



Roads To Koktebel

A film by Boris Khlebnikov and Alexei Popogrebsky



Russia - 2003 – 105 minutes – 35mm - color - 1:66 - Dolby Digital

Official Selection, *Cannes Film Festival 2004*
Official Selection, *Toronto International Film Festival 2003*
Winner, Philip Morris Award, *Karlovy Vary Film Festival 2003*
Winner, Special Grand Jury Prize, *Moscow International Film Festival*
Winner, Best Actor and Grand Jury Prize, *Cinemanila International Film Festival*
Winner, Special Prize, *Vyborg Russian Film Festival*
Official Selection, *Seattle International Film Festival*
Official Selection, *London International Film Festival*

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SYNOPSIS:

After his wife's death and the loss of his job, an aerodynamics engineer sets off from Moscow with his 11 year old son for his sister's house in Koktebel by the Black Sea. With no money or means of transport, they drift through the expansive and mesmeric landscapes of Russia at the mercy of chance. The father is content to meander as he tries to rebuild his self-respect, piece together his broken life and win back the trust of his son. Meanwhile, the boy impatiently dreams of reaching the coastal resort to start a new life of emancipation and gliders flying in the wind.

They come across many hurdles but the last encounter is with a beautiful young doctor who tends to the father's wounds. Since she is single and lonely they begin to fall for each other. The son sees her as an intrusion on the only loving relationship in his life sets off to complete the journey by himself... A simple plot, gracefully composed with stunning lyrical visuals, spaced-out dreamy shots and a loving eye for natural beauty recalls vintage Terrence Malick.

Cast

Boy	Gleb Puskepalis
Father	Igor Chernevich
Dacha Owner	Vladimir Kucherenko
Doctor	Agrippina Steklova
Truck Driver	Alexander Ilyin
Trackman	Evgeniy Sytyi

Crew

Written and Directed by	Boris Khlebnikov and Alexei Popogrebsky
Produced By	Roman Borisevich
Director of Photography	Shandor Berkeshi R.G.C.
Production Designer	Gennadiy Popov
Costume Designer	Svetlana Mikhailova
Sound	Evgeniya Pototskaya
Editing	Ivan Lebedev
Music	<i>Children's Songs</i> by Chick Corea

BIOS:

Directors:

Boris Khlebnikov. Born in 1972. Graduated from Film Theory Department of Russian Film Institute (VGIK)
Writer and Director: *Mimokhod*, 1997: Documentary; 16 mm b/w; 21 min.; (with Alexei Popogrebsky).
Writer and Director: *Tricky Frog*, 2000: short fiction film; 35 mm color.; 20 min

Alexei Popogrebsky. Born in 1972. Graduated from Psychology Department of Moscow State University
Writer and Director: *Mimokhod*, 1997: Documentary; 16 mm b/w; 21 min. (with Boris Khlebnikov);
Editor: *Tricky Frog*, 2000: short fiction film; 35 mm color.; 20 min.

Principal actors:

Igor Chernevich (Father): Actor of the Maly Dramaticheskoy Theatre - Theater of Europe, St. Petersburg (Artistic Director Lev Dodin). Acted in *Nicotine* (Russia, 1993. Dir. Evgeniy Ivanov). *BolsheVita* (1996, Hungary. Dir. Ibolya Fekete), *Vad* (Hungary, 1996. Dir. Sandor Sara), *Dukh* (Russia, 1998. Dir. Evgeniy Ivanov); *Szerencse lányai* (Poland, 1998. Dir. Marta Meszaros), *Knockout* (Sweden, 2000. Dir. Agneta Fagerström-Olsson).

Gleb Puskepalis (Boy): Son of the theatre actor and director Sergei Puskepalis. Gleb plays parts in two productions at the Pyotr Fomenko Theatre Workshop in Moscow.

Vladimir Kucherenko (Dasha Owner) became an actor at the age of 60. Prior to *Koktebel*, he has acted in three stage productions, and one short film.

PRODUCTION NOTES:

Roads to Koktebel was first conceived in 1995. First draft was completed in 1998. In May of 2000, writers/directors Khlebnikov and Popogrebsky and director of photography Berkeshi set off on an expedition along the route of the protagonists from Moscow to the eponymous town at the Crimean Peninsula in order to gather additional material and search for locations. Covering 4,000 km of country roads and sleeping in a tent, they took pictures of landscapes and people of rural Russia and Ukraine. Two more expeditions followed in 2001 and 2002.

In 2001 Khlebnikov and Popogrebsky sent their script to the European PitchPoint, an international script competition organized by ScripHouse Agency and the European Film Academy. *Roads to Koktebel* was one of the 10 scripts selected out of a total 120, and the writers were invited to present it at the 2001 Berlin Film Festival.

Same year, producer Roman Borisevich submitted *Roads to Koktebel* to the Russian Ministry of Culture. The project passed the selection committee and received state funding.

Roads to Koktebel was shot in October and November 2002 entirely on location in three rural regions of Russia and two regions of Ukraine.

REVIEWS:

“Surprisingly self assured and confident for first-time directors... One of the nicest surprises at Moscow Film Festival... Remarkably sensitive, a variation on Truffaut’s *400 Blows*”
Screen International

“Something exceptional...a real find...a road movie with a difference”
The Guardian

“Gracefully composed and moving, yet never maudlin...”
Variety