



ALEXANDER PASTZIKOV, IRINA GORAZDINA, MIKHEYI SHERSHBER, MIKHAEL GAGARIN, ALEKSEI KURKOV, ALEXANDER SAMOYLOV, ELENA OBYEDKOVA, EVGENIY MURAVICH, ANNA KOTOVA, ANASTASIA MARIKINA, LYUDMILA MATVIYENKO, SERGEY UDOV, VALENTINA MAZUNOVA,
 PYOTR MALININ, MARINA KRYAZHEVA, and BORIS KRYAZHEV, director BORIS KRYAZHEV, producer BUREN BUCHKOVSKAYA, SERGEY SIVOKHOV, coproducers NATALIYA ORLOVA, ALEXEI PRYADIN, TONY VALLA, IVA BLOMBAU, coproducer KHAMUKHURDUEV & S.C.,
 with GUSIA KRYAZHEVA, IRINA ALMANIKHAYTA, *MILY BARA PALAMARCHUK SEX, YOUNG BLANK, script by ANNA PESTERIKOVA, cast by MIKHAIL GAGARIN, and IRINA GORAZDINA, JANA KAPALOVA, ZINA JANE LANGE, and TAMARA DOLBACOVA,
 produced by MARS MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT and CFS FILM COMPANY, *FIRST FILMS FEST CONTROL COLOR OF MAY, SUPPORTED BY MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, LITHUANIAN FILM FOUNDATION, NOVUS FILM
















Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival
 Official Selection – Competition

ARRHYTHMIA

(Аритмия)

A FILM BY BORIS KHLEBNIKOV

Starring

Alexander
YATSENKO

Irina
GORBACHEVA

Runtime: 116min – Russia, Finland, Germany – 2017 – 1.85 – Dolby 5.1

RUSSIAN RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 28th 2017

INTERNATIONAL SALES

Indie Sales Company

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KARLOVY VARY SCREENING SCHEDULE

SAT. 1, 10:30AM @ CONGRESS HALL (Press & Industry)

SAT. 1, 8:00PM @ GRAND HALL (Official)

SUN. 2, 1:00PM @ PUPP CINEMA (Official)

TUE. 4, 11:30AM @ DRAHOMIRA CINEMA (Official)

SYNOPSIS

Oleg is a young gifted paramedic. His wife Katya works as a nurse at the hospital emergency department. She loves Oleg, but is fed up with him caring more about patients than her. She tells him she wants a divorce.

The new head of Oleg's EMA department is a cold-hearted manager who's got new strict rules to implement. Oleg couldn't care less about the rules – he's got lives to save; his attitude gets him in trouble with the new boss. The crisis at work coincides with the personal life crisis.

Caught up between their patients, alcohol-fueled off-shifts, and an evolving health care system, Oleg and Katya have to find the binding force that will keep them together.

INTERVIEW WITH BORIS KHLEBNIKOV

What was the original motivation for making *Arrhythmia*?

I didn't originally plan to make the film the way it turned out to be. The story took shape as we were working on the screenplay. Initially, the film was supposed to be a comedy, but it took a turn towards drama when the characters 'found' their profession.

The film isn't limited to a couple story; it deals with a larger issue: the evolution of the medical system in Russia, why did you choose this background?

That wasn't planned either. When we came up with the idea that our characters will be doctors, Natalia Meschaninova and I began to research this subject in detail. We talked with paramedics, doctors and department heads, and recorded our conversations on video.

Gradually, we learned more information and facts, which we incorporated into dramatic composition of the film.

Did you research in real hospitals when writing the script? What were the most interesting and surprising things you discovered in this process?

Yes, we had seven or eight consultants - doctors and paramedics from different parts of Russia who work in emergency departments. In each case they were dealing with slightly different problems, but overall the healthcare reform affected everyone quite deeply, so at some point we focused on this controversial subject. I wouldn't apply the words "interesting and surprising" to the work of medical professionals, because it's an endless stream of medical cases and routine procedures. While on the outside it might look striking, shocking and gruesome, on the inside people feel like regular employees.

Arrhythmia shows a lot of Russia through the different patients, often with a light tone. You always played with the codes of comedy. Is comedy a good way of showing a reality?

I believe comedy is one of the best ways to portray reality, because when a person smiles and tells jokes, that's when he or she is most relaxed. When we talk about someone with a good deal of irony or sarcasm, we see that person as a whole. If we use overly serious and moralizing type of rhetoric, the character becomes two-dimensional and only serves a functional purpose in the hands of the author.

Where was the film shot and why was this particular location chosen?

The film was shot in the city of Yaroslavl. It's a medium-sized Russian city, and an ideal location for us because it's visually rather diverse. It has old and new districts, a pedestrian walkway running along the river, and all the other settings described in our screenplay.

How was the character of Oleg born?

Natalia Meschaninova and I had the idea of creating a character who is extremely weak and immature in his personal life, at the level of a 12-year-old. At the same time, in his professional life we wanted Oleg to be very 'adult', confident and precise, as if he's spent more years in the profession than he really has. We wanted to make him full of contradictions.

Both the main actors deliver a strong performance. Why did you cast them in the first place?

Probably that's why - because they deliver a strong performance. In the case of Alexander, this is the fifth time I've worked with him. As for Irina Gorbacheva, this is the first time we've worked together. The principle employed in selecting them for the roles was that I was looking for actors who, in terms of their personality and emotionally, were similar to the characters in the film. I didn't want the actors to act, I wanted them to tell us about themselves, so that, in a way, it would be a documentary film about these two actors.

What were you going for with the character of the new boss of Oleg that implements the new strict rules?

The significance of this character boils down to him being a prisoner of circumstance, of the job that he has taken on. He is neither good nor bad. He's an effective manager who has been put in these circumstances by the healthcare reform.

What about the music?

When we wrote the script, Natalia Meschaninova suggested the two songs that are featured in the film, but we had no idea that the song that plays at the house party would become the main theme. That became clear after we had shot the scene. When I looked at it, I was absolutely convinced that we had to put this song at the finale as well.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Nowadays in our modern world, a person gets more and more involved into a public life, politics, charity, ecology, Putin, opposition, Ukraine, ISIL, Trump, crisis and other worldwide processes. Enormous number of people sit for days in social networks trying to make sense out of the today's world and reply the questions that have no answers for.

I think that exactly at this time, when people are being shredded into atoms by colossal information load, it is important to talk about a person who is busy solely with their own life issues, and in a very detailed way busy with the lives (physical ones) of other people. The importance of the world's events is not important for our character. The important things for him is – a matter of life or death. Now or never. Him or nobody.

There is a certain trend in our modern world to be hooked on *common issues* at any time. And for many people such an *addiction* ends with furious comments on social networks. And then they feel that their duty is sort of fulfilled.

But there also a very important thing which is called *a start from yourself*.

This is why it is very important for me to tell how people can now change the world *selectively*. By their own means and without gathering into friendly crowds.

I am interested in a person who is keen to understand and make something important not worldwide, not on country's television screens – but in their own profession, in their own life.

And whatever difficulties they could be having, and whatever horrible and unsolvable a problem would seem, eventually everything gets resolved. And often, in their own favor.

For me this is the flip side of how people surrender themselves to despair massively from any bad news. For me this story is about a very difficult life and hard work. The story of a human being not falling down as opposed to what one might expect but keeping on living their own life.

And this is the main reason why it was important for me to make this film.

FILMOGRAPHY – BORIS KLEBNIKOV

A LONG AND HAPPY LIFE (2013)

* *Berlinale Competition*

TILL NIGHT TEARS US APART (2012)

HELP GONE MAD (2009)

FREE FLOATING (2006)

* *Venice Orizzonti*

THE ROADS TO KOKTEBEL (2004)

* Philip Morris Award at Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

* Toronto International Film Festival

CAST

Alexander Yatsenko (*A long and Happy Life, The Duelist, Free Floating*)

Irina Gorbacheva

Nikolay Shraiber

Sergey Nasedkin

CREW

Director **Boris Khlebnikov**

Writers **Natalia Meshchaninova & Boris Khlebnikov**

Cinematography **Alisher Khamidkhodzhaev R.C.G.**

Editing **Ivan Lebedev Yulia Batalova**

Production Design **Olga Khlebnokova**

Casting **Anna Pestryakova**

Sound **Janne Laine**

Producer **Ruben Dishdishian, Sergey Selyanov**

Co-Producer **Natalia Drozd, Aleksii Hyvärinen, Toni Valla, Eva Blondiau**

Production Company **Mars Media Entertainment, CTB Film Company with Don Films/Post Control and Color of May, with support from the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, Finnish Film Foundation, NRW, YLE, Eurimages**

International Sales **Indie Sales Company**