



## LOOKING FOR LEIA

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Hashtags: #LookingForLeia, #WomenBuiltThisRebellion #GirlsRunTheGalaxy

U.S. Release Date: TBA

Running Time: TBA

Directed by: Annalise Ophelian

Produced by: Annalise Ophelian

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*Twi'lek cosplayers at Star Wars Celebration Orlando, from Looking for Leia ©2017 Floating Ophelia Productions LLC*

**LOG LINE:** Who are the girls and women of *Star Wars* fandom, and what stories do they have to tell?

**SHORT SYNOPSIS:** Who are the women of *Star Wars* fandom, and what stories do they have to tell about how the galaxy far, far away has shaped their daily lives? *LOOKING FOR LEIA* explores the *Star Wars* phenomenon from the unique perspective of women, who have been a substantial presence in the global phenomenon of *Star Wars* fandom since its debut in 1977, but have gone largely unrecognized until recently.

*LOOKING FOR LEIA* features interviews with intergenerational and culturally diverse female fans who discuss their entry point into the *Star Wars* universe and the passion and creativity with which they demonstrate their fandom. The film explores expressions of fandom from droid builders and cosplayers to Saber Guilds and convention goers, as well as women using *Star Wars* in the classroom, women in STEM, fan fictionists, collectors, and multi-generational fan families. The cultural implications of women in science fiction and fantasy fandom and women's media representation in these genres is discussed by cinephiles, psychologists, scholars, artists, and authors. The film reaches beyond Princess Leia to discuss how female characters and the fans who love them have shaped and expanded the *Star Wars* universe, and how these stories speak to experiences of gender resilience and resistance.

*LOOKING FOR LEIA* is currently in production and has been featured in The Verge, Nerdist, The Mary Sue, CNET, SyFy Wire, io9, Screen Rant, The Advocate, Comic Book Resources.

*Looking for Leia is not licensed by, sponsored by, or affiliated with Lucasfilm Ltd. or the Walt Disney Company in any way. 'Star Wars' and related properties are trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. This is a project about the phenomenology of fandom, media representation, and the cinematic history of sci fi and fantasy films.*

**FILMMAKER BIO:**

**Annalise Ophelian (producer/director)** is an award-winning filmmaker, psychotherapist, and consultant whose work includes *Diagnosing Difference* (2009) and *MAJOR!* (2015), which received 20 festival awards for Best Documentary. Dr. Ophelian's work focuses on centering marginalized voices and highlighting stories of gender and racial justice.



Filmmaker Annalise Ophelian, age 4 as Princess Leia. ©2017 Floating Ophelia Productions LLC

**PRODUCTION STILLS** available at [www.lookingforleia.com/press](http://www.lookingforleia.com/press):



## FILMMAKER'S STATEMENT:

I saw *Star Wars* in the theater ten times in the summer of 1978, and was Princess Leia for Halloween that year, wearing a dress and cape my mother made for me from our old curtains. In the years between each of the original trilogy films, I busied myself with action figures, read along to storybooks on cassette, and played the soundtrack albums on my parents' record player. In the late 1980s and 1990s I watched and re-watched the original films on worn out VHS tapes and on TV. I have the same feelings most people of my generation have about the Specialized Editions and the prequels (but sat through them all, on opening day, diligently). I felt proud that I saw *The Force Awakens* 11 times in the theater, four times opening weekend, beating my 1978 record, but still falling far short of many, many others.

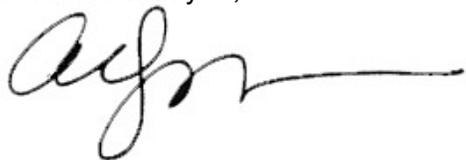
I became a filmmaker in large part because of the magic I felt watching *Star Wars*. I became a documentarian because I could not find my own stories or the stories of those I loved accurately portrayed on screen. The digital filmmaking technology pioneered by franchises like *Star Wars* and filmmakers like George Lucas created access to production methods that would have been inaccessible to me in the 1970s, and it's not lost on me that I'm able to use these tools to document under-told stories.

My work focuses on themes of representation and self-determination, particularly for marginalized communities and those who live at the intersection of multiple sorts of "otherness." I center participants as key collaborators in the storytelling process, before, during, and after filming. For many of us, *Star Wars* was the first time we saw a female character holding her own on screen, and the first time we had permission to geek out on a genre previously reserved for boys. And the most recent *Star Wars* films, comics, books, and animated series have had unparalleled numbers of female protagonists and women in central story roles. On screen and behind the scenes, women are driving *Star Wars* like never before.

Other good things to know about me? I'm queer-identified and live in San Francisco with my partner of 11 years and our three Chihuahuas. I'm a trained psychotherapist with master's and doctoral degrees in Clinical Psychology and work in private practice with individuals, couples, and multi-partner relationships on issues of sexuality, gender, and intimacy.

I don't often cosplay, but when I do it's as Han Solo.

May the Force be with you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alyson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.