



NUUCCHA

Feature film by VLADIMIR MUNKUEV



STORY

A man with a headscarf is shown in profile, looking back over his shoulder. He is shirtless and appears to be in a natural, outdoor setting with a green field and trees in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

SYNOPSIS

Based on the Hailak short story and other works by Polish writer with experience of Seberian exile Wacław Sieroszewski, the plot revolves around the poor Yakut peasant couple Khabdzhii and Keremes struggling to survive in the taiga area of the most remote East corner of Russian Empire at the end of XIX century.

After the death of the second newborn child both young man and woman obediently get back to their chores to make it through another day and get ready to lengthy and exhausting winter. The local Yakut ruler orders the family to admit to their house the Russian political convict Konstantin and keep him till further notice. The worlds of the family and the Russian unwelcome guest are colliding from the first days due to completely polar backgrounds. Despite the mutual challenge of the household against surrounding wild nature, Konstantin gradually settles in and claims the position of master of the house.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When I first read Waclaw Sieroszewski's works it stood out to me that his writings had depicted less ethnographic, but rather artistic point of view.

He definitely vividly described the lifestyle of unknown nation in the middle of Siberian wild region, their traditions and rituals,

but at the same time he focused on the

characters and conflicts, experiences and relationships between people.

The end of the XIX century was the turning point for Yakutia when the local culture had started to adapt to Russian assimilation.

Specifically, in the short story Hailak Waclaw reflects on the extremely important topic of colonization. In the

national republics (administrative units of Russian Federation) this topic is yet not comfortable to be talked about,

therefore, the subject matter had not been developed.

Nuuccha ("Russian" in Yakut language) is the film about the man who sincerely wanted to help others but instead had complicated the situation and became the aggressor.

It is crucial for me to reflect the controversy of each main character.

There is no caricature villain, who invaded and destroyed the live of weak couple. All of them became the hostages of the situation and struggled for the mere survival.

DIRECTOR

VLADIMIR MUNKUEV

Director, writer born in 1987 in Yakutsk, Russia.

Had studied in Arctic State Culture and Arts Institute as Director of Theatre faculty. After graduation had enrolled in Moscow Film School at the course of award-winning Russian directors Aleksey Popogrebsky and Boris Khlebnikov.

His first feature film Dude (2017) won Special Jury Diploma at XIX INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CINEMATOGRAPHIC DEBUTS and got «Best script» and «Best cinematography» awards at National Yakut award in the field of cinematography.

The second short film Joy (2018) was awarded the Prize for Best Film of Short Films Competition of Moscow Film

Festival, got the diploma of the Best Short Film in Foreign Language at SHNIT festival, was nominated for the Grand Prix of Koroche Short Film Festival and was selected to «Kinolikbez», “Amur Autumn”, was selected to Lublin Film Fest in Poland along with events in India, Armenia and Kazakhstan.



CREATIVE PRODUCER

BORIS KHLEBNIKOV

award-winning director, scriptwriter and
producer, known for *Arrhythmia* (2017),
A Long and Happy

Life (2013), *Roads to Koktebel* (2007),
Free Floating (2003)

SETTING



In Russian Empire the remote area of Yakutia became the region of prisons and convict settlements: severe climate, endless taiga and enormous distances between the settlements worked better than any fences. The convicts were placed in local families and called "the neighbors". The criminal offenders did not respect the traditions of the local people.

This is the movie about the outsider who becomes the master. This is the conflict of two worlds with no room for understanding of each other's' life principles. Under the circumstances the dialogue is impossible, only the destruction of one of the worlds.

But there is also the third untouchable world that has no need to join the struggle since it exists always in parallel and above of the characters: the world of mystics, spirits, dreams and visions. It does not interact with other words, though sends it sings.



SETTING



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A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a dark, heavy, traditional-looking garment, is shown in profile, focused on sewing a piece of light-colored fabric. The scene is dimly lit, with a strong light source from the right casting a warm glow on her face and hands, while the rest of the room is in deep shadow. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a wooden interior.

Despite of the period nature of the film the idea is to show the documentary approach of the narration: live camera depicting the nerve of the scenes. Instead of worshipping the beauty of surrounding nature to show the prisons without the walls.

The main characters live on *alaas* – the low land with the lake in the middle of taiga. The house is the typical pool Yakut construction – square building made of thin wood logs with tiny windows, roof covered with bark and earth, walls smudged with clay mixed with manor. The floor was covered with sand and hay.

All elements starting from costumes to buildings has to reflect the mixture of Yakut reality with Russian lifestyle.

SETTING



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CHARACTERS



KHABDZHIY played by Pavel Kolesov

35-year-old-man, weak but hardworking.

Speaks relatively good Russian after spending 3 years servant experience.

Married the orphan young girl not because he loved her, but rather to earn approval of the local ruler. Is ashamed of his poor background, that's why he had Russian-style wedding to become closer to municipal people. Is very submissive with the rulers, nevertheless is sincerely ready to help when needed.

CHARACTERS



KOSTYA KHRUSHOV played by Sergey Gilev

30-year-old man, compared to Yakur people – much bigger man with open face, but “heavy” glance. Political convict with

10 years of settlement experience. Was assigned to the mines, ran away, was caught and brought to taiga settlement.

Full of revolutionary ideas though of surface and idealistic nature.

CHARACTERS

A woman with dark, wavy hair is shown in profile, looking towards the left. She is wearing a dark green, textured coat over a dark blue or black shirt. The background is a soft-focus landscape with a field of tall, dry grass in the foreground and a line of trees with some yellow autumn foliage in the distance. The overall lighting is natural and somewhat muted.

KEREMES played by Irina Mihailova

30-year-old tiny, shy and childly naïve woman. Was baptized as Evmeniya Sleptsova but does not accept this name

unless for local priest and authorities. From time to time shames his husband for excessive obedience. Ashamed of her illiteracy, but unlike her husband is not embarrassed of her “wild” descent. Does not either understand nor speak Russian.

PRODUCERS



VALERIY FEDOROVICH & EVGENIY NIKISHOV

Producers, Media Executives and showrunners, who together were awarded TEFI Russian Television Prize in Television

Producer of the Season category in 2019.

Together they worked on such projects as: films Captain Volkonogov Escaped, Gogol, The Blackout, Fidelity, the VIP Cop

and drama series: An Ordinary Woman (winner of the leading actress prize at Series Mania, France 2018), The

Identification (Series Mania official selection 2019) and To the Lake Netflix Original series (2019 CanneSeries, Fresh TV

Fiction and the 41st Moscow International Film Festival official selection).

ALEKSANDR PLOTNIKOV

For over the decade Alexander is the General Producer of "LOOK FILM", Moscow-based production company with

emphasis on high-fly art-house feature and short films as well as premium OTT and TV series. Since 2010 the company

had established itself at Russian media marked by producing over 30 projects, including ironic melodrama "Intimate

Parts" directed by Aleksey Chupov & Natasha Merkulova, that scored 6 wins and 12 nominations including East of West

Award Nomination @ 2014 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and won Tridens Special Award @ 2013 Tallinn Black

Nights Film Festival.

ALBERT RYABYSHEV

General Producer of R-Media production company, Russian media industry veteran with experience in drama, melodrama and comedy genres with filmography of 14 films and drama series.

PRODUCERS

THE TEAM OF 4 PRODUCERS

worked together on the drama series *An Ordinary Woman*, that became the first Russian-language entry to *Series Mania 2018* competition and was awarded the leading actress prize for Anna Mikhalkova.

In Russia the series received 6 wins and 6 nominations including:

- APKIT (Russian Producers' Association) 2019 Award for Best Actress in a TV Movie/Series for Anna Mikhalkova and nominations 5 nominations including The Best Director and The Best TV series
- Golden Eagle Awards in Russia for the Best Television Actress for Anna Mikhalkova and nomination for Best TV Series
- TEFI Russian Television Prize in Television 2019 in 4 categories including the Best TV Movie/Series, Best Director of TV Movie/Series, TV Producer of the Season and the Best Actress of TV Movie/Series for Anna Mikhalkova.

NUUCCHA

A man with a beard, wearing a dark, heavy, quilted traditional garment, is lying on his back on a large, white and brown spotted dog. He is holding a small, light-colored object in his hands. The setting appears to be a rustic wooden structure, possibly a sled or a part of a traditional dwelling, with vertical wooden planks visible in the background. The lighting is dim and warm, creating a somber and intimate atmosphere.

Feature film
Duration: 90 min
Language: Russian, Yakut
Status: Post-production
Delivery: 2021



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