

Russians Invited to Document Their Lives on Film

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A cameraman filming a protest near Ulitsa Yakimanka last year. **Igor Tabakov**

If you live in Moscow, breathe and have a fairly stable hand, consider yourself invited to take part in a new documentary series.

Casting for the documentary project "Realnost.Doc" (Reality.Doc), which aims to chronicle life within Moscow society through a series of amateur-shot clips, launched on Sunday.

Chosen candidates — it can be anyone regardless of age, status, job and nationality — will be given cameras to shoot their daily life and then will send the clips to the project's creators. The creators will then edit the clips and publish regular online updates on each character through six- to eight-minute films.

"Not everyone can be our hero," said Alexei Pivovarov, one of the project's initiators. "We need interesting, open and active people who have a story they want to tell. However, we are

looking for normal people who will shoot their normal life. We need everyday life."

Well-known journalists and directors Alexei Pivovarov, Alexander Rastorguyev and Pavel Kostomarov, who came up with the idea for the project, came to prominence last year after making the popular documentary series "Srok" (Term).

"Srok" chronicles the lives of Russian opposition leaders and civil society. The documentary series, which started to come out in May 2012, was halted after investigators came to Kostomarov's home after he filmed a May 6 opposition rally. Starting this year, the series was transferred to the news site Lenta.ru.

"Realnost.Doc" might not be as controversial as "Srok," but its initiators say that it will still introduce a new groundbreaking format. One of the project's aims is to boost the status of films shot by amateurs by transforming them into a professional documentary.

"The main idea of Realnost.Doc is to start a new interesting format for a documentary," Pivovarov said. "The problem with amateur video is that users don't understand why they should watch it."

The creators want to collect people from different spheres of Moscow society, though they understand that the majority of applicants will be young people who are craving movie-star fame. And the creators are not against such casting. They want to develop possible stars — stars of everyday life, Pivovarov said.

Kostomarov compared the role of the organizers in the project to sliding stones in curling: Organizers scrub the ice, but they do not touch the stones, speed them up or direct them.

The documentary clips will be published online, though the project's creators are not ruling out that they might later be broadcast on some television stations. The creators also want to make an online reality documentary where viewers would be able to watch the characters 24 hours a day through cameras set up in select places that participants visit, such as a cafe.

The project's boundaries might also later be expanded to the whole country, but the creators' ultimate goal is to create a kind of social sphere or social network where people could communicate by videos that they themselves filmed.

To participate in the casting or ask a question, write to the organizers at realnost.doc@gmail.com or call +7-906-765-2426 or +7-916-073-8428.

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