



### SCREENING TIMES

02.09.13 11:00 – SALA PASINETTI (MARKET SCREENING)

04.09.13 09:30 – SALA GRANDE

05.09.13 17:00 – SALA PERLA – OFFICIAL SCREENING

06.09.13 22:15 – SALA PERLA 2

**CREDITS**

<b>Director</b>	Kitty Green
<b>Producers</b>	Kitty Green Jonathan auf der Heide Michael Latham
<b>Cinematography</b>	Michael Latham
<b>Operators</b>	Kitty Green Michael Latham
<b>Editor</b>	Kitty Green
<b>Post Production Services</b>	Camera Club & Pocket Post
<b>Colorist</b>	CJ Dobson
<b>Sound Design</b>	Jed Palmer
<b>Composers</b>	Jed Palmer and Zoë Barry
<b>Legals</b>	Shaun Miller Lawyers
<b>Music Clearance</b>	Path Music

**Special Thanks**

Pasha the KGB Translator

**Special Thanks**

Jane Campion

**Contacts in Venice:**

**Italian and international press**

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## SHORT SYNOPSIS

Ukraine's topless feminist sensation, Femen, has stirred up a press frenzy across Europe. Outraged by the world's image of Ukrainian women as either brides for sale or commodities of sex tourism, Femen bare their breasts in protest to disrupt this perception and agitate against these brutal patriarchal forces.

## SYNOPSIS

Ukraine's topless feminist sensation, Femen, has stirred up a press frenzy across Europe. Outraged by the world's image of Ukrainian women as either brides for sale or commodities of sex tourism, Femen bare their breasts in protest to disrupt this perception and agitate against these brutal patriarchal forces. Now, for the first time, 'Ukraine Is Not A Brothel' offers an intimate glimpse into the world's most provocative feminist organization. A movement that began in the snow-filled streets of a corrupt, post-Soviet Ukraine, Femen's naked war against patriarchy is gaining momentum across Europe, but before they take the world by storm, these bold and beautiful women must first come to terms with the sometimes contradictory forces and motives that powered their movement's rise to international prominence.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH KITTY GREEN (DIRECTOR)

### What is Femen?

Femen is a topless feminist protest movement that began in Kiev, Ukraine almost four years ago. The group of young women first came together to fight the rising rate of sex tourism and prostitution in Ukraine. Femen have since expanded, declaring a worldwide war on patriarchy.

### Where did you first hear of them?

I first read about Femen in a tabloid newspaper that I picked up off the floor of a train in Melbourne. There was a picture of a young, blonde in a fishnet tights, with thick black eyeliner, holding a hand-painted sign saying, 'Ukraine is not a Brothel'. It was a beautifully contradictory image, an image that simultaneously displayed her strength and her naivety.

### What motivated you to follow them?

After quitting my job at the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) in Melbourne, I packed my bags and traveled to my grandmother's native Ukraine. I spent a month photographing her village and filming interviews with relatives. On my way back to Kiev, I read that Femen would be protesting the following day in the fountain on Independence Square. The protest was called, 'No water in our taps! We'll wash in the fountain!' The next morning, I arrived at the square with my DSLR, found my place

amongst the flurry of press and onlookers, and chased these gorgeous girls as they were dragged away kicking and screaming by the Ukrainian security forces. After filming one protest, I was hooked.

**How did you make first contact and with whom?**

I first met the girls at Café Cupidon, their old headquarters, in Kiev. I showed them the footage that I had shot of their protest in Independent Square. It was very different to the news reel footage that the Kiev press gives them, perhaps due to my background in cinema. My footage had close-ups of their faces and the finer details – discarded floral wreaths, angry faces in the crowd etc. They loved it. From that moment on, whenever they were protesting, they wanted me there to shoot. I was invited into the inner circle.

**How long did you follow them?**

I spent fourteen months living with four Femen activists in a crumbling 2-bedroom Soviet apartment on the outskirts of Kiev. My cinematographer, Michael Latham, spent 4 months in Kiev (sleeping on our floor) and the bulk of the interviews were shot in his presence. I couldn't have made this film with a big crew. The strength of this film comes from the close relationship that I had with the girls.

**Was your choice of using interviews as a structural device there from the start or did it arise in the editing room from your material?**

Every day during the shoot, we would have three or four news media organisations, many international, come visit Femen for interviews. The girls are experts at controlling the media and have an answer prepared for any question that a journalist could possibly ask. I was searching for a way to get honest answers out of these women, and I found that as I got to know them, and as we formed a more intimate relationship, they began to trust me and open up to me about their fears and desires.

**What was the biggest challenge you faced whilst filming with Femen?**

When the girls were planning a trip to Belarus, "Europe's last dictatorship", I was immediately apprehensive. My Ukrainian friends warned me not to go as it was unsafe, but I decided to take the risk.

The protest against Lukashenko's regime was to take place in front of the KGB headquarters in Minsk. The streets of Minsk were dead quiet that morning. About five journalists showed up to cover Femen's protest. Two of them disappeared after taking a few shots. I wondered why they weren't staying to watch the arrest. It was then that a secret service man grabbed me by the arm and dragged me from the scene into a small room at the back of the KGB building. They took my camera and my telephone and left me there for hours. After a few hours, some men entered and dragged me off into a van and drove me to a second location. I asked repeatedly for a translator. They denied my requests.

After a few more hours in a dark room, I was given my camera back. The footage had been deleted. I was told I would be escorted to the train station. My escort sat opposite me on the train all the way across the border into Lithuania. At Vilnius station, he smiled at me darkly and said 'Goodbye' in Russian. I ran out into the dark streets of Vilnius.

The girls suffered a harsher punishment. They were thrust into a van and taken to a forest near the Ukrainian border where they were stripped and beaten.

**What is your personal opinion about both their agenda and their means?**

Whilst I have many reservations about the way Femen is managed, I have an unwavering faith in its women. Inna and Sasha Shevchenko are two of the boldest women I know. I have no doubt that they can achieve anything they set their minds too. I have already seen what Inna is capable of in France and I sincerely hope that Femen can grow into a productive and sustainable organization that not only raises awareness of women's issues but has the capacity to protect and defend the rights of women and girls across the globe.

**Was there any gap between what you thought you'd find before you met with them and between what you finally did?**

I arrived in Kiev thinking I'd be making a documentary about a group of bold young women who, whilst employing unusual and almost contradictory methods, were trying their hardest to make their country a safer and better place for women. A few months in, as I got closer to the girls, that picture became more complicated. I remember vividly, during a particular meeting, regarding a trip to Turkey sponsored by a slimey Turkish businessman who was using Femen to promote his lingerie brand, thinking to myself, 'Am I the only feminist at this table?' I was faced with a choice, I could abandon the film and find another subject for a documentary (one that I could stand behind whole-heartedly), or I could stay in Ukraine and make a film that paints an honest portrait of this movement. I chose the latter.

When I finally got to ask these girls the tough questions, and they were forced to reflect on their own organization and its contradictions, I was amazed at their strength and honesty. I believe, as result of this introspection, the women of Femen will be (and already have been) making better choices moving forward.

**Do you see any change in the Ukraine since Femen started its activity?**

Femen's main aim in Ukraine is to raise awareness about the subjugation of women. In my opinion, Femen's presence in the press, whether they are painted in a positive or negative light, has had a powerful effect on the youth in Ukraine. Feminism is no longer a dirty word. Protest is no longer a dirty word. Whether people love them or hate them, Femen provoke debate and, in doing so, play an important role in politicizing the youth in Ukraine.

**Did you choose the music for the film as a running commentary on events?**

The music tracks used in the film are very famous throughout the post-Soviet bloc. I heard them many times, on trains and in parades, while traveling across and throughout Ukraine. I was drawn to The Red Army Choir, in particular, because of the booming patriarchal tone in the tracks. This large choir of deep and masculine vocals became a perfect counterpoint to the high-pitched squeals and screams of Femen's activists.

**KITTY GREEN (DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, EDITOR)**

Kitty Green graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts. Her graduating short film 'Spilt' premiered at the Brisbane International Film Festival and screened at festivals internationally, picking up awards for its 'provocative' nature. After graduating, Kitty worked at ABC on 'Art Nation' and 'Artscape', shooting, editing and producing documentary content for national broadcast.

Kitty spent the last year in her grandmother's native Ukraine filming with the women of Ukraine's topless feminist movement 'Femen'. Her protest footage was screened by news media outlets all over the globe. Kitty's abduction by the KGB, whilst filming a Femen protest in Belarus, made headlines both in Australia and internationally. 'Ukraine is not a Brothel' is Kitty's feature debut.



**JONATHAN AUF DER HEIDE (PRODUCER)**

Jonathan took out the Best Emerging Filmmaker Award at the 2008 Melbourne International Film Festival. His short film Hell's Gates also won Best Student Film at MIFF following from its success at the 2007 Victorian College of the Arts Graduation Awards where it won: Best Film, Best 3rd Year Film & Best Director. His debut feature Van Diemen's Land screened at many festivals including Melbourne, Sydney, Edinburgh, Torino, Montreal, Sitges and Fantastic Fest before its theatrical release was met with critical acclaim. "A born filmmaker... a film you're unlikely to ever forget" - David Stratton, The Australian.

In 2010, Jonathan took part in a panel discussion 'Beyond The Convict Stain' for the King's College in London. He also launched the conference 'Found In Translation' for Monash University in Prato, Italy as a keynote speaker. In 2012, Jonathan was a speaker for the debate "Is The Screen Mightier Than The Sword" on Big Ideas (ABC1). Most recently, Jonathan completed filming his segment for the omnibus feature The Turning, a screen adaptation of Tim Winton's best selling novel.

**MICHAEL LATHAM (PRODUCER, CINEMATOGRAPHER)**

Michael Latham is a AFI nominated filmmaker, currently focusing on producing and cinematography. His most recent projects include 'Mine Kafon' (cinematographer & producer) which received a Jury Prize at the Focus Forward Awards, Sundance 2013 and 'Tau Seru' (cinematographer) which premiered at Critic's Week, Cannes 2013.

"Ukraine is not a brothel!" (Venice International Film Festival, 2013) is his debut feature as both a producer and cinematographer.

Michael is currently in production of his second feature length documentary as producer & cinematographer in collaboration with director Callum Cooper.

