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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Scores Strong Showing at Cannes Film Festival With 6 Films

This year's nominations represent a wide range of genres.

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"White Road" **Elena Glikman, Victoria Lupik**

This year Russia will be represented by six films at the 74th Cannes Film Festival, "the first time in a long while that Russia is so widely represented," said Yevgenia Markova, CEO of Roskino.

Juries will see two Russian films in the main competition and two in the category called "Un Certain Regard." Two other films have been selected for non-competitive categories.

Expectations are high for Kirill Serebrennikov's "Petrov's Flu" in the main competition. A co-production with companies from four European countries, the film, which centers on a family struggling to cope during a flu epidemic, is described as a "hallucinatory romp through post-Soviet Russia." It is based on Alexei Salnikov's novel called "The Petrovs In and Around the Flu."

The second film in the main competition is “Hykki Nro 6” (Compartment No. 6), directed by Juho Kuosmanen, based somewhat loosely on a novel of the same name by Rosa Liksom. It is also a co-production with support from Russia, Finland, Estonia and Germany. It is about a young Finnish woman who escapes a love affair in Moscow by hopping a train to Murmansk, sharing a compartment with a Russian miner.

In the “Un Certain Regard” category is a new film by Alexei German, Jr. called “House Arrest,” which sounds as if it could be a documentary. Shot entirely on one film set, it tells the story of David, a university professor who criticizes the city administration and then is accused of embezzlement and put under house arrest until his trial. German calls it “a love letter to the masters of great Russian literature, Gogol, Griboedov and Dostoevsky” that explores the theme of “the respect and responsibility a citizen ought to have for his or her country.”

The second film in this competition is “Unclenching the Fists,” directed by Kira Kovalenko and produced by Alexander Rodnyansky. It takes place in Russia's republic of North Ossetia, where a father resettles with his children. Kovalenko said the idea for the film came from a line from a work by William Faulkner about the burden of freedom.

The Russian nomination to the L’Atelier category is the film “White Road,” directed by Ella Mazheeva and produced by Elena Glikman and Victoria Lupik. It tells the story of Aldar, who goes on a road trip to his native republic of Kalmykia to search for his dead mother in the steppes.

The last nominated film at Cannes is “Under the Pillow” an interactive animation film that will be shown in the XR section. It was directed by Georgy Molodtsov and based on a fairy tale by the director’s father about Mormitten, a cat-like toy that helps children find treasures and overcome difficulties.

This year's festival will be held July 6-17 in Cannes.

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