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Russia Sends 3 Films to the Golden Globe Awards

No other country has entered as many films.

By Ali Sar

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A scene from "Dear Comrades" directed by Andrei Konchalovsky. **Sasha Gusev / Disney**

HOLLYWOOD—Russian-made films led the pack with three entries in the 78th annual Golden Globes competition.

Qualifying motion pictures include director Andrei Konchalovsky's "Dear Comrades," Klim Shipenko's "Text" and Yegor Abramenko's "Sputnik."

Russia is also represented as a co-producer in two other films: Ivan Tverdovsky's "Conference" (Russia, Estonia, United Kingdom and Italy); and director Vadim Perelman's "Persian Lessons" (Russia, Germany and Belarus).

"Dear Comrades" also has been picked to represent Russia in the Oscar competition. Unlike

Oscar's one entry per country rule, the Globes competition does not limit the number of foreign language film submissions for countries. The only condition is that foreign films debuted within the last 14 months. They do not have to be released in the U.S. to be considered.

Awarded by the 87-member Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the Golden Globes this year has attracted a record of 130 motion pictures in the foreign language category, Serge Rakhlin, the Russian native awards chair, told The Moscow Times.

"Dear Comrades," a two-hour historical drama, which won the special jury prizes at this year's 77th Venice International Film Festival, is considered a favorite. It was co-written, directed and produced by 83-year-old moviemaker Konchalovsky, who has worked in Russia and abroad. In the U.S. he is best known for his films "Runaway Train" and "Tango and Cash."

The Venice win represented an encore for the director whose first appearance at the Italian festival dated back to 1962 as a young co-writer on Andrei Tarkovsky's "Ivan's Childhood."

As Russia's 2020-2021 Oscar entry, the picture has been creating favorable attention among foreign film enthusiasts. Distributor NEON has purchased its U.S. rights.

The film tells the story of the 1962 Novocherkassk massacre, when workers in a small city protested after the government raised both production quotas and food prices. It is seen through the eyes of a party activist.

Julia Vysotskaya, Vladislav Komarov and Andrei Gusev head the cast.

"Dear Comrades" is expected to get a big push by NEON, which released last year's Oscar winner "Parasite." That film became a ground-breaking foreign language sensation that won best picture, best director, best screenplay and best foreign film Oscars.

"Sputnik" is Abramenko's feature directorial debut.

Produced at a modest budget of $2.6 million, this sci-fi thriller had its initial release in Mexico.

The 94-minute film has been screening to select groups and awards voters in U.S., leading a writer to comment "it stands its ground very well against better and more expensive sci-fi productions from Hollywood."

Starring Oksana Akinshina, Pyotr Fyodorov and Fyodor Sergeyevich, the plot follows a young doctor recruited by the military to examine a cosmonaut who survived a strange space accident.

In Russian with English subtitles, it is available on streaming platforms Hulu, Amazon Prime, YouTube and Google.

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"Text" is a Russian crime drama based on a 2017 novel of the same title buy Dmitry

Gluhovsky, who also penned the screenplay. The cast includes Alexander Petrov, Ivan Yankovsky and Kristina Asmus.

Directed by Shipenko, this film has caught the eye of critics. One online reviewer wrote that, “It’s maybe the best Russian movie I saw in the last several years.”

It tells the story of a man who ends up behind bars on false charges. When he gains his freedom, he discovers that he cannot return to his former life and decides to take revenge on the man who caused his incarceration.

The Golden Globes entry deadline was Nov. 30. From this initial list of entries, the short list of nominees for the awards will be chosen and announced on Feb. 3, 2021. The awards ceremony will be held on Feb. 28, 2021.

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