



Press-kit

presents

A film by Konstantin Lopushansky

THROUGH THE BLACK GLASS

The drama titled *Through the Black Glass* is a modern interpretation of such famous classical plots as *Cinderella* and *Scarlet Sails*, with a touch of Chaplin`s *City Lights*. The main heroine is an 18-year-old blind girl from a provincial orphanage, who unexpectedly gets a chance of a lifetime. A wealthy man offers to pay for an expensive eye surgery on the condition that she agrees to marry him before the operation, without a single glance at the groom. Alas, fate hands out happy endings sparingly, and the vision, miraculously regained by the heroine, gives her an unpleasant insight into stark realities of life.

The film directed by Konstantin Lopushansky, who also wrote the original script, is not just a new rendition of the classical plot; it is a deep glance at the ambiguous relationship between men and women in the present-day Russia. The author makes an emphasis on dynamics of editing, music, photography, and, obviously, the choice of actors.

The director says,

“You can analyze the film in view of several genres: tragic melodrama, a modern rendition of the classical Cinderella plot, and a religious drama loosely based on the conceptual conflict in Dostoevsky`s Gentle Creature. The story is centered at the tragic collision of two world outlooks: the religious belief and the atheistic view, set against the newest Russian history. The latter interpretation is the closest to me, and is in tune with my views as a film director. Yet, this still leaves space for detailed elaboration into the other two variants, melodrama being the priority. It is crucial that the film reaches the necessary emotional scope as it is primarily addressed to the youth”.

The main role (Nastya) was performed by Vasilisa Denisova, a graduate of the Russian State Institute for Performing Arts, and Maxim Sukhanov (famous for his roles in *The Land of the Deaf* and *Goddess: My Love Story*, and in Konstantin Lopushansky`s previous film *Role*), appeared as her husband, oligarch Mikhail Ostrovoy.

The director says that they searched long and hard for the actors, especially the actress for the role of Nastya. It was essential to find a young girl well aware of the exceptional world of an orthodox monastery life, who would feel at home with its peculiarities and traditions, because this knowledge had to be seen in subtle things such as the heroine`s plastics, reactions, and actor`s judgments.

“I was happy to have met Vasilisa Denisova. Despite her very young age, she has great acting skill and talent. I am confident that this actress will definitely come into the spotlight both in our film and in her future career. We are proud – together with Andrei Sigle, the film`s producer, and all the film crew – to have discovered this new name in the Russian filmmaking,” says Konstantin Lopushansky.

Vasilisa Denisova believes that this role was the gift of her destiny that is closely connected to blind people. Vasilisa Denisova appears in the performance after William Gibson`s play *The Miracle Worker* about Helen Keller, the deaf and blind American, in the Social Art Theatre. When she was preparing to play the mother of the deaf and blind girl, she spent a lot of time talking to blind people.

When working at the image of Ostrovoy, the antihero, Konstantin Lopushansky and Maxim Sukhanov tried to avoid the straightforward interpretation of him as a complete villain.

“I guess it was important here to perceive the scope of his personality, remarkable but possessed by severe passions, controversial and tragic, in a way. This man is undoubtedly smart, but it is a Mephistophelian mind, so any path that Ostrovoy takes undoubtedly leads him to crime and spiritual collapse,” the director says.

“Konstantin Lopushansky and I added a lot of details to my character`s image right on the filming location; we created Ostrovoy`s personality right on the spot. We have worked with Konstantin Lopushansky several times before, so we feel and understand each other very well,” Maxim Sukhanov explains.

Nadezhda Markina, the actress who got world famous after her outstanding performance in Andrei Zvyagintsev`s *Yelena*, plays an important supporting role – Mother Superior of the nunnery. *“I loved my part and the theme that the film covers. Nastya, the young girl, faces a difficult choice in her life, and my heroine helps her with wise guidance and advice; she discusses her doubts with her, and helps her to avoid making mistakes. Adults have to care for the young and guide them.”*

The film is set in St.Petersburg and its suburbs. The locations include multiple eye-catching places and buildings: picturesque landscapes and interiors, monasteries and monastic cells, churches, the sea shore, and many others. There are no studio scenes with stage sets in this film; all the settings are natural, alive, and atmospheric. The main heroine`s adolescence in the residential care facility was filmed in the Skvortsov Stepanov mental hospital. The oligarch`s mansion is represented by a real historical building - the Bip fortress in Pavlovsk, Tsar Pavel`s two-storeyed castle that now houses a luxurious hotel.

Moreover, the film crew worked in Moscow and Germany for several days.

The film *Through the Black Glass* is a subtle blend of melodrama and religious drama, and it is intended for a broad audience. As the authors try to draw attention of young watchers, they have made the film emotionally expressive and adherent to the highest esthetical standards.

Full-length feature film

Year:	2018
Genre:	drama
Length:	133 min
Color:	color
Language:	Russian
Subtitles:	English
Production:	Proline Film
With support from:	The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation
General producer:	Andrei Sigle
Directed by:	Konstantin Lopushanskiy
Written by:	Konstantin Lopushanskiy
Production design by:	Alexey Paderin
Cinematography by:	Dimitry Mass
Main cast:	Maxim Sukhanov, Vasilisa Denisova, Nadezhda Markina

Synopsis

This is a story of a blind girl who gets a chance of a lifetime. A rich man offers to her the precious gift of the eyesight, provided that she marries him blindly. This gift opens her eyes on the grim truth of life.

The film`s web page <http://prolinefilm.ru/en/films/through-the-black-glass>

Photo <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B1Plpc2tfDVab1U2cGNURDRKWjQ>

KONSTANTIN LOPUSHANSKIY

Directed by



Russian film director and screenwriter Konstantin Lopushansky is rightfully considered the spiritual and esthetic successor to Andrei Tarkovsky. He is also one of the few Russian directors who is indisputably an *auteur*.

He has won awards at more than 30 international film festivals (including the international Ecumenical Jury Award twice – at the Berlinale in 1995 and at the Moscow Film Festival in 1989). He is laureate of the Russian Vassilyev Brothers State Prize, the FIPRESSI prize, and the St.Petersburg Prize (in the nomination of arts and literature, 2007, for *The Ugly Swans*). He received the honorary title of Russian People's Artist (in 2008). He is a member of the European Movie Academy (EFA), an acting

member of the Russian Cinema Academy and of the Russian National Academy of Cinema Arts and Science.

Lopushansky's first full-length film, *Letters from a Dead Man* (*Briefe eines Toten*, *Lettres d'un homme mort*), brought him world-wide fame. It was screened at more than ten international festivals, including Cannes in 1987.

Konstantin Lopushansky also writes the scripts for his films. His scripts have been published as literary works in Russia and Europe.

Lopushansky's films have been screened numerous times on television, in France (ARTE), Germany (ZDF), Canada, the USA (TBC), South America, Australia, the U.K. and Eastern Europe. Retrospectives of Lopushansky's films have been held in cinemas in Germany, France, Belgium, Russia, and other countries.

He has been a director at the Lenfilm Studio since 1980.

Filmography:

2018 [THROUGH THE BLACK GLASS](#), feature film, director, scriptwriter

2013 [THE ROLE](#), feature film, director, scriptwriter

2006 [THE UGLY SWANS](#), feature film, director, scriptwriter

2001 THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

1994 RUSSIAN SYMPHONY

1989 THE MUSEUM VISITOR

1986 LETTERS FROM A DEAD MAN

1980 SOLO

1979 TEARS IN THE WIND

ANDREY SIGLE

General producer



Date of birth: May 15, 1964.

Education: the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory and the Royal Academy of Music in Gothenburg (Sweden).

He has composed music for more than 40 films.

Andrei Sigle's creative work has been awarded with prizes of Russian and foreign festivals many times. He's a participant of international film forums (Cannes, Berlin, Venice).

He's a Honoured Art Worker of Russian Federation (2006).

In 2011 – The Golden Lion for “Faust” at Venice Film Festival.

Andrei Sigle is also a member of the European Film Academy (EFA).

Laureate of “Time for peace film and music awards” (2008)

Laureate of Governmental awards of Saint Petersburg (2007, 2008)

Laureate of “White Elephant” awards (2005, 2012)

Laureate of “Kinotaur” (2005, 2006)

Laureate of “Nika” (2013)

Selected Filmography:

2016 [KHARMS](#), feature film, by Ivan Bolotnikov

2015 [ARVENTUR](#), animated feature film, by Irina Evteeva

2013 [THE ROLE](#), feature film, by Konstantin Lopushansky

2011 [FAUST](#), feature film, by Alexander Sokurov

2010 [MISSING MAN](#), feature film, by Anna Fenchenko

2007 [ALEXANDRA](#), feature film, by Alexander Sokurov

2006 [THE UGLY SWANS](#), feature film, by Konstantin Lopushansky

DIMITRY MASS

Cinematographer



Born 10 March 1954. Graduated from VGIK (pedagogue Ilyin) in 1979. Worked at Leningrad Documentary Film Studios and at Lenfilm.

Member of the Union of Cinematographers of the Russian Federation. Member of the Russian Academy of Television since 2004. Winner of multiple international film festivals and prizes.

Selected filmography:

2018 THROUGH THE BLACK GLASS

2015 DEPARTMENT]

2014 GENTLEMAN-COMRADES

2013 THE ROLE

2013 GUEST

2012 PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

2011 IN YOUR EYES

2010 HIDE AND SEEK

2010 I WON'T SAY

2009 TARAS BULBA

2009 THE PHONEIX SYNDROME

2003 POLICE STATION

2003 THE IDIOT

MAXIM SUKHANOV

in the role of Mikhail Ostrovoi



Actor, producer, and composer Maxim Sukhanov was born on November 10, 1963 in Moscow. In 1985 he graduated from the Shchukin Theater School (studying under T. Kopteva, and V. Ivanov) and began working at the Vakhtangov Theater. He also performs with the Lenkom, Stanislavsky, and Mayakovsky Theaters. Since the mid-1980s he has been working in film in the most varied roles. He is best known for his work in Land of the Deaf (directed by Valery Todorovsky), Goddess: How I Fell in Love (directed by Renata Litvinova) and The Horde (directed by Andrei Proshkin).

He was twice laureate of the State Prize for his roles of Khlestakov and Cyrano de Bergerac, and has won the Nika Russian national cinema award three times.

Selected Filmography:

2018 THROUGH THE BLACK GLASS

2013 THE ROLE

2011 THE HORDE

2011 BORIS GODUNOV

2011 BURNT BY THE SUN 2: THE CITADEL

2010 THE TARGET

2009 THE MAN WHO KNEW EVERYTHING

2007 20 CIGARETTES

2004 CHILDREN OF THE ARBAT

2004 THE GODDESS: HOW I FELL IN LOVE

1999 MAMA

1998 LAND OF THE DEAF

VASILISA DENISOVA

in the role of Nastya



Film and stage actress.

Born 9 November 1991. Lived in London for a while where she studied ballet.

In 2016 graduated from the Russian State Institute of Performing Arts in St Petersburg (pedagogues Filshinsky and Gracheva).

Works in the apprentice troupe at the Alexandrinsky Theatre.

Selected Filmography:

2018 THROUGH THE BLACK GLASS

NADEZHDA MARKINA

in the role of the Mother Superior



Born 29 January 1959 in Dmitrievka (Tambov Oblast). Graduated from the acting faculty at the Russian Institute of Theatre Arts in 1983. Started her career at the Taganka Theatre. In 1992 she moved to the Theatre on Malaya Bronnaya, where she worked for six years. Has also worked at the Gorky Moscow Arts Theatre and at the Gogol Theatre. In 1998 was awarded the Golden Mask for her role in the stage play, *Pyat vecherov* [Five Evenings].

Started her film career in the early 1980s, with cameo roles. A landmark role in her acting career was her work in Andrei Zvyagintsev's film, *Elena* (2010). The picture was well received by the public and critics alike. The film won prizes at the Cannes Film Festival and in the US. In 2011 the film was presented at the International film festival in India, where Nadezhda Markina won the

award for Best Actress.

Selected filmography:

2018 THROUGH THE BLACK GLASS
2017 MYTHS OF MOSCOW
2016 THE SUN AS A GIFT
2016 PETERSBURG. ONLY FOR LOVE
2015 THE FIND
2014 DEMONS
2013 THE THAW
2011 ELENA (2011)
2009 GOOD PEOPLE
2004 PENAL BATTALION
2000 THE WEDDING
1998 WHO, IF NOT
1985 BOW TO THE GROUND

Proline Film was founded in 2004 by a famous Russian movie composer and producer Andrey Sigle. The Studio cooperates with many independent European producers, major funds, film studios and TV channels. We are proud to work with the best Russian film directors: Aleksandr Sokurov, Konstantin Lopushansky, Irina Evteeva, Sergei Ovcharov. Films of the Studio are the participants and winners of many film festivals, including the Cannes International Film Festival, the Berlinale, the Shanghai International Film Festival, Venice International Film Festival and Moscow International Film Festival. Our mission is to promote Auteur Cinema worldwide.

ProlineFilm official website: <http://en.prolinefilm.ru/>

Individual requests can be made for interviews with director and writer Konstantin Lopushansky, producer Andrei Sigle, the actors and other members of the crew.

Please send your inquiries to Anna Zinovyeva: annazprfilm@gmail.com