

ANTIPODE BRINGS A NEW WAVE OF RUSSIAN DOCUMENTARIES TO THE MARKET



ZVIZZHI

directed by **Olga Privolnova**

ZVIZZHI

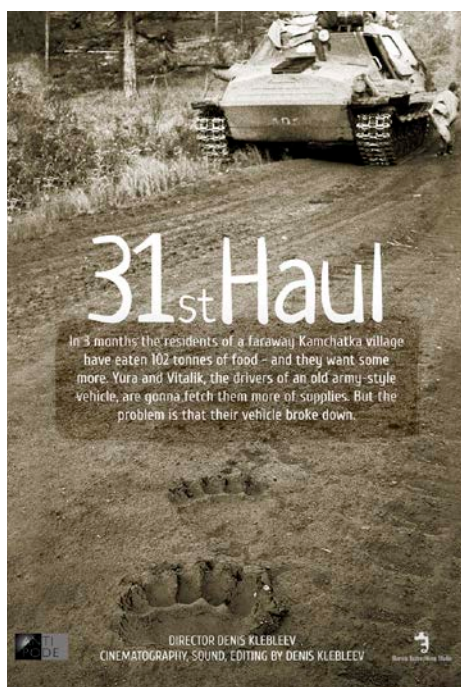
documentary

production 2014, Russia,
Marina Razbezhkina Studio

budget 1500 euro
51 min, Colour, DCP, Russian

synopsis

It takes 20 minutes on foot to get from the town of Nikola-Lenivets to the village of Zvizzhi. Nikola-Lenivets is the site of Arkhstoyaniye, a most fashionable festival of landscape objects. Zvizzhi is the place where Val'ka, Lyudka, Zhen'ka and a sixty-year-old "dolly" Natasha live. Natasha lives with Valerka, a guy who served a term for murder, because he knows how to fix electric wires. Valerka prefers to pass his nights with Zhen'ka. Val'ka was once Lyudka's kindergarten teacher; now they spend time together in a vegetable garden drinking denatured alcohol. "Fashionable" festival people and "degraded" Zvizzhi people never heard about each other. But one day, village people decide to go visit their neighbors during the festival...



31ST HAUL

directed by **Denis Klebleev**

31-I REIS

documentary

production 2013, Russia,
Marina Razbezhkina Studio

budget 3000 euro
60 min, Colour, DCP, Russian

synopsis

In 3 months the residents of a faraway Kamchatka village have eaten 102 tonnes of food – and they want some more. Yura and Vitalik, the drivers of an old army-style vehicle, are gonna fetch them more of supplies. But the problem is that their vehicle broke down. Starting as a road movie accompanied with a straight-forward sense of humour of the main protagonists, the film gradually introduces new characters and explores the depth of simple human relationships.

Denis Klebleev soon enters into the more intimate life of the two truckers: one, who is the companion of woman owner of the small transport firm, half-confesses that he is a professional parasite, while the other does his best to hide a hyper-sensitivity under his cruelly macho behaviour. Sexuality, family, money, human relationships seem to be overheated and the outside world, annihilated. All that remains is to drive off again into the night.

festivals & awards

- Best film Artdocfest 2012 (Russia)
- Cinema du Reel 2013 (Paris)
- Hot Docs 2013 (Canada)
- Kustendorf 2013 (Serbia)



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21 Days directed by Tamara Dondurey



31st Haul directed by Denis Klebleev



Mousetrap directed by Kristina Kvitko



Zvizzhi directed by Olga Privolnova



Together directed by Denis Shabayev

ANT!PODE SALES & DISTRIBUTION

(Moscow) decided to open to the world an unknown but extremely interesting stratum of contemporary auteur documentary cinema. The sales agent strategy is rather unexpected. The package includes debut full length works by the students of the Documentary Cinema and Documentary Theatre School of Marina Razbezhkina and Mikhail Ugarov. This is a unique private institution: 180 000 rubles (ca. 5100 dollars) of tuition rate and 1,5 years of studies transform several dozens of concerned men and women of various age groups in search of themselves into auteur film-makers with the recognizable manner of the School. For a professional critic, it becomes obvious that their works obviously into the rising "wave" unknown to *urbi et orbi* unlike the wave of "new Romanian cinema" which swept through the festival heights in the late 2000s. The names of Romanian filmmakers are now famous around the world and provoke interest of art cinema distributors. The Russian alternative to the state ideology of Putin's decades is more modest and basically unknown. Thinking about the festival and TV market ANT!PODE corrected its business strategy with a wish to change this situation.

The President of ANT!PODE Sales & Distribution Anton Mazurov: *"Recently I was a member of the examination commission in the School of Marina Razbezhkina and Mikhail Ugarov. 30 students were taught the auteur documentary filmmaking and verbatim. 17 of them came to the graduation with finished films, mostly medium- and full-length. I watched all the films and frankly speaking was shocked. I wanted to show the world the five films which received high marks in three independent ratings (fellow students, examination commission and viewers – the shows were open). I perceived it as a "wave". I was not disturbed by the fact that these films are debuts"*.

The School of Marina Razbezhkina was established several years ago from her small workshop. Marina Razbezhkina is

a world-famous Russian documentary filmmaker. Her feature film *Harvest Time* (Vremya zhatvy) travelled the world in 2004 from Karlovy Vary through Toronto to Thessaloniki. Her latest documentary project *The Optical Axis* (Opticheskaya Os), which had its world premiere at DOK Leipzig October 2013. Very often Marina travels across the world with master classes and lectures. The names of her students are still not very famous but their films are regular welcome guests on the international festival field. Among such examples – the film *Winter, go away!* (Zima, ukhodi!), the almanach of the School students broadly covering the 2011/2012 protests in Russia which followed the falsified parliamentary elections. This film was premiered in Locarno.

The School was established as an alternative to the conservative retro education practice which flooded few Russian cinema schools. In Russia, the state funding of documentary filmmaking did not evolve into the reasoned policy. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture is against live documentary esthetics deemed «black» by bureaucrats.

The films of Razbezhkina's students share the recognizable auteur manner: first, the conceptual ascetism, the filmmaker and cameraman are united in one person; second, the captivating ability to find and understand the hero in everyday life; and most important, remaining in the field of auteur cinema to fuse with an object of attention, to follow him relentlessly and delicately simultaneously dissolving in reality. These films are a series of masterful portraits of contemporary Russia, the other Russia, made in different genres, from tragedy to farce.

From long ago such documentaries can never get access to the Russian federal TV channels. There is, though, the Moscow *Artdokfest* created 8 years ago by and of another world famous documentary filmmaker Vitaliy Mansky (his *Tube* (Tru-



ba) received the documentary Grand Prix in Karlovy Vary in 2013 and continues to move from one world festival to another; sales belong to Heino Decker). *Artdokfest* is hosted

in December, in 2014 it will be held for the ninth time. It is an international festival of documentary cinema looking for a «Russian trace» all over the world. It is an alternative way in the Russian documentary filmmaking, it is conceptual and popular. Only there one may watch a wide range of films made by the School of Marina Razbezhkina. *31st Haul* by Denis Klebleev (one of the authors of *Winter, Go Away*) received the Best Film Award two years ago, it is included in ANT!PODE package and was shown at Cinema du Reel 2013 (Paris), Hot Docs 2013 (Canada), Kustendorf 2013 (Serbia). The recent festival winner *The Last Limouzine* (Poslednii Limouzin) by Darya Khlyostkina devoted to the last days of the giant monster ZIL, a large Soviet military transport plant, is just starting its festival route but is successfully sold by Heino Decker for TV and was bought by Al Jazeera.

The ANT!PODE package also includes four unusual works with diverse themes open to viewers: *21 Day* (Dvadzat' Pervyii Den') by Tamara Dondurey is a sublime portrait of an old woman in her last days in hospice; *Together* (Vmeste) by Denis Shabaev is a charming road movie about an attempt of a father and his daughter to find common language; *Mousetrap* (Myshelovka) by Kristina Kvitko is a burning family drama from the life of one unusual mother and her children; *Zvizzhi* by Olga Privolnova is a tragic-farce, Boschian sketch from the life of the village Zvizji located 170 km from Moscow.

Time will show how effective the sales agent strategy will be, but its team is interested in new projects and is waiting for feedback from colleagues. The package will be enlarged by other movies from the School which are now passing through the postproduction phase.



21 DAYS

directed by **Tamara Dondurey**

21 DEN'

documentary

production 2014, Russia,
Marina Razbezhkina Studio

budget 2 500 euro
67 min, Colour, DCP, Russian

synopsis

Twenty-one day is a time period that terminal patients are allowed to stay in hospice. Time is pulsating here according to peculiar inner cycles: getting faster, slower or returning to its ordinary rhythm. We wander through physical and mental spaces: wards, gardens, memories. It is a story of two main protagonists, yet two strangers, for whom the regular talk about death constitutes an integral part of life.



MOUSETRAP

directed by **Kristina Kvitko**

MYSHELOVKA

documentary

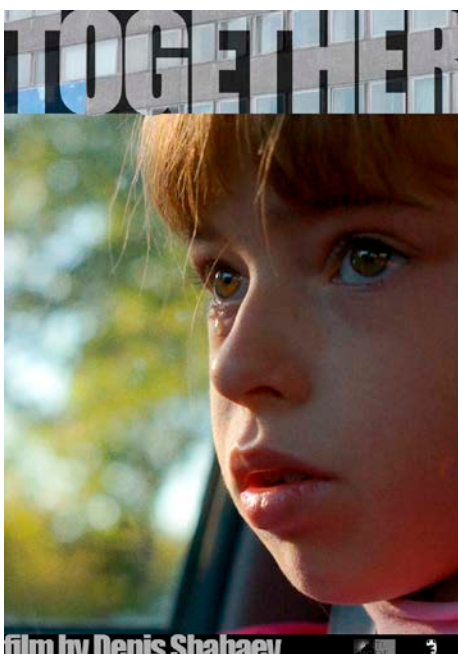
production 2014, Russia,
Marina Razbezhkina Studio

budget 2200 euro
73 min, Colour, DCP, Russian

synopsis

Can one escape from family to get into a mental hospital? An overdose of drugs – and you are “free”. Now Dasha lies on a hospital bed, paints and smokes. She smokes. And smokes. And smokes. Sometimes she is visited by two women: a young one speaks about the death and about Nietzsche, an elderly one pronounces monologues about the fashion, about the food, about the schizophrenia. They come and go but nothing changes. A closed space of the mental hospital is more and more hard to endure. How much is she going to stay in this box?..

A day of discharge comes. She is going to return back home.



TOGETHER

directed by **Denis Shabaev**

VMESTE

documentary

production 2014, Russia,
Marina Razbezhkina Studio

budget 8000 euro
52 min, Colour, DCP, Russian

synopsis

Two people are on the road. Everyday life, business calls, games, a curve of the highway, a swing and again business calls...

During this year the father and the daughter have not seen much of each other and they have not been alone for a long time.

Two cameras are looking face to face; different fears inhabit one and the same space.

There is a question: should they come back or should they continue travelling together?