

# AND THEN WE DANCED

1h 53min // Sweden | Georgia | France // Georgian



## SYNOPSIS

Set in Georgia, previously a Soviet state, it's a coming-of-age story about Merab, a dancer at the National Dance Ensemble. His goal of a place in the main company becomes a greater struggle when rival dancer Irakli joins the Ensemble and Merab falls in love with him.

A low budget Swedish/French/Georgian coproduction, *And Then We Danced* is writer/director/co-editor Levan Akin's third feature. Premiering at the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes, it was nominated for the Queer Palm award and has been selected as Sweden's submission for an Academy Award in the Best International Feature Film category.

## MORE ABOUT THE FILM...

Film notes from FilmBath Festival 2019 by Jan Brookhouse

In 2013 Akin went to Georgia in response to news coverage from the capital, Tbilisi. The country's first gay rights rally by about 50 people was attacked by thousands of anti-gay protesters, supported by the Orthodox Church, some of whom carried weapons. *And Then We Danced* developed from his research there into making a film about being young and gay in Georgia.

Akin chose dance for the film's setting because traditional Georgian Dance plays a large part in the country's culture. With roots in military moves and sports, it provides a strict masculine discipline and representation of an oppressive patriarchal society, a stark contrast to Western dance culture. At the same time, dance also facilitates the expression of emotion in the film.

Akin's story outline was developed as he filmed members of the cast (dancers, actors and non-actors) in their normal environments in a process he likens to neo-realism.

Homophobia in Georgia presented challenges to making the film there. Information leaks about themes resulted in the need for bodyguard protection and to change locations at short notice.

The Georgian Dance choreographer who worked undercover on the film is unnamed in the film credits because *'to do so would have cost him his job'* - Akin, Variety. Akin feels he could not have made the film in Tbilisi if he were not from Sweden or without Georgian producer Ketie Danelia, who was *'instrumental in orchestrating everything there'* - Variety.

Asked whether the film has contributed to a shift towards greater tolerance in Georgia, Akin felt that, as one of the few films in the Georgian language ever to be accepted at Cannes, it has gained a lot of legitimising attention. *'To me the film is very much a love letter to culture and tradition. I wanted to show that there wasn't any contradiction in loving your heritage, being part of your culture, and also breaking the norm. That was the overarching theme for me'* - Variety.

## CAST

CHARACTER	ACTOR
Merab	Levan Gelbakhiani
Irakli	Bachi Valishvili
Mary	Ana Javakishvili
Aleko	Kakha Gogidze

## CREW

Director/ Writer	Levan Akin
Film Editing	Levan Akin Simon Carlgren
Cinematography	Lisabi Fridell

## BOOKING

### Distributor

Peccadillo Pictures, Kahloon Loke  
kahloon@peccapics.com

### Non-theatrical bookings:

Troy Film Agency  
troyfilmagency@btinternet

Available:

22nd June 2020