

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
September 1995

PANTELIS VOULGARIS

October 20 - 26, 1995

A mid-career retrospective of the films of one of the most prominent directors of Greek cinema, Pantelis Voulgaris (b. 1940), opens at The Museum of Modern Art on October 20, 1995. With the social and political landscape of Greece as salient themes, the films in **PANTELIS VOULGARIS** are characterized by tenderness, strong emotions, and the intensely humanistic and heartening rendering of the characters and their stories. In Greek with English subtitles, the seven feature films and three short films will be screened through October 26. Mr. Voulgaris will appear at the Museum to introduce the evening screenings of *O Kleftis (The Thief, 1965)* and *To proxenio tis Annas (The Engagement of Anna, 1972)* on October 20.

Voulgaris' first feature film, *The Engagement of Anna* -- a beautiful and low-key portrait of a young woman -- is ultimately a harsh critique of Greek middle-class hypocrisy. *Happy Day (1976)*, Voulgaris' second feature, is a poetic allegory of the world of a concentration camp, influenced by the director's own experience as a political prisoner during the military regime in Greece in the 1970s. The politically turbulent period after the Second World War is the setting for *Petrina Chronia (Stone Years, 1985)*, a moving story of a couple's love, commitment, and struggle to survive long years of persecution. The period of 1909 to 1920 in Greece is the volatile backdrop for *Eleftherios Venizelos (1980)*, a political biography.

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Also included in the exhibition are *O Megalos Erotikos* (*The Great Love Songs*, 1973), an experimental work inspired by the preeminent Greek composer Manos Hadjidakis' song cycle "Megalos Erotikos". *Isiches meres tou avgoustou* (*Quiet Days in August*, 1991), three intercut contemporary stories, reflects on loneliness and city life during a hot Athens summer. In *I Fanella me to 9* (*The Striker with the No. 9*, 1988), Voulgaris ventures into the modern Greek soccer subculture.

Born in Athens, Voulgaris studied at the Stavrakos Film School and, like many other Greek filmmakers of his generation, began his career as an assistant at Finos Film Studios. Voulgaris had already worked as an assistant director in over twenty productions when he made a promising debut with two short films -- *The Thief* and *Tzimis o Tigris* (*Jimmy the Tiger*, 1966) -- and an ethnological documentary, *O Chorus ton Tragou* (*Dance of the Goats*, 1969). In 1970, while the country was firmly under the fascist military regime of the Colonels, Voulgaris completed *The Engagement of Anna*. This film was among the first and most distinctive manifestations of a different and dynamic cinema which would come to be known as New Greek Cinema.

PANTELIS VOULGARIS is organized by Jytte Jensen, Assistant Curator, The Museum of Modern Art, with the collaboration of the Greek Film Centre, Athens; The Greek Ministry of Culture, Athens; and the Foundation for Hellenic Culture, New York.

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PRESS SCREENINGS TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1995

11:00 a.m. - *The Engagement of Anna* (82 min)

2:00 p.m. - *Happy Day* (105 min)

To RSVP or to obtain video cassettes or film stills, contact Samantha Graham, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9752.

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