

WIP D The Man Who Surprised Everyone



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Russia, France, Estonia

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME: Drama | Digital Format | Russian | 120 min

DIRECTOR:

Natalya MERKULOVA

Alexey CHUPOV

PRODUCER:

Katia FILIPPOVA

WIP GOALS:

Funds, Sales agents, Pre-sales, Festival screening

PRODUCTION BUDGET:

US\$ 1,270,000

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2013 *Intimate Parts*

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

In a far away Siberian village, a man decides to change his sex as a desperate attempt to cure his illness.

SYNOPSIS

Egor Korshunov (40) is a Siberian forest guard who works for a local environmental company, fighting fearlessly against poachers in the Taiga. Egor is a great family man, respected by his fellow villagers. He and his wife Natalia are expecting a second child. Unexpectedly, Egor finds out that he has terminal cancer and has only two months left to live. No traditional medicine or shamanic magic can save Egor. Finally, left with no other options, he decides to take the last desperate step. He attempts to completely change his identity in order to fool oncoming death, just like Zhamba the drake did as the hero of a legendary ancient Siberian epic.

He decides to take the identity of a woman as his way of fighting a disease. His family, his friends and the local society now have to accept his new female self.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The man who surprised everyone is a parable for the subordination of the ordinary Russian man to death, which he is trying to deceive. This parable is told in a realistic manner.

The film is based on the personal memoirs of the director, Natalia Merkulova, her Siberian childhood, the village in which she grew up, the people who surrounded her, and the legends that were told in those places.

The events of the film take place in a Russian village where people live in wooden houses, where all the facilities are in the courtyard and a sewer replaces a septic tank.

The intolerance of the villagers for the protagonist because of his method of saving himself illustrates another important problem: all over the world most people react to something they do not understand with rejection. Lack of understanding creates fear, and this fear drives people to commit acts for which they feel shame afterwards.

REFERENCES:

The Hunt by Thomas Vinterberg

Winter, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring by Kim Ki-duk

DIRECTOR

Natalya MERKULOVA

Film director and screenwriter. After award-winning documentary short *Traumatism* (2010), her debut feature, *Intimate Parts* (2013, with Alexey Chupov) gained over thirty awards and nominations including Best Debut at Kinotavr, Russia's largest film festival. With Chupov, she co-directed the TV series, *The Tender Age Crisis* (2016) and co-wrote the popular feature *Salyut-7* (2017).

Alexey CHUPOV

Film director and screenwriter. Chupov graduated from Moscow State University and began working on TVC and Russia-1 channels as a journalist and a screenwriter. With Natalya Merkulova he co-authored and co-directed *Intimate Parts* (2013), co-directed *The Tender Age Crisis* (2016), and co-authored *Salyut-7* (2017).

PRODUCER

Katia FILIPPOVA

After studies in linguistics and television journalism, Katia (Ekaterina Philippova) began her career working for Nikita Mikhalkov and The Union of Cinematographers of Russia.

In 2000-2002, Katia produced film festivals in the U.S. and Russia before her film production career began with the short, *Just the Two of Us* by Alexander Veledinsky, screened in Un Certain Regard at Cannes Film Festival 2001. Since then, she has produced multiple television series, feature films and documentaries, many of which have gained awards.

She is the only official member of the International Association of European producers - ACE 2013 from the Russian Federation.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Pan-Atlantic Studio

Pan-Atlantic Studio is an independent company specializing in the production of feature, documentary and television films.

Pan-Atlantic Studio was founded in 2005 by Katia Filippova. Many films produced by Pan-Atlantic Studio have won professional awards and honors.