

makers^m

REAL INSIGHT INTO GLOBAL PRODUCTION

CANNES 2022

#9

EYE POPPING TRENDS

Will NFTs, the metaverse & virtual production transform film & TV?

FESTIVAL SEASON

What to expect as the film & ad industries return to Cannes



01-05-2022-9



GREECE

endless possibilities



Director Ferdinando Cito Filomarino & John David Washington on location in Athens for *Beckett* © Yannis Drakoulidis & Netflix.

There are 18 UNESCO World Heritage sites across Greece. Sunkissed islands and ancient ruins mark the country as a prime destination for filmmaking in Europe. If production teams spend a minimum of EUR100,000 then they could qualify for a healthy cash rebate of 40%.

G Millennium Media – the American production company behind *The Expendables* – is scheduled to shoot action-thriller *The Bricklayer* at its Nu Boyana Film Studios across Greece and Bulgaria in March 2022. Filming will take place in Northern Greece’s Thessaloniki, where the Greek section of the Nu Boyana project is currently under construction. In 2022 Millennium Media is set to build Greece’s first Hollywood-standard studio. First announced in 2019, the investment is worth EUR20 million, signalling the company’s intentions to revamp Greek filmmaking.

MBC Group from Saudi Arabia acquired a 30% stake in Greece’s Antenna Group. According to the announcement, the funds will be dedicated to the creation of state-of-the-art studios and infrastructure at an international standard, aiming to attract television and film producers from all over the world to Greece.

“EKOME SET UP THE NATIONAL FILM OFFICES NETWORK ACROSS 13 REGIONS AND THE TWO MAJOR MUNICIPALITIES OF ATHENS AND THESSALONIKI.”

Disney’s *Rise* was shot between May and July, exploring the story of Giannis Antetokoumpo and his family before the talented basketballer shot to NBA stardom. The project was filmed at Kapa Studios, a leading production company for film and television in Greece. The company’s modern, state-of-the-art complex is spread

across 10 sound stages. As well as feature films such as *The Jackals* and *Turning Point*, Kapa Studio has also hosted a range of television series, from *Big Brother*, *X Factor* and *Dancing With The Stars* to *The Weakest Link* and *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*.



LOCATION HIGHLIGHT

Delphi

On the slopes of Mount Parnassus – high above the Gulf of Corinth – lies Delphi, one of Greece’s most famous historic sites. This location was known throughout the ancient Greek world as the sanctuary of the god Apollo, and it was here that the shrine of his oracle stood.

Delphi is a film star in its own right, having featured in *My Life in Ruins*, *High Priestess*, *A Woman at Her Window* and many others. Three of the last remaining pillars of the area’s Tholos Temple were used in the background for the end credits of the James Bond classic *For Your Eyes Only*.

Parts of Netflix’s recent film *Beckett* (main image) were shot among the ruins of Delphi. The project tells the story of an American tourist who becomes the target of a manhunt after a devastating accident while on vacation. It is the first Netflix movie filmed entirely in Greece.

Q&A

ADAM PETRITSIS
DIRECTOR & PRODUCER



Q: *What project did you work on in Greece, and who was involved?*

A: The latest documentary I worked on was about the Battle of Lepanto, which took place off the Echinades isles of the Ionian Islands region. It was a co-production with the Ionian Islands Regional Unit, directed by Antonis Glaros.

Q: *Why are the Ionian Islands so special as a filming destination?*

A: The natural beauty and the history of the islands is on its own a great incentive for choosing the area as a film location. Together with the help of Angela Krokidi from the Ionian Film Office, the whole experience was very pleasant and as stress free as a shoot can be.

Q: *What makes Greece on a more broader level stand out for incoming productions?*

A: There is one element that makes Greece particularly excel as a location choice. That is none other than the unlimited variety of locations and seasons. You can find nearly every type of landscape you have in mind, in some corner of the country – whether that is a picturesque village, an underwater cave or a desert – with the advantage that throughout the year you also get all seasons from hot sun to heavy snow storms.

Q: *What advice would you give to anyone considering shooting in Greece?*

A: Be well prepared for all the bureaucratic procedures that will be needed, but know that you will be well rewarded with incredible cinematography and a friendly environment to work in.

Q: *What projects are you working on next?*

A: I am currently working on my Youtube series *Ancient Greece Revisited*, and in the early stages of another documentary on the Ionian Islands.

Filmed over 29 days in late spring, Mihai Mincan's *To The North* is a co-production between Greece, Romania, France, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, traversing a range of European regions. *Exodus* – the debut feature film from Lebanese director Abbe Hassan – is a Swedish project filmed in Attica, a part of Greece that recently hosted David Cronenberg's film *Crimes of the Future*. Kate Hudson, Daniel Craig and Dave Bautista have been spotted in the country filming the sequel to *Knives Out 2*, with new acting additions including Edward Norton, Kathryn Hahn and Leslie Odom Jr as well as musician Janelle Monáe.

Among Greece's English-speaking workforce, a range of production service companies are on hand to assist incoming producers operating across film, television and advertising. "Our company has shot commercials for some of the top companies – such as Samsung, Johnny Walker, Coca Cola, and L'Oréal – and worked with the top advertisers and producers in the industry," details Andreas Tsilifonis, executive producer at Central Athens Film Productions. "We cover long format productions alongside advertising too, providing full production services for international clients."

"We have serviced a variety of projects, from commercials (most recently for Toyota, directed by Jake Scott for RSA Films) to the livestreaming of the iconic Christian Dior Cruise 2022 at the Panhellenic Stadium for Tendernight Paris, to feature films such as *Exodus* for BRF Films in Sweden, due for release this year," says Maria Kopanou, executive producer at Green Olive Films. "Green Olive Films is known for being highly skilled in service production, with internationally experienced producers both in commercials and feature films. Our company has worked with some of the world's leading creative talent, understanding their vision and providing the resources through our offices in both Greece and Cyprus."

The country's very competitive 40% cash rebate and 30% tax relief scheme are available for incoming filmmakers through a digital procedure that is simple, fast and transparent. A major selling point for the cash rebate programme concerns high budget productions. Eligible expenses in Greece over EUR8 million permit subsidies on non-resident labour (such as scriptwriter and director's fees, salaries of crew and cast for feature films and TV series).

Between April 2018 and February 2022, 204 projects were accepted to the cash rebate programme. 92 projects were international productions or co-productions with Greek production companies and foreign companies from Europe, Asia, United States, Canada and Australia. Nearly EUR316 million was invested in Greece for the production of audiovisual projects. Filming took place in more than 140 different locations across Greece, with more than 49,000 jobs created for production needs.

"In recent years, Greece has become a centrepiece for foreign audiovisual productions regardless of their size, format or genre," details Moris





ESSENTIAL FACTS

TAX INCENTIVES

40%

A promising 40% cash rebate is available on production costs spent in Greece. The maximum cash rebate per project is capped at EUR12 million. Maximum eligible productions costs must consist of 80% of the total project budget. For projects with eligible expenses over EUR8 million, special provisions for scriptwriter and director's fees are available for high-budget productions. Salaries of crew and cast for feature films may also qualify in these circumstances.

TIME ZONE

GMT+2

STUDIOS

Greek-American John Kalafatis - CEO & co-founder of New York City's York Films - is developing state-of-the-art soundstages & film studios on the outskirts of Thessaloniki. A joint venture with Millennium Media & Nu Boyana Studios Bulgaria, this colossal project is attracting major Hollywood production into Greece.

ATA CARNET

YES

RECENT PRODUCTIONS

Disney's *Rise*, *The Enforcer* & *The Expendables 4* from Millennium Films, Netflix's *Knives Out 2* and Apple TV's *Tehran 2* were filmed in the country. Foreign productions shooting in Greece include *The Bricklayer* from Millennium Films, Amazon Prime's *Greek Salad*, documentary *Future Tenses* and animation *The Adventure of the Universe*.

Gkormezanos, founder and head of productions at M21 Films. "Equipped with multiple National Network Film Offices throughout the country providing productions with free, step-by-step support, a 40% cash rebate programme and a 30% tax relief incentive, a diverse portfolio of outstanding locations, great weather conditions and highly-skilled crews offering quality production services, Greece offers filmmakers an unmatched experience."

EKOME (National Centre of Audiovisual Media and Communication) set up the National Film Offices Network across 13 regions and the two major municipalities of Athens and Thessaloniki. The Film Offices Network acts as one-stop shop for international and local productions, providing help for permits and crew as well as promoting the advantages of the local communities.

The country is divided into three core geographical regions: the mainland, the islands, and the Peloponnese. Mountains, forests and lakes give the mainland a wild energy. Vikos Gorge, one of the world's deepest gorges, is located in the mainland's Pindus mountain range. Meteora is a stunning formation of gravity-defying rocks with monasteries precariously perched on top situated near the town of Kalabaka.

Greece typically enjoys a Mediterranean climate, though mountains are usually snow-covered. Dry hot days in the summer are cooled by seasonal winds known as the meltemi. Meanwhile, mountainous regions have generally lower temperatures and the winters are mild in lowland areas, with a minimum amount of snow and ice. A common phenomenon is the occurrence of different climatic conditions during the same season, meaning that mild heat manifests in coastal areas as cooler temperatures permeate the mountainous regions.

The Greek National Tourism Organisation recently created a campaign with advertising agency Ogilvy. The tongue-in-cheek commercial references the lesser-known snowy elements of the country's climate, announcing 'Greece has a winter too.'

While incomers may expect slight showers in their winter months, for the majority of the time one can

expect sun and mild weather throughout the year. This makes the country ideal for exterior shots. There is a good selection of standard and specialised equipment, and art departments and set construction units are of a high standard. All of the standard post-production facilities are in Athens, though new investments could shake things up over the next few years.



SOMETHING ELSE

The footballing world was stunned when underdogs Greece defied expectation to win the UEFA European Football Championship in 2004. With German manager Otto Rehhagel at the helm, Greek fans were treated to a magical summer as the national team slayed giants, forever placing themselves among the Sporting Gods of Greece.

Hosts Portugal were defeated 2-1 by Greece in the opening match of the competition, with Giorgos Karagounis and Angelos Basinas on the scoresheet to render Cristiano Ronaldo's strike obsolete. After battling through the group stages, Greece beat defending champions France in the last eight of the competition. The Czech Republic were defeated in the semi-final thanks to Greek defender Trainos Dellas scoring in extra-time.

Portugal had a chance to avenge their opening game defeat and win the competition on home soil, yet the Greek battlers had not read this script. Winning 1-0 with an emphatic header from Angelos Charisteas, Greece were crowned European champions. The bookies had given the country a slim 150-1 chance of winning the tournament, marking a truly remarkable campaign from the legendary group of players.

