

65   
VENEZIA 2008  
Competition



BUMAZHNY SOLDAT

A film by Alexey German Jr.

# PAPER SOLDIER



RUSSIA  
CHANNEL

elle  
driver

**Official Screening: 2-9-2008, SALA GRANDE, time : 16.30**

1-9-2008

Cinema hall: SALA PERLA, time : 22.00

Access : Daily Press

02-09-2008

Cinema hall: PALALIDO, time : 8.30

Access : Press, Industry, Professional

03-09-2008

Cinema hall: PALABIENNALE, time : 13.30

Access : Pubblico, Tutti gli Accrediti

04-09-2008

Cinema hall: GIORGIONE, time : 21.00

Access : Pubblico

The press-conference will take place the September 2nd at 12am, 3d floor, palazzo del Casinò.

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The pressbooks and photos are available on:  
<http://www.mimmomorabito.it> <http://www.image.net>

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Technical details

Bumazhny Soldat – Paper Soldier- Soldato di carta

by Alexey German Jr.

Russia, 2008 – 35mm, colour, 118', 1: 2.35, Dolby Stereo 5.1

original version in russian, with subtitles

# BUMAZHNY SOLDAT

Paper soldier

## Cast & Credits

**Directed by:** Alexey German Jr.  
**Screenplay:** Alexey German Jr.  
Vladimir Arkusha  
**Cinematographer:** Alisher Khamidhodjaev  
Maxim Drozdov  
**Editor:** Sergei Ivanov  
**Production Designer:** Sergei Kakovkin  
Eldar Karhalev  
**Costume Designer:** Elena Malich  
**Music:** Fedor Sofronov  
**Sound:** Tariel Gasan Zade  
**Main Cast:** Merab Ninidze  
Chulpan Khamatova  
Anastasya Sheveleva  
**Producers:** Artem Vassiliev  
Sergei Shumakov  
**Associate Producer:** Evgeny Lebedev  
**Production:** Phenomen Films  
**Co-production:** TV Channel "Russia"



## Alexey German Jr.

Paper Soldier is Alexey German's Jr. third feature film. With it, the director features in official competition at the Venice Festival for the second time. His previous films, *The Last Train* and *Garpastum*, were both shown (*Garpastum* in competition) at the Venice Film Festival, and *The Last Train* received a special mention from the Luigi De Laurentiis Award jury for a debut film in 2003. A. German Jr. has two Nika Awards from the Russian Academy of Cinema - Best Debut and Best Director.

The 32-year-old director is one of the leaders of the young generation of Russian moviemakers. Alexey combines the ability to recreate not only the atmosphere, but also the aroma and taste of a time period – whether it is Russia during World War II, the “Silver Age” or the Soviet 1960's – with high professional skill and an original approach to interpreting historical events. The plot stories German chooses for his films are always sudden. In *The Last Train* he showed the events of World War II through the eyes of a German doctor. *Garpastum* told the story of young boys at the beginning of the 20th century who were so captivated with street football that they did not notice the imminence of World War I and the beginning of the social catastrophe of 1917. Alexey German's new feature film is an attempt to show one of the central myths of the Soviet Union in a new light – the myth of the first human spaceflight. When looking at “History at Large”, the director German is always most interested in “small people”.



# Biography of Alexey German jr.

Alexey German Jr. was born in Moscow on 4th of September 1976. Between 1996-2001 Alexey studied at the Russian Film School - VGIK. He shot three short films that gained international and Russian film festivals awards. Alexey debuted in full-feature cinematography with his film "The Last Train". It was first screened in Venice in 2003 where it received a special mention of the "Future Lion" jury. The Russian Academy of Cinematography "Nika" named the director "Discovery of the Year". His second film "Garpastum" participated in the official competition of Venice IFF 2005. German Jr. recently finished his latest full-length feature film «Paper Soldier».

## Filmography:

- 2005 — Garpastum/Garpastum
- 2003 — The Last Train/Posledny Poezd
- 2001 — Fools/Durachki, short
- 1999 — Big Autumn Field/Bolshoje Osenneje Pole, short
- 1998 — Banner/Znanya, short

## Prix and Special Mention:

### Gaspastum/Garpastum

2005

62th Venice International Film Festival, Competition Program. World premiere

Bratislava International Film Festival: Special mention

Nika Awards: Best director's work

Ariete d'oro: Best director's work

2006

Sofia International Film Festival: STELLA ARTOIS Grand-Prix – for the Best Film

Bucharest Film Festival: Critics' Award

Tallinn International Film Festival: Critics' Award

Wiesbaden International Film Festival: Best director's work

etc.

### The last train/Posledny Poezd

2003

60th Venice International Film Festival - Special Mention of the Jury for the Best Debut

The "Stalker" Film Festival – Grand-Prix for the Best Film

Open Film Festival of CIS countries, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia "Kinoshock": Prize for the Best Director's Work

2004

Nika Awards: Best Debut

Rotterdam International Film Festival: Amnesty International in Rotterdam, Prize FIPRESCI

etc.

### Fools/Durachki

2001

Competition of student's works for the Prize "Saint Anna" – Jury Diploma

Munich International Film Festival: Prize

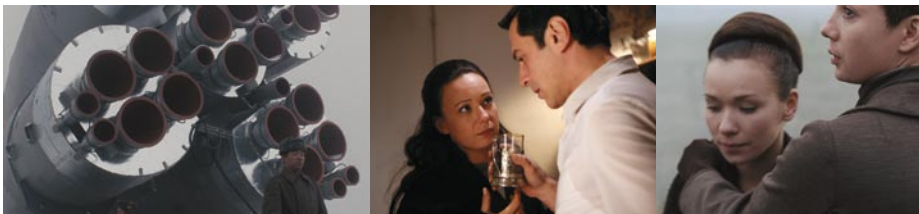
## Director's Statement

I was willing to reconstruct the “warming” era of USSR, during the early Sixties. At that time the country was struggling to get over Stalin’s heritage and therefore was setting up some truly great and romantic goals.

For me, this film is about how easily a delicate and fragile human mechanism can be shattered. It’s about the power of ideas and how, even if righteous, they could lead to human suffering and death destroying souls. It talks about how great developments have a downside to it.

The main hesitation for Daniel is whether it’s legitimate to risk a human life for his motherland’s superiority in space.

Alexey German Jr.



## Synopsys

Kazakhstan. Early 1961. **Daniel Pokrovsky**, a medical officer, currently works for the first soviet cosmonauts' troop. As a part of his duty he attends first soviet space ships tests. The test do not yet include humans, it's so far only dummies and animals. Eventually ships explode during take-offs, lose the tracking in space or destruct during landings.

Here, in the middle of endless Kazakh flats, Daniel finds himself in an incredibly complicated and yet tender relationship with a young girl named **Vera**. To her Daniel is the first and a very strong involvement.

Daniel comes back to Moscow where he keeps his observations on the health of young guys, future cosmonauts. Both he and they are aware, that no human has yet flown into cosmos and that each one of them might never come back. Daniel tries not to limit his relation to the troop by being their doctor only, he also tries to be a friend for each cadet. It's not announced yet which one of them will be chosen for the first flight. Pokrovsky spends day after day with them, they're just open guys around him, cheerful and careless. No symbols so far, just people.

His wife **Nina** is here, they're misunderstanding each other lately. She insists Daniel stops working where he does. She doesn't accept him participating in a project that could see the fatal end to human lives. Behind the 'sacrifice talk', the speeches about necessity for superiority in space, she sees Daniel hiding his uncertainty that human life is something to be dared to risk at all.

Daniel leaves his wife. One of the cadets dies. But Daniel is still positive the project is right and meant to be, even though he is really worried about his cadets. He realizes there's absolutely nothing he can do. He will simply be replaced. He already applied once with a statement that he's ready to fly into space, but it was rejected. Wasn't even considered.

Daniel breaks down. Already being ill he leaves for Kazakhstan in order to prepare the launch of the first man into space. He is with the first cosmonaut troop every day, helping them and supporting them. Each of them thinks about the chances for whoever will be chosen to die.

Nina, Daniel's wife follows him to Kazakhstan. Here she learns about his involvement with Vera, but she wouldn't leave him, understanding how ill he is. Both women are trying to talk him into leaving. They both love him endlessly. The launch is only several days away. The talks about negative chances for the start increase.

Daniel continues carrying his duties, but it's harder and harder for him to be next to the young cosmonauts he has known for over a year now. Giving up attempts to handle the stress, Daniel escapes one day before the launch. He dies on the way. The man flies up to the open space.

Nina takes Vera with her to Moscow, gets her into a college, accommodates her in her apartment. Time goes by. Both women keep living together and it's clear neither one of them will ever get married again because they both still love Daniel.



# Main cast

## Merab Ninidze as Daniil Pokrovski

Merab Ninidze was born in 1965 in Tiflis (Georgia), where he also studied acting from 1982 to 1984. He made his film debut in 1984 in Tengiz Abuladze's DIE REUE which received the Special Jury Award in Cannes two years later. From 1986 to 1991 he played for the Rustaveli Theatre in Tiflis and appeared in plays such as Georg Buchner's LEONCE AND LENA and in Shakespeare's HAMLET. In Georgia he shot more than 20 movies. He is well known to movie audiences as Alek in Bakhtiar Khudojnazarov's tragic-comedy LUNA PAPA. In 2001 he appeared in Jo Baier's VERLORENES LAND and in Andreas Gruber's BELLA BLOCK, as well as playing Walter Redlich in Caroline Link's NOWHERE IN AFRICA.

### Filmography:

- 2007:** "The Paper Soldier" of Alexei German Jr.  
 "The Rainbowmaker" of Nana Dzordzhadze
- 2004:** "Georgisches Liebeslied" of Tatiana Brandrup  
 "Sterne Leuchten auch am Tag"  
 of Roland Suso Richter
- 2002:** "Nowhere in Africa" of Caroline Link  
 (Oscar 2003 for Best Foreign Film)
- 2001:** "Ikarus" of Bernhard Weirather
- 2000:** "Bride of the Wind" of Bruce Beresford  
 "England" of Achim von Borries
- 1998:** "Luna Papa" of Bakhtiyar Khudojnazarov
- 1997:** "In Heaven" of Michael Bindlechner  
 "Suzie Washington" of Florian Flicker
- 1996:** "Jugofilm" of Goran Rebic
- 1995:** "Familienchronik" of Nino Shrabidse
- 1994:** "Hasenjagd" of Andreas Gruber
- 1992:** "Am Ende der Welt" of Goran Rebic
- 1991:** "During the Many Years " of Goran Rebic
- 1990:** "Die Kreuzung" of Levan Kitia
- 1989:** "Annäherung" of Aleksand Rekhviashvili
- 1988:** "Die Wurzeln" of Karaman Mgeladse
- 1987:** "Die Stufe" of Alexander Rekhviashvili  
 "Der Wirbel" of Lana Gogoberidze  
 "Temo" of Revan Zakareishvili
- 1984:** "Die Reue" of Tengiz Abuladze





## Main cast

### Chulpan Khamatova as Nina

Chulpan Khamatova was born in Kazan in 1975. She graduated from the Russian Academy of Theatre Art in 1997 (class of Alexei Borodin). Her graduate performance was Anna Frank's Diary, where she played the title role with great success. In 1998 she was invited to the Moscow "Sovremennik" theatre, where she made her debut with the role of Patrice Hollmann in Three Comrades (directed by Galina Volchek). At the "Sovremennik" theatre she performed as Irina in the Three Sisters (directed by Galina Volchek), Andrija in MotherFatherSonDog (directed by Nina Chusova), Katerina in The Storm (directed by Nina Chusova), Masha Mukhina in The Naked Pioneer (directed by Kirill Serebrennikov), Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra in a version (directed by Kirill Serebrennikov).

Chulpan Khamatova is one of the most successful actresses of Russian cinema. Since 1998 she appeared in the Country of the Deaf by Valery Todorovsky, Tuvalu by Veit Helmer, Time of the Dancer by Vadim Abdrashitov, Luna Papa by Bakhtiyer Khudojnazarov, Good Bye Lenin! by Wolfgang Becker, 72 Meters and The Fall of the Empire by Vladimir Khotinenko, The Children of Arbat Street and Ellipsis by Andrey Eshpaj, The Case of Kukotskiy by Yury Grymov, Garpastum by Alexey German Jr., Doctor Zhivago by Alexander Proshkin, The Sword Bearer by Philipp Yankovsky.

For the roles of Anna Frank, Patrice Hollmann and Andrija, Chulpan Khamatova was awarded with the State premium of the Russian Federation (2004). Among her other awards — Kumor (Idol), Tefi for Doctor Zhivago and Golden Eagle for Ellipsis.

#### Filmography:

<b>2008:</b>	"Hanna's Words" "Paper Soldier"/"Bumazhny Soldat" "The Rainbowmaker" "Boggart /Domovoy" "The House of the Sun/Dom Solntsa"
<b>2007:</b>	"Midsummer madness"
<b>2006:</b>	"Love in Konigsberg/Eine Liebe in Konigsberg" "Doctor Zhivago" "The Sword Bearer/Mechenosets" "Ellipsis/Mnogotochiye"
<b>2005:</b>	"The Case of Kukotskiy/Kazus Kukotskogo" "Fall of the Empire/Gibel' Imperii" "The Greek Holiday/Grechskiy Kanikuly" "Tatort - Der doppelte Lott" (TV) "Garpastum"
<b>2004:</b>	"72 Meters /72 Metra" "The Children of Arbat Street/Deti Arbata"
<b>2003:</b>	"Good Bye, Lenin!" "The Whore's Son"
<b>2001:</b>	"Victor Vogel – King of Advertising " "Lion's Share/L'vinaya Dolya"
<b>2000:</b>	"England!"
<b>1999:</b>	"Tuvalu" "Luna Papa"/"Lunny Papa"
<b>1998:</b>	"Country of the Deaf/Strana Glukhikh"
<b>1997:</b>	"Time of a Dancer/Vremya Tantsora"



**PHENOMEN  
FILMS**

Phenomen Films is a film production company established in Moscow in 2005. It is presently developing and producing the film "Paper Soldier" by Alexey German Jr (finished), DAU by Ilya Khrzhanovsky (in production), the full length documentary "Middle Russia Highlands" by Ilya Khrzhanovsky (in pre-production) and others. Founders of the company are the producer Artem Vassiliev and director/producer Ilya Khrzhanovsky. The company is mainly focused on producing works by young directors. Currently Phenomen Films is developing several further new projects.

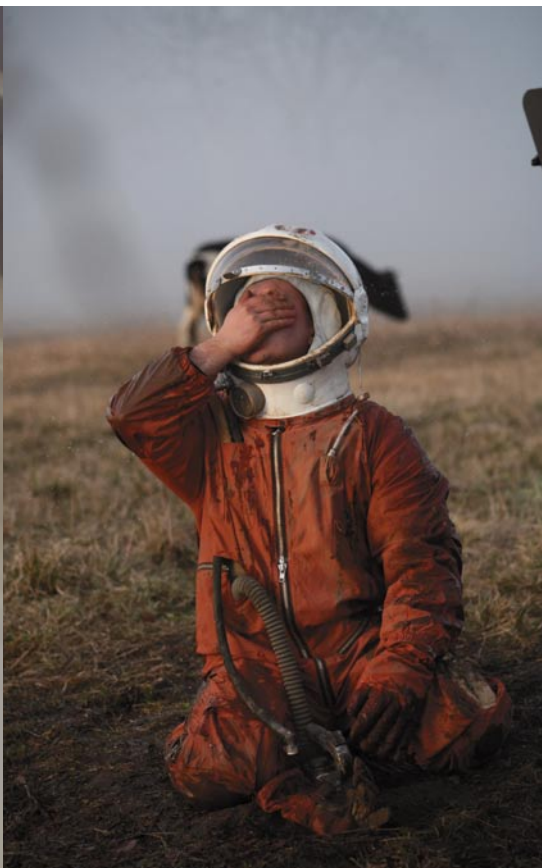
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contacts@phenomenfilms.ru



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The screen versions of classic and modern best-sellers such as "The First Circle" by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "Master and Margarita" by Mikhail Bulgakov, "Idiot" by Fedor Dostoevsky, "Lenin's Will" by Varlam Shalamov have already won the mainstream audience and generated the highest new standards in TV production.



[www.papersoldierfilm.ru](http://www.papersoldierfilm.ru)

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БУМАЗИНЫЙ СОЛДАТ

