

ART  
DOC  
FEST  
RIGA

# Artdocfest Project Pitching Session 2021



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BALTIC SEA DOCS

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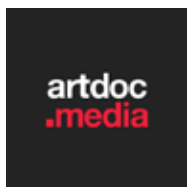
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**A**rtdocfest is the largest international festival of documentary films in Russian language. After the annexation of Crimea in 2014, when the organizers of the festival and its program were accused of taking an 'anti-government position' in Russia, Artdocfest moved to Riga and became a part of the Riga International Film Festival.

Artdocfest programs were a part of RIGA IFF for 5 years. In 2021, The first International Documentary Film Festival IDFF Artdocfest/Riga will take place in the capital of Latvia from September 3 to September 9. In addition to the Artdocfest competition, it will include the Baltic Focus competition and out-of-competition programs of world documentary filmmaking. The tradition of the famous documentary symposium will also be revived.

Since 2017 Artdocfest has collaborated with the Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries, thus creating more opportunities for independent filmmakers from the former Soviet Union to make their voices heard in the international documentary environment.



General Partner



RUSSIA / GERMANY / BELGIUM

# And His Brothers



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PRODUCER: Anna Shalashina  
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PRODUCTION COMPANY: Wish Media  
LANGUAGE: Ossetian / Russian  
LENGTH: 85'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
BUDGET: EUR 125 000

Ossetia is a republic with a challenging destiny – men of each generation fought in battles, women cried for the dead. It is divided into North and South, and people from one family live in different states. No one here will ever reveal to you the pain they had to experience in the past.

We will talk about the Ossetia of today, yesterday and tomorrow with the help of our characters – Taimuraz, Zara, Giorgi and Nastya, Mitya, and Azamat. They live in different villages of Ossetia and have never met each other. But their stories are so intertwined by the destiny of the Ossetian people that they sound like one.

Taimuraz is an old warrior and hunter, one of those who saw the war and grew up hunting. War runs in his veins, so does remorse. He leaves for the forest, where he spends time alone. There he teaches courage and hunting to young fellows. Giorgi ended up at war by accident. And the imprint which war left on him differs dramatically. Giorgi was injured in the war, he remembers the sickening smell.

His hiding place looks like this: he takes his wife Nastya and they both flee the city and head for the mountains to keep bees.

Azamat has not yet seen the war, but it flows in his veins since childhood. He was brought up on the memories and stories of his elders. Meanwhile, he grazes the cattle, works during the spring, climbs the mountains with friends and dreams of building his own house.

Mitya and Zara live in the Karmadon Gorge, in neighbouring apartments. Mitya is totally alone in Ossetia. His happy memories dwell in the ruins of the Kamadon resorts and among his mother's belongings. Zara is 90 years old, she raises her grandchildren, herds her son's flock, crosses mountains on foot, lives a poor life and is happy to be living it to this day. All of them believe in God, Ossetian saints and in mountain spirits. They tell stories, but usually they keep quiet. Each of them is part of Ossetia's story.

## Director: Alexandra Likhacheva



Alexandra Likhacheva was born in Moscow. In 2011 she graduated from the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) as a film director. Her films "Katya Krenalinova" and "Long.Black.Cloud is coming down" (2014) are participants and winners of international film festivals.

## Producer: Anna Shalashina



Anna Shalashina finished MBA program at Kingston University (London) in 2014. Her dissertation on film co-production was nominated for the Best MBA Project. Her company WISH Media focuses on author-driven feature films and documentaries with potential for international markets. Together with Alexandra Likhacheva Anna is producing a documentary And His Brothers and Alexandra's feature debut Kretsul (Russian-Romanian-Lithuanian co-production).

RUSSIA

# Black Sky



DIRECTOR: Vitaly Akimov  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 70'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 BUDGET: EUR 15 697

**T**he film takes place in Krasnoyarsk, provincial towns and villages of Siberia. Filming is being carried out during the “black sky” period. “Black sky” is the time when a critical level of environmental pollution is recorded in the city: due to exhaust emissions from factories, public institutions and schools are closed. The city is engulfed in dark smog. The task is to find heroes and shoot them in these phases of the “black sky”, in autumn and winter. An expedition to find heroes is required. To search for the heroes, I plan to contact the journalists of Novaya Gazeta, who have already worked with the topic of the “black sky” in Krasnoyarsk and other problem areas of Siberia. The main character of the film and mainly - is the haze through which documentary heroes with their real stories appear. The film literally does not raise the problem of ecology: the “black sky” here is a metaphor for the hard life of the “little man”. Particular problems and difficulties of the heroes take place in an atmosphere of constant darkness. This haze unites all the stories: the montage between the characters takes place through the city panoramas in fog and smog, through the exhaust of factories. The

way of working with people is observation, but their way of life is recorded by artistic means. Each frame is lined up photographically, a tripod is used for static, compositionally verified plans. In this film, people will constantly go somewhere aimlessly through the industrial landscape. Heroes: a worker in a factory or boiler room, a homeless person, a dysfunctional family in a village, a hero can be a lonely young woman working in a hospital or school, a problem teenager or a group of teenagers, an elderly grandmother or an old man spending time in the yard with a dog, a taxi driver, a prostitute, unemployed middle-aged men.

## Director: Vitaly Akimov



Vitaly Akimov. Documentaryst. Born on January 23, 1996 in the city of Arsenyev (Primorsky Territory). He began his career with photo journalism, in 2014 he moved to St. Petersburg, where he single-handedly created and published a magazine about people of art “The Strangers”. In 2019, he shot a number of documentaries, which in 2020 took part in the world’s leading documentary film festivals. He took part in one of the main programs of the IDFA documentary film festival, in the main competition of the ARTDOCFEST festival, together with Igor Mukhin took part in the 2nd triennial of contemporary art at the Garage Museum. He lives and works in Moscow.



RUSSIA / BELARUS

# Bones



DIRECTOR: Alexander Zubovlenko  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 BUDGET: EUR 30 000

**A** provincial priest, Father Andrei, digs the graves of priests in the summer cottage village and dug up the foundations of an ancient church on the banks of the storage reservoir. By oneself.

Gradually, this turns into a chaotic digging under the garage, under the veteran's summer cottage, in the trash heap. And wherever he digs, bones are everywhere.

The search for bones for him is not just a study of local lore, but also a part of his philosophy of the resurrection of ancestors, a 'common cause' and the way of mystical sensation of the world.

Studying the work of Mayakovsky, Yesenin and Tolstoy (controversial figures for the Russian church), Andrei restored Mayakovsky's dacha, which was burned down, built a monument to Tolstoy, and every month he serves a memorial service at Yesenin's grave, considering them to be truly believers. Andrei washes the bones with trepidation in the attic of Mayakovsky's dacha, where he plans to build a church. His wife Elena meekly

accompanies her husband to all excavations. The church for him is not in books, but in deeds.

But at some point, this activity begins to occupy all the time of the hero.

Excavation of bones and passion for philosophy lead him into conflict with the church leadership. And the only ones who admire and support him are local freaks.

Unfortunately, this is not what he is aiming for.

## Director: Alexander Zubovlenko



Was born in 1991 in Mazyr, Belarus. In 2012 he moved to Moscow. Graduated from the Film Directing Department of VGIK (Institute of Cinematography) in 2017. In 2018 graduated from the M. Razbezhkina Documentary Film School.

## SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY:

"Cinderella", 2015 (best documentary at the Munich International Festival of Filmschools)  
 "Extras. Close-Up", 2016  
 "Happy Pills", 2017 (best short film of the festival "Message to Man" in St. Petersburg, Grand Prix Palm of North 2018)  
 "Lessons in Courage", 2018  
 "Kolya as the Mirrow of the Russian Revolution", 2018

RUSSIA

# Characters Study



DIRECTOR: Nikita Yefimov  
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PRODUCTION COMPANY: Marina Razbezhkina Studio  
LANGUAGE: Russian  
LENGTH: 60'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
BUDGET: EUR 16 710

**At** the beginning of 2020, the legendary Moscow Sovremennik Theatre is facing big changes. After the death of Galina Volchek, who led the troupe for nearly half a century and enjoyed absolute admiration, Viktor Ryzhakov is appointed as the theater's new artistic director.

The appointment provokes controversy among actors. Some want changes; others are not ready for it. Furthermore, most of the troupe's leading actors are big stars of Soviet and Russian cinema accustomed to be treated accordingly. During the first troupe gathering in the new season, theatre's headlining actor Sergei Garmash refuses to work with Ryzhakov and leaves the company. The drama backstage becomes a play in itself.

For his first production, Ryzhakov chooses a play about a family suffering from a lack of communication. The leading role is given to the legendary actress Marina Neyolova, who shone in Sovremennik's most significant productions decades ago.

"Characters study" focuses on friction between Neyolova and Ryzhakov. The former embodies theatre that once released groundbreaking productions but now became dated and out of touch. The latter represents new ideas that look into the future, not the past. The future frightens Neyolova so she confronts Ryzhakov about his vision. But their conflict never crosses the line of intellectual debates and skillful manipulations.

With the sudden outbreak of the COVID pandemic, our heroes face the lockdown and continue rehearsals in "Zoom" meetings, which leads to additional communication challenges. When they finally return to offline meetings, Neyolova confronts Ryzhakov about almost every creative decision. Even the costumes are not good enough for her. On the day of the premiere, she wants to postpone the show.

Encouraged by Neyolova's diva behavior, other actors begin to cause trouble too. Thus the premiere of the play turns out to be more crucial for the theater troupe than for its audience.

## Director: Nikita Yefimov



Nikita Yefimov was born in Pskov, Russia in 1992. He graduated from Pskov State University, department of philology. After graduation he worked as a correspondent on local television. In 2019 he finished M. Razbezhkina and M. Ugarov

Documentary Film and Theatre School. Director's debut film "Kind Souls", which illuminates life of amateur theater actors in a Russian village, was shown at the leading Russian documentary film festivals – "Message to Man" and "Artdocfest". The short comedy "Leningraders" also took part in several Russian film festivals and was warmly received by Russian film critics.

The latest film by Nikita Yefimov, "Strict regime" is a documentary comedy filmed in a strict regime colony in St. Petersburg. The film premiered in April 2021 at Swiss festival "Visions du reel". "Strict regime" won the main prize in the festival's medium-length film competition.

FILMOGRAPHY:  
"Kind Souls", 2019  
"Leningraders", 2020  
"Strict regime", 2021

BELARUS

# Free Voices



DIRECTOR / PRODUCER: Docwave  
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PRODUCTION COMPANY: Docwave  
 LANGUAGE: Russian / Belarusian  
 LENGTH: 80'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 BUDGET: EUR 180 000

“Free voices” is a documentary project about the partisan choir singing resistance songs unexpectedly appearing in public places.

In August 2020, after the presidential elections in Belarus, a group of professional musicians and amateurs sang on the porch of Philharmonic Hall to protest against falsification and authority’s violence. Since then this choir began flash mob performances on protest marches, at shopping centers or underground stations. The “Free choir” singing iconic songs about dignity, courage, destiny, and faith of Belarusians became a powerful and inspirational tool for the people of Belarus

During rallies and concerts, the singers hid their faces and followed special security measures. One of the lead conductors - a tender, yet a very strong woman - and some of other important characters currently live far from home and are not able to return to Belarus due to the terrorism and extremism charges put against them. Hoping to intimidate the activists, the authorities detained some alleged conductors and musicians

several times. But the “guerrilla” choir is continuing its courageous performances until now. This is very annoying to the authorities and they started a real hunt for the choir members.

The film crew had to take precautions to keep the identities of the choir members secret and not to reveal their names and locations. To this day nobody knows who they are. The film gives an opportunity to look under the masks of the singing heroes of new Belarus.

Following the choir at breathtaking performances and listening to the authentic songs, we observe the creative story of the Belarusian protest. By getting closer to one of the symbols of Belarusian resistance we observe the motivation and dreams of the newly reborn Belarusian nation.

## Director: Docwave



The Names of the “Docwave” creators cannot be announced openly as their filming activity as well as the activity of their project

protagonist – choir singing the songs of freedom – can be prosecuted with severe repressions. The team includes both award winning documentary filmmaking professionals and a choir member, who joined together on the wave of Belarusian protests in 2020 in the filmmaking crew. The aim of the unity is to document the dramatic historic changes in Belarus through the eyes of an artist.



RUSSIA

# Generation



DIRECTOR / PRODUCER: Andrey Gryazev  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 BUDGET: EUR 17 000

**T**he main characters in the film are children born in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. All the footage is taken from children's personal blogs on social networks, such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, online streaming services, and includes bits of federal news. Social networks are the modern response of the market to the needs of the younger generation and their desire to be heard.

The film consists of over 20 episodes, which smoothly flow into each other. Each episode represents a separate subject, touching on a social or political issue in the life of a child born in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. From these numerous videos, the image of an entire generation is created. Because of the huge amount of material, the film must be full-length, with a runtime of 70–80 minutes. Only at this length is it possible to immerse the viewers into the atmosphere of the events, to force them to empathise and raise questions about the shown topics. The film addresses the general viewer, as well as parents and teachers.

In each episode we see the full scale of changes in the children's perception of various events. The children's

attitude changes from fear to full acceptance, sometimes comical, but often shocking in its ordinariness—such as the sound of sirens announcing an emergency, which at first causes fear, but the more it is repeated, the more a protective shield kicks in to ignore it.

The generation of today's children, in my opinion, is more sober in its estimate of life, and its pragmatic relationship to everything contrasts with the past idealism of the older generation; however, the main difference lies in the request for truth, freedom, justice and observance of laws among today's youngsters.

## Director: Andrey Gryazev



Was born in Moscow 15.02.1982. Professional athlete in figure skating. Competitor of World and European Championships. From 2000 to 2006 worked as a ballet dancer in an international ice show. Winner of more than 20 major awards various European and World festivals of documentary films. In 2012, nominated for the Sutherland Award for best directorial debut at the 56th BFI London Film Festival. The film "Tomorrow" (history of an art group Voina) became the first Russian documentary participant Berlinale in the Forum.

The film "The Foundation Pit" is a participant in the Berlinale 2020 and winner of the NIKA National Film Academy Award for the best documentary film of the year.

### FILMOGRAPHY:

"Sanya and Sparrow (Sanya I Vorobey), 2009, documentary  
 "Miner's Day" (Den' shahtera), 2010, documentary  
 "Tomorrow" (Zavtra), 2012, documentary  
 "The Foundation Pit" (Kotlovan), 2020, documentary  
 "First blood" (Pervaya krov'), 2020, short fiction

RUSSIA

# In Search of the Miraculous



DIRECTOR: Tanya Bazhenova  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023  
 BUDGET: EUR 100 000

**T**he action takes place in Moscow. The main character is a young artist named Ida, who is trying to find her place in the world of modern art.

In search of inspiration, Ida goes to exhibitions of other artists. Each of them is a carefully orchestrated reconstruction of the sensational exhibitions of the 1990s–2000s. These exhibitions are closed before they have time to open. Time after time, they are smashed by critics, law enforcement officers and activists concerned about public morality. Throughout the film, Ida visits five exhibitions, for the ideas of which she will grab for her first and possibly last creation.

For example, in the first “museum” scene, Ida comes to the exhibition of Avdey Ter-Ohanyan “Towards the Object” (1992), during which the artist demonstrates a hooligan performance: he drinks a bottle of vodka in one gulp and falls to the floor. On the same day, the exhibition is closed due to a complaint from the Russian Jogging movement.

In parallel, Ida meets with contemporary artists and their ideas. These episodes make a documentary out of a feature film.

A significant detail in the film will be the figure of the Dutch artist Bas Jan Ader. The title of the film “In Search of the Miraculous” also refers to his latest work.

In the sixth and final exhibition, Ida herself becomes the only exhibit in a completely empty gallery. The girl is standing in an empty room, and a few minutes later masked people rush in, making it clear to the viewer that even silence and silence can be censored.

## Director: Tanya Bazhenova



Tanya Bazhenova is a director and screenwriter. Born on 05/20/1994 in Krasnodar. Lives in Moscow. In 2019 she graduated from the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute. In 2015 she presented her debut feature film “The Union of

Writers” in the Russian program of the 37<sup>th</sup> Moscow International Film Festival. In 2018, the second feature film, “Case of Chérie”, won two awards: Best Documentary Debut and Audience Award at the ARTDOCFEST. Screenings were held in Moscow, with the participation of director Svetlana Baskova and film critic Kirill Razlogov, at the Jewish Museum, in St. Petersburg and as part of the NEWARK IFF festival (USA).

RUSSIA

# Queendom



DIRECTOR / PRODUCER: Agniia Galdanova  
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LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 BUDGET: EUR 52 000

**D**rag culture is globally known as a substantial part of pop-culture. However, in conservative Russia it is marginalised, and is basically underground. Nevertheless, for the majority of the drag community this is scarcely the only territory of freedom, where despite the overall social pressure on the LGBTQ people, they can find emotional support, realise their creative ideas and embrace their nature.

And it is also a story of our two protagonists: Gena and Nikita. After meeting each other they realised that drag is just the beginning and both embarked on a path of radical changes.

Gena Marvin lives in Saint Petersburg, studies in college and considers himself to be an action performance artist, who creates surrealistically painful characters, reflecting on the public perception of the minorities in Russia and his personal traumatic experiences. He has thousands of followers on Instagram and TikTok, interviews in foreign magazines. But at home, in Russia, his grandfather is still ashamed of what he does, he still hears curses coming

from his neighbours' windows in his hometown, a small village near Magadan in the far Northeast Siberian area of the country. The story of a feminine 18-year old Nikita from Moscow is completely different. Once impersonated a drag diva named Flavia, she realised that it's her true gender and she's ready for a transgender transition. That's when the problems began. First of all, financial - to collect the required amount for the surgery she has to work as a webcam model. Second of all, psychological - having to go through all the medical commissions creates a nasty feeling that for some reason you have to prove your gender to strangers. Finally, the relationship with her mother, who knows that her son is gay but she is not ready to accept his transition into a woman.

"Queendom" is a story of Gena and Flavia. A film about freedom in constrained Russia, the things some people have to go through for a seemingly natural chance to just be yourself.

## Director: Agniia Galdanova



Agniia Galdanova was born in 1987 in St. Petersburg. In 2011 she graduated from the Journalism faculty of the Russian State Social University, at the same time she worked in the Afisha magazine and other Moscow

publications. In 2012 she moved to Berlin, where she graduated from the Met Film School Berlin with a degree in filmmaking. In 2016–2017, received a grant and made a short documentary film *Something in You, Something in Me* as part of the German-Israeli program. The film was shown at Dokaviv and other small festivals in Europe.

In 2019, she returned to live in Moscow, where she graduated from the School of Documentary Films and Theater of Marina Razbezhkina and Mikhail Ugarov. The diploma film "One Step Forward, One Step Back" was shown at Artdocfest (Environment. Together) and Message to Man (National Competition).

RUSSIA

# Stealth



DIRECTOR: Nikita Ikonnikov  
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PRODUCER: Yanna Buryak  
[yanna@mimesis productions](mailto:yanna@mimesis productions)

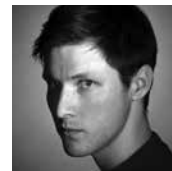
PRODUCTION COMPANY: Mimesis  
 LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 70'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 BUDGET: EUR 40 000

**S**TEALTH – is a transgender term meaning the rejection of the primary gender and related to it. The main character, a forty-year-old transgender woman, Svetlana, lives in the outskirts of Moscow, with a young military contractor Sergei. Svetlana and Sergei live in poverty. Due to the pandemic, Svetlana loses her unofficial job, and Sergei cannot sustain them on his meager income. To get a normal job Svetlana needs female identity papers. Svetlana, accompanied by Sergei, sets off on a difficult path to change her male documents, during which she has to confront her past, a family she has almost forgotten.

Nikita Ikonnikov, the writer-director of this film, has been following Svetlana since 2018. Svetlana says that she lives in STEALTH, which means that she carefully conceals her male past, leaving it invisible and unknown to most people. Nikita found out that Svetlana had a wife

and daughter relatively early into their relationship, but she didn't show him her male passport until two years into meeting him and that's when Nikita found out that Svetlana was 40. During one of their meetings, Svetlana introduced Nikita to her lover, a military contractor, fifteen years her junior, Sergei. That's when Nikita made a decision to start shooting the film. It was the unusual relationship between Sergei and Svetlana that inspired him to make it and which is central to the story. In the process of making the film he stopped asking himself the question, "Did Svetlana need a sex change?". He stopped asking himself, "Why would a young guy want to live with a middleaged transgender woman?". What came to fascinate him most of all is the intimacy shared by the characters and their ability to love and accept each other. That's what this film is about - the timeless importance of love and acceptance.

## Director: Nikita Ikonnikov



Nikita Ikonnikov studied at the Moscow State Academic Art School 1905 at the Faculty of Design and Painting. In 2017 he graduated from VGIK, course of Alexey Uchitel. Now he works for TNT Premier.

FILMOGRAPHY:  
 2020 "... Identification" (series)  
 2015 "Tania" (short film)  
 2013 "Chijicii" (short film)

## Producer: Yanna Buryak



Yanna Buryak is the founder of MIMESIS, a full-cycle film production company, and VOSTOK, the first Russian short film agency. She graduated from the London MET Film School in 2014. She specialises in the international co-production of auteur-driven cinema.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY:  
 2018 "The Birdcage" by Lindsey Aliksanyan, Manos Cizek / Documentary / 50' / Greece, Russia  
 2017 "Selvagem" by Victoria Mendonça / Fiction / 17' / France, Brazil, Russia  
 2017 "Milk" by Daria Vlasova / Fiction / 15' / Russia  
 2015 "Fedor's Journey Through Moscow At The Turn Of The XXI Century" by Axinya Gog / Fiction / 24' / Russia  
 2014 "Ruslan" by Taisia Deeva / Fiction / 14' / UK, Russia, Germany



KAZAKHSTAN

# The Cellar



DIRECTOR: Diana Zhilkenova  
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LANGUAGE: Russian / Kazakh  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022  
 LENGTH: 60'  
 BUDGET: USD 7 000

**T**his film is about three ordinary women. They are not heroic in a traditional sense, but these women pull off their own little feats every single day. Each of the characters – and, as it turned out, almost every Kazakh woman who has reached puberty – has experienced sexual abuse.

These women woke up from the illusion that women are the weaker sex, that they are victims. They ceased being the victims. Every woman in the film fights for her right to be protected in today's patriarchal Kazakhstani society. They fight against the notion that women are to be blamed for having been abused in a society where the label "it's her fault" is routinely hung on almost all victims.

The main characters of the film are Dina, Yelena and Johanna.

*Johanna Akbergenova* is a journalist and activist of the "NeMolchiKZ" ("DoNotKeepSilentKZ") social movement. Johanna was born as a result of rape. *Yelena Ivanova* is a student who was raped by her boss when working on a construction site. Her rapist remains free and

continues to repeatedly abuse other women. Despite that and despite him being the former deputy of the Nur Otan Party (Kazakhstan's ruling political party since 1999), Yelena files a complaint against him in court. *Dina Smailova* survived gang rape at the age of 20. 25 years later, her rapists remain unpunished, and Dina becomes the first woman in Kazakhstan to publicly open up about the sexual abuse that she experienced in a Facebook post. She then becomes the head of the "DoNotKeepSilentKZ" public fund, and is now helping the victims of rape to seek justice.

These women have broken the wall of silence around rape, their social media posts have greatly resonated with society. These strong women tell us what helps them to move on, how to deal with the emptiness that engulfs you when your life was forcibly broken, how to fight for your right to be safe, even if the whole world is against you.

They are not afraid of condemnation or criticism by traditionalists; they are ready to change people's attitudes towards survivors of rape, even if that costs them their honor.

## Director: Diana Zhilkenova



Diana Zhilkenova is a documentary filmmaker from Kazakhstan. In 2013 she graduated from a film school "KazNAA" named after I. T. Zhurgenov with a degree in Film and TV (non-fiction) Directing. During her studies, she created a five-episode documentary film titled as "I am 20 years old!" supported by Kazakhfilm studio. This film won the Tulpar national award as "Best Documentary Film" in 2011.

Her other film "Memento mori" (2013) participated in a number of international film festivals ("Bastau" International Film Festival IFF, Almaty; "I see God" festival, Moscow). In 2014, the film was selected by the New York Eurasian Film Festival where it won the Best Documentary Short Film award. At the moment, Diana is working on a creative documentary under the working title "The Cellar".

## Abnormals. Genderfuck



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Antony Cherenkov  
[antonycherenkov@gmail.com](mailto:antonycherenkov@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ Why do we consider one's behavior and appearance to be acceptable, while another's disgusts us? What is normal? Why is it so difficult to change the existing norms? Our heroes are people who are not like us, but who also want to be free and happy. We will see how silly gender stereotypes will seem if we immerse them into the historical and cultural context, we will see how the "power of normalization" breaks lives.

## Academia



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Sergei Chetverukhin  
[mcchet@inbox.ru](mailto:mcchet@inbox.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 120'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ The confrontation between archaism and modernity in the oldest theater school in the country: St. Petersburg Theater Academy. Every year, students experience a severe dissonance between the big world, in which new languages of the theater flourish, and the Academy, where they are taught in the same way as 20, 30, 50 years ago. This is a story about three paths of students at the Academy: rebellion, breaking or embedding into the system.

## ADA



UKRAINE

DIRECTOR: Alina Matochkina  
[ali.matochkina@gmail.com](mailto:ali.matochkina@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Ukrainian  
 LENGTH: 91'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2021

■ A film about the love and courage of two genius Ukrainian artists, whose work has always been contrary to the system. Love and mutual support helped them to survive even after the destruction of their main work of life, which they had been building for 13 years. But can the struggle continue if only one of the two remains?

## And they were friends happily ever after



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Tatiana Graf  
[tanya.graf.99@mail.ru](mailto:tanya.graf.99@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 35'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2021

■ Five female friends full of hopes and plans record video messages to each other before graduating from school. They imagine who would become whom in 5 years, express their expectations for life. Then the film takes place nowadays, 5 later. A viewer learns about the stories of the real life, who of the girls could implement their plans, and whose life has changed dramatically.

## Are You Mental?



RUSSIA

PRODUCER: Asya Ruchevskaya  
DIRECTOR : Marina Nekrasova  
[marina369@bk.ru](mailto:marina369@bk.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
LENGTH: 60'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ It all started when they were teens and it never stopped. To this day, compulsive thoughts and obsessive fears are plaguing their lives. But where do these thoughts come from? Is it still possible to overcome them? The documentary gives an insight into the nature of neurotic disorders in adolescents and shows the ways to handle them.

## Boney Piles



UKRAINE

DIRECTOR: Taras Tomenko  
PRODUCER: Vladimir Filippov  
[alenagrntsevich@gmail.com](mailto:alenagrntsevich@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Ukrainian  
LENGTH: 70'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Nastya was 6 when on the New Year's Eve shells fired by the Russian army hit her house. Her father died, and the rest of the family barely escaped. To feed their family, children have to look for scrap metal under the fire. From this reality Nastya (12) escapes into the world of her phone. There's one horrible thing we understood. For these children war has become a part of a landscape, an atmosphere.

## Borders



RUSSIA

PRODUCER: Anton Yarosh  
DIRECTOR : Ilya Komarov  
[ilyakomarov9@gmail.com](mailto:ilyakomarov9@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
LENGTH: 120'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2024

■ A documentary exploring several distanced locations in Russia placed on the state border. We will visit the border with Poland, formerly Prussian town; a little village near Mongolia, populated by indigenous ethnical minority called Soyot; the Russian border with North Korea, the forgotten locality Khasan, beyond which begins the territory of probably the most closed country of the world. All locations are connected through one bigger context – all of these are part of modern Russia. A familiar routine will unfold against strikingly different, diverse backdrops.

## Chernobyl – a forerunner of Independence



UKRAINE

DIRECTOR: Evgeny Titarenko  
PRODUCER: Natalia Khazan  
[5660161@gmail.com](mailto:5660161@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE:  
Ukrainian / Russian  
LENGTH: 80'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ “Chernobyl is a forerunner of Independence”  
The damage from the accident is more than 1 trillion dollars. The death toll continues to rise, and future generations will suffer from the consequences of the accident in many countries around the world. After all, who does not realize the lessons of history, is doomed to live through them again. The USSR buried Chernobyl, and Chernobyl buried the USSR.



## Children of change



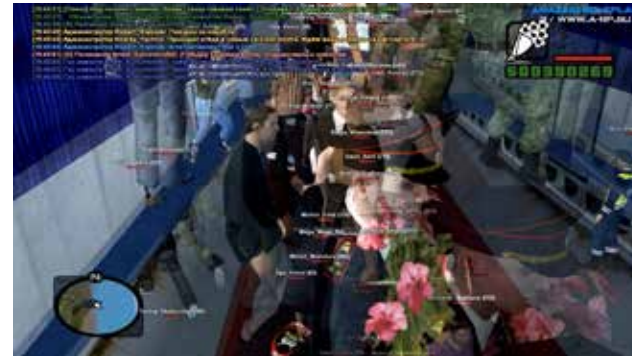
BELARUS

DIRECTOR: Alya Skrypen  
[perapylka@gmail.com](mailto:perapylka@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE:  
 Russian / Belarusian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ It's a film about the events in Belarus through the eyes of young people, who took to the streets to peacefully express their disagreement with the election results and had to grow up fast, faced with violence and lawlessness.

## Demorgan



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Paracollective  
 Dina Karaman, Vladimir Nadein  
[paracollective2199@gmail.com](mailto:paracollective2199@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 80'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Hundreds of thousands of gamers in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and other post-Soviet states are playing "GTA: Criminal Russia", a roleplay modification of the popular video game. It involves hard-and-fast rules, harsh laws, and ruthless control. Each player wants to rise through the ranks of Russian government authorities, which means acting "properly" in the collective virtual performance.

## CyberBaby



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Evgeniya Chesnok  
[4ecnocek@mail.ru](mailto:4ecnocek@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 60'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2021

■ When Mila from Stavropol shows her self-portrait, made two years ago, will we see tough relationships with her mother or harassment from the brother? The girl creates dark and austere figures without clear indicators of gender. Mila goes to Moscow in search of a new expressive language. There she begins to work under the pseudonym "Kroshkina" ("Baby girl"). Now there are bright and sexy women on the canvases, but what caused this metamorphosis?

## Doctor



KYRGYZSTAN

DIRECTOR: Alizhan Nasirov  
[alijannasirov@gmail.com](mailto:alijannasirov@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Kyrgyz  
 LENGTH: 20'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Newly qualified paramedic Myzambek Ishenbek Uulu is just 22, but he must care for over 400 people in a remote Kyrgyz village. He travels to many of his patients on horseback or on foot.



## Home video of Perestroika



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Georgy Porotov  
[6541517@mail.ru](mailto:6541517@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian / English  
 LENGTH: 120'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ This is the story of my family, my father, and the video camera that was supposed to connect our family through the iron curtain of the USSR. The curtain fell, the camera recorded the collapse of the empire, perestroika, the history of the country and the history of my family, which was never reunited, and my father left me a will to make a film about it all.

## Jakutia: cinema between the worlds



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Vladimir Kocharyan  
[kinoartproducer@gmail.com](mailto:kinoartproducer@gmail.com)

PRODUCERS:  
 Maxim Mussel, Boris Guts

LANGUAGE: Russian / Yakut  
 LENGTH: 100'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ In this road movie, the director comes to his homeland, Yakutia, where, while being a teenager he witnessed the beginning of the so-called “Yakut film boom” phenomenon. The Sakha people, whose population does not exceed 500 thousand people, have formed an independent film industry, producing up to 25 films a year. The director hits the road to discover the secret of the freedom of the Sakha people and reminds himself what it was like to be an Armenian child born in a Yakut village.

## Kinship votaress



UKRAINE / ISRAEL

DIRECTOR: Olga Simonenko  
[solgaalekseevna@gmail.com](mailto:solgaalekseevna@gmail.com)

LANGUAGES: Ukrainian / Russian / English / Polish  
 LENGTH: 75'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ What exactly is the study of family history - an attempt to answer personal existential questions or to build a connection with past generations and receive support from them? Turning to historian-genealogist Olga, women faced with complicated life circumstances, repeated in several generations, try to understand how they inherit negative scenarios of their family and how to stop this influence.

## Let it be a girl



RUSSIA / KAZAKHSTAN

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER:  
 Katerina Suvorova  
[agudkova@gmail.com](mailto:agudkova@gmail.com)  
[atelier.svet@gmail.com](mailto:atelier.svet@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Kazakh / Russian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ A film-portrait of Central Asian women who received the names-wishes “Let it be a boy” from their parents at birth.

## LimON/OFF. One day



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Liliya Vyugina  
[viugis@mail.ru](mailto:viugis@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 75'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ One day with writer and poet Edvard Limonov. He is at home. Hand-washed socks hang in the kitchen. There is also a bath and a fridge with nothing inside. Just a few spoons of porridges. Asceticism and spartan conditions. Limonov is an opposition politician at that time. He's in isolation and disgrace. But he's just settled into his personal life. His son was born. But arrest and prison, threats and danger often appear in his monologues.

## Marta



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Anastasia Kulikova  
[kulikovamilka@icloud.com](mailto:kulikovamilka@icloud.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 60-90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2021

■ A diary film about a 20-year-old girl named Martha, according to her passport, Masha. Martha lives two lives. Martha is a bright girl whose reality is like a fireworks or a kaleidoscope. She is a model, artist, DJ at parties. She talks about love, space, internal contradictions, and in the remaining time Martha composes the elvish language. Masha's life is the life of a sincere, bright child.

## Little by little



TAJIKISTAN

DIRECTOR: Orzumurod Sharipov  
[orzumurod@mail.ru](mailto:orzumurod@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Tajik  
 LENGTH: 30'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ I am one hero per 14 villages, as Karomat calls himself, a hero of the Afghan war. Now he lives a peaceful life, grazes sheep.

## My life to live



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Nikolay Flotskiy  
[nikolay.flotskiy@gmail.com](mailto:nikolay.flotskiy@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 40'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ What will the city of the future be like? Wishing to be it a friendly place for all population groups, Alexey develops a «wheelchair» that will allow disabled people to move around the urban environments on their own as well as to play football. Besides it can be also used by healthy children and adults too. The life of Alexey is the story of a heroic artist who lives in his own world, but is eager to change the world of all of us.

## Night



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR : Maria Balasanyan  
[mariabalas@yandex.ru](mailto:mariabalas@yandex.ru)

LANGUAGE:  
 Armenian / Russian  
 LENGTH: 34'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2021

■ The Second Karabakh War ended on the night of November 10, 2020 by signing formal document, but it didn't end for people who chose to live in their homeland. The age-old fight of Armenians for their nation continues, they are ready to do everything to stop the war not only formally. The film is about the events in Armenia during the 45 days of war and about the days after signing peace.

## No man is an island



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Lena Ritter  
[lana.ritter@gmail.com](mailto:lana.ritter@gmail.com)

PRODUCER: Helga Grigorieva  
 LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 78'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2021–2022

■ A woman wanders into the abandoned building in St.Petersburg with her camera. There she meets two homeless men, bound by unclear relationship. The younger man falls in love with a woman and follows her to Moscow, leaving his ill partner behind. She lets him stay. The unusual love triangle becomes a starting point of a documentary, exploring the concept of family and social class boundaries.

## Nina



RUSSIA / BELARUS

DIRECTOR: Maria Tikhonova  
[marusya4186@mail.ru](mailto:marusya4186@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 40'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Her name is Nina Baginskaya. She is 74 years old woman-heroine who fights for well-being not only on the streets of her native Minsk, but also within the walls of her home. She was placed in a pre-trial detention center more than once, the state takes away from her almost all her pension to pay fines, threats and curses are often heard against her. But even this doesn't stop Nina.

## Prohibition of certain actions



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR : Tamara Turilova  
[tomaturilova75@gmail.com](mailto:tomaturilova75@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 60'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Alla Gutnikova was arrested during the DOXA case. A month before that, she and Danya began dating. It could have been a conventional love story if not for political persecution. Instead of the summer holidays, there is now a daily schedule of trips to the Investigative Committee and house arrests.



## Return. Bitter. Sweet



AZERBAIJAN / UK

DIRECTOR: Shahida Tulaganova  
[shahidayakub@gmail.com](mailto:shahidayakub@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE:  
 Azerbaijani / Russian / English  
 LENGTH: 75'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ They've lost this land only to come back 30 years later to the lives long lost, to homes which don't exist, to the land claimed by others. Return. Bitter. Sweet is an observational documentary feature following four Azerbaijani Karabakh refugees who are planning to go back to their villages, which they were forced to leave 30 years ago.

## Searching Faina



AZERBAIJAN

DIRECTOR: Durna Safarova  
[durna.safarova@gmail.com](mailto:durna.safarova@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE:  
 Azerbaijani / Russian  
 LENGTH: 70'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ Faina, a 33-year-old woman from Azerbaijan, loses her life under suspicious circumstances in a prison in 2007. Silenced today by the authorities and forgotten by society, Faina's story is about a female activists who fought for freedom, justice and democracy.

## River dreams



KAZAKHSTAN

DIRECTOR: Kristina Mikhailova  
 PRODUCER: Dana Sabitova  
[danasabitova@gmail.com](mailto:danasabitova@gmail.com)

PRODUCTION COMPANY:  
 24 FPS film production company  
 LANGUAGE: Kazakh / Russian  
 LENGTH: 80'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Hybrid movie shows the 130 kilometer path of an ordinary mountain river in Central Asia. The story of a long journey through the eastern modern world is told from the river's point of view. It is full of contradictions. The main character, the lyrical heroine, is the girl River with her fascinating personality, fatality and dreams. Have you ever imagined what rivers dream about?

## Sweet milky corn



KAZAKHSTAN

DIRECTOR: Aizhana Kassymbek  
 PRODUCER: Diana Ashimova  
[diana.ashimova@gmail.com](mailto:diana.ashimova@gmail.com)  
 Tel: +7 777 272 60 15

LANGUAGE: Kazakh  
 LENGTH: 65'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ A true story about an ordinary guy who, at the age of 29, went from an orphanage to a mental hospital, without losing his taste for life. The documentary shows the life and death, love and hate, hope and dreams of one family through the prism of the protagonist. However, the film does not tell the classic story of a mentally sick person, but touches on such eternally human questions about the fate of a person who meets sunrises and sunsets and continues to live and hope.



## The 21<sup>st</sup>



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Dmitry Kabakov  
[dkabakov@mail.ru](mailto:dkabakov@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 85'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Actually the century is setting in only now, in 2021. It is exactly now that significant, essential changes are happening in the lifestyle of the country, the world; a qualitative leap. During the Millennium celebration we were filming, trying to distinguish the sprouts of a new century. The result was the film 'How are you doing?'. But then there was not much to be seen. We would like to continue our research. We will come back to our acquaintances 20 years later – during this time the baby grew up and the adult became different – and through them we will try to see the actual traits of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## The Last Mark



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR:  
 Elizaveta Keshisheva  
[elizavetakesh@mail.ru](mailto:elizavetakesh@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE:  
 English / Hebrew / Russian  
 LENGTH: 60'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ The Dead Sea evaporates so rapidly that in 40 years from now there will be nothing left from its salty waters. Hermit Mark has settled on the Dead Sea shore 12 years ago. He is the keeper of this place: a tiny piece of land that does not belong either to Israel or Palestine. Having escaped from the city, he wanted to find solitude here, but soon he becomes the center of life in this biblical place, doomed to disappearance.

## The Last River



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Sergei Shinkarev  
[shinkareff@gmail.com](mailto:shinkareff@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 120'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ Trilogy “The Last River” tells about life in the most remote places of Russia - moreover, the distance to the capital of the country is not of decisive importance. The first film was filmed in 2014, when the film crew walked along the river from the headwaters to the mouth. The second part will be filmed in August 2021, in the mountains of the Baikal region, at the head of the Lena. Filming of the third film is scheduled for 2022-2023, in the Arctic. The heroes of the trilogy are free people.

## The Road to Slavalachia



BELARUS / UKRAINE

DIRECTOR: Varfolomey Kuraga  
 PRODUCER: Nadezhda Ilkevich  
[nadzeya.art@gmail.com](mailto:nadzeya.art@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE:  
 English / Belarusian / Ukrainian  
 LENGTH: 90'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ The Road to Slavalachia documents the international collaboration of three folk musicians from Appalachia, Belarus, and Western Ukraine. They travel to one another's regions to create a new revolutionary culture rooted from old traditions. The documentary follows their “journey” to Slavalachia, an uncharted land that exists only in their shared creativity.

## The Unlike



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Kapitolina Dolgikh  
 PRODUCER: Olga Averkieva,  
 Ksenia Gapchenko  
[ksenia@docsvostok.com](mailto:ksenia@docsvostok.com)

PRODUCTION COMPANY:  
 Novyy Kurs / Docs Vostok  
 LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 80'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ Dana is an adopted restless Romani teenager raised by Russian foster parents in a village in Ural. Dana has swarthy skin, thick lips and dark hair. She hates this Romani side of her and wants it to disappear and Dana hardly tries to cover it behind numerous layers of whitening skin concealer. Dana can't see that she is pretty. «The Unlike» is a teenage documentary dramedy about Dana's revolted adolescence.

## What does America have to do with it?



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Alexei Salomatov  
[alexeyamiko@mail.ru](mailto:alexeyamiko@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 75'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Not everyone in Russia gives in to anti-american state propaganda. Lilia is a mother of three children living in Moscow. Last summer she organized a birthday party «America. In search of a dream» for her 9 year old son in a small village where she is from located 500 kms from Moscow. She is planning to use still remaining props and make her son's upcoming birthday setting american themed again

## Til the River Ends



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER:  
 Mariya Krasnoperova  
 PRODUCTION COMPANY:  
 Red Siberia Production  
[redsiberiaproduction@gmail.com](mailto:redsiberiaproduction@gmail.com)  
 +79504155758  
 LANGUAGE:  
 Russian / Nenets / Enets  
 LENGTH: 70'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2023

■ Modernity reaches a remote Siberian river, ending the 67 year career of a ship that is more than a mode of transport for the community, it is their heart and home. What worries our Siberian ship-dwellers is what life will be like after this big change.

## Twin fences



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Yana Osman  
[osman.yana@gmail.com](mailto:osman.yana@gmail.com)

PRODUCER: Andrey Silvestrov,  
 Lyusia Artemieva  
 LANGUAGE: Russian  
 LENGTH: 80'  
 EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ An investigation about iconic fence PO-2 that now covers 40% of Eurasia leads a filmmaker to Afghanistan where her family story forces to face her own cross-cultural fences.

## Who Is Next?



KYRGYZSTAN

PRODUCER:  
Altynai Koichumanova  
[altynaiko@yandex.ru](mailto:altynaiko@yandex.ru)

DIRECTOR:  
Nurzhamal Karamoldoeva,  
Sultan Usuvaliev  
LANGUAGE: Kyrgyz / Russian  
LENGTH: 52'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ The wide-spread practice of “ala kachuu” (“bride kidnapping”, an abduction of girls and women for forcing them into marriage) in Kyrgyzstan is explored in the form of a true crime documentary through the investigation of recent deadly cases of the kidnapped and murdered Aizada Kanatbekova and Burulai Turdalieva.

## Youth of Beki



RUSSIA

DIRECTOR: Almira Saifullina  
[almirasafi@gmail.com](mailto:almirasafi@gmail.com)

LANGUAGE:  
Tajik / Uzbek / Russian  
LENGTH: 90'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Beki - a young merchant from Bukhara, an ancient Muslim town of Central Asia. In his early twenties Beki keeps a souvenir shop and has many friends around him. They love to have fun together, drive a broken car along the streets, play football, smoke hookah and sing obscene songs. After unexpected death of the Beki's father, a master of embroidery, time begins to rush his youth: it is now his turn to marry and become a head of the family. Following the unspoken laws of oriental tradition, the life of Beki starts to change bringing him to a new state of being.

## Woman and Sea



KAZAKHSTAN

DIRECTOR: Sharipa Urazbayeva  
[shari.11@mail.ru](mailto:shari.11@mail.ru)

LANGUAGE: Kazakh  
LENGTH: 52'  
EXPECTED RELEASE: 2022

■ Through the life and lifestyle of the heroine of the film Azhar, who lives in the Aral Sea and does not lose heart as a fisherman in the sea on a par with men, to highlight the current state of the Aral Sea problem.