

Masha

A film by Dana Goldberg



Synopsis

A woman in her mid-twenties and a fourteen year old boy are sitting one in front of the other in the woman's bedroom. The woman is a director. She is **the** director. She probably auditions dozens of boys just like him every day. He cannot allow himself to question her; he must never refuse her order.

Israel 2005, Dana Goldberg, fiction, 10 min, Beta, black & white, Hebrew/ Engl. subtitles

Credits

Director	Dana Goldberg
Production	Keren Zinger
Camera	Asi Oren
Sound	Yehuda Naim
Editing	Hadara Oren
Cast	Yael Peiser, Yali Saar Tal-Shir

Dana Goldberg

Dana studied Video Art in Beit Berl College School of Art and graduated in 2003. When she took cinema lessons in her third year she decided to go for film-making. Between 2003 and 2007 she wrote and directed four short films, in which she analyses various forms of dependency and violence. In 2005 she attended Berlinale Talent Campus. Dana is developing her first feature length film.

Filmography

- Alpha (2007, 12')
- Masha (2005, 10')
- Untitled (2004, 1:44')
- Cell (2004, 9:30')
- Nommy Teller (2003, 12')

Director's statement

Masha is my third short film. It shows what's supposed to be an audition; I prefer calling it a ten-minute relationship. A woman in her mid-twenties and a fourteen year old boy are sitting one in front of the other in the woman's bedroom. The woman is a director. She is the director. She probably auditions dozens of boys just like him every day. He cannot allow himself to question her; he must never refuse her order.

My film Cell dealt with violence and morbid erotica between two strangers of the same gender, locked in a private public space. The dominant-submissive dynamics in that case was set after one woman arbitrarily took over. If you choose to use the terms 'good' and 'evil' and clearly distinguish between them, there would be no doubt who the attacker or the victim is.

Making Masha, I wanted to investigate a situation in which pathological dominance relations are developed out of objective conditions, but with one important difference: I wanted both sides to be victims. In a different manner, indeed, but both vulnerable somehow, both hurt. I wanted to see, as well as show, how cruelty can immerge out of true pain, loneliness, despair. I also wanted to deal with an evasive type of ambivalence: the blend of pleasure and fear.

The viewer witnesses the scene through Masha's private camera. He cannot see Masha herself, but hears her voice, her manipulative orders. Considering that the chosen frame stands for Masha's gaze, the image of the boy and his emotional reactions to her demands actually reflect and illustrate her pervert mind. That's why I see the whole piece as a portrait of Masha.

People usually say filmmakers ought to tell stories, and that the film's hero should be a character to identify with. I disagree with that. I think that filmmakers are to convey ideas, and that the hero or heroin, as well as the film's structure and all other cinematic components, must be derived from that idea and function together conceptually. I wanted the viewer to criticise Masha, to despise her for her violent intrusion, and then, with the sudden change of point of view, feel uncomfortable watching her humiliated, objectified just like the boy.