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### Going grey's a ball.

By ALISON BARCLAY.

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**Angie Black's** film debut will bowl audiences over in the aisles, writes ALISON BARCLAY

THINGS may be as clear as "black and white", but that doesn't mean they are simple.

A respectable Greek widow always wears black. A law-abiding lawn bowler always wears white.

But what does a Greek widow wear when she longs to play bowls, indeed, is aching to burst out of tradition and tread gaily on that manicured green?

Make that four Greek widows. How to reconcile black and white, and a bundle of other cross-cultural dilemmas, is the challenge Flora and her friends Stamatia, Eleftheria and Panayiota face in a new short film, Bowl Me Over.

It takes a "Black" to clarify matters. **Angie Black** is the young Melbourne director behind this comedy about how older people, set free from family duties, can choose a new life for themselves.

Though just 15 minutes long, Bowl Me Over has been almost five years in the making. It started with a story by Eleni Arbus.

Albert Park Lawn Bowls Club lent the team its lawn and now Bowl Me Over is set to live up to its name at the St Kilda Film Festival.

Flora, played by Arianthe Galani, wants to join the "skips" on the turf.

Why this should be such a soul-searching struggle for Flora intrigued Black immediately.

"It is Flora's decision to move into this world that is foreign to her," she says.

"It is quite ironical in itself, that you can live in Australia yet not live in Australia. But it is real. You just have to go to Clayton and all the signs are in Greek. They live within their community because it's safe."

Black is in her early 30s but her empathy with older people began in childhood, when her parents ran nursing homes.

"On the school holidays, all my friends would be off skiing and I would inevitably find my parents were short-staffed and we would spend our holidays at the hospitals, which were great fun!" she says.

"But I think life turns a corner at 50 and you can rediscover yourself.

"That is partly what this story is about. For Flora, all her life she has been a good wife and mother and now a widow. Rather than a life dictated by your family, you can choose to live how you want.

"It's like rediscovering your youth. I actually think it is something to look forward to." F OR some actors on the week-long shoot, it was just that.

Fani Coustas (Stamatia) got a crash course in acting from her daughter, comedian Mary Coustas, alias Effie.

"Mary trained her mum and brought her into the audition, saying `My mum has never acted before, but this story is about my mum, so she can do it'," Black says.

Fani Coustas also provided very tasty props, according to Noeline Brown, who plays the charmingly brash ringleader of the lady bowlers.

"We had all these gorgeous pastries that she made," Brown says. "Unfortunately, I had to stuff a lot of them down my face."

The next surprise was the slick form of actor Lois Collinder, who proved such a hot rookie bowler the bowls club pressed her to join.

Black, a fan of Brown ever since she saw her on Blankety Blanks in the '70s, wants to offer her a role in her first feature when it's written.

Meanwhile, she is curious to see how Bowl Me Over will be received.

"It's not a typical short film," she admits. "Some short films are quirky or cutting edge or violent or a bit nasty.

"But in our film, the tragedy is in the past and it's time to celebrate." Bowl Me Over screens with shorts in the St Kilda Film Festival's competition session No. 8, today, 7pm, George Cinema, St Kilda. Tickets: \$12/\$9.

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