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CTB FILM COMPANY, SALVADOR D
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INTERCINEMA

present:

THE HUNTER

124 min., Dolby Digital 5.1, 35 mm., 1:1,85, color, Russia, 2011

A film by Bakur Bakuradze

Official Festival screenings:

May 20, 11:00, 17:00, Debussy Theatre
May 21, 11:00, Bazin

Market screening:

May 18, 2011 17:30 Lerins 1 Riviera B10

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*This film is about the nature of intimacy, about the necessity of intimacy.
It is the strongest feeling a person can experience in this world.*
– Bakur Bakuradze

SYNOPSIS

Farmer Ivan Dunaev gets up early. He feeds his piglets, does paperwork, fixes the tractor, and weighs the meat he'll take in his old pickup truck to the market to sell.

He has a wife, a teenage daughter, and a young son. And he loves to hunt. His world revolves around these things. Then, one day, two new workers, Lyuba and Raya, on work release from the local prison colony, arrive on the farm. Ivan doesn't notice it at first, but something begins to change...

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

People today have a hard time being themselves. Thoughts and feelings chase after one another as if they were directed towards some goal, but in reality people often go along with the flow. "I'll just be like everyone else," they say to themselves.

If someone feels the need to avoid being part of the general confusion – to sense himself through his own thoughts, through responsibility, to give himself the right to be guilty, to allow himself to feel, to trust, and to act for himself – he is capable of being a hero. Not in the sense of a hero of the moment, a hero who sacrifices himself or a war hero. The kind of heroism I have in mind is a way of living life that can be concealed in daily, monotonous routines, in repetition.

Only at the price of such daily effort can the individual shape the world around him. A world shaped in this way inevitably becomes self-contained, as natural as the change of seasons on a farm, the habit of loving one's wife or the schedule for feeding the pigs.

What happens when this space of the everyday is ruptured by the intimacy between two people? What happens when someone comes into your life who has no illusions but also needs you?

AN INTERVIEW WITH BAKUR BAKURADZE

Is the story for this film fictional, as was the case with your previous film, the well-regarded *Shultes*, or is it based on a real-life incident?

Yes, in one sense it is fictional. On the other hand, if we begin to reflect on what parts of our fictions are really made up and what parts are a mixture of things we have seen and heard in real life, then we will never get to the bottom of it. In today's information age it is very hard to keep track of the source of things. We read newspapers, listen to the radio, see things, observe things, and thus an image is born. This image then generates a story, which in turns requires certain details. Of course this story and this romance could have happened in real life, but it is not the kind of situation where you can simply grab a plot from real life and transfer it to film. That rarely happens these days. That is why a film nowadays is always a mosaic, something assembled from various parts. The story might be fictional, but its parts are quite real.

It seems to me that *The Hunter* is not clearly tied to a particular time or country. Do you like "timeless" cinema?

The notion of “timelessness” is also an attitude towards time. Only stories from antiquity are genuinely timeless. Take *Shultes*, for example: it also falls under the category of being outside a particular time and a particular city, but nevertheless it is a story that clearly relates to the present time. The space *Shultes* inhabits is more easily recognizable as belonging in the present day than the setting of *The Hunter*. In this new film, the emphasis is not on a particular time, but on a particular person. And on the relationship between a man and woman, between a father and son.

Of course, everything has long ago changed in the big cities – even sex has become different – but certain basic things have remained the same.

In *Shultes*, it was quite obvious that you were struggling with two factors: “artistry” and urban space.

Yes, you’re absolutely right. In Russian cinema, this “artistry” or, to put it another way, a certain conventionality or artificiality in terms of what happens on screen, looks quite odd nowadays, although viewers have long ago accepted it as fact. Why it has turned out this way is a complicated issue. I don’t like the majority of Russian films precisely because our cinema suffers from a kind of standardized artistry. It is hard to say where this came from, whether from the theater, from television or from a combination of many factors. There will always be a difference between cinema and life, but in this case the difference is flagrant. I am certain it cannot go on this way for long, because this “artistry” is a dead end, something that is dying out. I would like for Russian cinema to move in some other direction. Characters in Russian films cannot go on speaking the way they did, say, in the eighties or even the seventies!

As for my “resisting” the city: all of us who live in the big city are in conflict with it. The city dictates its own conditions for life. It is hard here for a person to remain inside his own skin, to create and to exist the way his own nature and character tell him to. So we conform to the city or do not conform to it to a huge extent, but all the same we are dependent on the city. It is not that I struggle with the city, but rather I investigate forms of resistance.

That apparently is why, in *The Hunter*, you’ve taken the main character out of the city – to create ideal conditions for experimenting on him?

Yes, to put him in a setting bereft of external pressures, to put him one on one with himself. You know, every nation has its own psychological peculiarities, things that strongly influence a person’s behavior. I think that in terms of showing their emotions Russians are freer than people from other countries – for example, when it comes to displaying affection. In Russia, if people are predisposed to one another, there are very few factors that prevent them from becoming friends, from becoming intimate – far fewer than, say, in Egypt. The only thing that can get in the way of Russians is this thing they have dreamt up for themselves – that very same gigantic anthill, the megalopolis. And so an isolated space, outside the city, is a much more comfortable place for a person to define himself.

In the last decade, the notion of “professionalism” was a kind of fetish, including in cinema. Today we are beginning to realize that professionalism in cinema is a necessary thing but that it is not enough. There are almost no professional actors in *The Hunter*. Do you see professional acting as a hindrance to getting your message across?

In general terms, yes: professionalism is more of a hindrance. But first we have to understand what we mean by this word. If by “professionalism” we mean an actor who calculates how much he can put out on your film set so that he’ll have enough left over to give the same mediocre performance on twenty-two other film sets, then I have no time for this kind of professionalism. If we are talking about craft, about an actor’s ability, say, to laugh, then this kind of professionalism is

quite important. You know, a non-professional actor cannot laugh on cue. He can cry, but he cannot laugh. It's quite hard to learn how to do this.

Andrei Arkhangelsky, *Ogonyok*

Film critic Andrei Plakhov on *The Hunter*:

The Hunter is an existential drama that takes place wholly on a hog farm. And yet the film contains no drunkenness, foul language or other attributes of “black” Russian cinema, which in and of itself makes this an interesting experiment.

Russia Today:

The Hunter, from the philosophical Georgia-born director Bakur Bakuradze, relates to an ordinary Russian man, Ivan, leading a rural life, working, loving, existing.

BIOGRAPHIES AND FILMOGRAPHIES OF THE FILM'S CREATORS

BAKUR BAKURADZE, director, screenwriter

In 1993, Bakur Bakuradze (born 1969, Tbilisi) enrolled in the Directors Program at the Russian State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK), where he studied under Marlen Khutsiev. In 2007 his 35-minute film «Moscow» garnered award in short-film section at Kinotavr; film was shown at different international film festivals. His first feature film «Shultes» was shown at the Cannes Film Festival (Quinzaine des Realisateurs), won the Grand Prix at Kinotavr in Sochi and at the Kiev Molodist International Film Festival. «The Hunter» is his second feature.

Filmography:

- 2011 – «The Hunter», feature, 124 min.
- 2008 – «Shultes», feature, 100 min.
- 2007 – «Moscow», feature, 35 min.

SERGEI SELYANOV, producer

As the founder and co-owner (with director Alexei Balabanov) of CTB Film Company, Sergey Selyanov is one of the most successful and dedicated independent producers in today's Russia.

Born in the north of Russia in 1955, Sergei studied at the Polytechnical University where he founded a film studio. In 1980, he graduated from the Scriptwriting Department of the Russian State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK; Figurovsky's workshop). In 1987–88, he completed the Higher Courses for Scriptwriters and Directors, in Moscow (class of Rolan Bykov).

In 1992, he founded CTB Film Company. The company has produced more than fifty feature and documentary films as well as many TV programs.

In 2003, the economics magazine *Expert* described Sergei Selyanov as «the only Russian film producer whose name has become a brand in the sphere of film production».

Filmography as a director:

- 1995 *The Russian Idea*
- 1995 *Not Yet a Time for Sorrow*
- 1990 *Whit Monday* (Dukhov den)
- 1988 *Saint's Day* (Den angela)

Filmography as a producer:

- 2011 *The Hunter* by Bakur Bakuradze
- 2011 *Dom* by Oleg Pogodin
- 2007 *Bablo* by Konstantin Buslov
- 2010 *KocheGAR* by Alexei Balabanov
- 2009 *Prince Ivan and the Grey Wolf* by Vladimir Toropchin
- 2008 *Shultes* by Bakur Bakuradze
- 2008 *Nirvana* by Igor Voloshin

2007 *Mongol* by Sergei Bodrov
 2007 *Hard-Hearted* by Aleksei Mizgiriyov
 2007 *Cargo 200* by Alexei Balabanov
 2006 *Khottabych* by Pyotr Tochilin
 2006 *The Sword Bearer* by Filipp Yankovsky
 2006 *Bummer-2: Heaven on Earth* by Pyotr Buslov
 2006 *Dobrynya Nikitich i Zmey Gorynych* by Ilya Maximov
 2006 *It Doesn't Hurt* by Alexei Balabanov
 2006 *Transit* by Alexander Rogozhkin
 2005 *Blind Man's Bluff* by Alexei Balabanov
 2005 *Nochnoy Prodavets* (Graveyard Shift) by Valery Rozhnov
 2003 *Bummer* by Pyotr Buslov
 2004 *Alyosha Popovich i Tugarin Zmey* by Konstantin Bronzit
 2004 *Schizo* by Guka Omarova
 2002 *War* by Alexei Balabanov
 2002 *The Cuckoo* by Alexander Rogozhkin
 2002 *Bear's Kiss* by Sergei Bodrov
 2002 *Tycoon* by Pavel Lungin
 2001 *Sisters* by Sergei Bodrov, Jr.
 2000 *Brother 2* by Alexei Balabanov
 1998 *The Peculiarities of National Fishing* by Alexander Rogozhkin
 1998 *Of Freaks and Men* by Alexei Balabanov
 1998 *Checkpoint* by Alexander Rogozhkin
 1997 *Operation Happy New Year* by Alexander Rogozhkin
 1997 *Mama, Don't Cry!* by Maxim Pezhemsky
 1997 *Brother* by Alexei Balabanov

JULIA MISHKINENE, executive producer

Julia graduated from the philosophy department of Moscow State University, and has Ph.D. Since 2005, Julia has been the managing partner of the Salvador D group. She produced around ten documentary and corporate films and the features «Moscow», «Shultes» and «The Hunter».

In 2009 Julia successfully graduated the training program EURODOC and took part in master class MINI EAVE in Moscow. Now Julia is collaborating with European producers.

Filmography as a producer:

2011 – «The Hunter», feature, 124 min.
 2008 – «Shultes», feature, 100 min.
 2007 – «Moscow», feature, 35 min.

ARCHIL GELOVANI, co-producer

Archil was born in Moscow. He graduated from the Institute of International Relations in 1995. After graduating, he moved to Boston, where he continued his education, first at Boston University, then at Harvard. In 2005, he founded Independent Film Project, a film production company. He has produced a dozen feature and documentary films, which have received awards at various international festivals.

Filmography as a producer:

2011 – «The Hunter»
2010 – «Street Days»
2010 – «Rene goes to Hollywood»
2010 – «I love you baby»
2009 – «The Conflict zone»
2008 – «House of joy»
2008 – «Three Houses»
2008 – «Women from Georgia», documentary
2007 – «The Russian triangle»

NIKOLAI VAVILOV, director of photography

Nikolai was born 30 December 1975, in Moscow.

Filmography:

2011 – «The Hunter», feature, 124 min.
2008 – «Shultes», feature, 100 min.
2008 – «Moscow», feature, 35 min.
2008 – «Battle for the Ocean», documentary
2008 – «Beast», feature
2008 – «Efremov: A Letter from the Forgotten Russia», documentary

THE CAST

MIKHAIL BARSKOVICH – «Ivan Dunaev»

Mikhail was born in 1970 in Latvia. At present, he works as head of the department of ecosystems protection at Braslav Lakes National Park in Belarus.

Filmography:

2011 – «The Hunter», Mikhail's feature film acting debut

TATIANA SHAPOVALOVA – «Lyuba»

Tatyana was born in 1966. She lives in Saint Petersburg and works as the administrator of the Borey Art Gallery.

Filmography:

2011 – «The Hunter», Tatiana's feature film acting debut

GERA AVDOCHYONOK – «Kolya»

Gera was born in 2000.

Filmography:

2011 – «The Hunter», Gera's feature film acting debut

VLADIMIR DEGILEV – «Viktor»

Vladimir was born in 1957. He works on a hog farm in Russia's Pskov Region. *The Hunter* is Vladimir's feature film acting debut.

Filmography:

2011 – «The Hunter», Vladimir's feature film acting debut

THE CREW

Producer – Sergey Selyanov
Co-producer – Archil Gelovani
Executive producer – Julia Mishkinene
Director – Bakur Bakuradze
Screenplay – Bakur Bakuradze, Ilya Malakhova
Director of photography – Nikolay Vavilov
Set design – Kirill Shuvalov
Sound – Arseniy Troitskiy
Costumes – Elena Gromova, Marianna Gaiduk
Make-up – Katerina Maksyutova
Editors – Daria Gladysheva, Ilya Malakhova, Arseniy Troitskiy

THE CAST

Ivan – Mikhail Barskovich
Lyuba – Tatiana Shapovalova
Kolya – Gera Avdochenok
Viktor – Vladimir Degilev

Ivan's Wife – Oksana Semyonova
Lyuba's Co-Worker – Katerina Maksyutova
Ivan's Daughter – Yulia Melikhova
Petya – Dmitry Gusev
Doctor – Sergei Dolgoshein
Release Officer in Prison Colony – Natalya Karpova
Captain in Prison Colony – Yevgeny Vardanyants
Dead Pilot's Daughter – Natalya Pershina
Sausage Factory Owner – Nikolai Lebedev
Galya – Larisa Sergeeva
Swimming Instructor – Marina Rodina
Nurse at Health Spa – Olga Ivanova
Hunting Store Clerk – Sergei Lazarev
Dead Pilot's Relative – Galina Yarmolenko
Dead Pilot's Great Granddaughter – Anna Khodyush
Jeep Driver – Valentin Volkov
Veterinary in Hog Barn – Mikhail Simonov
Veterinary at Market – Svetlana Drachenko
Boyfriend of Ivan's Daughter – Vitaly Romanov
Brigade Sergeant in Prison Colony – Andrei Filimonov
Duty Officer in Prison Colony – Alexander Kozlov
Poacher – Sergei Shtormov
Worker at Market – Alexander Antonov