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Film News

FROM LATVIA



 NATIONAL
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LATVIA

Special Issue
Latvian Documentaries
2008

LATVIAN DOCUMENTARIES

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Special Issue Latvian Documentaries 2008

Front Cover *Debt to Afghanistan*

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The Deconstruction of an Artist

"Gustavs Klucis is the best-known Latvian artist in the world, and he wouldn't be if he hadn't been in Russian during the revolution. It's another question though, if fame and the upper echelons of art can make up for the tragedy of a man being destroyed by the system whose ideals he firmly believed in." Director Pēteris Krilovs, author of the film *Klucis. The Deconstruction of an Artist*.

During the making of the film you said that no other work to date has been so difficult for you. Why was it so hard?

There was a whole string of reasons, first of all the very complicated and lengthy research. Gustavs Klucis is

joined the Latvian Riflemen regiment in St. Petersburg during the revolution. And this is an important disparity – if he chose his own road, or was told where to go!

We had really good guides and pointers in all the museums and archives – in Rīga, as in Moscow, St. Petersburg and even Greece. By the way, while working on this film I once again realized that I'm a huge fan of archived materials, and can eagerly pour over old images countless times. And then beloved second-tier heroes also gradually emerge; for example, in the mass exercise scene with the shovels and rakes, a guy who appears twice briefly, is doing everything wrong – turning the wrong way, lifting his arms up when everyone has them lowered...

I've so grown to love him; I've even written a biography and a story continuation for him, on how everything can

those archives for some 120 hours, trying to restore events from almost a century ago.

For me as director the biggest problem was the fact that the film's raw material is in fact static – mostly archive photos and poster graphics, not live footage!

That is exactly what I admire in the film – this sort of material could have become the usual boringly chronological string of archival images that we've seen so many times, but instead there is incredibly live and creatively infused imagery throughout the film!

That's why I took one viewer's reaction to the archive imagery from the Paris World Expo at the end of the film as a particular compliment – the voiceover text urges to look closely at the man in the white suit, because it may be the only live footage of Gustavs Klucis, but the viewer said to me afterwards: "How can that be, I've been watching him live from the film's start!"

It was difficult to find an editing style because I'm not really a film director in my day-to-day, as I work project to project. Still, it was a pleasant difficulty – to find the right proportion and structure for the staging, the archive and modern-day materials, poster reconstruction and voiceover text...We tried so many different versions!

Now perhaps it seems strange, but at the beginning not many believed in this project, and we weren't given funding. That's why I think that this film is really a monument to the producer, Uldis Cekulis, who believed me and found the right way to convince others. He sent me around the world with this project to different pitchings, moreover to very precisely and wisely selected destinations: *Ex Oriente* in Prague, *Sunny Side of the Doc*, Karlovy Vary, Jihlava...

We were also helped by Tue Steen Müller's blessing, though even he was

go so wrong.

An additional problem with the research was that most of the films and material isn't about Latvia – Gustavs Klucis only spent his first 20 years here, but then lived in Russia for the remainder of his active life. That meant that while making the film we had to be in Moscow numerous times, sitting in

fairly critical in the beginning – there's nothing there! But then he saw the trailer, envisaged the film's intended devices and became a supporter of the Klucis project, even writing a very positive review in the end.

This is a very expensive film for Latvia's circumstances, but we received MEDIA fund support, and slowly the interest shown in our project by our foreign colleagues increased our conviction that something could come of this. It was also easier to work knowing what foreign TV channels and other interested parties wanted to see in this film – we could structure the material more precisely, so that it was clear not only to us, but also to people who aren't as immersed in the topic. After all, it's possible to encounter viewers who need WWI explained to them, much less ever having heard of the founding of Latvia, so everything has to be told almost from the dawn of time.

Can foreign viewers even begin understand the tragedy of Klucis and the brutality of those times? Don't they ask – why didn't his wife call the police?

Well, there were moments during the pitchings that really bothered me – I showed a trailer and explained Klucis' biography in great detail...Yes, they knew about Stalin and were aware of the period, but they still asked, why then was he shot?

And now, seeing the film, will they understand?

Yes, I think so. Although for those who haven't experienced the Soviet system, it will be hard at any rate to accept that Klucis was in fact shot mainly because he was Latvian. Most people now understand that Hitler destroyed Jews in Germany solely because of their ethnicity, but perhaps we haven't explained our history enough, and that is the negligence of historians. This film showed me once again that we need to talk about history, that it's a very interesting and important subject. Unfortunately up until now, we've been treating Latvia's history the way Europeans in the Middle Ages thought of the American continent – it's somewhere there across the ocean, but we don't go there because we're scared to. We need some Columbus to go and bring back word

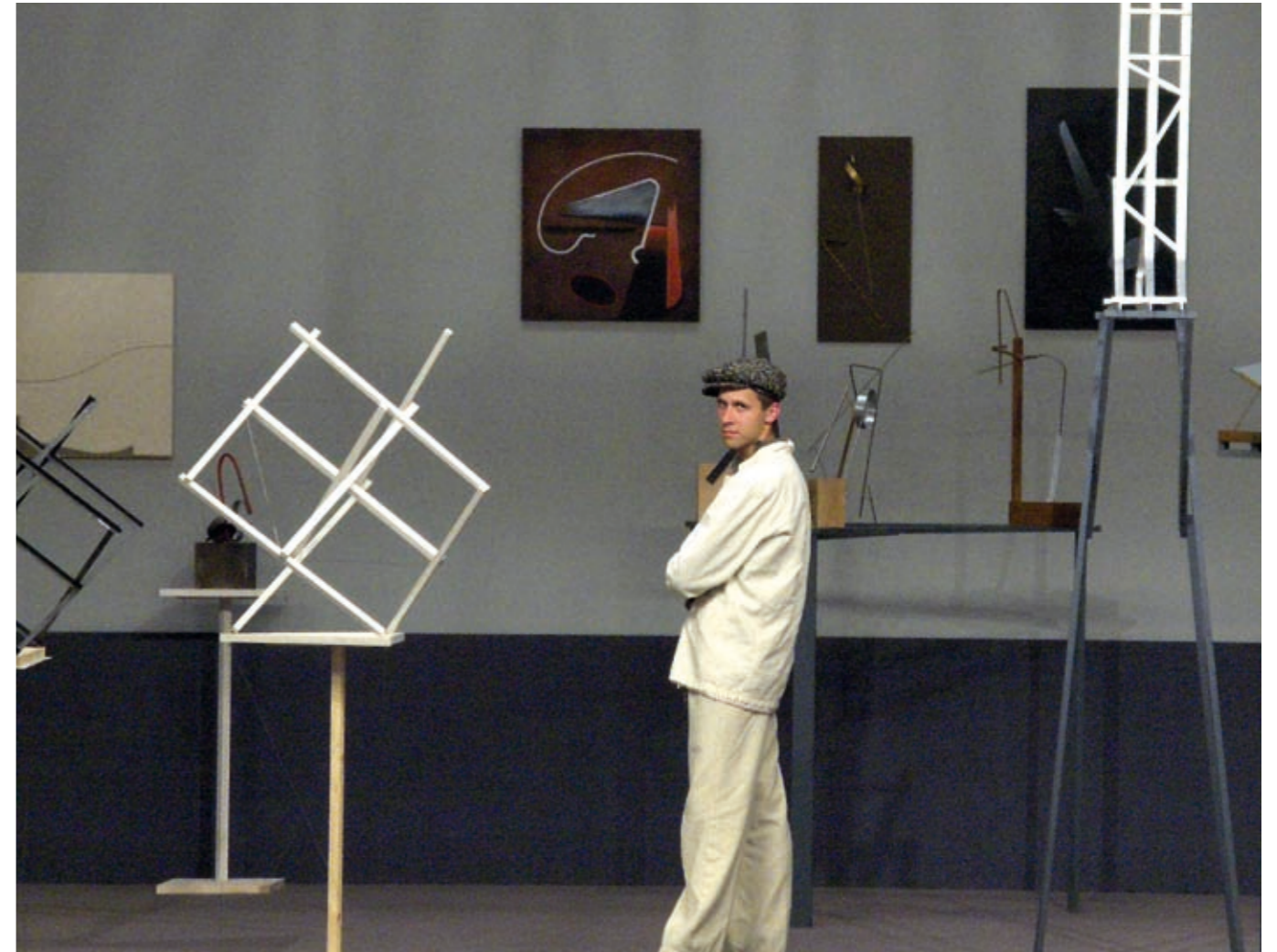
that yes, there is land!

One of the great things in the film is your very personal voiceover commentary where you're drawing parallels with your father's fate. Did you already have this very personal relationship with the material during concept development, or did it come with getting to know Gustavs Klucis on a deeper level?

No, the intention wasn't that personal. Although there were various types of people in my family, even party members, we still knew what had gone on – about Katyn in Poland, about 1937 and 1938, about Stalin's repressions over a long time period. I always thought – how can you not know what has gone on before you, and influenced so much in your present. I sometimes feel I know more than my biological age should know, as I listened to all sorts of stories from childhood on. That's why I didn't have any huge revelations or moments of shock while exploring Gustavs Klucis' biography, as I knew that unfortunately his fate was very characteristic of the times. Only it was all the more tragic because of his remarkable talent.



becoming more and more popular in Latvia and elsewhere, and though there is a lot of material about him, it hasn't been investigated and grasped. For example, several very significant facts changed three times during the making of the film – one source said that Klucis was drafted into the Czar's army in 1915, but another said that he had voluntarily





And I understood that it's much more effective to tell the fate of Latvia and Latvians through a world-renown figure, and not through some introverted patriot quietly clenching his fists in his pockets.

By the way, I think it's interesting that the film's text, which sounds so personal, was actually co-written by at least four authors, and we all came to the conclusion that Latvians have been responsible for their own harsh fate, first under the Czar and then in Soviet Russia. Latvians are a strange people – prone to collaborationism, and yet still fairly independent with a strong inner resistance to forced ideas.

In the middle of the editing process I had already decided that the film will end with International, and I even heard the way it would sound. Now I'm very proud of this finale, which makes it all even more significant – it's no longer the misfortune of a stupid Latvian farmer believing in the wrong ideas.

Now that you've looked deeply into Gustavs Klucis, have you understood him? He invested his talent in the adulation of these ideas – did he believe in them until the end of his life, or did he start to understand the mess he was in after a while?

I think he agreed with the ideals of the regime, but understood very well that Stalin was a monster. In his writings, Klucis is very demanding – of people, of their personality traits, and that is why, I think, he knew very well that many of those from the upper echelons surrounding Stalin, trying to get closer to power (Latvians among them), were petty and despicable, and that is why in some way they found his punishment justifiable.

By the way, in deconstructing Klucis' posters, we too relished his work process and could imagine how he felt, for example, taking Stalin's stumpy little figure and stretching it out to make a monumental image. Some sort of attitude had to develop in the process of bending reality, and I think it was rather ironic.

Valentina Zeļukina, expert on Klucis' works, said that even though Klucis worked on a flat surface, he had unique three-dimensional thinking. I would like to say the same of the film – in the moments when Klucis' posters rise up from an archive image or photograph, the screen's surface also comes to life and gains extra dimension.

You could call that our film's patent – we discovered that Klucis' posters are an exceptional phenomena from the psychological perception viewpoint. The viewer feels like he is on a moving platform in his posters, constantly changing angle and distance to the object, because there are such different perspectives and measures in the arrangement of forms in one image. This is a brilliant device that many 3D graphics experts have yet to grasp. Eighty years ago Klucis was a lot more progressive. By the way, audiences abroad see more of this artistic effect in Klucis' posters, while we are weighed down more by the ideological.

So you think that this film is viewed differently in Latvia, Russia and elsewhere in Europe?

Yes, you can already sense it – in Latvia, where the film's run has been extended, the public sees more the tragic fate and repression. In other countries they see more the story of an exceptional artist. As an expert said, he liked the fact that the film differs from the usual artists' biographies – full of admiration, distanced; here the film's hero is opened from within, explored, and perhaps even understood.

That then is the deconstruction mentioned in the title. Another effective device in the film is the staging – did Klucis himself inspire this?

Strangely enough I knew that there would be actors in this film from the beginning – also because I've already used staging in several documentaries. One of the reasons is that there isn't very much material on Klucis, but the film needed visual events, which is, simply stated, something has to move in the scene. It's a sort of period reconstruction, trying to bring to life feelings, colours, light and being convinced that a hand or shoulder movement or shadow can do more than text.

My day-to-day job of teaching young actors certainly helped this process – we frequently act out sketches that

seemingly do not have story, action and dialogue, only some small point of reference from which to unravel emotions for a scene. I can truly say that I'm experienced in this reanimation genre, and it was a real treat for me as a features' director.

You still view yourself as a feature film director even after such a stellar documentary?

Yes, definitely. Only I'm concerned with a problem I see in working with budding directors and seeing the films of others – contemporary cinema is becoming more and more narrative and literary. There is a lot of action on screen, but it is mostly effects – with bad prose beneath it, force-fed by primitive story devices. Now, with the experience of this film, I can say to younger people with much more assurance – you have to fight for a film's visuals, because it is a very essential quality. And if it can be done in a documentary, then it can be done even more so in a fiction.



Pēteris Krilovs

Date of Birth 18.02.1949.

Professional Education

1969-1975

feature film director, Moscow State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK)

Work Experience

1993-today

Professor at the Drama Department, Latvian Academy of Culture

1994-1996

Artistic Director at the Daugavpils Theatre

1975-1990

Film director at the Riga Film Studio

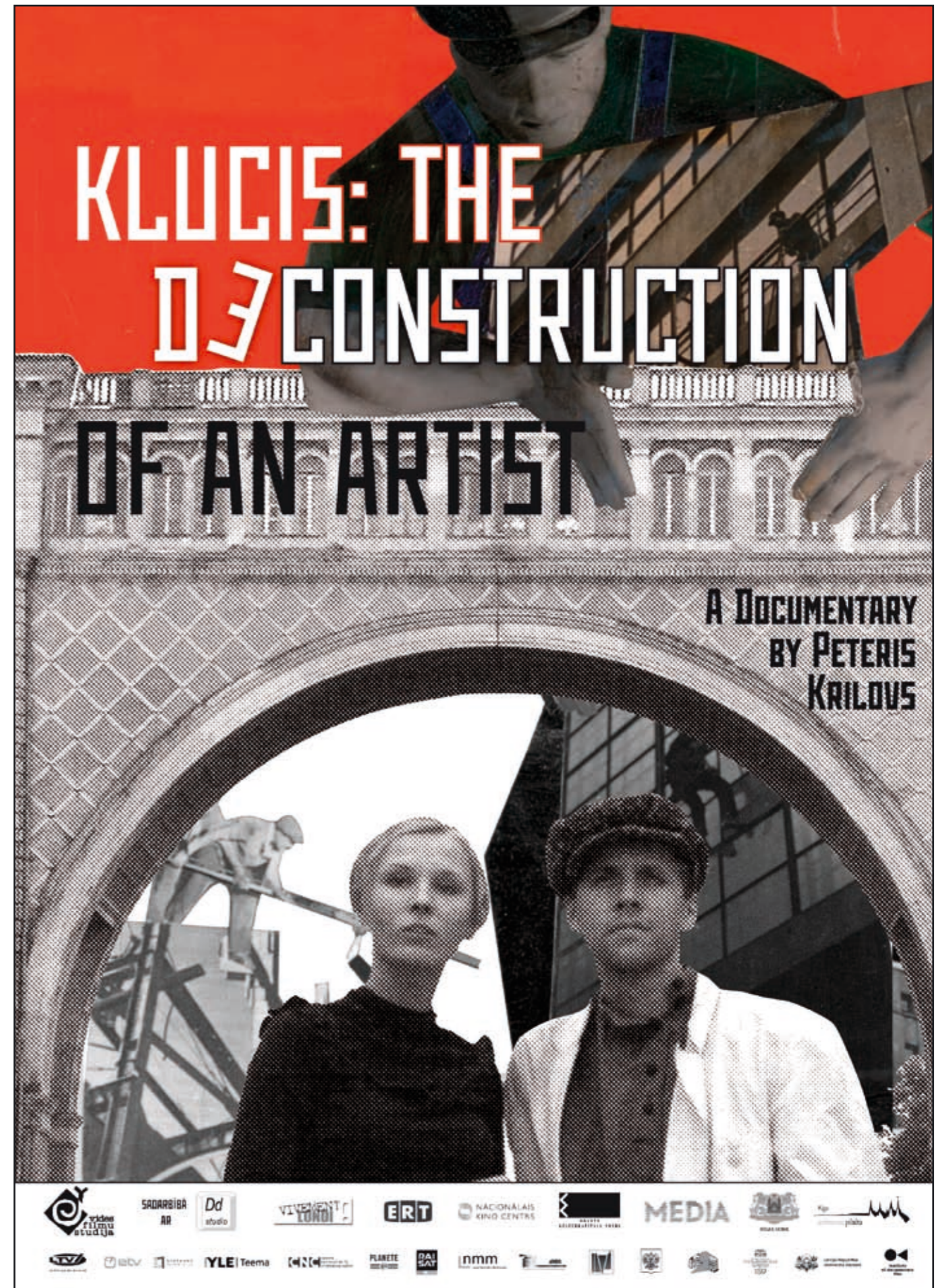
Professional Skills

1990-today ten documentaries

1990-today fifteen theatre productions

1985-1989 three short films

1977-1989 five feature films



The Soviet Story

Our main goal is to break through the wall of silence, say the film's authors. And they've succeeded – Edvins Šnore's documentary *The Soviet Story* has, like no other film in Latvia's recent history, provoked so many active disputes, cardinally opposing opinions and even aggressive deeds, including the burning of the director's effigy.

The film's author, an international relations student, collected the film's material for ten years. Upon examining historical archives he felt bitter disappointment about the injustices arising from the depiction and assessment of events in the last century. "Delving into the documents revealed increasingly close ties to both totalitarian regimes - Nazism and Communism, which were not only similar, but in the middle of both regimes there was also good cooperation and understanding on, for example, the necessity of the holocaust, mass murder and concentration camps. But all that has even deeper roots, found in Marx and Engel's philosophy, which grew in Europe's culture." believes the film's author.

The film took two years to make, and victims of the communist regime were interviewed in the process, as were politicians, leading historians and experts from all of Europe. Filming took place in Russia, Ukraine, Germany, France, the UK, Belgium and Latvia, and the circle of people involved in the film allows it to enlarge upon more than just being a Latvian product. A chronology of events shows that the film's resonance reaches far beyond the borders of Latvia.

March – the film's website www.sovietstory.com goes live, stating – the creative group behind *The Soviet Story*

has been driven by the desire to counterbalance the film *Nazism Baltic Style* by Moscow's *Third Rome Studio*, which was screened in Russia, and which Latvian historians deemed to be anti-Latvian propaganda with the aim to demonstrate a so-called fascism revival in the Baltics.

April 4th – newspapers write that news of *The Soviet Story* in Latvia's Russian internet portal has provoked an unprecedented number of comments and hundreds of letters have been received by the website. Interest in *The Soviet Story* has been expressed by Azerbaijan television, and Paul Raidna, the Estonian Honorary Consul in the U.S., has asked about buying rights to the film.

April 9th – premiere of the film at the European Parliament in Brussels. Financial support was given to the film by UEN (Union for Europe of the Nations) and European parliament deputies from Latvia, Inese Vaidere and Ģirts Valdis Kristovskis, who are both in the film as well. Vaidere says at the premiere: "...*The Soviet Story* will be a significant breaking point in understanding European history.", while Kristovskis stresses: "As soon as there is any question related to Russia, many EU officials still cringe. This film is only a starting solution that has to stir up public thinking, and from now on, in the name of security and conciliation of Europe's future, there has to be honest discussion on the totalitarian regimes that ruled in Europe."

May 5th – the film is screened in Latvia's capital, in the movie theatre Rīga, and among the persons attending the premiere are high-level government officials, foreign ambassadors, representatives of the politically repressed, and historians. Initially the movie theatre plans to screen the film for three days, but the run is extended due to the



demand for tickets.

May 6th – the UEN (Union for Europe of the Nations) press secretary releases information stating that the film has been sharply criticized by Russian official media, even though it has yet to be screened there. "There is even a persecution campaign against Russian historians who participated in the film. For example, Roginskis, head of Memorial, has been forced to publically express his regret for participating in a project "hostile to the state", despite the fact that Roginskis wasn't even involved in the film..."

Film director Edvins Šnore's view is: "It's comical that the Russian propaganda machine is already exposing in detail the so-called falsifications in *The Soviet Story*, and as proof pointing out mistakes in the names of organizations and military person ranks in Nazi and Soviet collaboration documents. These documents really do appear in the film, but without the mistakes indicated!"

May 7th – President of Latvia, Valdis Zatlers, watches the film, and immediately afterwards the President's Chancery contacts the film's producers asking for a copy of *The Soviet Story* in DVD format. On May 22nd, the President gives DVD copies as gifts to the presidents of Estonia, Lithuania and Poland.

May 8th – Latvian Justice Minister Gaidis Bērziņš requests that the Ministry of Education and Science ensure that *The Soviet Story* is shown in all Latvian schools, and the Minister is also of the view that the film should be seen by all high-standing government officials. The Minister believes that *The Soviet Story* is a striking example of how to show historical facts to the public: "The film very clearly and precisely proves that the German Nazi dictatorship and the Soviet Union's communist regime

were in essence not only one and the same, but even collaborated in occupying other countries".

May 17th – At the Latvian Embassy in Moscow, pro-Kremlin youth organization *Rossija Molodaja* stages a protest campaign *Don't Let Them Rewrite History!* Some 70 activists publically hang and burn a symbolic effigy of director Šnore, throwing broken pencils into the flames, and the organization's leader, Maksim Mischenko, demonstratively breaks a gold Parker pen. *Rossija Molodaja* representatives try to hand Latvian Ambassador Andris Teikmanis a letter with a thousand signatures while he is at the Europe Days celebrations in Gorky Park. In it they ask the Latvian government to ban the screening of *The Soviet Story*. The Ambassador does not accept the papers, indicating that they should be sent to the Embassy by mail. The Embassy does not receive anything in the mail in the following days.

May 18th – The Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends a note to the Russian Foreign Ministry, asking in the future to notify them in a timely manner of any protests planned at the Latvian Embassy.

May 21st – Latvian Television announces that the film will be shown on the LTV 1 channel on June 17th – the 68th anniversary of the day Soviet military tanks rolled into Latvia, and the government of independent Latvia was forced to step down as result of an USSR ultimatum.

May 22nd – During the European Parliament plenary session in Strasbourg, Baltic Intergroup deputies, representing eight Baltic region countries, are informed of the protest in Moscow. Baltic Intergroup chairman, Christopher Beazley, stresses that it's important to react to such incidents; he notifies the EU's External Relations Commissioner, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, of the protest. UEN President Brian Crowley announces that he will also inform EP Chairman Gert Poettering of this issue. A letter submitted to the EP Chairman states: "We propose that the question of the violation of diplomatic norms in relation to one of the EU member states be mentioned in the next EU-Russia Summit. In this way you would not only express your negative attitude towards the mentioned incident in Moscow, but you would also extend your moral support to those

people who believe that the crimes committed by the two totalitarian regimes – Nazism and Stalinism – will receive equally large condemnations in an international arena."

May 23rd – *The Economist* writes: "Edvins Snore's film *The Soviet Story* is the most powerful antidote yet to the sanitization of the past. BEING burnt in effigy on the streets of Moscow by nationalist hoodlums must count as a kind of *Oscar* if you are a Latvian filmmaker whose aim is to expose modern Russia's blindness to the criminal history of the Soviet Union. Mr. Snore and his sponsors in the European Parliament have produced a sharply provocative work." Moreover, *The Economist* points out that those who want to ban it should try refuting it first.

May 27th - Movie theatre Rīga announces that they are once again extending the film's run on account of audience interest.

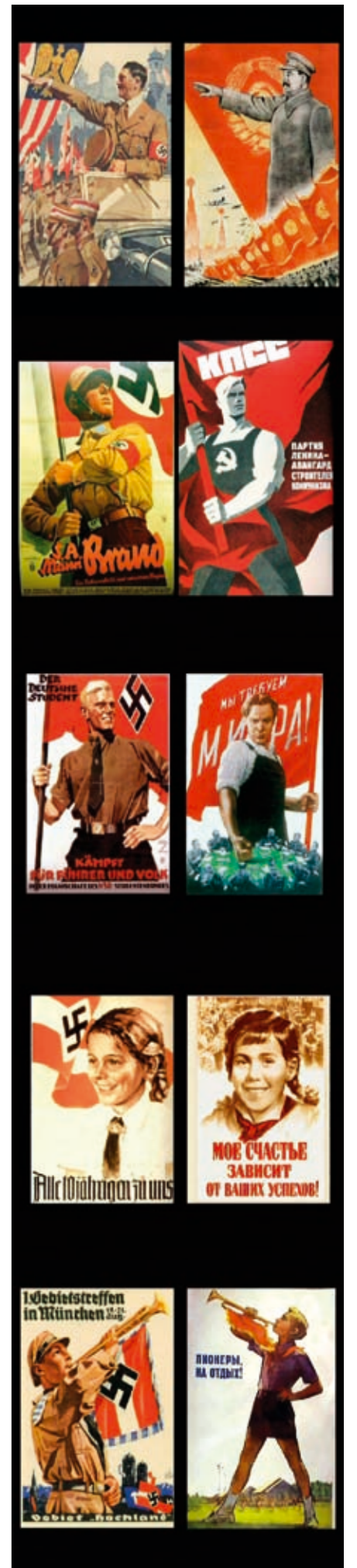
June 1st – Kristaps Valdnieks, the film's producer, announces that they are in talks with several countries to show the film abroad.

June 6th – Kremlin historian Alexander Dyukov, writing in his internet blog on www.livejournal.com, admits that he watched 2/3 of *The Soviet Story* and had only one desire: "to kill the film's director and set the Latvian Embassy on fire". The historian began disputing the film even before it premiered, calling the filmmakers bastards. Among historians, Dyukov is known to doubt the validity of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact's secret protocol.

June 10th – The Occupation Museum of Latvia begins showing the film, joining the many municipal institutions and schools that have expressed interest in having the film shown outside movie theatres.

Reviews of the film are published in the Russian media: *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, *Komsomolskaja Pravda*, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, and in European media: *Le Figaro*, *Economist.com*, *Parliament.com*, *European Voice*, *Hospodarske Noviny* and others.

Tue Steen Müller, Filmkommentaren.dk: "The director has done huge and impressive research in the archives. It's a film you cannot escape from (...), it's a film for public and global TV channels."



RELEASED

In Bed with Surrealism. Sukuts

Documentary, 30', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2007
Created with the support of the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Ilona Bruver / Producer Ilona Bruver / Production company Kinolats / Contacts Kinolats, Kapseju 3b, Riga LV 1046 / tel.: + 371 2644 0907, art.is@apollo.lv



The international film festival *Arsenals* has been a fixture on the Riga scene for the last 20 years. It

has introduced new film aesthetic and was one of the only creatively free events in Soviet times. Over the years the festival has influenced culture and society in Eastern Europe, continually dazzling us with its creative point. The film is a portrait of the director, the father of *Arsenals* and the trusty knight of surrealism.

Released September 2007



RELEASED

Nazis and Blondes

Documentary, 58' / 84', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia/ Estonia, 2008
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation, Estonian Film Foundation, Eurimages

Director Arbo Tammiksaar / Producers Jaak Kilmi, Askolds Saulitis / Production Companies Subjektīva Filma (Latvia), Kuukulgur Film OÜ (Estonia) / Contacts Subjektīva Filma, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 5640, subjektivfilma@inbox.lv



About the fate of Baltic Film actors in Soviet period cinema. Not about the glory – the big roles and stardom

– but about the darker side, the way the stereotype of the enemy was created by the Soviet era industry.

Released June 2008



RELEASED

KLUCIS. The Deconstruction of an Artist

Documentary, 56' / 90', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia/ France/ Greece
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation, Riga City Council, MEDIA Broadcasting, LTV, LRT, ETV, YLE, RAI

Director Pēteris Krilovs / Producers Uldis Cekulis, Jean-Francois Le Corre / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija (Latvia) / Co-production with Vivement Lundi (France) and ERT (Greece) / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Riga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Latvian artist Gustavs Klucis embraced the technological revolution of the early 20th century

and applied it to his art, becoming a classic of Russian constructivism. He created photomontage and Lenin's public image, and became the most important artist of the Soviets. Killed by Stalin's regime, his artistic career poses many unanswered questions. This documentary reveals many secrets and intimate moments of his dramatic personality – the unequal duel between the Artist and the Power.

Released May 2008



TO BE RELEASED

1x1

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation, Latvian TV

Directors Daina Rašenbauma, Gints Grūbe / Producer Inese Boka-Grūbe / Production Company Labvakar / Contacts Labvakar, Šmerļa 3, Riga LV 1006 / tel.: + 371 6752 1414, birojs@e-labvakar.lv, www.labvakar.lv



Since Latvia regained independence in 1991, only a small number of all those who emigrated

during the 1940's returned, though many of them had been waiting for the occupation to end. This is about the first generation of Latvian émigrés – those who came back, those who chose to stay in the West.

To be released November 2008



Arts & Culture

RELEASED

The Stations

Documentary, 25', Betacam SP, 4:3, b/w, stereo, Latvia, 2008
Created with the support of National Film Centre of Latvia and State Culture Capital Foundation, Latvian Television

Director Ilona Bruver / Producer Ilona Bruver / Production Company Kinolats / Contacts Kinolats, Kapseju 3b, Riga, LV 1046 / tel.: + 371 2644 0907, art.is@apollo.lv



A film about the romantic days past of railway stations, as seen through the eyes of an old engine conductor

and a cashier in one of the forgotten railway stations that trains only pass by. It's a lonely world, full of memories and railway ambience. A story without words, but with music, sounds of the railroad and unrealized journeys that make their lives endurable.

Released January 2008



TO BE RELEASED

The Latvian with a \$100 000 Price on His Head

Documentary, 52', HDV, 14:3, colour, stereo, Latvia/ Sweden
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia

Director Una Celma / Producer Dace Siatkovska / Production Company Latsfilma / Co-production with Lats Film (Sweden) / Contacts Latsfilma Čaka 33-43, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 2947 5390, latsfilma@one.lv



Lars Vilks is a Swedish artist of Latvian ancestry, a university professor, sculptor, provocateur,

scandal-maker and State Secretary of his own micro-nation of Ladonia. He is the only Swede and the only Latvian to have a \$100 000 price on his head. But perhaps his creative and intellectual powers are worth much more?

To be released May 2009



TO BE RELEASED

Life Unworthy of Life

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation, Media Plus, Riga City Council

Director Dāvis Simanis / Producer Roberts Vinovskis / Production Company Locomotive Productions / Contacts Locomotive Productions, Brupinieku 28-57, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: +371 2929 8667, + 371 6729 8538, office@locomotive.lv, www.locomotive.lv.



Love, hate, power and greed are just a small spectrum of human characteristics

encoded in Richard Wagner's *Die Walkure*. It is universal opera and therefore creates a massive challenge to an artist's imagination. *Life Unworthy of Life* is an investigation of the director's mentality into and beyond the reality of staging the *Walkure* at the Latvian National Opera. Taking the *Walkure* phenomenon to an abstract level, the film seeks the fragile link between a pragmatically constructed performance and the world of the unconscious that lies within the music and the narrative.

To be released November 2008



Nude

Documentary, 26', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Ināra Kolmane / Producer Jānis Juhņevičs / Production Company Film Studio Deviņi / Contacts Film Studio Deviņi, Šmerļa 3-326, Riga LV 1006 / tel.: + 371 6724 1688, devini@parks.lv



Some people collect family albums, but accomplished arts scholar, Sarmīte Sīle, takes a nude picture of herself

every ten years. Behind this unique series of nude photos that span a lifetime is her story.

To be released September 2008



Loner and Bacchanal

Documentary, 56', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia

Director Andis Mizišs / Producer Laima Freimane / Production Company Screen Vision / Contacts Screen Vision, Baznīcas 31, Riga LV 1010 / tel.: +371 6729 1584, laima@screenvision.lv, www.screenvision.lv



Anšlavs Eglītis (1906-1993) was the only Latvian who was a member of the Hollywood Foreign Press

Association for more than 30 years. He was not only a film critic, but also a talented writer, dramatist, and poet, known for his deep cultural knowledge, sparkling wit and imagination. Afraid that he would make up interviews, his editor ordered him to take a photo together with each celebrity he interviewed, thus creating a unique photo archive.

To be released March 2008

The Sounds that Sun Makes

Documentary, 70', HD, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation

Directors Dāvis Simanis, Gints Grūbe / Producer Inese Boka-Grūbe / Production Company Mistrus Media / Contacts Mistrus Media, Stabu 33, K-211, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 2925 9580, inese.boka@mistrusmedia.lv



The documentary film *The Sounds that Sun Makes* follows the process of musical creation during the unique

collaborative project *World's Sun Songs*. Seventeen contemporary well known composers from all over the world who have met in a single musical space, mediated by the Latvian choir *Kamēr...* The film investigates the world of sonic creation of seven composers involved in the project – Giya Kancheli of Tbilisi, Pēteris Vasks of Latvia, Leonid Desyatnikov of Russia, Polina Medyulianova of Uzbekistan, Sir John Tavener of Great Britain, John Luther Adams of the United States, Ko Matsushita of Japan.

To be Released December 2008



Arts & Culture

Mansur's War Dance

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Aija Bley / Producer Guntis Trekteris / Production Company Ego Media / Contacts Ego Media, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 1720, egomedia@egomediaweb.com, www.egomediaweb.com



Mansur Musaev is a 12 year-old Chechen boy who has spent his childhood in wartime and as a

refugee. Mansur is an exceptionally talented dancer who has been performing since he was a toddler.

To be released: June 2008



Perpetual Rehearsal

Documentary, 2 x 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, Keren Rabinovitz Culture Foundation, Israel

Director Herz Frank / Producer Herz Frank / Production Company Film Studio EFEF, Kaupo Filma / Contacts Film Studio EFEF, Kr. Valdemāra 18-1, Riga LV 1010 / tel.: + 371 6724 2611, herzfrank@yahoo.com



Observing the rehearsals of Yevgenij Arye, the founder and artistic director of Israel's world-famous

Gesher Theatre over a ten-year period, shows an artist aiming for the ideal.

To be released July 2008



RELEASED

600 Stories That Have to be Told

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, mono, Latvia, 2007

Director Dzintra Geka / Producer Dzintra Geka / Production Company SB / Contacts SB, Graudu 41 A, Riga LV 1058 / tel.: + 371 6762 9960, dzintrag@inbox.lv www.sibirijasberni.lv



Interviews were conducted over a seven year period with 670 people who were deported to Siberia as children in 1941. Fragments of their memories form a mosaic revealing their past experiences of losing fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. Time heals, but nothing is forgotten and the stories must be told.

Released June 2007

RELEASED

The Soviet Story

Documentary, 52' / 86', DV, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2008
Created with the support of European Parliament, Riga City Council

Director Edvins Šnore / Producer Kristaps Valdnieks / Production Company Labvakar / Contacts Labvakar, Šmerļa 3-326, Riga LV 1006 / tel.: + 371 2919 9400, sovietstory@gmail.com



This is a story of an Allied power, which helped the Nazis to fight Jews and which slaughtered its own people on an industrial scale. Assisted by the West, this power triumphed on May 9th, 1945. Its crimes were made taboo, and the complete story of Europe's most murderous regime has never been told. Until now...

Released April 2008

RELEASED

Debt to Afghanistan

Documentary, 58', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia / State Culture Capital Foundation / MEDIA

Director Askolds Saulitis / Producer Askolds Saulitis / Production Company Subjektiv Filma / Contacts Subjektiv Filma, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 5640, subjektivfilma@inbox.lv, www.35mm.lv



The politologist Atis Lejiņš sets out on a risky trip to Afghanistan to find a former mujahideen

commandant, to return his heart's debt for saving his life during the USSR invasion in the 80ies. At that time also young men from Latvia fought and died in Afghanistan without the right to choose. Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, in New York and the fall of the Taliban regime, Latvians are back to Afghanistan – as part of NATO missions.

Released May 2008



TO BE RELEASED

Agapitova and Igarka

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia

Director Dzintra Geka / Producer Dzintra Geka / Production company SB / Contacts SB, Graudu 41 A, Riga LV 1058 / tel.: + 371 6762 9960, dzintrag@inbox.lv, www.sibirijasberni.lv



In 1941 almost 4,000 children under the age of 16 were deported to Siberia. Some returned to Latvia,

many perished, and many were left in exile, where they had their own children. What is their children's fate? Naģežda Āriņa and Anatolijs Taurenis were born in the 1950s in permanently frozen Igarka. Their mothers had been childhood friends in Latvia, before the deportation. Nadja managed to return to Latvia and now sells souvenirs, but for Taurenis Latvia is still a dream...In the fall of 2007, Naģežda heads to Igarka to visit Taurenis.

To be released November 2008



History

RELEASED

Little Bird's Diary

Documentary animation, 24', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2007
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Edmunds Jansons / Producer Bruno Aščuks / Production Company Studija Centrus / Contacts Studija Centrus, Alberta 7-8, Riga LV 1010 / tel.: + 371 6733 3043, bruno.ascuks@studijacentrus.lv www.studijacentrus.lv



The first Latvian documentary animation film is based on unique drawings from the diary of 80 year-old

Irīna Pilke, encompassing a period from the end of WWII until the beginning of the 80s. These drawings, where the author appears as a little bird, show everything around her...everything we call life. Through the eyes of the little bird, Chiz, we get a glimpse of an earlier age.

Released September 2007



TO BE RELEASED

Controversial History

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, b&w, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia / the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Ināra Kolmane / Producer Jānis Juhņēvičs / Production Company Film Studio Deviņi / Contacts Film Studio Deviņi, Šmerļa 3-326, Riga LV 1006 / tel.: + 371 6724 1688, devini@parks.lv



The whole truth about Latvian soldiers has yet to be unravelled. Were they involved with the Nazi genocide

against Jews on the Western Front? Were they fighting for communist ideals on the Eastern Front? In a follow-up to The Latvian Legion (2000), eyewitnesses and archive materials tell the vivid story of the destinies of Latvian soldiers in WWII.

To be released December 2008



History

RELEASED

KLUCIS. The Deconstruction of an Artist

Documentary, 56'/90', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia/ France/ Greece
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation, Riga City Council, MEDIA Broadcasting, LTV, LRT, ETV, YLE, RAI

Director Pēteris Krilovs / Producers Uldis Cekulis, Jean-Francois Le Corre / Production Company Vides Filma Studija (Latvia) / Co-production with Vivement Lundi (France) and ERT (Greece) / Contacts Vides Filma Studija, Lapu 17, Riga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Latvian artist Gustavs Klucis embraced the technological revolution of the early 20th century

and applied it to his art, becoming a classic of Russian constructivism. He created photomontage and Lenin's public image, and became the most important artist of the Soviets. Killed by Stalin's regime, his artistic career poses many unanswered questions. This documentary reveals many secrets and intimate moments of his dramatic personality – the unequal duel between the Artist and the Power.

Released May 2008



RELEASED

Debt to Afghanistan

Documentary, 58', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2008
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation, MEDIA

Director Askolds Saulitis / Producer Askolds Saulitis / Production Company Subjektiv Filma / Contacts Subjektiv Filma, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 5640, subjektivfilma@inbox.lv, www.35mm.lv



The politologist Atis Lejiņš sets out on a risky trip to Afghanistan to find a former mujahideen commandant, to return his heart's debt for saving his life during the USSR invasion in the 80ies. At that time also young men from Latvia fought and died in Afghanistan without the right to choose. Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, in New York and the fall of the Taliban regime, Latvians are

back to Afghanistan – as part of NATO missions.
Released May 2008



TO BE RELEASED

I Inspect Bad Ships

Documentary, 52', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia/ France
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, LTV, MEDIA Development and Provence Cote d'Azur

Director Roy Lekus / Producers Uldis Cekulis, Roy Lekus / Production Company Vides Filma Studija / Co-production with Private Joke Productions (France) / Contacts Vides Filma Studija, Lapu 17, Riga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Focussing on the dramatic stories of two ships, Victor and Olga J that never made it back to their home ports in Latvia and Greece, this documentary investigates mistreatment and abuse of crews in maritime transportation. Based on director Roy Lekus' original footage, the investigation takes us to France, England, Latvia, Bulgaria and Ghana. As the stories of the Victor and the Olga J unfold, they yield a picture of cynical indifference on the part of rogue ship owners who flout the basic human rights of crews and of legal impotence on the part of national and international authorities.

To be released October 2009



TO BE RELEASED

May 4 Republic

Documentary, 70', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Antra Cilinska / Producer Antra Cilinska / Production Company Juris Podnieks Studio / Contacts Juris Podnieks Studio, Citadeles 2, Riga LV 1010 / tel.: + 371 6721 6967, jps@jps.lv, www.jps.lv



Legal proceedings against the Banka Baltija, which went bankrupt in 1995, have been going on unsuccessfully for years. The issue is why one of the first of newly-independent Latvia's banks was deliberately brought down, losing the investment money of almost every other family in Latvia. It's one of the most glaring examples of brute capitalism in Latvia's recent history, but it has been followed

by others – from offshore transit-business schemes, to high-level systematic corruption in state commissions. Latvia's entry into the EU and NATO seems to have changed the form and means of what goes on, but the story of how democracy and market economics work only in so far as they are not replaced by ties between money, power and crime continues. This, right now, is quite possibly a breaking point or decisive moment determining what will end or go on.

To be released December 2009



Natural History & Wildlife

RELEASED

Three Men and a Fish Pond

Documentary, 52', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2008
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation and Latvian Television

Directors Māris Maskalāns, Laila Pakalniņa / Producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Three elderly country bachelors idle away their time amidst semi-wild nature, closer to birds and pond fish than to humans.

Released May 2008



Science & Technology

TO BE RELEASED

The Secrets of the Pyramid of Djoser

Documentary, 52', HD, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia / Created with the support of National Film Centre of Latvia

Director Romualds Pipars / Producer Baiba Urbāne / Production Company Film Studio Ģilde / Contacts Film Studio Ģilde, Amatu 5, Rīga LV 1941 / tel.: + 371 6721 0022, pipars@mailbox.lv, www.gilde.lv



Latvian scientists – archaeologists, photogrammetry and radar specialists, architects, geologists, historians, computer programmers and others, banded together to create a unique technology for exploring archaeological sites, and made a sensational find in 2007. In the oldest stone building in the world – Egypt's Pyramid of Djoser – the Latvian scientific expedition discovered new underground rooms and a network of galleries. This new information has forced a reevaluation of previous assumptions about the role and function of pyramids.

To be released April 2009

RELEASED

Little Bird's Diary

Documentary animation, 24', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2007
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Edmunds Jansons / Producer Bruno Ašcuks / Production Company Studija Centurms / Contacts Studija Centurms, Alberta 7-8, Rīga, LV 1010 / tel.: + 371 6733 3043, bruno.ascuks@studijacenturms.lv, www.studijacenturms.lv



The first Latvian documentary animation film is based on unique drawings from the diary of 80 year-old Irīna Piļke, encompassing a period from the end of WWII until the beginning of the 80s. These drawings, where the author appears as a little bird, show everything around her...everything we call life. Through the eyes of the little bird, Chiz, we get a glimpse of an earlier age.

Released September 2007



RELEASED

Three Men and a Fish Pond

Documentary, 52', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2008
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation and Latvian Television

Directors Māris Maskalāns, Laila Pakalniņa / Producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv

Three elderly country bachelors idle away their time amidst semi-wild nature, closer to birds and pond fish than to humans.



Released May 2008



TO BE RELEASED

Aging with Joy

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and LTV

Director Ilze Ramāne / Producers Valdis Ābols, Lukas Trimonis / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Co-production with Ultra Nominum (Lithuania) / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Three elderly ladies – Zenta (82), Elza (90) and Ilga (73) – meet every Tuesday at a Culture House in a suburb of Riga to take part in rehearsals with 40-odd other ladies of the "Granny Choir". Despite their age, low income and health issues, they appear to know how to grow old with dignity, a sense of humour and, as it seems, even joy.

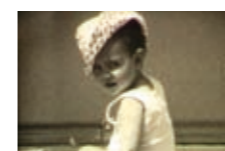
To be released November 2008



Double Portrait of a Coin

Documentary, 2 x 52', Digital Betacam, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Romualds Pipars / Producer Baiba Urbāne / Production Company Film Studio Ģilde / Contacts Film Studio Ģilde, Amatu 5, Rīga LV 1941 / tel.: + 371 6721 0022, pipars@mailbox.lv, www.gilde.lv



Using previously unpublished footage shot by amateurs in the era of 8mm cameras, the film is about the simple human life of those who lived in the Soviet Latvia from 1940 until 1991, a time when a double-moral reigned in society.

To be released September 2008



The Antechamber

Documentary, 26', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation and Riga City Council

Director Andris Gauja / Producer Valdis Ābols / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



The only thing we can be sure of in this world is that one day we shall die. In spite of that, we tend to live our lives as if it is never going to happen. But there are many among us who are deprived of the right to think that way. Victor (31) has a rare form of cancer in an advanced stage. Moreover, his wife is about to divorce him. Trapped in the antechamber of death and with his family falling to pieces, he knows that perhaps the most important decisions of his life must be taken here and now.

To be released February 2009



homo@lv

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation and EU MEDIA Plus programme

Director Kaspars Goba / Producer Ieva Ūbele / Production Company ELM MEDIA / Contacts ELM MEDIA, Ganību dambis 15-47, Rīga LV 1045 / tel.: +371 6729 9722, elmmidia@elmmidia.lv



The film will reveal the multi-layered conflict and heated debates between gays and lesbians trying to come 'out of the closet' in Latvia and their numerous opponents praising nationalism, Christian values and traditional family in the post-Soviet environment. Observation of the conflict through personal stories of main protagonists will provide an opportunity for the society to face its own fear, hatred and aggression and to understand its causes and to see the roots of radicalism in the Latvian society.

To be released September 2008



I Inspect Bad Ships

Documentary, 52', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia/ France
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, LTV, MEDIA Development and Provence Cote d'Azur

Director Roy Lekus / Producers Uldis Cekulis, Roy Lekus / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Co-production with Private Joke Productions (France) / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Focussing on the dramatic stories of two ships, Victor and Olga J that never made it back to their home ports in Latvia and Greece, this documentary investigates mistreatment and abuse of crews in maritime transportation. Based on director Roy Lekus' original footage, the investigation takes us to France, England, Latvia, Bulgaria and Ghana. As the stories of the Victor and the Olga J unfold, they yield a picture of cynical indifference on the part of rogue ship owners who flout the basic human rights of crews and of legal impotence on the part of national and international authorities.

To be released October 2009



Social Issues

TO BE RELEASED

The Man from Varka Kru

Documentary, 52'/80', Super 16 mm, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Viesturs Kairišs / Producer Guntis Trekeris / Production Company Ego Media / Contacts Ego Media, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 1720, egomedia@egomediaweb.com, www.egomediaweb.com



Mārtiņš Rubenis is known as the most famous Latvian luger who won Latvia its first ever Winter

Olympic medal. In the circles of alternative culture he is known as DJ Betons of Varka Kru. Mārtiņš also became the centre of international mass media attention when he participated in an organized hunger strike in front of the Chinese Embassy in Riga in 2006. As a practitioner of Falun Gong and an Olympian, he refuses to accept China as the venue of the 2008 Olympics.

To be released September 2009



Palavani

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia/ Georgia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, Latvian Television and Georgian Television

Director Temo Tsava / Producers Uldis Cekulis, Temo Tsava / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Co-production with Palestra (Georgia) / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Riga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



It is a story about talent, about individuality both in character and fate, about the possibility of becoming either a champion or a shepherd... Palavani is not about being the strongest, it is much more about moral strength and the way you are treating people and things around you. It is about being a personality.

To be released May 2009



Mansur's War Dance

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Aija Bley / Producer Guntis Trekeris / Production company Ego Media / Contacts Ego Media, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 1720, egomedia@egomediaweb.com, www.egomediaweb.com



Mansur Musaev is a 12 year-old Chechen boy who has spent his childhood in wartime and as a

refugee. Mansur is an exceptionally talented dancer who has been performing since he was a toddler.

To be released June 2008



Tide

Documentary, 52', HD, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Ivars Zviedris / Producer Ivars Zviedris / Production Company Studija AVE / Contacts Studija AVE, Miera 39-27, Riga LV 1001 / tel.: + 371 6737 0087, ave@deponet.lv



In the year 2007, 300 000 passengers took the flight from Riga to Dublin. Valdis and his shell pickers comprise

a fraction of Latvians living in Ireland now. They lead a temporary life between different worlds, kind of repeating the history of Latvia in the Soviet times or the first independence. The "shell-pickers" daily routine is set by the TIDE. During low tide they pick the shells, during high tide they sleep. The Irish sea is 4 times saltier than the Baltic sea. Also the life here is often saltier than at home. Almost everybody suffers of the nervous tension. For some it's more acute, for some it's washed over by the salty water.

To be released October 2009



Social Issues

My Mother's Farm

Documentary, 52', Betacam SP, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia/ Norway
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, Latvian Television

Director Ilze Burkovska – Jacobsen / Producer Guntis Trekeris / Production Company Ego Media / Co-production with Bivrost film & TV (Norway) / Contacts Ego Media, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 1720, egomedia@egomediaweb.com, www.egomediaweb.com



For the post-war generation in Latvia, the dream of the "good old days" became a significant part

of the process of regaining independence. Dream of the restoring the countryside to the way it was during the first independence is only now seen by most as naïve and unreal. Six episodes that reflect the historical development in the nation parallel to the fate of the director's mother are used to explore the effects of political order on everyday lives. Though she is now leaving the countryside, the process of moving her life provides a visual stimulus for memories.

To be released June 2008



Snow Crazy

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and Latvian Television

Director Laila Pakalniņa / Producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Riga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Downhill skiing is the most popular sport in Latvia despite the fact that there are no mountains. Indeed,

there can't be too much optimism in life, and this will certainly be an optimistic film about people doing what they want, defying geography and logic.

To be released June 2009



TO BE RELEASED

The Tourist (Hello, where are you from?)

Documentary, 52' / 90, HDV, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation, Media Plus, Riga City Council

Director Roberts Vinovskis / Producer Roberts Vinovskis / Production Company Locomotive Productions / Contacts Locomotive Productions Bruņinieku 28-57, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: +371 2929 8667, + 371 6729 8538, office@locomotive.lv, www.locomotive.lv



„Hello, where are you from?“ is the question tourists most frequently hear. I am from Latvia, a small

Eastern European country increasingly visited by tourists. I am thirty years old, and during the last twelve years I have made several films and visited 38 countries. I can be fairly described as a „professional tourist“. Now I'm returning to some of the places I have visited in order to find an answer to a couple of seemingly simple questions – what is a tourist and what does a tourist expect and get from the places he or she visits?

To be released December 2008



RELEASED

Stuck in Stikine

Documentary, 82', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2007

Director Uģis Olte / Producers Uģis Olte, Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Klipu filmu darbnica / Co-production with Vides Filmu Studija (Latvia), Endurance Logistics (Latvia) / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Riga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Five men from Latvia – 2 businessmen, an experienced traveller, a cameraman and

their tour guide head out to tame the fastest flowing river in North America – Stikine. But unexpected winter sets in, placing them in a situation that could cost them their lives. Despite locals' advice, men decide to press on, leading them to dramatic events, that were not supposed to happen.

Released September 2007

Social Issues

Women in 4 Square Metres

Documentary, 52', HDV, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, MEDIA

Director Una Celma / Producer Dace Siatkovska / Production Company Latsfilma / Contacts Latsfilma, Čaka 33-43, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 2947 5390, latsfilma@one.lv



Statistics say that 40% of Latvia's defence personnel are female. Why do girls chose a military career – for

the pay, for self-fulfilment or patriotism? What do these women do in the day-to-day operations? What is the role of women in today's society? The answers to these questions come through discovering the life and work of five Latvian women in various military jobs.

To be released December 2008



The Women and the Guard

Documentary, 20', HDV, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia

Director Una Celma / Producer Dace Siatkovska / Production Company Latsfilma / Contacts Latsfilma, Čaka 33-43, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 2947 5390, latsfilma@one.lv



This documentary will trace the parallel lives of a military policeman assigned to an Afghan women's

prison under a European Union assistance program, and a woman, Habiba, and her child, imprisoned there because she was abandoned by her husband. A philosophical study in the contrasts between Eastern/ Islamic lifestyles and Western good intentions, and how a policeman's mission becomes paradoxically entangled with his Afghani prisoner.

To be released April 2009

Sports & Adventure

RELEASED

Working Class Ballet

Documentary, 49', HDV, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2007
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia and the State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Roberts Vinovskis / Producer Roberts Vinovskis / Production Company Locomotive Productions / Contacts Locomotive Productions, Bruņinieku 28-57, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: +371 2929 8667, + 371 6729 8538, office@locomotive.lv, www.locomotive.lv



The European championship football madness, drunken „experts“ at the provincial stadium, the

backstage of the National team, raving fans on the streets of Paris and Lisbon. Football is a sport and entertainment though possibly there is more to the game. In the film „Working Class Ballet“ philosophers, linguists, neuropsychologist and football coaches contemplate the parallels between football and the drama of life, forming an unusual tale on what football is or could be.

Released September 2007

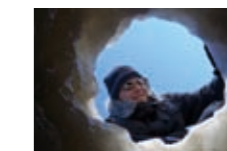


TO BE RELEASED

The Man from Varka Kru

Documentary, 52' / 80', Super 16 mm, 4:3, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, State Culture Capital Foundation

Director Viesturs Kairišs / Producer Guntis Trekeris / Production Company Ego Media / Contacts Ego Media, Stabu 17, Riga LV 1011 / tel.: + 371 6729 1720, egomedia@egomediaweb.com, www.egomediaweb.com



Mārtiņš Rubenis is known as the most famous Latvian luger who won Latvia its first ever Winter Olympic

medal. In the circles of alternative culture he is known as DJ Betons of Varka Kru. Mārtiņš also became the centre of international mass media attention when he participated in an organized hunger strike in front of the Chinese Embassy in Riga in 2006. As a practitioner of Falun Gong and an Olympian, he refuses to accept China as the venue of the 2008 Olympics.

To be released September 2009



RELEASED

The Church will Arrive in the Evening

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia, 2007
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation, Baltic Media Centre, Denmark, MEDIA Development and Latvian Television

Director Andis Mizišs / Producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



In the ice-free months of the year Father Gennady captains a barge transformed into a floating Orthodox

Church on a mission trip along the Volga-Don Canal to the remote Russian villages. At each port of call Father Gennady leads church services, distributes holy sacraments and hears confessions. But some unexpected circumstances cause the mission to suddenly take a rather different turn.

Released September 2007



TO BE RELEASED

Āigi (Time)

Documentary, 26'/52', Digital Betacam, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia / Estonia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, Estonian Film Foundation, Estonian Cultural Endowment, ETV, LTV, LRT, SVT and MEDIA Broadcasting

Director Dainis Kļava / Producers Uldis Cekulis, Riho Vastrik / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Co-production with Vesilind (Estonia) / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



A reindeer herdsman's life is as gently monotonous as the tundra itself. It flows in synchrony with the

life of the reindeer herd from one migration to the next. The time between these two points belongs entirely to the herdsman. It's āigi – the herdsman's time.

To be released July 2008



World



Snow-Crazy

Coming soon self-ironic documentary by Laila Pakalniņa, 52 min

Downhill skiing is the most popular sport in Latvia despite the fact that there are no mountains. Indeed, there can't be too much optimism in life, and this will certainly be an optimistic film about people doing what they want, defying geography and logic.

In former times Latvians cleared woodland for tillage. Nowadays they do the same but for a different purpose: to recover land for downhill skiing courses.

Main Characters:

Edmunds, a mechanic. If it were not for his passion for downhill skiing, he would never have started his own business of designing, constructing and installing ski lifts. Now apart from being a skilled skier he is also a prosperous businessman. On weekends and during the holidays Edmunds together with his wife and children go to a ski resort and takes one of his self-made ski lifts up the "mountain".

Linda. Men like Linda, and vice-versa. But for a Latvian woman it's far from enough. When at some point she realized that she was neither skiing nor snowboarding, she made her choice in favour of the snowboard because "I went snowboarding today" sounds more impressive to her than "I went skiing today".

Gints Puķīte, a businessman. An East European busi-

nessman establishing a flourishing enterprise in Austria. Gints began with a hotel in the Austrian ski resort Bad Gastein; today he owns a Latvian Ski Centre in the Alps. In Bad Gastein, amidst signboards in German you can also see "Slēpju noma" (Ski rental) signs in Latvian. It is also the venue of Latvian championships in downhill skiing. And why not – after all, our national flags are so similar!

Pensioners. Latvian pensioners can't be seen in Paris or London because they are racing down the hills in Latvia. Many ski centres in Latvia offer free admittance for the retired, provided they wear helmets. You can see a lot of old people wearing all sorts of protective headgear (including builder's helmets). Quite often they come in pairs – a grandpa and a grandma, or two grandpas. And they are excellent skiers.

Juris Žagars, actor and ski centre owner. Juris is one of the most popular actors in Latvia. For many Latvians he is the icon of the "fatal lover"; for many he is the God because he has snow and downhill skiing courses at "Zagarkalns" (Zagar's Hill), the most popular ski centre in Latvia. It has also become extremely popular with the Lithuanians who, according to Latvians, are lousy skiers and they jump the queues at the ski lifts. But in fact, there is no hill there. The actor has set up his business ... in a pit.

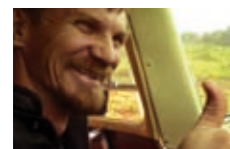


TO BE RELEASED

Child of the Big Bird

Documentary, 52', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation and Latvian Television

Director Andis Mizišs / Producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



At the end of the 1950s, an airplane carrying a group of Latvian Brazilian missionaries lands in the jungles of

southern Bolivia. Among the missionaries there is a baby, Samuel. Fifty years later, Samuel has become the soul of the Baptist mission, and the only confidante of the Ayore Indians trapped in a dead end between the jungles and civilization.

To be released October 2008

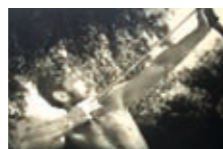


TO BE RELEASED

To Kill or to Die

Documentary, 56', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia / the State Culture Capital Foundation, Latvian TV

Director Andis Mizišs / Producer Laima Freimane / Co-producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Screen Vision / Co-production with Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



Thousands of adventure lovers still read the bestselling TIGRERO, the story of the Latvian-born

Sasha Siemel's life in the steaming jungles of Brazil. He was not afraid to challenge a jaguar to a fair fight, being the only known white man to learn to hunt them the Indian way – with a spear. He became incredibly popular in the 1960s by starring in Hollywood and National Geographic films, commercials and even comic strips. This film will uncover his unique personality through unseen film footage, testimonies of his former hunting companions and the witty stories of his widow.

To be released December 2008



TO BE RELEASED

Who Was Ed.L?

Documentary, 56', HDV, 16:9, colour, stereo, Latvia
Created with the support of the National Film Centre of Latvia, the State Culture Capital Foundation, Latvian TV

Director Andis Mizišs / Producer Laima Freimane / Co-producer Uldis Cekulis / Production Company Screen Vision / Co-production with Vides Filmu Studija / Contacts Vides Filmu Studija, Lapu 17, Rīga LV 1002 / tel.: + 371 6750 3588, vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv



The extraordinary inventor Ed Leedskalnis is said to have discovered the secret of pyramid building

of Ancient Egypt. In the course of twenty years he single-handedly cut and moved over large distances huge blocks of coral rock to build the legendary Coral Castle in Florida. Since then, Ed's creation has been endlessly researched and examined, leaving the researchers as puzzled as ever. The film will unveil some of the countless legends, theories and stories around the Coral Castle.

To be released January 2009





12th Baltic Sea Forum

JOIN US AT

The pitching sessions of documentary film projects

Riga, Latvia, September 3-7, 2008

Application Deadline: Friday, June 6, 2008

Guidelines and Entry Form: balticforum@nfc.gov.lv
www.mediadesk.lv



When
September 6-7, 2008

Where
Riga, Latvia



What is Forum

The Baltic Sea Forum is a documentary film project market organized by the National Film Centre of Latvia, MEDIA Desk Latvia, European Documentary Network and Producers Association of Latvia and supported by MEDIA 2007 programme and Baltic Films.

Meeting Point of Documentary Filmmakers

The Baltic Sea Forum brings together Baltic, Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Georgian producers and commissioning editors and representatives of film funds from all over Europe, looking for new and exciting documentary projects mostly from the Baltic region and Eastern Europe. A total of 25 projects will be selected to be pitched at Baltic Sea Forum to the panel of 12 commissioning editors from European TV stations and film funds.

Co-production workshop

Co-production workshop will be held on September 3-5 to be led by experienced and acknowledged European documentary film experts. Participants will be introduced to the latest developments in European documentary film market, along with presentation of case studies of well-known international co-productions, and given insight to co-production contracts and other legal issues regarding co-production.

The main focus will be on project development, story-telling and developing presentation skills. The friendly and informal atmosphere of the Forum events and receptions provide an excellent place for networking among documentary film producers and filmmakers from many countries and presents platform for future collaborations.

Film Screenings

Selection of high-end documentary films on social issues will be screened on the week before the Forum and will be accessible to all Forum participants and the general public.

New Forum Developments

For the first time in Forum history film projects from all over the Europe related to the Baltic countries are admitted.

**Welcome to the Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries,
welcome to the beautiful Riga in September!**

More information

www.mediadesk.lv

Come

See New Horizons

The National Film Centre of Latvia is a state financed governmental organisation overseeing the film branch in Latvia, granting governmental financial support to Latvian films, preserving the national audio-visual heritage, promoting Latvian films abroad, co-operating with the rel-

evant international and national organisations and organising training for Latvian film professionals. We are members of the EURIMAGES Foundation as of 2001 and MEDIA Plus as of January, 2002. At major international events we work together with Estonians and Lithuanians

under the co-operation platform BALTIC FILMS. We are keen on attracting film, television, and video production to Latvia, stimulating inward investment, creating employment opportunities for creative staff, technicians and support service companies.

www.nfc.lv

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