

**ART  
DOC  
FEST**

**2016**

Artdocfest is the largest international festival of Russian language documentary films. After the annexation of Crimea in 2014, when the organizers of the festival and its program were accused of taking an 'anti-government position' in Russia, Artdocfest moved to Riga and became a part of the Riga International Film Festival. Since 2017 Artdocfest collaborates with the Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries, thus creating more opportunities for filmmakers from the former Soviet Union to make their voices heard in the international documentary environment.

# ARTDOC FEST PROJECT PITCHING SESSION

SEPTEMBER 7 2018

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# Derelict



TITLE: Derelict  
 COUNTRY: Russia  
 DIRECTOR: Aleksei Sukhovei  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 65 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2019–2020

**L**esterday's orphanage kids have received new apartments and begin their independent lives. Some of the young kids have literally been raised by the closed-type social institutions. For the first time ever they receive relative freedom of movement and money.

New building of New Moscow. One-room studio-type apartments have been distributed to the kids. They are now all neighbours. Social workers still come visit them as before – they arrange furniture from IKEA and check their refrigerators. They leave icons and some books on the windowsills. The kids live on these few square meters like in common barracks. The only food they have is vodka.

Sasha and Lesha have found work in a construction site for 10 thousand roubles. Lesha has the habits of a juvenile convict and teaches Sasha how to live. Sasha isn't mature enough, and right after graduation he marries a girl who became pregnant by him a couple of years ago. The baby is always in the "Little Mama" Crisis Centre for teenage moms. The name of the bride is Nina. She is also an orphanage kid from an underprivileged family. She has only 35 kg of bodyweight, but commands Sasha around and doesn't shy away from Lesha. She has serious birth scars on her face, but she plans to do plastic surgery and change her passport.

Unfamiliar pensioners have

collected 4 thousand roubles, and Sasha celebrates his wedding using this money. He takes Nina to his apartment where there are other boys and mess. In the autumn their son will be discharged from the Centre and they will have to live together. In the meantime, they argue in Sasha's one room apartment about where to put the baby's bed. By the way, scammers have already stolen a total of 1.3 million roubles from their accounts. But they aren't worried because they hardly understand how much everything costs in stores. Until now, other people were always doing everything for them. And now, like once before, they are again left to face their new life alone.



## Director: Aleksei Sukhovei

2001. A. F. Mozhaisky Military Space Engineering Academy VIKA, St. Petersburg. Has worked in the field of space technology. 2006. All-Russian State University of Cinematography of S. A. Gerasimov (VGIK) – courses, operator. 2007. NGO, foundation Educated

Media (assignee of the Internews Russia) – film and television directing, workshop by A. Kogan, N. Gugueva. 2008. Directing of documentary films and television, workshop by M.A. Razbezhnaja and V. Fenchenko.

# I'm Happy



TITLE: I'm Happy  
 COUNTRY: Russia/Peru  
 DIRECTORS: Nastia Korkia,  
 Mila Nekrasova  
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LANGUAGE: Russian / Spanish  
 LENGTH: 70 min / 90 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2018

**M**ila has been diagnosed with tongue cancer. It is an aggressive and dangerous type of cancer that requires immediate action and a painful treatment that mostly starts with surgery – the resection of the tongue. Mila is an actress and a director, and this diagnosis is a great shock for her.

Instead of the traditional path she decides to go to Peru and try an untraditional treatment in the Amazon jungle. She also decides to make a film about her healing process. The story starts from the day Mila was diagnosed, and we follow her through the process of

her treatment and until she gets back home.

The shaman Don Lucho and his helper and caregiver Erika play an important role in this film, as does Russian guide and ethnographer Anatoly, who stays with Mila the whole three months that she spends in the jungle. An obvious theme line of the film is the huge desire to get cured and the fight to achieve this goal. In addition, this film is also saying a lot about the faith in getting healed, and about being able to be happy filming and enjoying life even in this tough life situation.

We want to emphasize that

Mila herself was the one who first came up with an idea of making this film. The footage is partly taken by her, and mostly by her daughter, director Nastia Korkia.



## Director: Nastia Korkia

Nastya Korkia graduated from the Romanic-German department of the Faculty of Philology of Moscow State University, specializing in Spanish. She worked as a director on the TV channel Rain, and made a lot of advertisements that were noted at the Cannes Lions, Epica and other festivals. In general, she has given a lot of her time to implementing the ideas of other people. She graduated from the Moscow School of New Cinema, workshop of B. Bakuradze and N.

Khomeriki. In 2017, Werner Herzog held a master class during which the film *Forget All* was shot. The premiere took place at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The film was selected for a number of festivals around the world. Nastya is currently working on a full-length documentary about the creation of the cultural space HPP-2, and she also in the post-production stage with the full-length film *Estoy feliz* (I'm Happy).

# Lenin Trip



TITLE: Lenin Trip  
 COUNTRY: Russia  
 PRODUCTION COMPANY:  
 Pure Dreams Fund  
 PRODUCER: Yaroslav Kuzin  
 DIRECTOR: Roman Tsukman  
 PHONE: +7 905 2589 032  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 18 episodes x 10 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2018

**L**enin Trip is a search for the documentary authenticity of the modern Russian mental space, in all its cultural, ethnic and climatic diversity. *Lenin Trip* contains 18 documentary series (on the Internet – 10 minutes each) about an ethnographic journey across all of Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railway, from Vladivostok to St. Petersburg. Russia is a huge country, on a scale sometimes difficult to comprehend even for the most experienced travellers. Therefore it isn't so easy to answer the question: "What unites the inhabitants of this multinational

country?" In each city and every village, travellers ask several local residents about who Lenin is, what did the revolution bring to the country, and how they feel about the idea of the burial of the body of Vladimir Ilyich. It is up to the participants of the film expedition to find out how people of different regions live today, and what they think about the country's past.



## Director: Roman Tsukman

Born on January 5, 1987 in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk. Along with school, Roman also attended an art lyceum. Afterwards Roman studied design at the Krasnoyarsk Art College of V.I. Surikov. After receiving a diploma in 2008 he worked as a designer for several years, and was engaged in painting in Krasnoyarsk, and afterwards in St. Petersburg. After attending a beginner filmmakers' course at Lenfilm studios in 2013, he began to try his hand at filmmaking. In 2017, the premiere of his debut full-length documentary *Actor Lives* took place. Since 2014 Roman Tsukman lives in Berlin, and apart from his directorial and scenario projects, he is engaged in editing films and other media products. He also studied documentary directing at FilmArche in Berlin.

# Lenius Loci



TITLE: Lenius Loci  
 COUNTRY: Russia  
 PRODUCTION COMPANY:  
 Parallax Pictures  
 PRODUCER: Ekaterina Meliksetova  
 DIRECTOR: Alexey Khanyutin  
 PHONE: +790 3775 1391  
 EMAIL:  
 parallax.pictures.moscow@gmail.com

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 80 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2020

**I**n Roman mythology each place had its own deity – genius loci.

In Soviet mythology, a universal deity for all parts of the USSR replaced the local geniuses. No matter where you were, the main town square was adorned with a monument of Lenin. A bronze, concrete or gypsum Lenin could be found in a park or a residential courtyard, next to a factory or a school. However, the leader of the proletarian revolution wasn't installed just anywhere.

In a brochure "On Lenin's Monument" (1924) it says: "A monument to Lenin should not

only occupy the best location in town, but also the one where its appearance contradicts Leninist ideas the least". The stone Lenin was to "see" his commandments being followed: improving workers' living conditions, abolishing illiteracy, deploying socialist competition and building Socialism.

In turn, with his very presence, Lenin impacted the surrounding area in a positive way, confirming that this place was closer to the "bright future" than others. Flower gardens were installed, flags were erected and blue spruces were planted around the monuments.

The surroundings of Lenin's monuments were especially well groomed. They were a kind of time portal into the Communist era.

We aim to show what these "pockets of future" look like now. What do Lenin's eyes see today? And how do the descendants of Communism builders feel about Lenin? The film will consist of 12 chapters dedicated to 12 of the monuments that can still be found around the former USSR.



## Director: Alexey Khanyutin

Born in Moscow, USSR, in 1956. Graduated from the All-Russian State University of Cinematography (VGIK) in 1978. After an unsuccessful debut on Soviet television (the first film was crippled by censorship) he started his post-graduate course at the Institute of the History of Fine Arts, Moscow, where he received his Ph.D. During the Perestroika years he decided to return to directing. He worked at the Central Documentary Film Studio, where he

made the films *Spot* and *Demob'91*, which won awards at many major film festivals. He started his pedagogical activity in the mid 90s: he directed a workshop at VGIK. Currently he is the head of the Film and TV Department at the Contemporary Art Institute, Moscow. He was the president (2002–2005) and is member of the board (since 2005) of the Russian Guild of Documentary Film and Television.

# Lifetime Resort



TITLE: Lifetime Resort  
 COUNTRY: Russia  
 DIRECTOR: Nastya Kuziakova  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 52 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2020

**F**or almost 4 centuries of its existence, the Russian city of Sol-Iletsk has learned to do only two things: to extract salt and guard prisoners. Both are done at the highest level: no criminal has managed to escape from the local special regime colony, and the salt is recognized as the best in the world. Since the 90s, the salt lake opposite the largest life sentence colony in Russia began to attract holidaymakers. At the first glance, such different places cannot co-exist so close to each other, literally, on neighbouring

streets. People who come here on vacation pretend not to notice the barbed wire across the road. And it's better not to know that the most dangerous people in the country occupy the other side of the road: Chechen terrorists, serial murderers, maniacs, paedophiles and cannibals... In this city everything is intertwined. The colony is gradually becoming one of the tourist attractions, and the resort – at least in some way – fulfils the commercial ambitions of the prison administration, because prisoners themselves produce

many goods: watermelons, bread, kumis, and souvenirs. How does this strange life go on? How does the colony affect the city and the resort? And what will happen to this place when the full-scale federal construction of a resort base is done?



## Director: Nastya Kuziakova

Nastya was born and grew up in the southern Ural Mountains in the city of Orenburg. After graduating from high school she entered the S. A. Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) (Directing Department/Boris Karadzhev documentary class).

In 2017 she graduated from the VGIK with honours.



# Present Simple Tense



TITLE: Present Simple Tense  
 COUNTRY: Russia  
 DIRECTOR: Dmitry Kabakov  
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 EMAIL: dkabakov@mail.ru

LANGUAGE: Russian / Farsi  
 LENGTH: 90 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2018

**W**hat allows a person to say: I am from here, this is my land? What binds a person to a particular place? Look at all the nationalities that have lived in this area: Finnish-Ugrian, Baltic, Slavic people. What about now? The film immerses us into life in a small dwelling near Moscow. Two houses are the focus of attention: they look out on to each other through their windows – they are two worlds. One house is occupied by an elderly couple: she is a teacher, he is an engineer, he is always doing something. In the other – the large family of

Mahmud – an immigrant from Tajikistan. How are relationships between them developing? We are immersed in the life of these two worlds, in their destinies.

The Tajiks fled the civil war. They bake cakes and sell “nosvai”. The eldest son, Muhamed, does not go to school because he doesn’t know the language. And he begins to go to the neighbour – the teacher, instead of the school. The old teacher also has her own story, her own destiny. Her mother came to Russia from Vienna – to build communism. The Tajiks are evicted from the house, and the

old people are left alone. The new owner of the property, a pastor, is building a fence between the houses.



## Director: Dmitry Kabakov

Born in 1961. Graduated from the All-Russian State University of Cinematography (VGIK), master-class of V.P. Lisakovich of non-feature films in 1996. Defended his diploma in 1999 with the film *One*. Works as an independent director.

# Quicksilver Chronicles



TITLE: Quicksilver Chronicles  
 COUNTRY: USA / Russia  
 PRODUCTION COMPANY: Fist Films  
 PRODUCER: Misha MacLaird  
 DIRECTORS: Aleksandra Kulak,  
 Ben Guez  
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 EMAIL: sk.dividi@gmail.com

LANGUAGE: English  
 LENGTH: 73 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2019

**A**mid the ruins of an abandoned California mercury-mining town, *Quicksilver Chronicles* follows the daily lives of outspoken and gifted writer Kate Woods, her brother Kemp, and their friend Tommy. The film observes them within the context of their home in New Idria, which is a rugged wilderness, an environmental disaster, and a dell for lost souls.

After 20 years as a mariachi violinist, an accident left Kate unable to play music and coping with chronic pain. She is fiercely independent, emotionally vulnerable, and most at home on her ghost-town ranch, where she cares for her pets and her brother.

She dedicated her later years to environmental activism, drawing political attention to the damage left behind by the mining company.

Kate's brother Kemp is a geologist and inventor. He originally bought land in the abandoned town to construct an experimental anti-aging bunker, and later invested in a mining claim to extract the rare mineral Benitoite. Between struggling with health issues and recalling his extraterrestrial encounters, he sells gems and minerals to visiting students.

Childhood friend Tommy Chargin has studied visual arts and worked as a homicide squad photographer, later

becoming master printer for famous portraitists such as Annie Leibovitz. Bluntly opinionated on his field, he critiques Susan Sontag's writing and praises the mystical landscapes of photographer Minor White.

The three garrulous companions navigate rural isolation, talking about astrophysics and existence and connecting through TV to the country's changing political climate. In 2017, while the film was in production, Kate was killed in a car accident. Her death and absence made evident how much life and energy she had brought to New Idria. The film is a portrait of her last year.



## Director: Aleksandra Kulak

Co-Director Aleksandra Kulak is from Vitebsk, Belarus. She graduated from the St. Petersburg University Culture and Arts program for photographer-filmmakers, and studied in the cinematography department at Moscow Film School. Her work as director and cinematographer includes the short films *Christmas* (co-dir. Ruslan Fedotow, 2014) and *OK Good* (2015). Her award-winning documentary *Salamanca* (co-dir. Ruslan Fedotow, 2015)

premiered in IDFA and was selected for international festivals worldwide. Co-Director Ben Guez was born in 1983 in the Soviet Union and immigrated to Chicago at the age of nine. He holds degrees in history and Latin American studies from the University of Arizona. His short films *The Memory of Turtles* and *Valentina* participated in numerous international festivals.

# Sacred Ground



TITLE: Sacred Ground  
 COUNTRY: Russia  
 DIRECTOR: Sergey Kozmin  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 52 and 80 min.  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2018/2019

**S**ome time ago, the residents of concrete apartment blocks around Torfyanka Park would come here to walk their dogs, play with the kids or jog. Today they are two hostile parties fighting over a tiny patch of ground.

Every Sunday half of them come to pray by a wooden cross, accompanied by the priest and sporty right-wing Orthodox activists; another half shows up singing, whistling and playing loud music to interfere with the prayer and to defend the park which they want to stay public.

Who could have imagined such a confrontation in a country, which used to be fully secular,

even atheistic for decades?

Still, since the Moscow government announced the plan to build over three hundred new churches in town, collisions between Orthodox believers and city-dwellers over construction sites have become common.

At Torfyanka a strife between believers and park defenders has turned into a severe struggle with night watches, physical fights, and mutual offense. For both parties Torfyanka has become a crucial point in life, which made them take a fresh look at their neighbours, the authorities, and the country they live in.

Residents of the district turn on loud music and arrange a “dancing

protest”, defending the right to preserve the park as a secular space, open to all. Was it possible to imagine such a collision in Moscow just a couple of decades ago? The struggle for the park has become a turning point in the life of activists from both sides. The Torfyanka forced them to take a fresh look at their neighbours, at the power and the country.



## Director: Sergey Kozmin

Sergey Kozmin was born in Moscow. Sergey worked as a cameraman for TV-companies and news-agencies on reportage and features in Russia and former Soviet Republics. Three years ago, Sergey turned to documentary filmmaking. “Sacred Ground” is his first

feature documentary.

# The Fairy Tale about the Hobbyhorse



TITLE: The Fairy Tale about the Hobbyhorse  
 COUNTRY: Ukraine  
 PRODUCTION COMPANY: Docutoloka  
 PRODUCER: Denis Strashny  
 DIRECTOR: Uliana Osovska  
 PHONE: +380 632025004  
 EMAIL: docutoloka@gmail.com

LANGUAGE:  
 Ukrainian / Russian / Estonian  
 LENGTH: 75 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2019



Director:  
 Uliana  
 Osovska

**70** year-old Anatoly of the Cistercian Order is an artist-conceptualist, and in the past – a dissident who

fled Soviet Ukraine. Once upon a time made a vow that every day he will find something good, learn something new and create something new with his own

hands. Anatoly has created a wooden horse – a symbol of the volunteer – that helps all who need help.

## Train Kyiv-War



TITLE: Train Kyiv-War  
 COUNTRY: Ukraine  
 PRODUCTION COMPANY: EasyLiving Films  
 PRODUCER: Serguei Pudich  
 DIRECTOR: Kornii Gritsok  
 PHONE: +380 502140492  
 EMAIL: korneygritsyuk@gmail.com

LANGUAGE: Russian / Ukrainian  
 LENGTH: 52 min / 60 min  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2019



Director:  
 Kornii  
 Gritsok

**12** hours and 30 minutes divide Kiev and Konstantinovka – a small industrial city in the East of the country, after which the frontline begins

almost immediately. This is the exact travel time of the Kiev-Konstantinovka speed train, known among Ukrainians as “Kiev-War”. We want to give a voice to the people that have to go from

peace to war, and to people who are travelling back from war to peace, and to share their thoughts and emotions.



## NOTES

## NOTES

In collaboration with the BSD



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