

Dossier de presse trigon-film

# DANS LA BRUME

Un film de Sergei Loznitsa  
Lettonie, 2012



## DISTRIBUTION

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## MATERIEL PHOTOGRAPHIQUE

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## FICHE TECHNIQUE

Titre original	V Tumane
Réalisation	Sergei Loznitsa
Scénario	Sergei Loznitsa, d'après le roman éponyme de Vasili Bykov
Image	Oleg Mutu
Décors	Jurgis Karsons, Kirill Shuvalov, Juris Zhukovskis
Montage	Danielius Kokanauskis
Son	Vladimir Golovnitsky
Costumes	Dorota Roqueplo
Production	MA.JA.DE.Fiction, Rajafilms, Lemming Film, Belarusfilm, GP Cinema
Format	Blu-ray, DCP
Durée	128 min.
Langue	russe
Sous-titres	all/fr

## FICHE ARTISTIQUE

Vladimir Svirskiy	Sushenya
Vladislav Abashin	Burov
Sergei Kolesov	Voitik
Nikita Peremotovs	Grisha
Yulia Peresild	Anelya
Kirill Petrov	Koroban
Dmitrijs Kolosovs	Mishuk
Stepans Bogdanovs	Topchievsky
Dmitry Bykovskiy	Yaroshevich
Vlad Ivanov	Grossmeier

## FESTIVALS

Cannes 2012, en compétition  
Prix de la critique internationale

## **SYNOPSIS**

Parce qu'il n'a pas été exécuté avec ses compagnons par l'occupant allemand, à la suite d'un sabotage, la résistance l'accuse de collaboration et condamne Sushenya à mort. Deux partisans viennent alors le chercher chez lui pour l'exécuter. Au moment fatal, la police collaborationniste surgit et il s'ensuit un échange de coups de feu et l'un des résistants est gravement touché. Sushenya prendra soin du blessé tandis que l'autre cherchera un chemin pour que le groupe puisse s'enfuir. Seul à connaître la forêt, Sushenya est temporairement épargné, le temps qu'ils retrouvent le campement de la résistance.

## **RESUME DU FILM**

1942, la partie occidentale de l'Union Soviétique est sous occupation allemande. Les escarmouches sont nombreuses et brutales avec la résistance. Des actes de sabotages sont perpétrés. L'un de ceux-ci provoque un déraillement non loin du village où Sushenya vit avec sa femme et sa fille. Il n'est qu'un humble cheminot, mais à ce titre, il est fait prisonnier avec les saboteurs. Ceux-ci seront exécutés, mais l'officier allemand décide d'épargner et de libérer Sushenya bien qu'il ne lui ait pas donné d'information sur la résistance. La rumeur se répand pourtant rapidement qu'il a trahi – car il n'y avait aucune raison qu'il soit encore en vie. La résistance envoie alors deux hommes pour l'arrêter et l'exécuter.

Les deux partisans, Burov et Voitik, viennent donc le chercher et l'emmène dans la forêt avec une pelle pour qu'il y creuse sa tombe. Au moment fatal, les trois hommes tombent dans une embuscade tendue par la police alliée à l'occupant. Burov est grièvement blessé. Il gardera donc Sushenya pendant que Voitik ira chercher de l'aide. Lorsqu'il reviendra bredouille, il trouvera son camarade mort, étendu à côté de Sushenya qui a refusé de s'enfuir pour ne pas laisser le corps seul dans la forêt. Les deux hommes vont errer dans la forêt biélorusse immense à la recherche d'une issue, Sushenya portant toujours le corps de Burov, et l'ennemi à leurs trousses.

Au bout de son calvaire, Sushenya devra faire un choix et reconnaître qu'en fait il n'en a pas.

## BIOFILMOGRAPHIE DU REALISATEUR

Sergei Loznitsa est le 5 septembre 1964 à Baranovich, en Biélorussie, alors partie de l'URSS. Il fut élevé à Kiev, en Ukraine où il obtint en 1987 un diplôme de mathématiques appliquées à l'école polytechnique de la ville. Entre 1987 et 1991, il travailla comme scientifique à l'Institut de cybernétique de Kiev, se spécialisant dans le recherche sur l'intelligence artificielle. Il a aussi travaillé comme traducteur du japonais. En 1997, il sort diplômé de l'Institut d'état russe du cinéma (VGIK) où il a étudié la mise en scène. Depuis 1996, Sergei Loznitsa a réalisé une douzaine de documentaires. A ce titre, il a reçu de nombreuses récompenses aussi bien internationales que nationales. Son premier long métrage de fiction My Joy (2010) fut sélectionné en compétition au festival de Cannes

## Filmographie

- 1996 TODAY WE ARE GOING TO BUILD A HOUSE, documentaire, 28 min, N/B, mono, 35mm
- 1998 LIFE, AUTUMN, documentaire, 34 min., N/B, mono, 35mm
- 2000 THE TRAIN STOP, documentaire, 25 min., N/B, mono, 35mm
- 2001 SETTLEMENT, documentaire, 80 min., N/B, mono, 35mm
- 2002 PORTRAIT, documentaire, 28 min., N/B, mono, 35 mm
- 2003 LANDSCAPE, documentaire, 60 min., couleur, mono, 35 mm
- 2004 FACTORY, documentaire, 30 min, couleur, dolby digital, 35 mm
- 2005 BLOCKADE, documentaire, 52 min, N/B,, stereo, 35 mm
- 2006 ARTEL, documentaire, 30 min, N/B, stereo, 35 mm
- 2008 REVUE, documentaire, 83 min, N/B, dolby digital 5.1, 35 mm
- 2008 NORTHERN LIGHT, documentaire, 52 min, couleur, stereo, DVCPRO
- 2010 MY JOY, fiction, 127 min, couleur, Dolby SR, 35 mm, 1:2.35
- 2012 IN THE FOG, fiction , 127 min, couleur, Dolby SR, 35 mm, 1:2.35
- 2012 THE MIRACLE OF SAINT ANTHONY, documentaire, 40 min, couleur, HD

## **Vasili Bykov (1924 – 2003)**

Vasil Bykov was born in the village of Bychki in the Vitebsk region of Belarus, in a poor peasant family. After graduating from secondary school he entered Vitebsk College of Arts, where he studied sculpture. However, he had to abandon the course in 1940, when the government grants for education were abolished.

In 1942 Vasil Bykov was drafted into the army, and after training at the Saratov Infantry school, he was sent to the front. He was badly wounded in 1943 during the Kirovograd military operation and was mistakenly presumed dead. This experience was later described by Bykov in his novella "The dead don't feel pain" (1965). He left military service in 1947 in the rank of senior lieutenant.

Bykov started his writing career as a local newspaper editor, working in the city of Grodno. In the beginning of the 60-s he began publishing short stories and novellas. He wrote most of his books in Belorussian and translated them into Russian himself. In 1962 Bykov published the novella "Third rocket" which brought him critical acclaim and popularity with readers throughout the Soviet Union. In the late 60-s and early 70-s Bykov published several novellas which confirmed his status as a leading Soviet author of his generation: "Alpine ballad" (1963), "Sotnikov" (1970), "Hold out till dawn" (1972).

The main subject of Bykov's writings was the Second World War and its traumatic impact on the common man. "I speak on behalf of the killed generation," – said Bykov about himself.

In 1988 Bykov became one of the co-founders of the Belorussian National Front. In 1997 he emigrated from Belarus. He returned to his native country one month before his death, in May 2003.

"IN THE FOG" (1987). The action of the novel takes place in the Soviet Belorussia during the Nazi occupation. The protagonist, a railway worker Sushenya, is wrongly accused of collaboration. He is faced with an impossible moral dilemma.

"... everything has its' meaning and its' laws of being. Human power is always limited. Sometimes, a man is completely powerless. Those people, partisans and patriots, have perished, and why should he hope for a better fate? He was with them when they met their death and, perhaps, only because of that he deserves a similar end. Let the others forgive him; let his wife and his young son forgive him. He always tried to be a good father and a loving husband, but the war and the ill fate overpowered him. Only God knows, how much he loved them and how much he suffered – in order to save them. Perhaps, everything could have been different, if he had not felt such a strong love for them, which was so ruthlessly used by those villains who backed him into a corner. The German officer Grossmeier ruined his life, but he did not destroy his willpower. His free will is the only thing that remains undamaged and unrestrained. He still has the freedom to choose his own death... And this would be his sole consolation in his darkest hour. He could not find any other thought to comfort him." (Vasil Bykov, "IN THE FOG").

(Source: site official du film)

## **Le point de vue de Sergei Loznitsa**

The Second World War. Western frontiers of the USSR. Forest. Two partisans are on their way to kill a civilian. They are on a mission. Their comrades, resistance fighters, have decided that this civilian is a traitor. Traitors have to be killed. This is how our story begins.

The civilian, condemned to death by the partisans, is a decent man. He found himself in this position due to unfortunate circumstances, but he is not able to prove his innocence.

The story ends tragically for all the protagonists.

There are hopeless situations, which do not have a way out, simply because there is a breakdown of understanding; the stream of events defies any reasoning and there is no possibility for a dialogue.

We are dealing with such a situation.

The protagonist gradually realises that he is doomed. He is finally able to see the real state of affairs.

This is the plot of the film.

There are three retrospections in the film. These are three flashback episodes from the lives of the main protagonists – Sushenya, the civilian, and the two partisans, who come from the forest to kill him – Voitik and Burov. Each flashback reveals the personalities of the protagonists and leads us to understanding of how each of them got caught up in this affair.

The structure of the film is as follows: the opening scene – development – retrospection – development – retrospection – development – retrospection – development – finale. The linear structure with occasional digressions in time enables us to see the events from a distance and in a time perspective. It reveals the logic behind the events and demonstrates the causes of seemingly accidental circumstances.

The characters of the three main protagonists can, roughly speaking, be defined as the following prototypes: a Saint – a Man who doubts – a Villain.

Sushenya. His appearance gives a false impression of someone very gullible and easily led. In reality, he is an emotionally intelligent person, a man of dignity; he is very consistent in his actions and in his ideas.

Burov. He ended up in a partisan camp only because he was ill-treated by his neighbour and could not cope with the feeling of humiliation and the desire of revenge. He is hard, opinionated and passionate, yet, at the same time he attempts to reflect upon the situation and to find some justification for his actions.

Voitik. He is a typical representative of "new Soviet formation" – undignified, cowardly, indifferent, unremarkable. He is capable of killing someone without giving it a second thought. He is only preoccupied with his personal safety and provision of food for himself. As far as he is concerned, the rest of the world exists only as an obstacle or as a means of achieving his personal goals.

While Sushchenya and Burov are trying to understand what is going on around them, they are capable of reflection and they can doubt their own actions, especially when other people are concerned, Voitik's only preoccupation is his own survival and the world around him is very narrow; it exists to serve his immediate needs and purposes. While Burov and Voitik come from the forest with the intention to kill Sushenya (in this particular case, it is not so important, whether Burov doubts the righteousness of this murder or not), Sushenya is not capable of murder, nor he is capable of

compromising the lives of the people who are close to him. He can only appeal for understanding and compassion or he can sacrifice himself, when the word of reason loses its power. The irony of Sushenya's position consists in the fact that he does not understand the real state of affairs: he was let off by the Gestapo only to become a "bait", with which the German police wanted to catch the partisans by luring them out of their hiding place in the forest.

There is a clash of personalities in the story. Looking from historical perspective, one can say that under the Soviet regime Voitik-like characters were particularly successful, they survived and multiplied, whereas characters like Sushenya practically disappeared. These are the fruits of social selection.

On the narrative level the film describes the events that took place in the autumn-winter 1942. On the metaphysical level one can say that the film deals with the idea that the state of non-being afflicts any society, plagued by war, and that the state of non-being afflicts any individual in a society, which demands a sacrifice from its' members. Sacrifice in the film is shown as one of the possibilities, which a member of a society has, to stop the spreading of the lethal disease of mutual destruction. The protagonist, having understood his fate and having found the courage to accept it, acquires existential wisdom.

The film will be made in a minimalist, restrained manner. Any emotion, even if present in certain episodes, will be understated – in the manner of acting and in all the structural elements. The film is like a tight nerve. I will only allow myself to pull apart the thin fabric of the film at the very end.

The film will be shot on location: in a village, in a forest, at a farm, at a small railway station. The action spreads over three seasons: late summer, late autumn, winter. I have chosen the rugged terrain with hills, lakes, small rivers and wild, thick vegetation. The forest in the film is unkempt, thick, with a mixture of conifers, pines and foliage. The landscape can be described as "ominous", reminiscent in style to the paintings of Jacob Ruisdael.

In contrast to the expressive landscape, the style of cinematography will be understated. The movement of the camera will be restrained, the composition will be laconic; there will be few scenes in each episode, just enough to articulate the idea of the episode.

The visual language is of primary importance to me. The dialogues are only present where it is absolutely necessary. The sound will be rather minimalist. The sound of the forest in the late autumn and early winter.

Why do I choose to go back to history, why do I want to make a film about the Second World War? Due to certain reasons, artists during the Soviet era had a very limited opportunity to reflect upon the events which took place in those tragic years. The post-Soviet culture also has not produced works which give an unbiased representation of the events of that period. However, the tragic events need to be reflected upon and analyzed. I consider it my duty to look back and – therefore – into the future.

Sergei Loznitsa