The Stray Story: A dogumentary

Overview

200 million stray dogs struggle to survive around the globe every single day. In an attempt to help, I joined forces with volunteers from all over the world, who are nothing less than rescue superheroes. Yet, even superheroes need help. Through their incredible work, this documentary aims to fight the root of the problem - lack of awareness. It presents the issue as well as its solutions, inspiring people to make a difference. Wanna be a dog rescue superhero? Join us by helping those who help!

Message from the director, Christina Georgiou

My rescue dog, Leo (aka Lord Leopold) and I, would like to thank you for stopping by and finding out more about our effort to make a difference for strays! Even reading this is a huge step towards our goal of raising awareness and spreading the word.

We all have a list of things we're passionate about. On the top of my list are films and dogs. So, making a film about dog rescue just came naturally. I have been making films for a living, while also helping out in shelters for more than a decade, and the results so far have been nothing but rewarding. Several films I've worked on have been awarded in international festivals (check out IMDb for details, https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3408378), while some have been distributed to millions of households around the globe.

Yet, looking into the grateful eyes of a rescued dog is worth more than any award in the world! And that is why I want to make this film - to explain how the problem arises, celebrate the
incredible work of volunteers out there and inspire more people to make a difference, any way they can: either by looking after their pets more responsibly, or by rescuing, or by supporting those who rescue, or simply by spreading the word (it helps!).

No matter who you are, where you come from, or what you do for a living, becoming a superhero for a cause takes nothing more than finding what you believe in and doing what you can to make a difference. I've found my calling, and would like you to come with me on this unforgettable journey.

### Audience engagement

The positive response we've had so far has been incredible, and the film has taken on a life of its own, developing into something much larger and more important. Though our digital strategy was only launched a few weeks ago, our project has received a massive reach and has grown more impact than ever imagined, and this is just the beginning! Our Facebook posts receive thousands of views and an impressive percentage of audience engagement. Additionally, the project receives constant interest from media all over Europe. Here are some examples of press coverage our project has received.

**TV / Radio INTERVIEWS**

- **UK:** London Greek Radio (17.05.19) - [View](#)
- **GR:** Star Channel (12.06.19) - [View](#)
- **UK:** Hellenic TV London (15.06.19) - [View](#)
- **USA:** Hellas FM – New York (28 June 2019)
- **CY:** CyBC TV ‘Omorfi Mera’ (01.07.19) - [View](#)
- **CY:** CyBC 3rd Radio, M. Galides (03.07.19)
- **CY:** CyBC TV ‘Proti Enimerosi’ (04.07.19) - [View](#)
- **RIK Classic,** Saskia Unreserved (11.07.19)- [View](#)
- **GR:** MesogeiosFM, L. Demertzis (29.07.19)
- **GR:** PrakteorioFM, N. Kazantzidou (30.07.19)

**LITERARY INTERVIEWS**

- **Impossible Works** (29.06.19) – [View](#)
- **In-Cyprus** (15.03.19) – [View](#)
- **Haravgi, “Orizontas”** (21.07.19) – [View](#)
- **Cyprus Mail** (04.08.19) - [View](#)
Some of our featured volunteers

Andreea Roseti - Translator / Events Organizer - Sibiu, Romania

Andreea has been voluntarily helping stray dogs for the last 11 years and is now the President of Animal Life in Sibiu, a developed area of Romania. Legislation allows for the capture and killing of dogs, which certain individuals have taken advantage of for profit, receiving high payments by local authorities for each dog they capture and kill.

Nicos Kountouris - Air Traffic controller - Nicosia, Cyprus

Through a primary school education program on companion animal welfare, Nicos aims to decrease the numbers of strays and incidents of animal abuse in Cyprus. He also lobbies for new companion animal legislation. He is the director of the NGO Zootropion Humane Education Society Against Animal Cruelty.

Norma Torres - Forensic Neuropsychologist - Gadsden, FL and Puerto Rico

Norma was the first to introduce pet therapy within the prison system, healing abused animals and people. She lives in Gadsden, known for animal abuse and dogfights. She is the founder/director of the NGO youcanmakeadifference.inc, and aids both people and animals stricken by the hurricanes in Florida and in her homeland, Puerto Rico.

Takis Proestakis - Former Dentist / Night club owner - Crete, Greece

Takis quit his job in 2012 to open his own 6 sq. km shelter in Ierapetra, Crete. Also known as "the Saint of dogs", he runs a vivid social media campaign in order to acquire donations and support. Local authorities in his area do little to help, while many of his fellow citizens continue to abandon and mistreat animals.
The Impact

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." - Nelson Mandela

Our project is a social contribution initiative - one that aims to encourage change through positive example and success stories, with a global reach.

The inspirational work of featured volunteers from all over the world, sets forth key issues and simple solutions which can really go a long way.

Among other, the documentary sheds light on:

- what it means to volunteer - forever grateful rescuees vs. people taking rescuers for granted
- responsible pet handling - a pet is for life and deserves a loving home!
- animal welfare educational programs - shaping people's views and behavior
- the connection between animal abuse and criminal behavior
- consumerism and its impact on every living creature's quality of life
- the importance of comprehensive legislation and of its implementation
- controlled breeding / reproduction - many strays are thrown-away litter
- spaying / neutering - it can save lives and keep your pet healthy
- name-tagging / microchipping - making sure your pets find their way home safely
- adopt, don't shop! - animals shouldn't be sold! Open your home to a rescued dog instead
- what to do if you find a stray dog - understanding body language - do you speak dog?
- no-kill policy - adopt shelter dogs, to give other dogs a second chance in life
- how one can help the cause - fostering, fundraising, educating, donating
What We Need

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." - Henry Ford

This has been my passion project for several years, with footage dating from as early as 2014 and with all expenses covered by myself, with the kind generosity of fellow film-makers (who either worked voluntarily or with discounted fees), friends and family. With their help, I have so far filmed extensively with selected volunteers from Cyprus, Romania, the U.S.A. and the U.K. We are pretty much 70% through filming. While we have received some funds through a crowdfunding campaign and through selected sponsors, these are still not enough to finish the film the way it deserves.

There’s much more that needs to be done before the film can be released:

- Traveling to Crete, Greece, to film our feature volunteer and his shelter
- Proceeding with an assembly edit, to establish any need for additional filming
- Complementary filming (if required)
- Post-production: Final editing, color grading, sound design, music scoring, up-scaling etc.
- Production of deliverables – DCPs & DVDs for wide dissemination
- Promotion and distribution to festivals, NGOs etc. (spreading the word as widely as possible is why we do this!)

Completing this film requires that the expenses of traveling, accommodation, filming, insurance, post-production and distribution are covered. And for these, your much appreciated contribution, no matter how small, would make a huge difference towards realizing our goal.

If you wish to donate, please visit paypal.com/thestraystory, or send your funds to Blunatic Pictures’ Bank Account (Bank of Cyprus):

Account Number: 357032090678
IBAN: CY79002001950000357032090678
What You Get

"If you would not be forgotten as soon as you're dead, either write something worth reading, or do something worth writing." - Benjamin Franklin

Films have a long-lasting impact, and so do animal welfare causes. This project merges both, and by contributing, your name (or your beloved pet's name and photo) will live on for years on end through the end credits of our widely disseminated film.

Additionally, we have put together a wonderful series of perks, as thanks for your valuable contribution and as a reminder of how you've made a difference to the lives of dogs and their rescuers. Please visit our Facebook Page or contact us to find out more.

Ultimately though, the most important gift you get in return for your contribution is knowing that you have made a difference for the two hundred million stray dogs out there.

Now, can you picture that many loving puppy eyes smiling at you gratefully? Yup, it's overwhelming, and it's all because of you!

Risks & Challenges

"To make a film is easy; to make a good film is war; to make a very good film is a miracle." Alejandro González Iñárritu.

What we want to make is nothing short of a miracle, and that requires time, money, hard work and tons of patience, commitment and perseverance. But most importantly, it requires skill and passion, and we feel we've got what it takes to make it happen. This film is all about communicating something important and reconnecting people with each other and with the world around them. What we would like is for the film to reach as wide an audience as possible, whether that means box office success or online dissemination.
Films cost a lot to be produced, and sometimes never make any profit - documentaries even less so. There's some truth in the joke "if you want to be a millionaire, all you have to do is be a billionaire who's made a film". But even if this film never makes any profit, this does not affect any of your donations. You can rest assured that the film will be completed and, if all goes well (fingers crossed!), 50% of net proceeds will be donated to shelters.

Other Ways You Can Help

"Optimism is a strategy for making a better future. Because, unless you believe that the future can be better, it’s unlikely you will step up and take responsibility for making it so. [...] The choice is yours" - Noam Chomsky

The main goal of this project is to encourage change by raising awareness. Which means that, whether you can donate or not, there are still numerous ways you can join this cause and help us make a difference. First of all, you can get the word out and make some noise about our cause, by

- sharing a link to this project on your social media or via email
- liking and sharing our facebook page, [www.facebook.com/thestraystory](http://www.facebook.com/thestraystory)
- sharing our website, [www.thestraystory.com](http://www.thestraystory.com)

Additionally, feel free to contact us if you would like to:

- volunteer for our project (media exposure, film-making or other services)
- send us footage of you and your dogs - it may find its way into our film!
- share your opinions and ideas - because "none of us is as smart as all of us" (K. Blanchard)
- offer your services or donate in-kind (flights, accommodation, post-production etc.)
- provide us with constructive criticism (it is always very much appreciated!)
- give us some encouragement (long projects require a lot of stamina)

Last but not least, you can become a volunteer for any cause you believe in, and be the change you want to see in the world!