

# OBJECTIVE 03

To support reconciliation, dialogue, closer relationship and trust between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities

# THIN GREEN LINE

## MARIOS PSARAS AND OYA AKIN

### PRESS KIT

# THIN GREEN LINE

A FILM BY MARIOS PSARAS

## STORY OF THE ACTION

The "Thin Green Line" is a bi-communal creative documentary about romantic relationships between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, regardless of gender or sexuality. It tells three love stories, the hardships and discriminations the couples faced, and the many differences and taboos that divided and brought them together. The film ultimately reveals love as an alternative vehicle for peace building and affirms mutual acceptance and respect as key ingredients for reconciliation.

*"It was definitely not an easy project to pursue as it involved multiple forms of taboos, prejudices and personal risks for the participants. The original participants eventually dropped out and we had to hire actors to tell their stories. So it turned into a creative documentary rather than the usual "talking-heads" format. We were determined to get the stories out there, in the hope that potential audiences will reflect on what brings people together and what separates them, and most importantly how love can overcome differences and obstacles."*

Marios Psaras

*"The film itself was designed as a tool to be used in discussions, presentations and workshops around identity, gender, sexuality, nationalism and peace-building. Throughout 2018, the film was screened at international film festivals around the world, thus promoting our alternative voice for peace and reconciliation on the island, without obliterating issues of gender and sexuality. Through Grow Civic support, we have managed to reach out to people from Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, bi-communal CSOs, and other groups working on similar peace-building activities and gender and sexuality issues. It allowed us to expand our network and multiply the possibilities for screening events and workshops. In the discussions following the preview screenings of the film, it was evident that issues of gender and sexuality cannot be obliterated in any discussions around national identity, ethnicity and religious fanaticism."*

Marios Psaras

## RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The film provided a pretext for discussions and workshops on the way identity and differences are interwoven with aspects of nationalism and religious fanaticism. According to Psaras, the film, screenings and workshops created a space for collaboration and dialogue between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, unearthing alternative means of peace-building. It also raised the issues of gender and sexuality and created a space to deconstruct hegemonic notions of masculinity and femininity, as well as homophobic and heterosexist assertions on sexuality. The rights-based approach of the action helped to develop a bridge between the civil society actors and duty bearers in a creative way by the means of empowerment and inclusivity. It focused on social inequality and aimed to empower neglected groups, while shedding light on reconciliation.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The film was screened not only in Cyprus but around the world, at film festivals, universities, and private screenings for targeted audiences. The film is available online for interested groups and audiences not only to enjoy but also to use in their actions.

*"Wherever it has been screened it has elicited diverse reactions and conversations around its daring topic. Its outreach and success confirmed the power that the moving image has in helping reconsider and reframe long-established views and prejudices."*

Marios Psaras

The "Thin Green Line" aimed at breaking down barriers between the two communities and highlight those elements that bring them closer, thus raising awareness and creating spaces for dialogue and shared experience. The film was produced with subtitles in English, Greek, and Turkish so that it can reach audiences throughout Cyprus and abroad. While the filming and editing were funded by another donor, Grow Civic supported the post-production phase, which took place in the second half of 2017. After the finalization of the post-production, the team made two premiere screenings, one for the cast and crew and one for CSOs and duty bearers from both communities, at the Home for Cooperation in the Buffer Zone.



## ABOUT MARIOS PSARAS AND OYA AKIN

Marios Psaras is a film scholar and filmmaker with a background in education, philosophy and film studies, and experience working in TV, radio, film, and festival production. Thin Green Line is his fifth short film. Oya Akin is a Cypriot actor, director, educator, facilitator, translator and peace activist. Since 2003, she has taken part in, collaborated and/or led more than 100 bicultural, multi-communal, multilingual, multicultural projects such as theatre plays, short-documentaries, TV films and peace education projects. While Marios was the director, co-writer and co-producer of the "Thin Green Line" film, Oya was the actress and co-writer.

## THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Post-production of the film "Thin Green Line"

Preparation & dissemination of visibility materials (poster and press kit)

Screening of the movie on 14 February 2018, at the Home for Cooperation in the Buffer Zone.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

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