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Film News from Latvia



Water / Photo: Agnese Zelliņa



NATIONAL
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LATVIA

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Latvian News

The catalogue of Latvian films for 2005/2006 indicates an encouraging development in Latvian film – gradually increasing film production and a developing film environment.

The year 2005 witnessed the largest number of films simultaneously in production since the independence of 1991: 5 full-length fiction films, 2 full-length animation films and a number of documentaries and short animation films.

The year 2006 will be the year of Latvian film premieres – from films by acclaimed art-house movie directors (Laila Pakalniņa's *The Hostage*, Viesturs Kairišs' *The Dark Deer*) to a historical mainstream movie (Aigars Grauba's *Defenders of Riga*) and animation films for the young movie goers (*The Three Musketeers*, *Lotte from Gadgetville*), as well as a debut in fiction by the talented documentary film director Juris Poškus.

With growing state support for film, Latvian producers are able to attract greater financing from European funds (Eurimages and MEDIA Plus), and operate internationally with more success – almost all of the films in production are international co-productions. A regular co-production partner for Latvian film is Estonia, and this fact has led to the idea of establishing a Baltic Co-production Fund – a plan that has to be further developed and implemented.

There is more good news: Laila Pakalniņa's short feature *Water*, has been selected for the Berlin Film Festival. The Film Law is on its way to being adopted. The Riga Film Museum is in the process of changing its location from outskirts of Riga to the very centre of the Old Town, where it will form the basis of the yet to be firmly established Cinematheque of Latvia.



The Baltic Dimension

The year 2005 was a successful one for Baltic collaboration – the platform of Baltic Films. 2006 looks promising as well.

In September 2006, Latvia will become a regular host of the Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries, thus celebrating the 10th anniversary of the event which started on the beautiful island of Bornholm in Denmark, and then moved to the Baltic countries, where it has now become the most important yearly international venue for documentary film under the auspices of Baltic Films.

The Baltic Sea Forum is a documentary project market, co-organised by the National Film Centre of Latvia, Baltic Films and the European Documentary Network. It brings together Baltic, Polish, Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian producers and the commissioning editors and representatives of film funds from all over Europe, looking for new and exciting documentary projects from the Baltic region.

Over the last 10 years, the Forum has been god-fathering prize-winning films from such acclaimed directors as Herz Frank, Ivars Seleckis, Audrius Stonys, Arunas Matelis and others.

Contact and information: balticforum@nfc.gov.lv; www.mediadesk.lv

In 2005, Baltic Films and Tallinn University became co-founders of a project that is designed to positively change the Baltic audiovisual landscape – the Baltic Film and Media School. Students from all three Baltic countries will be able to receive internationally competitive education on a MA level in all main film professions. The new masters programme in film arts will be launched in September 2006.

The main events co-organised by Baltic Films in 2006 are: participation at the Berlinale European Film Market, the Marché du Film in Cannes, Sunny Side of the Doc at La Rochelle, the Karlovy Vary IFF and Nordic Film Days in Lübeck; organising the Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries in Riga, Latvia and the Baltic Event co-production venue in Tallinn, Estonia.

Ilze Gailite Holmberg
National Film Centre of Latvia, Managing Director
Baltic Films, Chairwoman

The Delicacy of Water

Water/Ūdens/Feature (short)/35 mm/12 min/2006/Director Laila Pakalniņa/Producer Laila Pakalniņa/Production Hargla Company/International Sales Hargla Company, Valtaiķu 19, Rīga, LV-1029 Latvia, tel.+371 9235 618, laila.pakalnina@inbox.lv



Laila Pakalniņa

Born 1962. Graduate of Moscow University, TV Journalism and VGİK, Film Directing. Has directed 16 documentaries, 2 short and 2 feature films. Finds inspiration in moments of life – in movements, words, lights, situations. In childhood wanted to become an ice-cream vendor.

a discovery at Cannes, a recent competitor at the Venice IFF – now for the first time Laila Pakalniņa's work will be featured in the Shorts Competition at the Berlinale. After 16 documentaries, 2 feature films and 1 TV special, Laila Pakalniņa is making her debut in the genre of fiction short. Clean and clear. *Water* by Laila Pakalniņa has been included among the favourites of the selectors at the Berlinale.

- How would you feel if you arrived for a swim at your favourite pool only to discover that the water is cold? That's exactly what happened to the author of *Water*. It triggered Laila Pakalniņa's fantasy which now seems to have overgrown the initial momentum. At the outset *Water* was intended as a short, but after the script was finished,

diplomas – the first in journalism from Moscow University and the second in film directing from the Moscow Film Institute (VGİK) – Laila Pakalniņa is not your usual sort of director. If one looks at Pakalniņa's track record, there is hardly another director in Latvia who can match her international success. She has an air of anti-establishment about her, but at the same time she is in the middle of the film scene. Her first black & white documentary shorts after graduation from the Moscow Film Institute, which coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union, were discovered at Cannes. *The Ferry* (1994) and *The Mail* (1995) were included in the Official selection. Ten years have passed since then. Pakalniņa's first feature, *The Shoe* (1998), followed in the footsteps of her shorts at Cannes. For her second feature, *The Python* (2003), the people at Venice were quicker and included it in their new Upstream competition section. As for her latest doc – Pakalniņa's *Dream Land* (2004), was picked-up by the high-profile Amsterdam IDFA for screening last year.

world of delicate interplay between a mostly static frame recording reality as it happens, in front of our eyes, and a world of sound mostly outside of the frame. It seems like nothing much is happening. Sometimes "nothing much" is an exaggeration. It seems like nothing is happening! Just wait a second, or two or three... and slowly, bit by bit, you're immersed into a window to the world as Laila Pakalniņa sees it.

- Somehow the best description of what (not) happens in Pakalniņa's films and why it is so rewarding to actually watch them is a feeling that radiates from the following story. In the world seen by Laila Pakalniņa: "I wait hopelessly long for an elevator in a small hotel in Prague. It is evident that someone is riding it. Down-up. Up-down. Suddenly the elevator doors open. In front of me is a Japanese girl who asks: "Could you tell me how to work this lift?" I explained, and afterwards I never did manage to catch the elevator... I took the stairs."

- It's just the thing that Pakalniņa does in her films. She "waits" for things to happen, and then, when they happen, she "takes the stairs". The small everyday absurdities



Photo: Agnese Zeltiņa

Pakalniņa understood that she has more in mind than the initial bargain of a moment at the pool. Now we can look forward to a feature-length tetralogy combining all four elements – water, fire, air and earth.

- With two higher-education

- So why does Pakalniņa's work fascinate people who've seen thousands of films? If one speaks of Laila Pakalniņa as overused, the notion of auteur still can't be avoided. It's the principal originality featured exclusively in her work and in not in that of other directors. A



IN COMPETITION

none of us seem to notice, but Laila Pakalniņa does. She never uses the crutches of computer graphics and never averts her gaze, so the pictures we get are crisp and clear. As she puts it: "Today you can do just about anything in film, but it will be CGI. But it is also possible to do challenging things without that artificial form. "Live cinema" is more cinematic than one constructed in a computer."

- In Pakalniņa's case, "physical filmmaking" is a value that will not deflate when the next generation of computer chips emerge. As simple as the story set-up is, the technical achievements in *Water* reveal themselves to an experienced viewer. Long-time collaborator, director of photography, Gints Bērziņš, assisted by the underwater expertise of cinematographer, Kaspars Braķis, has done fine work in presenting the subjective feel of being in another reality. The high-points include a 360-degree underwater panorama and the refined POV of the swimmer above and below the water's surface,

"stop-watched" by people in black trousers standing at the edge of the pool.

- Sometimes the director's observation of events happening within the frame reminds us of the notion of detached gaze from the Japanese No theatre, which Akira Kurosawa spoke of in regards to directing. Except that here it's turned into a philosophy of life. We could name it the philosophy of observation. If you'd ask for the main principles in this philosophy I'd say there are none. A detached gaze is needed – one that doesn't make any judgements or comments. It's almost like reciting Peking Opera while looking at a blank sheet of paper. You have to let go of all your expectations and concentrate on sensing the rhyme and rhythm.

- How does it work in *Water*? This is a challenging question for Laila Pakalniņa, and she comments: "Whatever I will explain to film critics about the meaning of what takes place in *Water* would ruin the experience for audience. I've



made it open, so those who watch it can fill it with their own meanings. The main thing is – feel free when watching it!" She compares the filmmaking process to the feeling of being in water – you experience a different reality.

- So don't ask her why five vintage Soviet milk trucks are bringing fish to a pool in *Water*. And I wouldn't ask why a big, black, ominous Mercedes-Benz is chasing a boy with a baby carriage in a parking lot, and why the chase sounds like a Russian troika with a carriage attached gliding across a snowy plain.

- Sometimes *Water* is reminiscent of Jacques Tati's comedy, where the detailed little gags and stunts make the narrative line run like a spider's thread strung on fine needle-points. Except that the subject is as broad as water. At



other times it plays out like a theatre of the absurd. Although that art form seems old-fashioned compared with what happens in *Water*. Parts of the story derive their meaning from a subtle interplay of meanings you invent for them. Is she serious? Is she playing? Is she there at all? Only the small “pay-offs” at the end of each scene suggest that there is a behind-the-screen presence – a director with her own very distinct mindset and view of the world.

- At a time when cinema is largely considered a story-driven medium,

new film may seem, Laila Pakalniņa makes us wake-up to a reality that is more real than the well-structured “reality” of the story-driven, music and dialogue pumped screen experiences we call films. There is almost no dialogue in *Water*. Just one key scene that unlocks the story features a short dialogue between the heroine and the person on duty who registers attendance at the pool. The rest of Pakalniņa’s offered world is created by the subtle interplay of sounds and the mostly static framing of the mis-en-scene.

Zalila, member of the FIPRESCI Jury at Venice 2003, put it so precisely: “Laila Pakalniņa teases the viewer’s voyeurism by not allowing him to see things and actions he knows are off-screen. The eagerness of the viewer progressively turns into a kind of sweet abandonment into the hands of the filmmaker, and the off-screen becomes a space from where anything and everything may happen.”

- *Water* may seem intellectual to those who are intellectual. It may seem symbolic for those who are



Photo: Agnese Zeltiņa

Water questions the very nature of film. Laila Pakalniņa’s film offers a challenge and brings back the “cinematic experience” – with experience being the prime interest. An interest in catching a passing moment. But this is not Faust’s cry for the moment to last forever. Pakalniņa lets moments slip by for others to follow, and even more stimulating and absurd, she offers enjoyment of these moments and doesn’t dramatise by the rules of story-driven thinking.

- *Water* makes one recall the beginnings of cinema – that innocence of perception. There is a film by Laila Pakalniņa called *Wake up!* (2000). It not only offers a slice of the social heritage left by the Soviet army in a military harbour town, but it also follows the games and simple fun that the kids presently living there are indulging in. The kind of perceptive innocence that makes one want to shout – wake up! – this is real cinema. This is cinema as it may have been at its very beginning. As unreal as her

Latvian film director Varis Brasla once said that we’ll never fully understand women – they have a different logic and can easily have seven Fridays in one week. As much as one may not like to note the difference of sexes in the director’s chair, this is a case in point where we can’t escape it. I’d argue that one has to have a woman’s perception in order to create the subtle world of aural experience we get in *Water* – the fine touches of the almost surreal sound experience. It can be called sound imagery – a tapestry so delicate that one beat of disharmony would ruin it.

- The notion of life happening somewhere else pops into mind when you’re immersed in the reality of Pakalniņa’s film. Your visual senses are stripped of the usual overdose and the minimalistic mis-en-scene draws your attention to a world of mainly off-screen sound creating a reality beyond the one you see on the screen – although this sense of the other world does have a touch of humour behind it. As Ikbāl

into film semiotics. It is full of signs and yet very pure at the same time. It reads on the level that the spectator is prepared to read. This may be one of the most interesting and intriguing things about *Water* – it is wholesomely unpretentious, but reads very intellectually at the same time. It could provoke a discussion among those who consider themselves cineastes, making one wonder – is it a new frontier? Is this where the cinema of the future is heading? Can it be the pure VJ-ing of senses and meanings?



Water

 BY LAILA PAKALNIŅA

11/02/2006	19.00	CinemaxX 3
12/02/2006	22.00	CinemaxX 3
13/02/2006	13.00	CinemaxX 3
15/02/2006	13.00	CinemaxX 3
19/02/2006	19.00	CinemaxX 3

A 3,500-year-old mummy breathes like a character from Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*; a block of ice transported from Alaska contains Charlie Chaplin's cane from *The Gold Rush*; Sergey Eisenstein bequeaths a milk separator to his hometown which contains a hidden gold bar... Such marvels can only be experienced in Riga at the International Film Forum, *Arsenals*, celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year.



the film connoisseurs of the world.

- *Arsenals* is conceptual not only in its film selection, but also in its collective image, gaining new nuances each year while still maintaining some constant, as though etched in stone, characteristics. There are no ceremonious speeches during the opening festivities, in fact, not a word is spoken. There are only lights, sound and the event. The closing ceremony is also highly traditional – even though the competition, containing some twenty odd films, is part of the festival programme, all of the directors whose films were included in the competition screening are winners. They each receive the Magical Crystal with the engraving Best Director. The main prize – the fate of the USD 10,000 is determined by (His Majesty “Chance”), in the form of a button from the tunic of the president of *Arsenals*, Augusts Sukuts, which falls into one of the cocktail glasses and a draw amongst

which is a wonderful opportunity for the festival guests to become familiar with films from *Arsenals'* home region.

- *Arsenals* always expands upon and enriches the screenings of good films in five movie theatres with a variety of events which enthuse the media and society, offering unbelievable experiences and breathtaking tumbles – both the Dutchman, Jos Stelling, and the American, Bill Plympton, have admitted that *Arsenals* was the most surreal experience in their lives. For many years now on a set evening, the guests of *Arsenals* have climbed aboard a train and set out on a pilgrimage to the small Latvian town of Keipene, where an object worthy of a Guinness record stands – a lighthouse, 70 kilometres from the sea. Sergey Eisenstein mans the station house ticket window, and the lighthouse radiates out the letter “P” in honour of Latvian film legend, Juris Podnieks. From an old-fashioned payphone one can call Marilyn Monroe, Jean-Luc Godard, Andrei Tarkovsky, Salvador Dali or Marlene Dietrich. This year as well, the guests of *Arsenals* will be invited to Keipene for the opening of a Giants' table in the spirit of *The Battleship Potemkin*.

Film Forum *Arsenals* Celebrates its Anniversary

- In 1986, the festival was born as part of the city's festivities celebrating Soviet Film Day and the 90th anniversary of the first moving picture show in Riga. Cleverly utilizing perestroika, which was in full swing at the time, and the enthusiasm of the underground movie scene, it then gradually gained in importance. By now the festival has been conceptually stabilized in not following cheap flash and temporary fads. *Arsenals* searches for novelty in the language of film, including in its programme films which address the viewer with scenes, rhythms, lights, shadows and sound. If some pedantic person would undertake the task of organizing all of the films shown over these twenty years of *Arsenals'* programmes and retrospectives, it would be a wonderful sampling for

the competing directors is then held on stage. The basis for this kind of lottery lies with the forum organizers' certainty that art can't be determined by competition and in terms of best or worst – the films in the competition screening have gone through as much rigorous scrutiny as to not leave the jury any doubts. In the past, the cash awarded at the end of the closing ceremony has materialized from water, air, ice and sheep's wool, and no one knows what will happen this year.

- *Arsenals* is also convinced that film artistry can emerge in any genre and format, and that's why features, documentaries and animation films are all included in the main competition screening and the other programmes, and in the Baltic Film Competition screening as well,

- “Even an earthquake won't stop film screenings in Riga” - the very first *Arsenals* started with this slogan, and really – even though seismic disturbances have been recorded on festival days both in 1986 and 2004, this hasn't been an obstacle for *Arsenals*. Every year some 120 foreign guests arrive, and for the anniversary this number could triple because everyone is invited - those who have already experienced the magic of *Arsenals*, and those hoping to be acquainted. From September 16th-24th, the Latvian capital of Riga will be transformed into *Arsenals* city and the whole world will be welcome to join in on this fascinating experience. More information is available at www.arsenal.lv

10 REASONS WHY TO SHOOT YOUR FILMS IN LATVIA

“The recent experience shows that foreign producers come to shoot their films in Riga and Latvia for various types of locations – for example, the Russians look for a Western European city, the Brits make use of the harsh winter to make films with action taking place in snowy Siberia”, says the manager of a local film production company.

- 1 Professional and well-equipped studios and efficient producers able to cater for large and small scale productions (productions shot in Latvia include such films as *Invincible* by Werner Herzog, *Honeybaby* by Mika Kaurismaki, *Archangel* by Jon Jones, starring Daniel Craig and others);
- 2 Cinevillage – a studio backlot unique to the region with a wide range of open-air set decorations of architecture ranging from the 19th century to the mid 20th century, stages, catering and hotel service;
- 3 Riga, the capital with various types of locations: the richest heritage of art nouveau architecture in Northern Europe, picturesque wooden architecture from the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century; Soviet period

architecture from Stalinist buildings to the bleak apartment blocks of the the last century;

- 4 Good, cost-effective international transportation connections (airlines such as Air Baltic, Ryanair, EasyJet and many others; buses, trains);
- 5 Cost-effective and resourceful service;
- 6 Good infrastructure, hotels and catering in the region around the capital;
- 7 Palaces (for example, Rundale palace by architect Rastrelli) and manor houses;
- 8 Beautiful seashore, as close as 25 km from the capital;
- 9 Virgin nature and landscape;
- 10 Enthusiastic people eager to work on films.

We will be happy to assist you with information about the possibilities of making your films in Latvia. Please contact: locations@nfc.gov.lv or nfc.gov.lv, tel: + 371 7358 858

PLATFORMA FILMA / CINEVILLA STUDIO and BACKLOT



Cinevilla Studio is a film production and film industry facility centre in Latvia, offering excellent services, technical equipment and two stages. Cinevilla Studio is able to provide clients with exceptional quality full-services for the shooting of films or advertising clips.

Cinevilla Studio is located in a quiet pinewood forest and sand dune setting, just a few steps away from the beautiful, famous Baltic white sand beaches of the resort and spa town, Jūrmala. Travelling by car, Cinevilla Studio is only 20 minutes from Riga city centre and 15 minutes from Riga International Airport.

One of the services provided by Cinevilla is the only open-air backlot with permanent film sets in Latvia – Cinevillage. The overall area of Cinevillage is 150 ha, with 15 ha of the territory currently developed and consisting of large scale film sets with historical buildings and other features, which create a sense of historic reality.

Cinevilla Studio has its own team of highly-qualified film industry professionals. Working together with Cinevilla Studio, clients are able to create the high-quality product desired for today's competitive film industry market.

Main activity

- Feature film production / studio and equipment rental;
- Producer: Andrejs Ēkis;
- Cinevilla Studio facilities:
 - 1) Sound stage (735 m², 104 m²), set construction, props, costumes;
 - 2) Grip and lighting equipment;
 - 3) Sony HDW-F900 digital camera and accessories;
 - 4) Broadcast quality non-linear editing suit (HD, BetaSP, DVC-Pro, DV);
 - 5) Sound production and postproduction equipment;
 - 6) 3D animation and composition equipment;
 - 7) Cinevillage Backlot: 150 hectare large rural locale for building sets.

• Studio Manager: Aigars Grauba
Dzintaru prospekts 19,
LV-2015, Jūrmala, Latvia
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RIGA FILM STUDIO



Founded in 1946 Riga Film Studio is one of the biggest bases for film production and services in Baltics. The studio provides all kinds of extensive rentals, facilities and services to make a quality film with rather low costs. It is located 20 minutes from the centre of the city which is famous for its Old Town and Art Nouveau architecture.

Main activity

- Feature film and TV production / studio and equipment rental;
- Facilities:
35 mm shooting and editing equipment,
Sound stages (983 m², 832 m², 300 m²)
set construction and set dressing, props,
costumes;
- Grip, lighting and camera equipment;
- Studio Manager Vents Horsts,
Šmerļa 3, Riga, LV 1006, Latvia
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Come

See New Horizons





Photo: Andrejs Grants



Films from Latvia

FEATURES IN POST-PRODUCTION

Defenders of Riga / Rīgas sargi

Historical drama, HD, 90 min, dir. Aigars Grauba, Platforma Filma, supported by MEDIA TV Broadcasting, developed with the assistance of Arista

It's 1919, and a war-weary soldier, Martins, returns home to the newly independent Latvia. He wants only to get back to a normal life and to Elza, the girl he left behind. On the day of their wedding, a rogue German general orders an attack on Riga and Martins and Elza are forced to flee. Martins has to make the difficult decision to join the fight to defend his city and to leave Elza behind, once again. The fledgling Latvian army battling alongside thousands of volunteers manage to beat back the aggressors. This miraculous victory ensures the survival of the Republic of Latvia as an independent state, and Martins and Elza are finally able to return home and to their future together.



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The Dark Deer / Tumšie brieži

Drama, 35mm, 85 min, dir. Viesturs Kairišs, Kaupo Filma in co-production with Fischerfilm, Austria, supported by MEDIA Development, developed with the assistance of SOURCES

A story about a girl who was born in blood. 17 year-old Ria is a wild creature and a secret at the same time – a young woman who finds herself in the middle of complicated family circumstances. She spends her best moments in the wilds of the garden together with the deer she has grown up with and thinks of as her own children. Ria experiences her complicated first love, but it results in desperate and tragic action, killing the ones she loves most of all.



Please, contact:
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The Hostage / Ķilnieks

Tragicomedy, 35mm, 73 min, dir. Laila Pakalniņa, Kompānija Hargla, co-production with Acuba Film, Estonia and Casablanca Film Production, Slovenia supported by MEDIA Development, developed with the assistance of Colin Tucker, SOURCES

The Hijacker forces to land the plane at the Rīga Airport. 7 year-old Tom, travelling on his own, voluntarily becomes a hostage. Along with the traditional demands, the Hijacker adds the demands of the little hostage – beginning with some local chocolate and a self-instruction tape for learning the native language, and ending with organizing a Song Festival and a special biathletes' performance – all ideas originating from a CD on Latvia.



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Mona / Mona

Drama, 35mm, 90 min, dir. Ināra Kolmane, Film Studio Devīni, co-production with Icelandic Film Cooperation, supported by MEDIA Development

A story of different worlds – about a man and a woman, about the city and the countryside, about the future and the past, about animals and their killers, about deep and short-lived passion and the ancient mystery of a woman. It is a story interwoven with visions, metamorphosis and love.



Please, contact:
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Supported by EU Funds

ANIMATION IN POST-PRODUCTION

Lotte from Gadgetville / Lote no Izgudrotāju ciema

Family film, 75 min, 35mm, dir. Janno Põldma, Heiki Emits, Eesti Joonisfilm, Estonia, co-production with Rija Films, Latvia, supported by MEDIA Development and EURIMAGES

Cheerful puppy-girl Lotte lives in a small seaside village with her father, a famous inventor, and her spirited mother. Lotte always has things she wants to do, and she is always eager to experience something new. The most important event in the village is the annual competition of inventors where the prize goes to the most efficient and wittiest invention. Who will be the winner this year?



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The Three Musketeers / Trīs musketieri

Family film, 80 min, 35mm, dir. Jānis Cimermanis, ABoom, Latvia, co-production with Zentropa Entertainments3ApS, Denmark, and Three Musketeers Films, United Kingdom, supported by EURIMAGES

A classic story known all over the world that has captured and thrilled generations of children and adults now in puppet animation format. With all of the sense of childish enthusiasm intact, this romantic story disguised as humour and farce will once again delight.



Please, contact:
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DOCUMENTARIES IN POST-PRODUCTION

My Husband Andrei Sakharov / Mans vīrs Andrejs Saharovs

Documentary, digital Betacam, 52 min., dir. Ināra Kolmane, Film Studio Devīpi, co-production with Odysseus Productions, France, supported by MEDIA TV Broadcasting

Through a vast coverage of exclusive archive materials and interviews and personally narrated by his wife, Yelena Bonner, the story of the life of Andrei Sakharov, the most famous Soviet dissident, Nobel Peace Prize winner and the creator of the Soviet hydrogen bomb will be revealed.



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www.latfilma.lv/devini

ANIMATION IN PRODUCTION

Danceplay / Spēlēju dancoju

Animation, Betacam SP, 30 min., dir. Roze Stiebra, Dauka, supported by MEDIA Development

A musical animation based on a classic novel by Latvian author, Janis Rainis, set on a huge stage above the busy street traffic of Riga, the capital of Latvia. The animated images escape the stage-frame and join the crowds.

Please, contact:
Producer Ansis Bērziņš, Dauka
Šmerļa 3, Rīga LV 1006, Latvia
Tel./Fax: +371 7530 191
dauka@apollo.lv

COMING SOON



Films from Latvia

DOCUMENTARIES IN PRODUCTION

The Church will Arrive in the Evening / Baznīca pietās vakarā

Documentary, HD, 52 min., dir. Andis Mizišs, Vides Filmu Studija, supported by MEDIA Development

In the ice-free months Father Gennady captains a barge transformed into a floating church on a mission, cruising up and down the Don River and bringing spiritual food to the remote Cossack villages.



Please, contact:
Producer Elvita Ruka,
Vides Filmu Studija
Pils 17, Rīga
LV 1050, Latvia
Tel.: +371 7503 588
Fax: +371 7503 589
vfs@vfs.lv,
www.vfs.lv

The Debt to Afganistan / Parāds Afganistānai

Documentary, Betacam SP, 58 min., dir. Askolds Saulītis, Subjektiv Filma, supported by MEDIA Development

There is an old saying attributed to Alexander the Great: he who will rule Afghanistan will rule the world. The film will portray "the roof of the Earth" and track the close links between this far-off country and Latvia.



Please, contact:
Producer Askolds Saulītis,
Subjektiv Filma
Stabu 17, Rīga
LV 1011, Latvia
Tel.: +371 7216 967
Mob.: +371 9299 564
subjektivfilma@inbox.lv

Us and Them / Vai citi?

Documentary, Betacam SP, 60 min., dir. Antra Cilinska, Juris Podnieks Studio, supported by MEDIA Development, developed with the assistance of Eurodoc Production

The existence of two parallel communities – one Latvian, the other Russian, is the reality of present day Latvia. After the establishment of an independent Latvian Republic in 1991, the Russian speaking community began to see themselves as a threatened minority and to depict themselves as oppressed. Where does truth lie? Are there victims? Or is it simply that the idea of integration, for both sides, does not work properly?



Please, contact:
Producer Antra Cilinska,
Juris Podnieks Studio
Citadeles 2, Rīga
LV 1010, Latvia
Tel.: +371 7216 967
Fax: +371 7210 908
jps@jps.lv, www.jps.lv

The Deconstruction of an Artist / Nepareizais latvietis

Documentary, Digital Betacam, 52 min., dir. Pēteris Krilovs, Vides Filmu Studija, co-production with Vivement Lundi, France, supported by MEDIA TV Broadcasting, developed with the assistance of Ex-Oriente

Gustav Klucis, the son of Latvian peasants, goes to Russia and becomes a renowned master of Russian constructivism. Killed

by Stalin's regime, his life and artistic career still pose many unanswered questions.

Please, contact:
Producer Uldis Cekulis,
Vides Filmu Studija
Pils 17, Rīga LV 1050, Latvia
Tel.: +371 7503 588, Fax: +371 7503 589
vfs@vfs.lv, www.vfs.lv

FEATURES IN PRE-PRODUCTION

Rudolf's Gold / Rūdolfa mantojums

Comedy, HD, 90 min, dir. Jānis Streičs, Platforma Filma, supported by MEDIA Development

An upbeat comedy set over a hundred years ago in Latvia during a time of technological progress and optimism upon entering a new century. The story revolves around the blossoming love, with all the ensuing twists and turns, of several couples in a small rural

community. The ancient customs and traditions of brewing beer serve as a colourful backdrop.

Please, contact:
Producer Andrejs Ēķis, Platforma Filma
Dzintaru prospekts 19, Jūrmala, LV 2115, Latvia
Tel./Fax: +371 7147 022
alina@platformafilma.lv
www.cinevilla.lv

Midsummer Madness / Jāņu nakts

Comedy, 35mm, 90 min., dir. Alexander Hahn, Fischerfilm, Austria, Steve Walsh Production, UK, Kaupo Filma, Latvia, supported by MEDIA Development and EURIMAGES

If you have some urgent business to do in Latvia don't try it during midsummer because the whole place goes crazy. Curt, a typical American, finds this out very quickly when he arrives in Riga on Midsummer's Day.

Please, contact:
Producers Guntis Trekteris, Kaupo Filma; Markus Fischer, Fischerfilm, Austria, Steve Walsh, Steve Walsh Production, UK
Stabu 17, Rīga LV1011, Latvia
Tel.: +371 7291 720
Fax: +371 7270 542
kaupo@latnet.lv

Supported by EU Funds

ANIMATION IN PRE-PRODUCTION

Golden Horse / Zelta zirgs

2D animation for family audience, 35mm, 75 min, dir. Signe Baumane, Xavier Dujardin, Rija Films, coproduction with Paul Thiltges Productions, Luxembourg, and Vilanima, Lithuania, supported by MEDIA Development, developed with the assistance of Cartoon Movie

A fairy-tale about the eternal fight between good and evil where good conquers evil by persistency, purposefulness and honesty. Antis, the youngest of three brothers, is deeply determined to save the beautiful Princess who is kept in a glass tower by the Black Mother. Luckily Antis meets the White Father who encourages him to fight for the Princess's life although it seems an impossible mission. The struggle involves fighting his greedy and nasty

brothers, the Cruel Prince and the Black Mother herself. The open-hearted and brave Antis is not discouraged and reaches his goal.



Please, contact:
Producer Vilnis Kalnaellis,
Rija Films
Mēness 4, Rīga
LV 1013, Latvia
Tel.: +371 7362 656
Fax: +371 7339 198
vilnis.kalnaellis@rijafilms.lv
www.rijafilms.lv

Tales of the Sunrise Tree / Austras koka pasakas

2D/3D animation for children, Digital Betacam, dir. Nils Skapāns, Jetmedia, Latvia, in coproduction with Collective, Slovenia and Sidewinder Films, UK, supported by MEDIA Development, developed with the assistance of Cartoon Forum

Good and evil reigns equally in this world. In the world of nature and animals some nasty little jokers attempt to change the accepted order of things. The forest elves, the helpful hands of the Sunrise Tree, are asked to bring everything back to normal. But they must be done by sunrise.

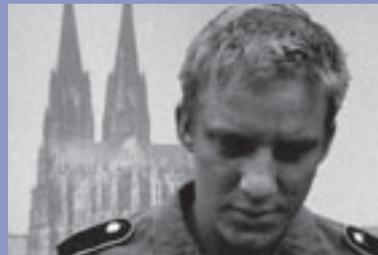
Please, contact:
Producer Inga Prauliņa, Jetmedia
Tallinas 94, Rīga LV 1009, Latvia
Tel.: + 371 7296 131
Fax: + 371 7296 132
inga.praulina@jetmedia.lv

FEATURES IN DEVELOPMENT

Bastards / Bastardi

Drama, 35mm, 90 min, dir. Varis Brasla, F.O.R.M.A., supported by MEDIA Development, developed with the assistance of ACE

Three people without a homeland painfully try to build one in a foreign country – old roots torn, new ones not found. 1956, England. A sleepy, post-WWII harbour city. For most people the war is over, but not for Arturs Skuja (30), a Latvian ex-soldier who has lost his country and his family, and still battles wartime nightmares. He encounters Juhan, another émigré and also an ex-soldier, and his Irish girlfriend Esther. Juhan has a drinking problem and Esther wants to teach him a lesson. She pretends to have feelings for Arturs. The innocent flirtation gives rise to an unexpected attraction. Will love be able to make-up for a nightmare of a life?



Please, contact:
Producer Gatis Upmalis
F.O.R.M.A.
Lāčplēša 36- 4A, Rīga
LV 1011 Latvia
Tel.: +371 7287 300
Fax: + 371 7287 301
s.forma@latnet.lv

Bitter Wine / Rūgtais vīns

Drama, HD, 80 min., dir. Rolands Kalniņš, Platforma Filma, supported by MEDIA Development

A dramatic romance with ironic undertones set in and around the city of Riga. The story revolves around Donats, a talented architectural-designer and a modern-day Don Juan, and follows him as he weaves through his various relationships with the women in his life. There's Banuta, a businesswoman, Anna, an artist, Regina, more mature and a confidante, and Ieva, a young musician. Donats goes from one to the other seemingly without any serious entanglement or consequences. But when he falls in love with his employer Agnese, who is married to Ralfs, he comes up against a formidable opponent.

Please, contact:
Producer Andrejs Ēķis, Platforma Filma
Dzintaru prospekts 19, Jūrmala, LV 2115, Latvia
Tel./Fax: +371 7147 022
alina@platformafilma.lv
www.cinevilla.lv

Finding Elvis / Kur pazudis Elvis

Childrens' drama, DVCAM, 97 min., dir. Una Celma, Latsfilma, supported by MEDIA Development

Rīga schoolchildren have complicated relationships with their always-busy parents. One day, a teenaged boy, Elvis, disappears along with his mother. No one seems to be interested in looking for them. But Nils, Elvis' classmate, decides to organize a team of detectives and they set-off on a search.

Please, contact:
Producer Una Celma, Latsfilma
Čaka 33-43, Rīga LV 1011, Latvia
Tel: + 371 9475 390
latsfilma@one.lv

GENERAL DATA

Total population	2 306 434
Population of capital city Riga	731 762
Number of households 2005	897 445
Currency LVL (Lats)	1 EUR = 0,7028 LVL
Standard VAT rate	18%
VAT for cinema tickets	5%
Personal income tax	25%
GDP 2004	10 452 144 000 EUR
GDP per capita 2004	4 519 EUR
Average monthly income 2004	300 EUR
Number of cinemas 2005	49
Number of screens 2005	65
Number of arthouse cinemas 2005	1
Number of multiplex with 7 screens and more 2005	1
Active production companies 2005	40
Active distribution companies 2005	2
Number of admissions 2005	1 601 352
Admissions per capita 2005	0,69
Gross Box Office 2005	5 197 284 EUR
Average ticket price 2005	3,24 EUR
Annual state support for film industry 2006	2 541 646 EUR



DOMESTIC FILMS RELEASED 2000-2005 (incl. Betacam format)

	Feature films	Shorts	Animation films	Feature-length docs	Short docs	Total
2000	2	3	4	1	9	19
2001	3	7	7	6	14	27
2002	1	6	8	2	4	21
2003	7*	3	3	10	9	32
2004	3**	2	5	6	10	26
2005	2	1	6	10	10	29

* incl. 3 TV Dramas released theatrically,
 ** incl. 2 TV Dramas released theatrically

DOMESTIC FILMS

LATVIAN FEATURE FILMS COMPLETED 2000-2005

Original Title	English Title	Director	Year of Release
Augstuma robeža	Maximum Headroom (Sweden/Latvia)	Una Celma	2005
Krišana	Fallen (Latvia/Germany)	Fred Kelemen	2005
Ūdensbumba resnajam runcim	Waterbomb for Fat Tomcat (Latvia/Estonia)	Varis Brasla	2004
Es mīlu Jūsu meitu	I love Your Daughter*	Viesturs Dūle	2004
Rudens rozēs	Roses of Autumn*	Jānis Streičs	2004
Pitons	The Python	Laila Pakalniņa	2003
negribu, negribu, negribu!	Never, Never, Ever!	Lauris Gundars	2003
Pēdējā Padomju filma	The Last Soviet Movie	Aleksandrs Petukhovs	2003
Naktssargs un veļasmazgātāja	Night-watchman and Laundress*	Jānis Streičs	2003
Man patīk, ka meitene skumst	You're Sexy When You're Sad	Arvids Krievs	2003
Es pārku Jūsu vīru	I'm Buying Your Husband*	Jānis Cimermanis	2003
Tiritomba jeb zelta zivtiņa	Tiritomba, Golden Fish*	Armands Zvirbulis	2003
Sauja ložu	Handful of Bullets (Sweden/Latvia)	Una Celma	2002
Labās rokas	Good Hands (Latvia/Estonia)	Peter Simm	2001
pa ceļam aizejot	Leaving by the Way	Viesturs Kairiņš	2001
Paslēpes	Hide-and-Seek	Jānis Putniņš	2001
Baiga vasara	Dangerous Summer	Aigars Grauba	2000
Vecās pagastmājas mistērijas	The Mystery of the Old Parish House	Jānis Streičs	2000

* TV Drama released theatrically

DISTRIBUTION

ADMISSION — GBO REVENUE 2000-2005

	Number of Admissions	Admissions per capita	GBO		Average Ticket Price	
			LVL	EUR	LVL	EUR
2000	1 457 000	0,61	2 017 000	3 602 000	1,38	2,4
2001	1 152 000	0,46	1 829 453	2 999 103	1,59	2,6
2002	1 071 000	0,46	1 908 380	3 127 868	1,78	2,9
2003	1 132 947	0,47	2 206 909	3 140 166	1,97	2,9
2004	1 680 352	0,72	3 500 988	4 981 485	2,08	3,0
2005	1 601 352	0,69	3 652 672	5 197 284	2,28	3,24

TOP TEN 2005

Title	Country of Origin	Admissions	GBO LVL	GBO EUR	Prints
Madagascar	USA	54 604	101 276	144 104	4
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	USA	48 701	118 715	168 917	2
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	UK/USA	42 764	102 768	146 227	5
The Phantom of the Opera	USA/UK	41 262	95 525	135 921	2
Shark Tale	USA	38 543	70 276	99 994	6
Hitch	USA	30 767	75 388	107 268	3
War of the Worlds	USA	29 614	67 788	96 454	3
Star Wars: Episode III. Revenge of the Sith	USA	29 577	71 435	101 643	4
King Kong	NZ/USA	27 324	73 712	104 883	4
9th Company	RU/UA	26 090	64 787	92 184	3

BREAKDOWN OF FILMS BY ORIGIN 2005 (PREMIERES)

	No of films	Admissions	GBO LVL	GBO EUR
Domestic	2	17 290	17 851	25 400
European	44	297 934	738 033	1 050 132
USA	90	1 080 345	2 488 188	3 540 393
Other	15	109 244	248 932	354 200
Total	151	1503 813	3 493 004	4 970 125

CINEMA PREMIERES 2000-2005

	Domestic	European	USA	Other	Total
2000	4	14	87	1	106
2001	2	35	100	6	143
2002	1	30	65	3	99
2003	9	33	86	3	131
2004	3	46	110	7	166
2005	2	44	90	15	151



LATVIAN FILMS AT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS 2005

In 2005 Latvia has been represented at 245 International Film Festivals in 52 countries. Latvian films of all genres have been selected for competition and were shown in special programmes and retrospectives.

Number of Latvian films at IFF	135
of which feature films	32
of which documentaries	49
of which animations	54



LATVIAN FILMS TRAVELLING MOST AROUND THE WORLD 2005

FEATURES

Krišana / FALLEN by Fred Kelemen / KinoKombat&Screen Vision / 2005, 35 mm, 90'
FIPRESCI Award, Special Jury Award and Best Cinematography Award – Festival of European Cinema in Lecce 2005, Italy

Ūdensbumba resnajam runcim / WATERBOMB FOR THE FAT TOMCAT by Varis Brasla / F.O.R.M.A. / 2004, 35mm, 75'

Pitons / THE PYTHON by Laila Pakalniņa / Hargla Company / 2003, 35 mm, 88'

DOCUMENTARIES

Leiputrija / DREAM LAND by Laila Pakalniņa / Vides Filmu studija/ 2004, DVCAM, 35'
European Film Academy Nomination – Best European documentary film of 2005
Grand Prix – Ukrainian International Documentary Film Festival 2005, Ukraine
Jury Special Mention – ECOCINEMA 2005, Greece
Main Prize – International film festival GREEN VISION – 2005, St. Petersburg, Russia
Award in category VALUE OF RESIDUES – CINEECO 2005, Lisboa, Portugal

Romeo un Džuljeta / ROMEO AND JULIET by Viesturs Kairišs / Kaupo Filma / 2004, DVCAM, 56'
Nomination for the Russian Film Academy Award “Nike 2005” in the category “Best Film of CIS and the Baltic States”

Bet stunda nāk / BUT THE HOUR IS NEAR by Juris Poškus / FA FILM / 2003, 35mm, 90'

ANIMATION

Zobārsts / DENTIST by Signe Baumane / 2005, 35mm, 10'
Best Animation Audience Award – Red Shift Film Festival 2005, USA
Prize for Third Best Animation – Tribeca Underground Film Festival 2005, USA
Best Short Animation Award – Wreck-Beach International Film festival, USA
Best Picture (Short film) and Best Auteaur – Blue November MicroFilmFest, USA
Audience Award – L'ALTERNATIVA, 12th Barcelona Independent Film Festival, Spain

Bezmiegs / INSOMNIA by Vladimir Leschiov / Rija Films / 2004, 35mm, 7'
Best Animation / Clermont Ferrand 2005, France
Honourable Mention / Nashville Film Festival 2005, USA
Best Animation – International Animated Film festival Bimini 2005, Riga, Latvia
Jury Special Mention – 45th Cracow Film Festival 2005, Poland
Best Film in Session – Melbourne International Animation FF MIAF, Australia
Audience Favourite Vote – London International Animation Festival, UK

Skudrulauva / ANTLION by Dace Rīdūze / Animācijas Brigāde / 2004, 35mm, 12'40''
Offi
School Jury Prize for Best Short Film in Competition Nr 1 – Sancy Film Festival for Young People PLEIN LA BOBINE, France
Jury Award for Best Animation film – 7th International Children film festival LISTAPADIK 2005, Belorussia

Redzi, Trusi?...tētis brauc uz Londonu! / LISTEN, RABBIT...DADDY GOES TO LONDON by Nils Skapāns / JPS/ 2004, 35mm, 8'17''

MAIN FILM INSTITUTIONS

National Film Centre of Latvia (NFC)

Peitavas 10/12
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Filmmakers Union of Latvia

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Latvia Film Producers Association

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Department of Screen and Stage Art, Academy of Culture

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Eurimages National Representative

c/o National Film Centre
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eurimages@nfc.gov.lv

Latvia State Archive of Audiovisual Documents

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LV1006 Riga Latvia
Tel + 371 7529 822
Fax + 371 7529 954
fonds@delfi.lv
www.arhivi.lv

Media Desk Latvia

c/o National Film Centre
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Tel + 371 7358 857
Fax + 371 7358 877
mediadesk@nfc.gov.lv
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Baltic Cinema

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Fax +371 7357 627
forumcinemas@forumcinemas.lv
www.forumcinemas.lv

ACME Film

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INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS

Riga International Film Forum Arsenal

Mārstaļu 14
LV1050 Riga Latvia
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International Festival of Film Actors "Baltic Pearl"

Blaumaņa 26-18
LV1011 Riga Latvia
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Fax +371 7289 040
info@balticpearl.lv
www.balticpearl.lv

International Documentary Film Symposium

Amatu 5
LV1941 Riga Latvia
Tel/Fax +371 7210 022
pipars@mailbox.riga.lv
www.latfilma.lv/symposium

International Animated Film Festival Bimini

Ezermalas 4/2-50
LV1006 Riga Latvia
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Fax +371 7540 066
info@bimini.lv
www.bimini.lv

Riga International Children Film Festival "Berimor's Cinema"

Mārstaļu 14
LV1050 Riga Latvia
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Fax +371 7820 445
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www.arsenals.lv

International Film Forum "And The Word Became Film..."

M.Pils 6-4
LV1050 Riga Latvia
Tel + 371 7222 061
ilze@stunda.lv
www.stunda.lv

Riga International Fantasy Film Festival

Mārstaļu 14
LV1050 Riga Latvia
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Fax +371 7820 445
zane@arsenals.lv
www.arsenals.lv

Youth Film Festival "Happy 2ANNAS"

Annas 2
LV1001 Riga Latvia
Tel +371 9107 124
Fax + 371 7614 789
2annas@inbox.lv
www.re-lab.lv/2annas

Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries

c/o National Film Centre
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Supported by



The National Film Centre of Latvia is a state financed governmental organisation overseeing the film branch in Latvia, granting governmental financial support to Latvian films, preserving the national audio-visual heritage, promoting Latvian films abroad, co-operating with the relevant international and national organisations and organising training for Latvian film professionals. We are members of

the EURIMAGES Foundation as of 2001 and MEDIA Plus as of January, 2002. At major international events we work together with Estonians and Lithuanians under the co-operation platform BALTIC FILMS. We are keen on attracting film, television, and video production to Latvia, stimulating inward investment, creating employment opportunities for creative staff, technicians and support service companies.



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