

Nick Nolte explores Greece's rugged nature in 'Arcadia Lost'

Grizzled US actor Nick Nolte becomes a wandering mystic in "Arcadia Lost", a coming-of-age drama shot in the mountains of Arcadia in the Peloponnese in Greece, organisers said on Tuesday.

The low-budget movie is directed by Phedon Papamichael, the Greek-American cinematographer of "Sideways", "Walk the Line" and "W", the upcoming Oliver Stone biopic of President George W. Bush.

Nolte plays a vagabond living in the Greek wilderness who mentors two American teenagers after their parents die in a road accident whilst on vacation in Greece.

"It's a mystical story...a movie that takes place in parallel realities. It's almost like a trip to the underworld," Papamichael told a news conference in Athens.

Locations include the rugged Mani peninsula in the Peloponnese, Mount Parnassos in central Greece and the River Mornos Reservoir where receding water levels brought a submerged village to light.

"We had the opportunity to expose new parts of Greece to a foreign audience," the Los Angeles-based director and cinematographer said.

The film was originally supposed to be shot in India but was rewritten for a Greek setting after Indian authorities failed to back the project.

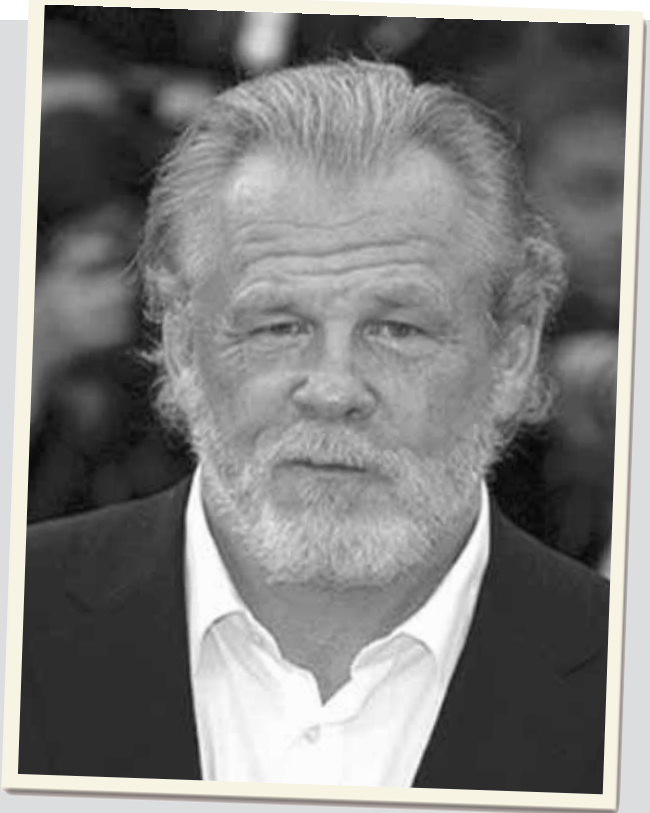
Nolte's character is based on a German vagrant who lived in a cave near the Arcadian town of Leonidio where Papamichael spent his holidays as a youth.

The film's release has been tentatively slated for spring 2009.

'Arcadia Lost'

The intriguing plot centres on an American family who wind up in a car crash whilst on holiday in the Mediterranean. Their parents dead, the two shell-shocked step-siblings begin wandering the countryside, where they meet Nolte's character, a strange old man who leads them to a mysterious spiritual ceremony. Haley Bennett and Carter Jenkins will play the survivors of the car crash.

A coming-of-age road movie with a mystery at its heart, Arcadia Lost explores Greece through the eyes of teenage Americans, mapping materialism and innocence onto timelessness and spirituality. In ruins, olive groves, and stunning landscapes, the



teens encounter a country both foreign and familiar, a place that becomes the landscape of the mysteries of their own minds and teems with life and death, the mysterious and the banal, the sacred and the profane.

Greece vows to shield consumers from price-fixing

ATHENS, Oct 7 (Reuters) - Greece's prime minister pledged on Tuesday to protect consumers from profiteering and price fixing, saying Greek household budgets are coming under pressure as the global credit crisis bites.

Greece has escaped the tougher effects of the credit crunch, such as failing banks, but an economic slowdown has forced the government to raise taxes, while wages have remained stagnant despite the rise in prices.

"Many of our citizens, especially the unemployed, the low wage-earners and pensioners, are facing difficulties," Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis told reporters after meeting the development minister.

"Prices are increasing, and, of course, years of distortions in the Greek market have widened the pressures that are faced by Greek households," he said.

Consumer groups say Greeks often pay more than wealthier Europeans for basic goods such as milk because of price fixing by cartels. Limited pay rises have further squeezed Greek households, especially those with mortgages and credit card loans as interest rates rise.

Greece's inflation rate shot to a 10-year high in July of 4.9 percent as global oil and food prices surged, and has



remained a full percentage point above the euro zone average. Economists see September's rate easing to 4.5 percent.

The government will create a monitoring service, under the auspices of the development ministry, to ensure

businesses and stores do not raise prices at rates higher than European peers. It will also strengthen the country's competition commission.

"I have asked for greater urgency with controls," Karamanlis said. "I asked for all means to be exhausted to deal with cases of profiteering, misinformation or any other exploitation of the consumer."

Karamanlis did not give further details of the measures. His government forecasts economic growth in 2009 will ease to 3.0 percent from 3.4 percent this year, higher than euro zone peers despite the slowdown.

Greece's 2009 draft budget plans tax hikes and spending cuts in an effort to rein in public debt but the socialist opposition says these will hurt the less well off.

Greece to built housing facility for immigrants

ATHENS — The Greek government says it will build a housing facility for 1,000 illegal immigrants who have been camping in the open in the western port city of Patras.

For years, illegal immigrants have gravitated toward Patras, a major maritime hub where many hope to smuggle themselves onto ships or ship-bound trucks.

In the past, most migrants in Patras were Kurds from Turkey and Iraq, but today they are mostly Afghans.

Nondas Paschos, communications director for the Greek office of the international aid agency Doctors Without Borders, says migrants may not want to move to the new housing facility.

The problem, he says, is that the housing would make it harder to get aboard ships because it's too far from the port.

The Ministry of Interior said the facility would be built far from inhabited areas.

That's being done in order to ensure "public tranquility and the safety of the inhabitants ... with full respect for human rights."

Paschos said Sunday that more important than the facility's location was "provision of adequate medical care and psychological services."

"These are pretty healthy people overall; after all, they had to withstand months, or even a year on the road before they reached Greece.

"Some have developed respiratory infections and skin problems, while a few have injuries from trying to hold on into departing trucks," he said.

7 bodies found, migrant accident suspected

THESSALONIKI, Greece: Authorities say they have recovered the bodies of six men and a boy along a deserted stretch of coastline near Greece's border with Turkey.

Police and coast guard officials found the bodies over the last three days outside the northeastern city of Alexandroupolis. The search was ordered after one body was discovered by local fishermen.

Police said they believe the victims were immigrants trying to enter Greece illegally, probably by boat. Iraqi identity papers were found on one man. Autopsies carried out on four victims showed they had drowned.

The autopsy results were announced Monday