

PRESSKIT



HOLD
ONTO
ME
KPATA
ME

A FILM BY MYRSINI ARISTIDOU



“A GREAT DEBUT FEATURE FILM”
LOUD AND CLEAR

“ASTUTE WRITING AND ASSUREDLY
BITTERSWEET PERFORMANCES”
VARIETY

“A STUNNING PORTRAYAL
OF WILD GIRLHOOD”
THE PLAYLIST

“A PROFOUNDLY
REWARDING EXPERIENCE”
NEXT BEST PICTURE

“EMOTIONALLY POTENT AND
QUIETLY DEVASTATING”
SILVER SCREEN RIOT

“I FOUND MYSELF HOLDING
MY BREATH MORE THAN ONCE”
SILVER SCREEN RIOT

“SUBLIME FILM”
SUBLIME FILM

TITLE HOLD ONTO ME
GENRE Drama, Family
COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION Cyprus
COUNTRY OF CO-PRODUCTION Denmark, Greece, and in joint participation with the United States
LANGUAGE Greek
RUNTIME 102 minutes
SHOOTING FORMAT Digital
ASPECT RATIO 2:35:1
SHOOTING FORMAT Cyprus
COMPLETION YEAR 2025

**PRODUCTION
DETAILS**

A Cypriot - Greek - Danish co-production,
in joint participation with The United States

PRODUCERS

Monica Nicolaidou, Myrsini Aristidou, Anders N.U
Berg, Konstantina Stavrianou, Rena Vougioukalou

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Mark Hollinger, Thomas J. Mangan IV

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Fimblades (CY), One Six One Films
(CY), Fredo Pictures (DK), Graal (GR), Pleasant Bay Pictures (USA),
Mango Productions (USA)

SUPPORTED BY

The Cyprus Deputy Ministry of Culture, ERT (Greek
TV Channel), The Danish Film Institute, The Greek Film Center, The
Black Family Grant of NYU Tisch School of the Arts, The Sam
Spiegel International Film Lab - Emerging Filmmaker Award.

DISTRIBUTION

Angel Films (DK)



SYNOPSIS

It's summer, and 11-year-old Iris is running wild through the streets with her older friend Danae when she learns her estranged father, Aris, is back in town for his own father's funeral.

Determined to know him, Iris tracks him down to a dilapidated shipyard, where he's been keeping to himself. What begins as a stubborn attempt to reconnect slowly unfolds into a fragile bond imperfect, yet poignant.

DIRECTOR'S
NOTE



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HOLD ONTO ME is the final part of a journey that began with my short films *Semele* and *Aria*—each exploring the evolving bond between a father and daughter during pre-teen and teenage years. This film reaches further inward, tracing the quiet, often unspoken longing that forms in the absence of a father, and the unsettling vulnerability of two people who know of each other, but do not truly know one another.

Reflecting on my own personal experience, it inspires the resilience of a young girl reaching out, and a man who returns with a childlike irresponsibility, unsure how to respond until circumstances force him to face it. The film observes the fragile beginnings of a relationship that never quite had the space to become one, yet allows for brief gestures of care to break through.

As a Cypriot filmmaker, it was important to me to capture the textures of everyday life here: the worn-out backdrops, the slow movement of time, and the raw emotional undercurrents that continue to shape us. This is a story about presence after absence, about seeing and being seen, and the fragile weave of feelings that linger in between. Like the island itself, Iris is small and overlooked—left to endure, until this distant promise of care draws near.

MYRSINI ARISTIDOU



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DIRECTOR & WRITER

MYRSINI ARISTIDOU

Myrsini Aristidou is a Cypriot filmmaker whose work has received international acclaim. She studied Film and Art History at Pratt Institute in New York before earning her MFA at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

Her short films *Semele* and *Aria* premiered at major festivals including Venice, Sundance, Berlinale, and TIFF, with *Semele* winning the Jury Prize in the Generation section at the Berlinale. Her films have since screened widely and won numerous awards worldwide.

A former Cannes Cinéfondation Resident and alumna of the Sam Spiegel International Film Lab, TIFF Talent Lab, and Berlinale Talents, her debut feature *Hold Onto Me* marks her transition into feature filmmaking.

Beyond her filmmaking, Myrsini is the founder of the Saga-po Children's Foundation, an international NGO dedicated to empowering underprivileged children through education and creative learning initiatives.

LEAD ACTORS

CHRISTOS PASSALIS

Christos Passalis is a Greek actor, director, and playwright born in Thessaloniki in 1978. He studied at the Drama School of the National Theatre of Northern Greece and in 2004 co-founded the Blitz Theatre Group, whose works have toured internationally at venues including Festival d'Avignon, Schaubühne, and Onassis Stegi.

As an actor, he made his screen debut in Yorgos Lanthimos's *Dogtooth*, followed by roles in *Black Field*, *Homeland*, *The Miracle of the Sargasso Sea*, and Fiona Tan's *History's Future*.

As a filmmaker, he co-directed *The City and the City* (Berlinale Encounters, 2022) and made his solo feature debut with *Silence 6-9*, which premiered in competition at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.



MARIA PETROVA

Maria Petrova, 11, was born in Cyprus and has Bulgarian roots. *Hold Onto Me* marks her acting debut. Discovered by casting director Daina Papadaki during the search for a non-professional lead, Maria brings raw authenticity and striking emotional depth to the role of Iris.



CREATIVE
TEAM

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CREATIVE TEAM

CINEMATOGRAPHER LASSE ULVEDAL TOLBØLL

Award-winning Danish cinematographer and NYU Tisch graduate, Lasse Ulvedal Tolbøll has shot more than forty short films, including *Knight of Fortune* — nominated for the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short. His feature credits include *Sweet Thing* (Crystal Bear, Berlinale) and *A Gaza Weekend* (FIPRESCI Prize, TIFF).

PRODUCTION DESIGNER DIMITRA SOURLANTZI

Greek production designer with an MFA from DAMU Academy in Prague, Dimitra has led art departments on *MAGMA*, *5pm Seaside*, and the upcoming *Medium*, and worked on David Cronenberg's *Crimes of the Future*. She also collaborates with leading theatre institutions, including the Onassis Stegi.

COMPOSER ALEX WESTON

Alex Weston is a Brooklyn-based composer whose scores have premiered at Sundance, Berlinale, and Venice. His work on *The Farewell* (A24) was shortlisted for the 2020 Academy Awards. Other credits include *The Novice*, *Goodnight Mommy*, and Amazon's *Expats*. His music blends classical composition with experimental textures, creating emotionally layered soundscapes that elevate narrative storytelling.

EDITOR JENNA MANGULA

Danish editor known for *Miss Viborg* (2022) and *Eternal* (2023), with credits spanning both fiction and documentary. She co-edited *Hold Onto Me* alongside director Myrsini Aristidou. Her body of work also includes *Maja*, *Sons of Denmark*, *Copenhagen Does Not Exist*, and *Songs in the Sun*.

SOUND MIXER KOSTAS VARYMPOPIOTIS

Kostas Varympiotis is a renowned Greek sound designer whose work includes Theo Angelopoulos's *Eternity and a Day* (Palme d'Or, Cannes), *Ulysses' Gaze*, and *The Cherry Orchard*. His immersive soundscapes have shaped many internationally acclaimed productions across film and theatre.



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MYRSINI ARISTIDOU

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