traumas of the past take control of the individual while he/she is being liberated from a violent social system. The events unfold in a strange, complex and surprising world where strong images carry the story forward.

Director-writer **Maria Ruotsala** was Young Artist of the Year in 1990. Her works of art are included in the collections of Centre Pompidou in Paris. Maria studied film in London and her award-winning films include *Hyper Sensitive* and Rosegarden. Her TV mini-series *Happy Home* won critical and audience acclaim and received the Venla Emmy award for Best Female Actress. Maria's latest feature film Apeiron received widespread critical acclaim and she has been *described as a talented visionary, a unique filmmaker.* 

Film Editor **Ulrika Enckell** studied film editing at the Helsinki University of Industrial Arts (later: Aalto University). She has edited documentary and fiction films, among others Christian Lindblad feature film *Ripa Hits the Skids*, Antonia Ringbom documentary *I seek the Sun* about painter Ellen Thesleff and Maria Ruotsala's films *Hyper Sensitive*, *Rosegraden* and *Apeiron*. Ulrika prefers working on films with unconventional narrative, visual creativity and cinematic wit. She also works as a journalist and translator.



# MAIDEN OF DUSK

**Maiden of Dush** is a feature drama. In a detached corner of Estonia, the archeologist Sonja (41) leads excavations that search for proofs of historical "angel makers", people who conducted illegal abortions. Unlike her work, Sonja's personal life does not stand daylight. Sonja is engaged in a passionate relation with her young assistant Niko (25). When the attic room of her temporary home is rented by Thomas (58), the relationship of the lovers comes to an unexpected turn. The sexual impulsiveness of Sonja becomes the dynamo of the intimate family of the three – until the shocking fact changes permanently the life of the lovers. The disease inherited from Sonja's mother will take Sonja to death in a few years. And that's not all, she is expecting a child! The three are forced to face difficult choices. By means of magical realism Maiden of Dusk tells a story about love that in its beauty reaches beyond the death.

#### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I want to defend each of my characters' right to love. The unusual love between the three might be a dream-come-true. But fate has its ways. Sonja stands there for us, reminding that accepting the death as part of our lives frees us to be true to ourselves. Before the inevitable, we need to learn how to live a good life.

Pia Tikka is filmmaker and CEO of production company Oblomovies Ltd. She has directed fiction films Daughters of Yemanjá, Sand Bride, and her next film Maiden of Dusk is in development. She has published the book "Enactive Cinema: Simulatorium Eisensteinense" and her interactive cinema Obsession has been awarded with Möbius Prix Nordic. Currently, her Enactive Virtuality Lab in Baltic Film and Media school, Tallinn, explores viewer's co-presence with virtual characters in immersive cinematic narratives.

**Oblomovies Ltd** was founded in 1990 by Pia Tikka (CEO, Director-Producer) and Nina Stenros (Director-Producer). The company produces long features and experimental short films with drama content and develops interactive and enactive cinematic storytelling and related media technologies for augmented cinema, mobiles and game platforms.

ORIGINAL TITLE MAIDEN OF DUSK
GENRE DRAMA
DIRECTOR PIA TIKKA
WRITERS EEVA R. TIKKA AND PIA TIKKA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER PIA TIKKA
PRODUCTION COMPANY OBLOMOVIES LTD.
LANGUAGE OF DIALOGUE ENGLISH, FINNISH,
ESTONIAN

SCHEDULED RELEASE 2021

PRODUCTION BUDGET 1.8M€

STATUS OF THE PRODUCTION IN PREPRODUCTION

LOOKING FOR EUROPEAN CO-PRODUCTION Partners, sales and distribution Partners, investors

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#### PARTICIPANTS AT OFF/FFA



PIA TIKKA, Director



EEVA TIKKA, Screenwriter



## THE SAINT

**The Saint** is an emotional psychological drama with mystery elements. It is also a film about deception and the necessity of giving and receiving help. Anna, a troubled art historian starts to work in an environment which rules and values she does not share. The conflict worsens when she finds hidden in a church an uncatalogued medieval sculpture of a saint and becomes obsessed with cracking it's mystery. In the process she realizes that the sculpture and herself have much more in common than she bargained for. The question is, which monsters the sculpture will make her face? Inner or outer? Both.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

but the eye and the mind. Films that fulfill the need to see and be part of something real and recognizable. Films that remind us of the beauty and the values in our lives. Films with which we can be entertained yet see ourselves and the world a bit clearer. For me the Saint is such a film.

based in Finland. She works both in fiction and documentary. Ojala's screenplay Women on the Way won the best feature screenplay award at Massachusetts Independent Film Festival in 2013. She is currently working on two feature-length documentaries, Burning Voices and Traces, and several screenplays. Oiala graduated with the MA in film screenwriting from The University of Salford, UK in 2009.

## WOMEN ON THE WAY

Women on the Way is a coming of age story of Leena Mägi, 39. Leena, recently divorced from her wealthy Estonian husband, is back in her homeland Finland, broke and living in a caravan. She makes a deal with her mother Aino, who lives up north that she will go there to help sell the old house. Meanwhile in Estonia, her ex-husband Andres decides to send their daughters Maria, 15, and Karolina, 11, to their mother since Maria skips school to smoke weed with her boyfriend and Karolina burnt the school locker room. So off they go - three women on their way from Helsinki to Rovaniemi, trying to cope with the different stages of womanhood, with each other and with the inevitable growing pains. And in the end it's time to celebrate Midsummer.

#### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Pirjo Ojala's script is a funny and fresh story of a female, middle-aged anti-hero. It deals with serious and difficult matters in a comical way. The story is about motherhood, being sufficient if not perfect. In life crises, despite our limited capabilities, we are still the best parents for our children and capable of growing together. Other important themes are estranged families, and inequality caused by money or the lack of it.

Director Lenka Hellstedt is a film & tv director and scriptwriter from Helsinki. She has MA from Film Department, majoring in directing and scriptwriting, at University of Industrial Arts (Aalto University), Hellstedt has directed four feature films, the latest premiering February 2020, and 12 tv-series and short films. She also worked as a lecturer of film directing in Aalto University for 6 years. Now Hellstedt is back to working again as a full-time freelance filmmaker.

Screenwriter Pirjo Ojala is an award-winning screenwriter & director

ORIGINAL TITLE NAISIA TIELLÄ GENRE ROAD MOVIE, COMEDY **DIRECTOR** LENKA HELLSTEDT WRITER PIRJO OJALA LANGUAGE OF DIALOGUE FINNISH, ESTONIAN **SCHEDULED RELEASE** 2022 PRODUCTION BUDGET 12 M€

musketeer

**CONTACT** DIRECTOR LENKA HELLSTEDT EMAIL LENKA.HELLSTEDT@YAHOO.COM **PHONE NUMBER +358 40 513 1968** 

**STATUS OF PRODUCTION IN DEVELOPMENT** 

**LOOKING FOR PRODUCERS. DISTRIBUTORS** 

#### REPRESENTATIVES AT OFF/FFA



LENKA HELLSTEDT. DIRECTOR



**SCREENWRITER** 

It is my conviction that we need films that trigger not just the emotion

Director Pia Andell directed her first film in 1994. Her selected filmography includes documentary films Pere Lachaise - Necropolis (1996), A Small Film on Sibling Relations (2001), Y in Vyborg (2006), Göring's Baton (2010), Patron (2013) and fiction films Records and Photographs (2015), A Halt (2017) and The Match (2018). Currently she is working on a a dance film. In Andell's films the light and the heavy walk side by side - there is always humor and as well as a raison d'être. Her films have been awarded in many prestigious festivals in Finland and abroad.

Silva Mysterium Oy is an independent production company. It was founded in 1994 by producers Mika and Niko Ritalahti. From the beginning the company has operated widely in the field. Silva Mysterium has produced fiction films (for theatrical release and for television), documentary films, radio plays and commercial films. The most recent production by the company is Diva of Finland directed by Maria K. Mononen. This, the director's debut feature, will be in theaters in October 2019. Currently in production is Hanna Bergholm's horror film Pahanhautoja (Hatching, 2020). It is an international co-production.

SCREENWRITER-DIRECTOR

PIA ANDELL.

**ORIGINAL TITLE PYHIMYS** 

**PRODUCER MIKA RITALAHTI** 

**SCHEDULED RELEASE** 2022

**CONTACT** MIKA RITALAHTI

**PRODUCTION BUDGET 1.3 M€** 

**LANGUAGE OF DIALOGUE FINNISH** 

**LOOKING FOR FINANCING, PARTNERS** 

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REPRESENTATIVES AT OFF/FFA

**DIRECTOR PIA ANDELL** 

WRITER PIA ANDELL

GENRE PSYCHOLOGICAL DRAMA, MYSTERY

PRODUCTION COMPANY SILVA MYSTERIUM

EMAIL MIKA.RITALAHTI@SILVAMYSTERIUM.FI

MIKA RITALAHTI.

PRODUCER

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## www.action-projekti.fi

Action! project was created to advance the employment of female professionals in the audiovisual sector, to develop measures to remove obstacles and to support all employment activities that promote gender equality in the Finnish industry. Action! is a three-year employment assistance and further training program for female film professionals funded by the European Social Fund and it will be a collaboration with Aalto University and Women in Film & Television Finland.

Action!-hankkeen tavoitteena on edistää naispuolisten ammattilaisten työllistymistä audiovisuaalisella alalla, kehittää toimenpiteitä esteiden poistamiseksi ja tukea työllistämistoimia sektorilla. Euroopan sosiaalirahaston rahoittama kolmevuotinen hanke toteutetaan Aalto-yliopiston Taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakoulun Elokuva- ja lavastustaiteen laitoksen ja Women in Finland and Television Finland (WIFT Finland) ry:n välisenä yhteistyöhankkeena.

## WIFT Finland OFF/FFA

16 - 17 September 2019









Audiovisuaalisen alan tasa-arvon ja työllistymisen hanke





