

ARTEL

directed and written by **Sergey Loznitsa**



ARTEL

documentary

production

2006, Russia, St. Petersburg Documentary Film Studio

budget € 30 000,
35 mm, b&w, 30 min.

cinematographer
Sergey Mikhalechuk

synopsis

This film is a 30-minute contemplation of the hard work of fishermen living in rigorous northern world. It does not have musical score and it almost has no dialogue.

The space of life sometimes comes down to very simple things. Imagine: white sky, white snow, skyline, wind, a human figure tucking into ice. The man makes a hole in the ice. For him, it is a possibility to live. Seeming simplicity of life is everything that we are capable of seeing. Perhaps we can sometimes also detect the direction of the flow.

Sergey Loznitsa

tags

family history, hicksville,
sea life, the far north

@wards

Best Documentary Film – Karlovy Vary International
Film Festival, 2007

“ Master shots, long takes, wide lens, black-and-white – absurd poetry of daily life. It seems to be a film formula that Russian directors have a patent on. You could make all sorts of critical remarks about it, but the genre yields many a gorgeous film. In *Artel*, we follow a group of small black silhouettes on a wide white landscape with a couple of log cabins. Beneath the snow and ice they are walking on, fish are swimming. In any case, the men spend a lot of time dealing with some fishing nets. If they did not use a chainsaw to make a hole in the ice, the film could just as well have been made 80 years ago. The documentary seems to say that life by the sea has always looked like this and it always will. Or is the final shot, when the ice breaks and the water flows, a reference to the old Soviet masters and an optimistic symbol of imminent change in a frozen social situation? // **IDFA**



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