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Netflix Acquires Rights to Russia's Cult 'Brat' Films

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Screenshot from Brother 2

Netflix, the world's largest streaming platform, has bought the rights to Russia's "Brother" ("Brat") films and will make them available from June 1.

The "Brother" series are Russian neo-noir crime dramas written and directed by Alexei Balabanov in 1997 and 2000. The series tells a story of Danila Bogrov, who has just returned from fighting in the first Chechen war. He gets pulled into the world of his older brother, Viktor, a hitman. In the first film they kill mafia bosses in post-Soviet St. Petersburg, and in the second film they take on American-Ukranian mobsters in Chicago.

The films acquired cult status in Russia for the portrayal of the criminal side of Russia in the 1990s, dark humor, soundtrack and memorable quotes.

This is not the only major Netflix Russian deal. In late May, Netflix announced the filming of its first original Russian TV series "Anna K," a modern take on Leo Tolstoy's classic "Anna Karenina" starring actress Svetlana Khodchenkova. She is familiar to Western viewers from

her role as Irina in the 2011 version of John le Carré's "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy."

According to the show's description, "socialite Anna Karenina, the wife of the future governor of St. Petersburg, enters into a fateful romance with Vronsky, the heir to the aluminum empire."

Netflix entered the Russian market in 2016. Last year the streaming service launched a Russian-language version and began to subtitle its films and television shows in Russian.

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