

APPLES

Directed by Christos Nikou | 2020 Venice Wrap Report



QUOTES, REVIEWS, REACTIONS & INTERVIEWS

“Soulfully relevant”

Peter Debruge - VARIETY

“Arresting. Somber and surreal, this is a haunting meditation on the manipulation of memory. Christos nikou establishes himself as an exciting new voice”

David Rooney – THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

“Something special. Hugely accomplished”

Wendy Ide – SCREEN

“Splendidly poignant”, “★★★★”

Xan Brooks – THE GUARDIAN

“Time Out says ★★★★★”

Phil de Semlyen – TIME OUT

“This debut film does deserve such high praise. Apples thus announces Nikou as the latest in a growing line of excellent contemporary Greek filmmakers making movies that stir brains and melt hearts.”

Kaleem Aftab – CINEUROPA

“Strong (...) A moving, sensitive and droll debut about re-integration into society, memory and grief”

Andreas Wiseman - DEADLINE

“An original story, ironic and sharp”

Mauro Donzelli – COMINGSOON (ITALY)

“A capable debut able to strike deeply”

Andrea Chimento – IL SOLE 24 ORE

“Richly affecting. An intimate tale of loss, memory, and healing”

Leonardo Goi – MUBI

“A melancholic tragicomedy, with lyricism and sensitivity, and with an apocalyptic touch”

Diego Battle, OTROSCINES (ARGENTINA)

“Enrapturing viewing”

Geoffrey McNab – THE INDEPENDENT

“Emotional and sincere”

Diego Lerer – MICROPSIA CINE (ARGENTINA)

TRADE PRESS

SCREEN INTERNATIONAL (Print), by Staff, August 31, 2020

[August-September 2020 Issue. Included in Venice Film Festival Preview.](#)

**Please note, coverage appears on page 45.*

THE PLAYLIST, Andrew Bundy and Rodrigo Perez, August 31, 2020

[Mentioned in "2020 Venice Film Festival Preview: All The Must-See Films To Watch"](#)

VARIETY, Peter Debruge, September 2, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Christos Nikou couldn't have anticipated the almost unrecognizable world into which he would be releasing his debut feature, "Apples," but it's a testament to the strength of this lonely and aloof tragicomedy's central allegory that it adapts so well to our pear-shaped times... Feels soulfully relevant as reality aligns with the speculative world Nikou imagined. (...) The approach operates like "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" in reverse, and indeed, there are traces of Charlie Kaufman's influence on Nikou's understatedly absurdist script: The doctor prescribes the man a series of new tasks... Will doing these things spark his memory? They're certainly funny-sad to witness, like a Kafka character performing a silent-film comedy routine at times, as he awkwardly struggles with various situations. (...) Nikou comes to this project having worked as an assistant director on Yorgos Lanthimos' "Dogtooth" and Richard Linklater's "Before Midnight," but his voice already feels distinct, more mature than those found in the disruptive debuts of his Greek peers. "Apples" has a ruminative quality that's fairly uncommon in modern cinema, leaving space for audiences to project themselves into the man's situation. (...) Overcast, underpopulated and squeezed into a subconsciously oppressive 4:3 frame, the movie isn't meant to be realistic. Rather, it tickles our imagination, inviting us to consider the prospect of being given a new beginning, and whether starting from scratch would be such a terrible thing.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, David Rooney, September 2, 2020 - "a truly fiery film"

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Simultaneously deadpan and dour, somber and surreal, this is a haunting meditation on the manipulation of memory to anesthetize pain, crafted with a meticulous attention to visual and aural composition that makes for arresting viewing. Christos Nikou establishes himself as an exciting new voice in the movement with his assured feature debut. (...) The unnamed protagonist could almost be a postmodern Buster Keaton, played in a wonderful performance by Aris Servetelis that seems affectless but slowly uncovers concealed layers of feeling. (...) The originality of the premise, the uncanny timing of its wry grounding in a pandemic that's steadily reshaping society and the soulful observation of how we process loss and move on with our broken lives should ensure that this Venice, Telluride and Toronto selection finds a responsive art-house audience. Although it takes place in a distinctly analog time, Apples also represents an amusing commentary on our age of social media saturation. (...) That identification process sets up the Polaroid as an important motif, its format echoed in the boxy 4:3 aspect ratio that adds to the striking intensity of cinematographer Bartosz Świniarski's expertly framed visuals. Nikou strikes a pleasing balance between ironic observation and melancholy reality.

INDIEWIRE, David Ehrlich, September 2, 2020

[Review: Grade B-](#)

In the movie's best moments, the veneer of Lanthimos-like affectlessness that's layered over Aris' behavior reflects the sterility of our own social media use... "Apples" conveys a sense, palpable but unspoken, that emotion is the crucial difference between data and memory, and distancing ourselves from the feeling of our experiences makes us liable to forget who we are. (...) At times, it seems as if Nikou is trying to peel back the layers of Lanthimos' ultra-blunt comic methodology and explore how it reflects our growing inability to feel things (...) Emotional responses — even terror and heartbreak — are what get under our skin and make us who we are. If this Charlie Kaufman-tinged fairy tale has a moral, it's that people are the sum of the things they feel and don't forget. (...) This is a movie full of lovely and lilting moments that invite you to reflect on the value of your own painful memories.

DEADLINE, Andreas Wiseman, September 2, 2020

[Mentioned in "Venice Film Festival: Day 1 – First COVID-era Fest Underway with Sparsely Populated Theaters & An Allegorical Film for the COVID-era"](#)

**Please note, Deadline emailed to subscribers as a breaking news alert*

A moving, sensitive and droll debut about re-integration into society, memory and grief. Director Christos Nikou ...could be the latest significant filmmaking voice to emerge from the country.

SCREEN DAILY, Wendy Ide, September 3, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

A meditation on memory, identity, grief and loss, with the narrative device of a global pandemic thrown in for good measure... this hugely accomplished, satisfyingly textured first feature is really something special. (...) With its deadpan style, laced with surreal flourishes and dry, absurdist humour, the film evokes not only the Greek Weird Wave work of filmmakers such as Yorgos Lanthimos (Nikou served as an assistant director on Dogtooth) but also something of the hyper stylised melancholy of Charlie Kaufman. But Apples is also distinctive enough never to feel derivative of its influences. A healthy festival career should follow its premiere as the opening film at Venice Orizzonti, and interest is likely from arthouse distributors looking for quality content. (...)

A wry commentary here on selfie-culture and the pervasive idea that an experience is somehow invalidated unless it has been instagrammed and approved. Does identity become identikit if everyone is posting the same insta-polished content? But the film's themes run deeper.

THE PLAYLIST, Jonathan Christian, September 3, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW: Grade B+](#)

"Apples" could not have been released at a more perfect time, which, despite its timely unveiling, harbors an endearing timeless quality to its rumination on identity, memory, and rebirth. (...) Arrives bearing gifts of uplifting encouragement and pensive meditations on the nature of the human experience. Equipped with deadpan humor and numbing silence, Nikou's philosophically minded dramedy strives to create conversation as much as it actively attempts to entertain... "Apples" flaunts its own brand of offbeat charisma. (...) Cynicality is not a word existent in the film's lexicon, which is continually evident by Servetalis' brilliant performance—the actor nary misses his mark. By leveraging most of the movie's weight on expressions and glimpses, "Apples" cherishes subtlety, the mark of a project confident in its craft. (...) "Apples" stands steadfast in its commitment to creating a bittersweet experience that imparts a heartwarming afterglow, encouraging you to contemplate on your past and anticipate the future with optimism—that sentiment will not, and should not, be forgotten any time soon.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Scott Roxborough, September 3, 2020

[Piece on the future of cinema in the COVID era includes Christos Nikous' quotes](#)

Well, it is still early, but judging by the first few days, the Venice experiment has been a resounding success. Yes, there are fewer people, fewer films, and fewer stars. No, wearing a mask in a cinema will

never feel normal. But if the goal of holding the 77th Venice International Film Festival was to show the world the movie business can bounce back, you have to say: mission accomplished.

"It is very strange to be here, with the masks and everything, but I think it is very important to have Venice now because somehow the film industry has to restart," said Greek director Christos Nikou, whose debut *Apples* opened the festival's Orizzonti sidebar on Wednesday. "We all know that our industry was hit more by COVID than other industries. Most of the theaters have been closed in the past few months. But I'm optimistic we will find a way out of this." Venice is showing a way out. Or at least showing a way that film festivals can be held during this pandemic.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Scott Roxborough, September 3, 2020

[Article on the status of the indie film market based on Venice sales \(mentioning Apples\)](#)

Greek feature *'Apples'* also sold wide in a positive sign for the international indie film industry (...) Greek director Christos Nikou's Orizzonti opener *Apples* locked in deals with the U.K. and Ireland (Curzon Artificial Eye), as well as Australia/New Zealand (Madman Entertainment).

These deals weren't actually struck in Venice. The venerable Italian film festival, unlike the Cannes or Berlin festivals, has never had a true film market. But by announcing their deals on the Lido, sales outfits are sending a positive signal to the industry that the post-coronavirus comeback of indie cinema is underway. (...) Alpha Violet also sold multiple territories for its Orizzonti title, with Curzon Artificial Eye in the U.K. and Ireland and Madman picking up Australia and New Zealand rights on Nikou's directorial debut *Apples*. The fairytale-like story of a world hit by a pandemic that causes amnesia was also selected to play in the canceled Telluride Film Festival. CAA is handling U.S. sales rights.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Scott Roxborough, September 11, 2020

[Mentioned in "Venice's Post-Lockdown Festival Experiment a Success"](#)

Christos Nikou's debut feature *Apples*, a favorite from Venice's Horizons section, sold across Europe, with Paris-based Alpha Violet closing deals with Curzon for the UK and Ireland, Madman for Australia, Lucky Red for Italy, and Feelgood for Greece, among many others. The deadpan drama is set in an analog world where a pandemic is causing a wave of amnesia. CAA is repping U.S. rights to the film.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Scott Roxborough, September 11, 2020

[Christos Nikou on Channelling Charlie Kaufman in the Offbeat 'Apples'](#)

Nikou is adding his own twist to the movement with his assured directorial debut.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Critics's best off

[APPLES is among the list of the 15th favorite films](#)

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Critics's Picks 20 Best Films From the Toronto and Venice Film Festival

[APPLES is among the list of 20 Best films](#)

VARIETY, Ben Croll, September 12, 2020

[Mentioned in "Renaissance in Venice: Film Professionals Smiling as Festival Wraps"](#)

Drawing serious and sustained buzz were Uberto Pasolini's "Nowhere Special," starring James Norton (pictured above with Pasolini), Jasmila Žbanić's "Quo Vadis, Aida?" and the one-two dystopian

punch of Christos Nikou's "Apples" and Michel Franco's "New Order."

DEADLINE, Andreas Wiseman, September 12, 2020

["Venice Film Festival 2020: The Best Movies According To The Critics"](#)

Greek drama Apples was programmed on the festival's first day and it was easy to see why. The allegorical story of a man – and society – suffering from amnesia was well-received by most. Christos Nikou becomes the latest filmmaker to join the Greek new wave.



ENGLISH-LANGUAGE GENERAL PRESS

THE FILMSTAGE (US), Jordan Raup, August 29, 2020

[TRAILER PICK-UP](#)

THE GUARDIAN (UK), Xan Brooks, September 2, 2020

[FOUR STAR REVIEW](#)

With a neat stylistic flourish, Nikou sets his tale in an ahistoric, analogue Athens, modern on the surface yet seemingly in thrall to cassette decks and instant cameras. At a time when memories are wiped and histories erased, physical media perhaps provide a crucial link with the past (...) What prevents Apples from becoming a simple Lanthimos copycat is its comparative kindness and its abiding direction of travel. Where a lesser director might have been tempted to point his tale towards darkness, Nikou – to his credit – adopts a more tender approach.

CINEUROPA, Kaleem Aftab, September 2, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

It's that kind of film where highbrow and lowbrow delightfully dance together. It is also a mix of the weird and the familiar. [...] Aris sees old behaviours and feelings return when he meets fellow recovery patient Anna (Sofia Georgovasilis) in the best scene at a cinema since True Romance. [...] Apples is a pretty unforgettable debut and must already be a frontrunner to win Orizzonti. [...] It's a sensibility and aesthetic that is reminiscent of the worlds created by Charlie Kaufman, Michel Gondry or Spike Jonze, and yes, this debut film does deserve such high praise. Apples thus announces Nikou as the latest in a growing line of excellent contemporary Greek filmmakers making movies that stir brains and melt hearts.

FIRSTSHOWING (US), Alex Billington, September 2, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW: 9 out of 10](#)

Leaves you with that warm embrace of cinema...It's a very tender, understanding film that reminds us to live in our own way, no matter how hard that might be. (...) It's really sweet, low key filmmaking. No big movements or shocking moments, just a tenderness focused on Aris. A dash of Her, a sprinkle of The Lobster, with heaps of Greek bleakness. Nikou succeeds - creating a lovely, subtle film that has so much to say without having to actually say it in dialogue...Topped off with a lovely score from Alexander Voulgaris, the film won me over and will stay in my heart well after the festival.

MOVEABLEFEST, Stephen Saito, September 2, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

"Apples" was uniquely built for this moment, both deeply connected to its anonymous lead...and thoughtfully constructed to wrap its arms around the societal consequences of the big idea at its center where the erasure of history begins with large swaths of people no longer having a common currency of collective memory. Recognizing painful memories have as much value as happy ones, the tragicomedy reminds of "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" by way of "Dogtooth", but to suggest it isn't a complete original would be doing it a disservice, with Nikou's ability to allude to the ripple effects of the issues plaguing its central character on the larger world without ever leaving his side is truly unique, cleverly considering what fills the void when our own minds start to betray us. At a time when everything seems out of sync, "Apples" resonates brilliantly.

TIME OUT (UK), Phil De Semlyen, September 3, 2020

[FOUR STAR REVIEW](#)

Playful and melancholy, this sparkling debut could just signal the arrival of a new Yorgos Lanthimos (...) Apples is less sharp-edged satire, more humanist exploration of the importance of memory Laced with deadpan wit and a joyfully surrealist streak. (...) [Nikou] is aiming to engage the heart. Apples is a film that manages it in spades. It's a seriously impressive calling card.

MUBI (USA), Leonardo Goi, September 3, 2020

[Positively Included in Festival Dispatch](#)

Apples is drenched in a deadpan humor redolent of the Greek New Wave. Bartosz Świniarski's cinematography keeps the palette suitably cold, a mélange of blues and grays that match the wintry landscape, brutalist architecture, and overall bleak atmosphere lingering over Aris' routine, the man's entrapment and loneliness only amplified by the 4:3 aspect ratio. (...) All of Apples absurdist tesserae eventually coalesce into a richly affecting whole, a film that whiplashes from dark comedy to satire to tragedy to raise questions about our own human fabric—whether all we are comes down to the sum of the things we choose to remember, and the memories to leave behind. And if the film feels so nimble on its feet, credit goes to Servetalis' terrific performance.

THE INDEPENDENT (UK), Geoffrey McNab, September 4, 2020

[Curtain Raiser](#)

One movie everybody seems to like is young Greek director Christos Nikou's charming and subversive debut feature, Apples (...) Servetalis gives a wry comic performance as the bewildered hero, trying to piece together his identity. Apples also features one of the best dance sequences in recent cinema.

THE CRITERION COLLECTION, David Hudson, September 4, 2020

[Included in Festival Dispatch](#)

IONCINEMA (Canada), Nicholas Bell, September 4, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Nikou finds meaning through its absence in an exceptional debut.

Somewhere along the way, the Greek Weird Wave has seemingly evolved from weird to wise, at least if Apples, the directorial debut of Christos Nikou, is any indication...Nikou presents a dark satire which plays like a prophetic telegram of not only current cultural identity crises, but in an existential sense, seemingly invisible forces which decimate our lives as we know it (...) A bit warmer and empathetic than the cold behavioral oddities of Lanthimos, Avranas or Babis Makridis, Nikou posits identity as something which is also rooted in our collectiveness, for without connectivity, we might as well be invisible.

RogerEbert.com (UK), Brian Tallerico, September 7, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

His feature directorial debut is a quirky little gem, a movie with a great sense of visual composition and a fascinating concept, anchored by two enjoyable performances.

THEFILMSTAGE, Eli Friedberg, September 8, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW: Grade B](#)

AWARDSDAILY (USA), Zhuo-Ning Su, September 10, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Greek writer/director Christos Nikou's feature debut APPLES is a quirky, funny, melancholic delight that will exhilarate fans of the absurdist Greek New Wave. (...) With APPLES, Nikou also establishes himself as a very effective visual artist/storyteller. The film looks lovely for one thing. Striking, markedly linear production design frames an eerie mindscape of hollow, untrustworthy beauty.

VANITY FAIR (USA), Richard Lawson, September 10, 2020

[Included in "The 17 Fall Festival Films We're Most Excited About"](#)

INREVIEWONLINE, Lawrence Gordon, September 10, 2020

[MIXED REVIEW](#)

DISCUSSINGFILM, Ben Rolph, September 11, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#) ★★ ★

An Unforgettably Beautiful and Stylish Debut. Apples is not only one of the strongest debuts of the year, but strongest films period.

SCREENANARCHY, Martin Kudlac, September 12, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Apples is more than just a blast from the recent past in terms of the analog era and New Greek Wave. Nikou proceeds naturally to a generation evolution pushing the formalism to new territory while reducing the shock-therapy impact without betraying the dark comedy roots of his cinematic ancestors. The director is eating the apple of New Greek Wave and having it too. It is a fantastic encore of admired cinema that seemed exhausted and its generational expansion.

FILM INQUIRY, Rafaela Sales Ross, September 11, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

A mesmerizing exploration of identity, memory and grief.

TAKEONECINEMA, Jim Ross, September 16, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

APPLES stand as a worthwhile and intriguing statement independent of its absurdist peers.

CNN, Thomas Page, September 18, 2020

[START TO THE OSCARS RACE](#): APPLES is among the list of 10 Best films

THEWIRE, Namrata Joshi, September 18, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

VENITIAN CAT, Cat Bauer, September 18, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

APPLES is among the list of 20 Best films

THE OBSERVER, Siddhant Adlakha, September 20, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Apples is entirely its own beast, both as a reserved and plot-less boat ride down one man's lonely psyche, and as a fixture of the last decade of absurdist Greek cinema. (...) One might say Nikou is exploring, from within, the kind of emotional disconnect that leads one to live life at a remove.

ITALIAN-LANGUAGE GENERAL PRESS (SELECTION)

SCREENWEEK, Marco Triolo, August 27, 2020

[Trailer Pick Up](#)

Un originale racconto, ironico e tagliente [...] Il suo è uno stile surreale e asciutto, che crea un mondo e un universo proprio, capace di incuriosire per alcune contrapposizioni visive inattese, piene di ironia tagliente e con un protagonista, Aris Servetalis, davvero convincente. (...) Una riflessione sulla memoria e l'identità, sulla perdita e sulla reazione di una società a una pandemia, attraverso l'avventura di nuova scoperta di sé di un uomo. I toni ironici lasciano spazio a una sempre più presente angoscia, vissuta dal protagonista insieme a noi spettatori, che svela il peso di una vita che subisce per la prima volta ricordi dolorosi da immagazzinare nella "nuova identità". (*„An original story, ironic and sharp [...] Nikou's style is surreal and dry and creates a whole universe that incites our curiosity with almost unattended juxtapositions, full of cutting irony and with a truly convincing protagonist, Aris Servetalis. [...] The ironic tones leave space for an increasing sense of anxiety the protagonist lives through together with the viewer, revealing the weight of a life suffering as if for the first time the aching memories to be stored in a „new identity“*).

IL SOLE 24 ORE, Andrea Chimento, September 2, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

La sua opera colpisce ugualmente, in particolare perché si tratta di un lavoro d'attualità, capace di far riflettere su diversi temi fondamentali per il periodo in cui stiamo vivendo (...) Anche su questo punto Nikou guarda alla lezione di Lanthimos ma anche all'austriaco Michael Haneke, riuscendo comunque a offrire un tocco personale, in special modo con la metafora di un'amnesia collettiva, decisamente interessante e ricca di spunti di riflessione (...) un esordio capace di colpire nel profondo, a tratti derivativo, ma ugualmente stratificato e pronto a stimolare numerose riflessioni. Un buon inizio per una sezione che si preannuncia quest'anno di grandissimo interesse. (*STRIKING. A topical work, capable of making us reflect on various fundamental themes for the period in which we are living. Also on this point Nikou looks at the lesson of Lanthimos but also at the Austrian Michael Haneke, however managing to offer a personal touch, especially with the metaphor of collective amnesia, very interesting and full of food for thought. A capable debut able to strike deeply, at times derivative, but equally layered and ready to stimulate numerous reflections. A good start for a section that promises to be this year of great interest*).

MOVIEPLAYER, Giuseppe Grossi, September 2, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW: 4/5](#)

Un misto di fascinazione e disturbo per film che apre questa strana Venezia 2020 parlando di epidemia in tempi di pandemia. Un tempismo casuale, che rende questa preziosa opera prima ancora più pungente e significativa. (*Fascinating and disturbing. This film opens a strange Venice 2020, and it's about an epidemic in times of pandemic. A casual timing, which makes this precious first work even more poignant and meaningful*).

IO DONNA, Paola Piacenza, September 2, 2020

[Curtain Raiser & POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

A man who doesn't know who he is anymore (Aris Servetalis, who looks just like Daniel Day Lewis (...)) Interestingly (perhaps inevitably) Nikou chooses to set his film in a pre-digital era, turning his film into a true period film. It is consistent that he would have chosen a 4:3 vintage format, one used before it was replaced by the current 16:9".

ELLE, Silvia Locatelli, September 3, 2020

[Curtain Raiser](#)

È un film sulla perdita. Noi siamo l'insieme dei nostri ricordi, di tutte le cose che non possiamo dimenticare? Siamo diventati una società di smemorati, che ha perso la sua identità, per colpa della tecnologia? Nel film tutto è analogico - niente cellulari, lettere scritte a mano, vecchie radio e vecchia musica - e Nikou sembra suggerire proprio questo: immagazziniamo tutto nei nostri smartphone e la memoria si è impigrita, siamo sempre più interessati a cercare il filtro giusto e ci siamo dimenticati di vivere. (*It's a film about loss. Are we the set of our memories, of all the things that we cannot forget? Have we become a society of forgetful people, which has lost its identity due to technology? In the film everything is analog - no cell phones, handwritten letters, old radios and old music - and Nikou seems to suggest just that: we store everything in our smartphones and the memory has gone lazy, we are increasingly interested in looking for the right filter and we we have forgotten to live*).

IL MANIFESTO, Silvana Silvestri, September 3, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Il nuovo cinema greco sempre più al centro dell'attenzione in tutti i più importanti festival, procede elaborando un'estetica originale a dispetto delle difficoltà del mercato. Possiede come nota dominante una caratteristica atmosfera di sospensione, declinata in più versioni, dal sarcasmo velenoso di Lanthimos alla trascinante tristezza di Miserere di Babis Makridis, visto proprio lo scorso anno. Come se la società intera fosse in attesa, ma senza speranza, di qualche soluzione a un futuro incerto, e la cosa vada presa con un certo spirito. (*The new Greek cinema increasingly at the center of attention in all the major festivals, proceeds by developing an original aesthetic in spite of the difficulties of the market. It has as its dominant note a characteristic atmosphere of suspension, declined in several versions, from the poisonous sarcasm of Lanthimos to the enthralling sadness of Miserere by Babis Makridis, seen just last year. As if the whole society were waiting, but without hope, for some solution to an uncertain future, and this should be taken with a certain spirit*).

NUOVO CINEMA LOCATELLI, Luigi Locatelli, September 3, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW: 7/8 stars](#)

Extremely talented Christos Nikou (...) first revelation of this Venice festival.

TAXIDRIVERS.IT, Margherita Fratantonio, September 5, 2020

[Mixed Review](#)

Altro limite, almeno per chi del cinema ama l'aspetto emozionale, quello di ricorrere a soluzioni filmiche che privilegiano il distacco emotivo dello spettatore, nonostante l'ottima recitazione di Aris Servetalis. "*Another limit, at least for those who love the emotional aspect of cinema, is that the film resorts to stylistic solutions that favor the emotional detachment of the viewer, despite the excellent acting of Aris Servetalis*".

WIRED, Claudia Catalli, September 9, 2020

[The piece labels APPLES as "the surprising film of the Venice Festival"](#)

È un film che affascina, incuriosisce, allude al dramma contemporaneo degli apolidi, sottolinea l'importanza della memoria per la storia di ogni essere umano senza cadere nel retorico, infine sottende il tema dell'avvelenamento quotidiano a causa della sofisticazione del cibo. ("*This is a film that fascinates, intrigues, alludes to the contemporary drama of stateless people, underlines the*

importance of memory for the history of every human being without falling into rhetoric, and finally underlines the theme of daily poisoning due to the sophistication of food").

GERMAN-LANGUAGE GENERAL PRESS

Kino-Zeit, August 31, 2020

[Trailer pick-up](#)

Frankfurter Rundschau, Daniel Kothenschulte, September 3, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Nicht weniger grandios eröffnete die Nebensektion Orizzonti mit dem griechischen Beitrag „Mila“ („Apples“) von Christos Nikou. [...] Es ist faszinierend, wie Nikou durch wenige Nuancen einerseits eine auf den Kopf gestellte Gesellschaft porträtiert, andererseits aber etwas Unsichtbares wie die veränderte Wahrnehmung beschreibt. So wie derzeit Albert Camus' existentialistischer Klassiker „Die Pest“ wieder auf den Bestsellerlisten erscheint, dürfte „Apples“ weithin als Kommentar zur Corona-Befindlichkeit verstanden werden. Es mag ein Zufall sein, aber wie hier über den Verlust des vermeintlich Selbstverständlichen reflektiert wird, nicht nur im Sozialleben, sondern auch in der Sinneswahrnehmung, das ist schon prophetisch. [...] Es war die größte Sorge vieler Filmschaffenden, dass sich das Publikum mit der Nutzung der Streaming-Portale das Kinogehen angewöhnt, weil es irgendwann einfach vergessen haben könnte, was für ein Geschmack das ist. In Venedig arbeiten gerade ein Festival und sein Publikum daran, dass dies niemals geschieht. *(The Orizzonti sub-section opened no less wonderfully with the Greek contribution “Mila” (“Apples”) by Christos Nikou.[...] It is fascinating how Nikou portrays a society turned upside down through a few nuances on the one hand, but on the other hand describes something invisible like the change in perception. Just as Albert Camus'existentialist classic “The Plague” is currently back on the bestseller lists, “Apples” should be widely understood as a comment on the corona state. It may be a coincidence, but the way in which the loss of the supposedly self-evident is reflected here, not only in social life but also in sensory perception, is already prophetic. [...] It was the greatest concern of many filmmakers that the audience would stop going to the cinema by using the streaming portals, because at some point they might simply have forgotten what their taste is. A festival in Venice and its audience are currently working to ensure that this never happens).*

OUTNOW (Switzerland, main online cinema outlet), Roland Meier, September 4, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW \(4.5 stars out of 6\)](#)

Sind die Griechen die neuen Cracks des Weltkinos? Newcomer Christos Nikou könnte einst Yorgos Lanthimos (Dogtooth) beerben. Sein Erstling ist eine lakonische Auseinandersetzung mit der Erinnerung und dem Darstellungsdrang, die trotz ihres komplett analogen Settings einiges über das digitale Zeitalter aussagt. Eine surreale Dramey aus der Orizzonti-Nebensektion am Filmfest Venedig 2020. *(Are the Greeks the new cracks of world cinema? Newcomer Christos Nikou could one day inherit Yorgos Lanthimos (Dogtooth). His debut is a laconic examination of memory and the urge to depict, which, despite its completely analogue setting, says a lot about the digital age. A surreal dramedy from the Orizzonti subsidiary section at the Venice Film Festival 2020.)*

FRENCH-LANGUAGE GENERAL PRESS

ABUS DE CINE (France), Olivier Bachelard, September 4, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW: 3/5](#)

Un premier long métrage aussi intrigant que rigoureusement construit. [...] Interrogeant sur la spontanéité et la véracité des contacts humains, le scénario prend un tournant intéressant alors que l'homme rencontre une femme à une soirée. Par bribes, certains éléments de la vie de cet homme sont évoqués, de manière directe ou indirecte, dans une continuité esthétique, entre cadres travaillés et couleurs éteintes, jusqu'à un dénouement qui donne tout son sens au récit. Mais ce sont surtout l'utilisation des uns par les autres, l'individualisme, et la capacité de l'homme à rebondir, qui se cachent derrière une intrigue maline. *(A first feature film as intriguing as it is rigorously constructed. [...] Questioning the spontaneity and veracity of human contact, the script takes an interesting turn as the man meets a woman at a party. In bits and pieces, certain elements of this man's life are evoked, directly or indirectly, in an aesthetic continuity, between restricting frames and faded colors, until a final development gives everything that has passed a new meaning. But it is above all the use of each other, individualism, and the ability of man to bounce back that is hidden behind a clever twist.)*

ANGLES DE VUE, Boustoune, September 3, 2020

[They put APPLES in the running for screenplay and acting awards](#)

SPANISH-LANGUAGE GENERAL PRESS

LA TERCERA (Chile), Rodrigo González, September 2, 2020

[Curtain Raiser](#)

OTROSCINES (Argentina), Diego Battle, September 4, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW \(4/5 stars\), calling APPLES "an early revelation of the festival"](#)

Con una apuesta por ese humor deadpan (entre minimalista y absurdo) que remite al cine de Lanthimos, pero también al de Martín Rejtman y Aki Kaurismäki (y a cierto delirio propio del de Charlie Kaufman), Apples (el título hace referencia a la obsesión de nuestro antihéroe por las manzanas rojas) es una tragicomedia melancólica, no exenta de lirismo y sensibilidad, y con un dejo apocalíptico que Nikou construye con una convicción y una solidez encomiables. Un notable debut para él y para la segunda sección en importancia de Venecia. *(With a commitment to that deadpan humor (between minimalist and absurd) that refers to the cinema of Lanthimos, but also to that of Martín Rejtman and Aki Kaurismäki (as well as to a certain delirium typical of Charlie Kaufman), Apples (the title refers to the obsession of our antihero for red apples) is a melancholic tragicomedy, with lyricism and sensitivity, and with an apocalyptic touch that Nikou builds with a commendable conviction and solidity. A remarkable debut for him and for the second most important section of Venice).*

MICROPSIA CINE (Argentina), Diego Lerer, September 9, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

De ahí en adelante, la opera prima de Christos Nikou –que fue asistente de películas de Yorgos Lanthimos– empieza a parecerse un poco más a otras de esta «Nueva Ola Rumana» que suelen estar plagadas de situaciones extrañas y comportamientos bizarros. Pero Nikou apenas coquetea con ese estilo y lo usa más que nada como esquema narrativo, ya que su plan de fondo es otro: seco y

hastaclínico en sus modos, sí, pero finalmente mucho más emotivo y sincero. *(From then on, Christos Nikou's debut feature - who was YorgosLanthimos' movie assistant - begins to look a little more like others from this "Romanian New Wave" that are often plagued with strange situations and bizarre behavior. But Nikou hardly flirts with that style and uses it more than anything as a narrative scheme, since his background plan is different: dry and even clinical in its ways, yes, but ultimately much more emotional and sincere).*

OTHER INTERNATIONAL GENERAL PRESS

MOVIESROOM.PL (Poland), Rado Folta, September 4, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

Historia opowiedziana w filmie, która powstała na bazie osobistych doświadczeń reżysera, jest bardzo inteligentną i poruszającą wariacją na radzenie sobie z bolesną stratą. Słodko-gorzki, skoncentrowany na ludzkich doświadczeniach i przeżyciach, nigdy nie traci z punktu widzenia człowieczeństwa swoich bohaterów. Christos Nikou może być najbardziej wrażliwym na ludzi greckim reżyserem. *(The story told in the film, which is based on the director's personal experiences, is a very intelligent and moving variation on coping with a painful loss. Bittersweet, focused on human experiences, and it never loses the humanity of its characters. Christos Nikou may be the most sensitive Greek director).*

Komsomolskaya Pravda (Russia), Stas Tyrkin, September 6, 2020

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

At the opening of the "Horizons" competition program, there was the premiere of the Greek "Apples" - a laconic absurdist drama by debutant Christos Niku, which accurately captured the unhealthy pandemic atmosphere in which the current Venetian Mostra unfolds, not without risk (...) Statements on the topic of memory / unconsciousness risk falling into impassable pathos but "Apples", imbued with a delicate sense of the absurdity of life, happily avoids not only any vulgarity, but also the unambiguity that another fruit lover might expect from them.

Filmtett.ro (Hungary), Farkas Boglárka, September 14

[POSITIVE REVIEW](#)

"Despite the initial appearance, Nikou is not simply a copy of Lanthimos. Sure, the master made an undeniably deep impression on his disciple, but Nikou is able to gain legitimacy for his authorship, among other things, by not painting as dark a picture of our world as his mentor. Apples is not a flawless creation, but a distinctly thought-provoking and witty overture to the career of a Greek film director. This is evidenced by the fact that not only the Toronto, but also the Venice International Film Festival selected him for his program. And as for the amnesia pandemic, let's not forget: the apple is good for memory!"

INTERVIEWS & PHOTOSHOOTS

Interviewees: Christos Nikous (CN), Sofia Georgovasili (SG)

AUSTRALIA

Stephanie Bunbury, The Age, print (CN)

AUSTRIA

Marie-Therese Thill – ORF TV (CN/SG)

GERMANY

Andreas Lueg, ARD TTT, TV (CN)

INTERNATIONAL

CINEUROPA, Kaleem Aftab, September 3, 2020 (CN)

["I always love movies that change the rules of our society a little bit"](#)

FRED FILM RADIO, Angelo Acerbi, September 2, 2020 (CN)

[Christos Nikou - APPLES \(VIDEO on Youtube\)](#)

[Podcast on Fred Film Radio](#)

ITALY

Venezia News (Official Daily for the VFF), Marisa Santin, September 2, 2020 (CN)

[Apples: Interview with Christos Nikou](#)

CINECITTÀ LUCE MAGAZINE, Sonia Serafini, September 2, 2020 (CN/SG) – TV Interview

[Apples: memoria ed emozioni in apertura di Orizzonti](#)

RAINEWS, Alessandro Bignami (CN/SG) – TV Interview

[Interview with Christos Nikou](#)

ROLLING STONE, Benedetta Bragadini, September 3, 2020 (CN)

[Christos Nikou, Nuovo Cinema Greco](#)

ANSA, Nicola Rumeliotis, September 16, 2020 (CN)

[La commedia nera di Christos Nikou arriva in Italia](#)

Arianna Finos - La Repubblica, print (CN)

Andrea Morandi - Hot Corn, online (CN/SG)

Marco Consoli, Il Venerdì (CN)

Valentina Ariete, Movieplayer, online TV (CN)

Federica Polidori, Sole 24, online TV (CN)

Stefano Masi, Rai News 24, TV (CN)

Alessandro De Simone, Ciak Magazine, Print (CN)

POLAND

Rado Folta, Moviesroom.pl (CN)

UK

SCREEN, Geoffrey McNab, September 2, 2020 (CN)

['Apples' director reveals details of next project in Venice \(exclusive\)](#)

Emma Jones, BBC TV (CN/SG)

John Bleasdale, Sight & Sound UK (CN)

James Mottram, Metro/The Herald (CN)

USA

VARIETY, Chris Vourlias, June 22, 2020

["No Longer 'Weird,' Greek Cinema Defies Labels, Borders"](#)

DEADLINE, Andreas Wiseman, September 9, 2020

["Venice Film Festival Hit 'Apples' Scores More European Distribution Deals"](#)

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, Scott Roxborough, September 12, 2020

[Interview with Christos Nikou](#)

PHOTO PORTRAITS

Riccardo Ghilardi – Getty Images (CN/SG)