

THE **FACTORY**

Presents

FIREBIRD

In a world ruled by fear, will true love survive?



Director | Peeter Rebane

Writers | Peeter Rebane, Tom Prior

Cast | Tom Prior, Oleg Zagorodnii, and Diana Pozharskaya

Run Time | 107 minutes

Rating | Not Rated

Company | The Factory

Publicity Contact

The DDA Group

FRAMELINE@ddapr.com

DDA

LOGLINE

At the height of the Cold War, a troubled soldier forms a forbidden love triangle with a daring fighter pilot and his female comrade amid the dangerous surroundings of a Soviet Air Force Base.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Firebird is a touching love story set in the Soviet Air Force during the Cold War. Sergey, a troubled young private, is counting the days till his military service ends. His life is turned upside down when a daring fighter pilot, Roman arrives at the base. Driven by curiosity, Sergey and Roman navigate the precarious line between love and friendship as a dangerous love triangle forms between them and Luisa, the secretary to the base Commander. Sergey is forced to face his past as Roman's career is endangered and Luisa struggles to keep her family together. As the walls close in, they risk their freedom and their lives in the face of an escalating KGB investigation and the fear of the all-seeing Soviet regime. Based on a true story.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Directed by Peeter Rebane and based on the memoir by Sergey Fetisov, Firebird is a touching love story set in 1970s Soviet-occupied Estonia, against the backdrop of the Cold War. Sergey (Tom Prior), a young private in the Soviet Air Force is weeks away from completing his conscription. He spends his days working together with Luisa (Diana Pozharskaya), an ambitious secretary to the base commander Colonel Kuznetsov (Nicholas Woodeson). Luisa is secretly in love with Sergey, but when a maverick fighter pilot Roman (Oleg Zagorodnii) arrives at the base, both Sergey and Luisa find themselves intrigued by him.

Fresh out of flight school, Roman is desperate to prove himself. Sergey is assigned to introduce Roman to the base. They quickly discover their mutual interest for photography and theatre. Sergey fights his conflicting feelings and debates whether to pursue a friendship with Roman while Luisa finds herself increasingly attracted to the charming newcomer. But Roman's arrival has also not been missed by KGB Major Zverev (Margus Prangel) who monitors all personnel for suspicious behaviour.

On a routine trip to the Regional HQ, Roman impulsively takes Sergey to his first ballet performance, Stravinsky's magical tale - 'The Firebird'. On their return journey, Sergey confesses that he always wanted to be an actor, but dismisses it as a silly dream. Roman disagrees, encouraging him to follow his passion. They narrowly escape being caught by border guards as Roman spontaneously kisses Sergey.

Roman and Sergey embark on a secret love affair. Sergey now has to conceal his feelings in front of Luisa as the three of them continue to bond. Meanwhile, KGB Major Zverev receives an anonymous report implying Roman has been engaging in immoral conduct with an unnamed private. Kuznetsov and Zverev demand the private's name and give Roman a stern warning - that a sexual relationship with a man will earn him five years in a hard-labour camp and end his career as a fighter pilot forever. Roman denies everything, but ends their relationship immediately. Sergey leaves the base with a broken heart.

One year later, Sergey has settled in Moscow to pursue his career as an actor. His world is once again turned upside down with the arrival of Luisa, who tells him that she and Roman are to be married. Tormented and unable to tell Luisa about his previous affair with Roman, he dutifully attends the wedding. When they meet again, Roman denies any feelings at first, but his guard finally breaks down. Sergey believes that they can still live a secret life together in Moscow. Roman then reveals that Luisa is pregnant.

Years pass as Sergey moves on with his life, flourishing in his theatre studies. Meanwhile, Roman attempts to come to terms with his role as a father, husband and officer. But his feelings for Sergey are impossible to repress. Finally, Roman enlists for a training course in Moscow and sets about reigniting their relationship. Risking everything, and trusting no one, can their love survive within the all-seeing Soviet regime?

PRODUCTION STORY

Origins

Peeter Rebane came across the story of *Firebird* seven years ago, through the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. There, he spoke with film critic and actor, Sergei Lavrentiev who gave him a copy of 'The Story of Roman' by Sergey Fetisov. "I read the story over the weekend, and it made me weep," said Rebane. "This is such a tragic, yet fascinating story." He knew right away that he had to make this movie.

After writing the first draft, Rebane contacted producer Brigita Rozenbrika, to help him get the project off the ground. Rebane knew Rozenbrika from his days of promoting concerts and making concert movies, when she was producing music concerts across Europe. When Rozenbrika first read the script, it reminded her of growing up and living under Soviet rule. "It took me back to that world when you had to hide your thoughts from the world for fear of being arrested... or worse." For her it was, "A human story about freedom."

Taking the memoir as a starting point, Rebane collaborated on the script with actor and screenwriter Tom Prior, who is best-known for his performances in *The Theory of Everything* (2014) and *Kingsman: The Secret Service* (2014). Prior, who also stars in *Firebird* as Sergey, met Rebane in 2014, and they instantly connected to the story. "We worked extremely well together, but we brought different skills to the project," said Rebane. "My strengths are more analytical, whereas Tom's are rooted in feeling the truth of the moment. It was a perfect collaboration; we could develop the story so that it felt honest."

The central challenge was being truthful to the historical events and respectful of Sergey's memories, while also crafting a film that was universally understood and relevant to audiences today. *Firebird* is a period film, but both Rebane and Prior immediately felt this was a profoundly contemporary story. During the writing process, Rebane experienced a breakthrough moment when he stepped away from Sergey's book to consider how each of the central characters had recalled the events of the story. "I realised there are many perspectives on this story – I knew that while we were telling it from Sergey's point of view, it was equally important to give space for Luisa and Roman". This gave them some sense of liberation from the historical details, allowing Rebane and Prior to explore how love can blossom even in the most hostile of situations.

Rebane and Prior were fortunate enough to interview Fetisov before his death in 2017. "We had eleven hours of audio recordings that we used to inform the finer details of the performances," said Rebane. Prior was fascinated, both as an actor and a writer, to have the chance to speak with the real Sergey. "He told us stories about being in the air force and memories of Roman," said Prior. "I hadn't read the book when I began working on the script. It was fascinating to discover what it had been like for him," Prior added, "He didn't speak English, and I don't speak Russian, so Peeter was doing the translating, but it was obvious to me that he had a warm heart and beautiful energy." As well as the interview tapes, Rebane also had permission to scan Sergey's photo archive. This, along with documentary footage from the era, allowed them to be exact with the period details.

As well as the love story, Rebane and Prior wanted to capture what it was like to live in an age of paranoia. "It wasn't just about the KGB," said Prior. "It was also the fear generated by those living around you – your neighbours and friends." This atmosphere heightened the drama of Roman and Sergey's love story. "Their love was a massive risk, which is why when they accept their love it becomes so encompassing, and it's also why it all starts to go so wrong – it's a tragic love story."

Casting

Prior was approached to play Sergey before becoming involved in the writing process. Being a writer and a performer presented some new challenges for the British actor. "Sometimes I would walk into a scene, and it would be completely different to how I had imagined it when we were writing the script," said Prior. It was a fascinating process for the actor. Unlike any other project he had worked on, he had lived and breathed this story for two years while developing the script with Rebane.

Next would come finding the right people to play Luisa and Roman. "90% of a director's job is casting," said Rebane. "If you cast the right personality, with the right energy for the role you are off to a good start."

Rebane knew that he had found the right person to play Roman when he met Ukrainian actor, Oleg Zagorodnii. Before *Firebird*, Zagorodnii had performed on stage and in several successful TV shows in Russia. *Firebird* presented a new endeavour. "My first thought was, 'I can't do this.' It was in English, and at the time, my English wasn't good enough." Despite the challenge of mastering a new language in a few months, Zagorodnii was adamant about playing the part. He connected with Roman, and drew on the experience of his own life to inform the character.

Just as importantly, was the role of Luisa. Again, Rebane saw that the Russian actress and dancer, Diana Pozharskaya, had the right energy to play the part. Pozharskaya met with Peter in her native Moscow, and she admired the character of Luisa, sympathising with her story. "She just wants to be happy, but her life is a tragic one," explained Pozharskaya. As part of her research for the role, Pozharskaya spoke with her relatives, including her mother, to try and grasp what it would have been like for an unmarried woman like Luisa, living in the USSR. "They said that any woman at that time without a husband or children would be treated as if something is wrong with them." Things may have changed in Russia, but Pozharskaya could relate to the character's desire to find love and build a family. "Here we have a woman who loses her husband, and worse, loses her husband to her friend. During the Soviet Era she couldn't possibly imagine such a thing happening, because it was so unheard of." She added, "Then there is the fact she had a child with a man who betrayed her. What could be worse?"

Prior, a graduate of RADA, Zagorodnii who studied at The National University of Theatre and Cinema Art in Ukraine, and Pozharskaya, who attended Moscow's prestigious VGIK, all came with different approaches to the film. This meant rehearsal time was vital. "Not everyone's first language is English," said Prior, "so it was important that we had the time to get everything right." They rehearsed for two months and became alert to each other's methods. "We care about one another and listen to what the other one needs," said Pozharskaya. Zagorodnii noted that it was easier for him and Pozharskaya because they were able to discuss the script in Russian, but added, "We may come from different schools of acting but from the first time that we met, there was a connection."

While learning each other's approaches was important, Rebane also wanted the dialogue to sound right. As Rebane wanted the film to be in English, in order to reach the widest audience globally, he felt that each character should have an authentic accent. "We didn't want to limit our casting choices," he explained. "We also didn't want glib Russian accents like a lot of films do." This meant months of work with the cast and dialect coach Catherine Charlton honing accents that would be authentic to the period. "We had four different language bases on set, so we had to find a common ground that would sound natural and truthful," said Rebane. The accent work has been challenging across the board," said Prior. "We had to find a middle ground accent we could all achieve. It's relatively easy to find a heavy stereotypical accent but we worked diligently with Catherine to create the subtleties and nuances which sound believable."

Rebane found Estonian actor Margus Prangel to play the villain of the piece, KGB agent Major Zverev. “He represents the oppressive Soviet regime – he, like those in power, is always watching,” says Prangel. Unlike other members of the cast, Prangel grew up in the Soviet Era, and drew upon his memories and family history to inform the role. “My father was asked to be in the KGB,” he said. “They put pressure on him, still he said no, and then they put him in jail on false charges. He ended up writing to Leonid Brezhnev (Former General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) to be released. Back then, they didn’t need much to put you in jail.”

Recreating Brezhnev’s USSR

Part of the challenge of a film like *Firebird* was creating an authentic backdrop to the drama of the love triangle. “These details make the world,” said Rebane. “If you don’t pay attention to the details then nothing works.” There were providential events, such as the ex-air force commander who appeared during a shoot in Eastern Estonia. “All of a sudden this man appeared on set, who had seen we were making a film,” said Rebane. “He came with a collection of photos from when he was in service. We compared them to the set we had built, and we were able to match everything up perfectly.”

There were also difficulties involving the MIG23 - the fighter plane that Roman flies in the film. “We tried to get hold of a MIG23 from Finland, but quickly found out that you need an agreement from both Ministers of Foreign Affairs for the transportation of military equipment – so that didn’t happen,” said Rebane. Fortunately, they were able to source a MIG21 from the Estonian Air Museum. This led to the production making the national news, with reports of a Soviet fighter plane being moved across the countryside.

Estonia has modernised a great deal since the Soviet occupation, making it a tricky to find the right locations. However, in the east of the country, Rozenbrika and Rebane were able to locate untouched, abandoned mining villages, along with Soviet-era buildings for the non-military scenes. Throughout the shoot, Rebane had one motto, ‘Never compromise’. If it wasn’t historically accurate then he wouldn’t shoot it. That included the right costumes, haircuts, and even body language. “If we couldn’t replicate it, we never shot it,” said Rebane.

Love Against All Odds

As a feature debut, Rebane opted for a challenging project that involved a complex love story and a great deal of period detail. It was a labour of love. “Whatever your race, religion, or sexuality, it is love that matters,” said Rebane. “I didn’t set out to make a political film, I wanted to tell the story of three people, living their lives in an authoritarian, hostile society, trying to find love despite having the odds stacked against them.”

How did you come to be involved in writing, as well as starring in, Firebird?

I met Peeter [Rebane] back in 2014 after I came off Kingsman: The Secret Service, and The Theory of Everything. He sent me the draft of the script he had written, and I instantly connected with the material.

We agreed that we wanted to make a teaser for the film, and during this process, I made a few suggestions for changes to the script. Peeter and I then sat down, and over months made significant structural changes to the text. It was a really fascinating process as a writer and as an actor. My writing process involved combining my skills as an actor and what I was beginning to learn as a writer. It was unlike anything I had done before.

How did the meeting with Sergey Fetisov, whom your character is based on, inform the writing of the screenplay?

When I came on board the project, I hadn't read Sergey's book which Peeter [Rebane] based the first draft on. Sergey didn't speak English, and I didn't speak Russian, so Peeter did the translating. Sergey told us stories about Roman, his time in the air force, but he was more reserved about Luisa – he still found it painful to talk about her. I had spent months trying to understand what was going on inside Sergey's head, so it was a fantastic experience to speak to him. I should say that while the film is based on Sergey's life, the story is inspired by their relationship, rather than a strict, by the numbers, biopic.

How does writing the script change your performance?

On set, Peeter and I were strict about when we were talking about the script and when we were discussing performance. Once we started filming, we stuck to the final draft of the script. What was strange as an actor was how intimately I knew the material. I spent three years with the story, but I had to rediscover the story as an actor and put aside my involvement as a writer.

How did you find working opposite Diana Pozharskaya and Oleg Zagorodnii?

We had two months of rehearsals before the shoot that was invaluable. We noticed that actors who have trained at Russian schools tend to perform with a greater emotional intensity than those trained in western Europe, at schools such as RADA. All three of us approached the film with open minds, bringing our own voices and perspectives to how we saw the love triangle.

What preparation and research did you do for the military aspect of the film?

I have always been fascinated by Soviet history, so there were some aspects of the story that I felt familiar with. In terms of physically preparing for the role, we were sent to a boot camp in Eastern Estonia. They still have conscription in Estonia, and we spent time with the Estonian Defence Force. I did two boot camps, where myself, Oleg, and Jake [Henderson], had to follow the same routine as the other soldiers. We dug foxholes, pitched tents, went to firing ranges. It was intense.

What have you taken away from this project?

I have really appreciated the chance, and challenge, of writing as well as performing. The hours, and level of commitment, have tested me, more than any project I have worked on before. Fourteen plus hour days are tough, but it has been incredible. I would say the only thing I that I wished I could have changed is the amount of sleep I got.

CAST AND CREW BIOS

PEETER REBANE | Director

Born in Estonia, Peeter has studied, worked and lived around the world, including the USA and the UK. His directing portfolio includes feature films *Firebird* (2021), *Sailing to Freedom* (in development), documentaries *Tashi Delek!* (2015) and *Robbie Williams: Fans Journey to Tallinn* (BBC Worldwide, 2014) as well as numerous music videos including Moby's "Wait for Me" and Pet Shop Boys' "Together."

Peeter produced and directed the 22-camera concert film *Robbie Williams: Live in Tallinn* (2013). He has also produced the 2010 European Film Awards, the 2002 Eurovision Song Contest, and hundreds of shows in the Baltic region for various artists including Elton John, Bob Dylan, Madonna, Sting, Lady Gaga, Metallica, Queen, and others. In 2013, Peeter was named Entrepreneur of the Year in Estonia.

Peeter has been a jury member at various film festivals including Black Nights Film Festival and Cape Town International Film Festival. He studied as an exchange student at Oxford and graduated from Harvard *cum laude* in economics, psychology and visual arts. After a career as a producer, he went on to study directing at the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts and trained in acting for directors at Judith Weston's studio. Peeter has travelled the world, sailing around Cape Horn, crossing the Atlantic & Pacific four times, and hiking the mountains of Tibet. He has a global perspective and a passion for telling local human stories with a universal resonance.

TOM PRIOR | Sergey

Tom trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) graduating in 2012. His acting work includes; *The Theory of Everything* (Working Title) playing Eddie Redmayne's son Robert Hawking, *Kingsman: The Secret Service* (Twentieth Century Fox, Marv Films) and *Endeavour* for ITV. He also featured in British Independent Feature *Dusty and Me* acting alongside Lesley Sharp, Ian Hart and Ian Glen, and in an Icelandic/British co-production feature *Iceland Is Best*.

Tom had his West End debut in 2013 performing *Tory Boyz* (by James Graham), *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Prince of Denmark* as part of a repertory company at The Ambassadors Theatre, London.

Tom was selected to train with the National Youth Theatre REP Scheme, a company of 15 actors selected from around the UK; working in collaboration with the National Theatre, BBC and Royal Shakespeare Company. He wrote his first short film *Breaking the Circle* in 2014. He then rewrote a feature film script adapted from a true story, before becoming the co-writer of *Firebird*.

He recently completed his latest acting role alongside Harvey Keitel and Malcolm McDowell in a United States/Canada/Malta co-production feature *Blood on the Crown*.

OLEG ZAGORODNII | Roman

Oleg Zagorodnii is a Ukrainian actor at Kirill Serebrennikov's Gogol Centre in Moscow. His theatre performances include *Ozero*, writer M. Durnenkov, and *Brothers* based on Luchino Visconti's *Rokko and his Brothers*. He is known for *The Choice* (2016) and *Dzhamayka* (2012) TV series.

DIANA POZHARSKAYA | Luisa

Diana Pozharskaya is a Russian actress, originally from Volgograd. She is a graduate of Moscow's famous VGIK university and is also a professionally trained dancer.

Her most notable performance to date has been the key role of "Vera" in the critically acclaimed war epic *The Unknown Soldier* (2017). Directed by Aku Louhimies, it has gone on to become the biggest box office hit in the history of Finnish cinema, with Diana consistently receiving praise for her performance in it.

Diana is known throughout Russia for her role as 'Darya' in the hugely popular TV series *Hotel Eleon* and is a regular in the Russian TV series, *Senior Mafia*. She recently played the role of 'Tanya' in the feature film *Eclipse* (2016), directed by Artyom Aksenenko; other notable credits include 'Elena' in *On The Edge*, a new drama filmed in Egypt, and *Our Children* in which she plays the leading character of 'Maria'. She will shortly begin shooting the female lead of 'Nadya' in a new film, *Heat in Baku*.

Her latest international acting role is playing Sofia on Apple TV+ series *Trying*.

Diana recently completed a Chanel campaign in Paris and is Chanel's global brand ambassador.

JAKE THOMAS HENDERSON | Volodja

Jake attended East 15 Acting School in East London and graduated in 2018. Whilst training he played the roles of 'Platonov' in *Wild Honey*, 'Gravedigger' in *Hamlet*, 'Myron' in *All New People*, 'Sonnerie' in *Red Noses* and 'MP' in the UK premiere of *The Family that Could Talk About Anything*.

MARGUS PRANGEL | Major Zverev

Margus Prangel is an Estonian actor and director. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in 2000. He worked 2000-2010 at the Estonian Drama Theatre as an actor and from 2012 at Von Glehni Teater as a producer and director.

Margus has featured in 36 films and TV roles and over 40 theatre roles. He won the Best Leading Actor award in the "TV drama" category for *Klass: Elu pärast* (Estonia, 2009) in the Roma Fiction Fest.

NICHOLAS WOODSON | Colonel Kuznetsov

Nicholas Woodson is an English film, television and theatre actor. Woodson's first film work was a role in *Heaven's Gate* (1980). Since then he has appeared in close to a hundred films including *The Russia House* (1990), *The Pelican Brief* (1993), *Shooting Fish* (1997), *The Man Who Knew Too Little* (1997), *Titanic Town* (1998), *The Avengers* (1998), *Mad Cows* (1999), *Amazing Grace* (2006), *Skyfall* (2012), *Mr. Turner* (2014), *The Danish Girl* (2015) and *The Death of Stalin* (2017).

KASPAR VELBERG | Pilot Selenov

Kaspar Velberg is an Estonian actor. After graduating from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (prof. Elmo Nüganen) in 2012 he then joined Tallinn City Theatre. He is known for *1944* (2015) an Estonian war drama and Icelandic-Estonian co-production *Mihkel* (Truenorth 2018). He has played over 30 theatre roles, including Jean in Strindberg's "Miss Julie" and Lopakhin in Tchekhov's "The Cherry

Orchard" in which he was nominated for the best male leading actor at the Estonian Theatre Awards 2018.

BRIGITA ROZENBRIKA | Producer

Brigita's portfolio includes the highest grossing Latvian feature film *Defenders of Riga* (2007), the BBC drama *Archangel* (2005) starring Daniel Craig, the Norwegian-Latvian co-production *Virgins of Riga* (1996), as well as more than a dozen films in the roles of producer, executive producer, art director, production designer, assistant production designer and location manager. She is also a member of the European Film Academy.

Brigita graduated with a Master of Arts degree from the Latvian Academy of Arts. Over the years, she has been the international jury member of the 2005 Emmy Awards, associate producer of the 2014 European Film Awards, executive producer of the 2003 Eurovision Song Contest and other large-scale events. She has also been the general manager of the Baltic Production Co., producer of International Mikhail Chekhov Actors Workshop, general manager of Riga Culture Agency, manager of International Film Festival Arsenal and a promoter of shows for artists including Depeche Mode, Elton John and more than 50 others.

Brigita is lecturer of the Management of Cultural Events and Risk Management course at Turība University. Her passion is managing the creative process of taking an idea and developing it into the final emotional experience for the audience.

MICHAEL EDELSTEIN | Executive Producer

Michael Edelstein is an entertainment leader, technology advisor/investor and an accomplished producer who has developed and produced hit television series in addition to building an award-winning multi-national television studio. From 2010-2017, Edelstein served in London as President of NBCUniversal International Studios, which he built from inception into one of the most respected content players in the international marketplace. Under his leadership, NBCUniversal International Studios became a top destination for writers, producers, directors and format creators, producing high-quality scripted and non-scripted programming across all genres, including the UK's biggest scripted television export of all time, *Downton Abbey*. During his tenure, the division produced more than 1100 hours of original content. This included over 150 series which combined generated numerous awards including 3 Golden Globes, 6 BAFTA Awards, 14 Logies, 12 Leos and 18 Emmy Awards.

Edelstein is also one of the two original Executive Producers of the global phenomenon *Desperate Housewives* for which he received two Golden Globes. Prior to that he was instrumental in the launch of the CSI Franchise while at CBS Entertainment.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Edelstein graduated from The University of California, Los Angeles magna cum laude and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa academic honor society.

MAURO DURANT | Executive Producer

Mauro Durant is a creative director, stylist and brand strategist with over 20 years' experience working internationally with private clients, celebrities and luxury brands spanning fashion, beauty, jewellery, art and design. In the early 90s, after acquiring a college degree in graphic design and photography, Mauro launched the fashion brand Durant & Diego in Caracas, Venezuela, which also supported projects in theatre, music and the film industry, for which Mauro has a great interest. The brand established

international partnerships with retailers in Paris, New York, L.A. and Japan. Since 2006 he has been a business partner in La Movida Films, a production company in Venezuela.

He has created a dynamic partnership with pioneer luxury, fashion and technology entrepreneur Carmen Busquets and in 2006, they co-founded CoutureLab - a laboratory of ideas and online platforms to support global creative talent. In 2015, Mauro became a partner in Trust Luxe, a specialized site for luxury brands that caters to Chinese luxury clients with a platform and team based in Shanghai.

Mauro dedicates time to mentoring new generations of creative talents and has been supportive of many charities and initiatives focused on human rights, aids, arts and education, throughout his life.

BEATRICE KRUGER (CSA, ICDN, UICD) | Casting Director

Growing up in Germany, Hong Kong, Italy and the USA she speaks 5 languages, studied acting, anthropological theatre and travelled throughout Eastern and Western Europe with the theatre in the 70s and 80s. In 1992 she founded FBI CASTING in Rome and has cast Italian and international films ever since. Amongst many others: *The Book of Vision* (2006), *Grain* (2017), *To Rome with Love* (2012), *The Wholly Family* (2011), *The American* (2010), *Letters To Juliet* (2010), *My Mother's Smile* (2002), *Not of This World* (1999), *Under The Tuscan Sun* (2003), *Excellent Cadavers* (1999) and *Elvis & Meriljn*; the Italian or European casting on *The Divine Order* (2017), *Inferno* (2016), *Spectre* (2015), *Dreamland* (2016), *Nine, Angels & Demons* (2009), *The International* (2009), *Casino Royale* (2006), *Ocean's Twelve* (2004) and for TV on *Gladbeck* (2018), *Mozart in The Jungle* (2014), *Borgia* (2011), *Rome* (2005), *Titanic* (1997), *Ferrari* (2017), *The Good Pope* (2003).

MAIT MAEKIVI (ESC) | Director of Photography

Mait studied at the State Institute of Cinematography under the guidance of Vadim Jusov (Andrei Tarkovski's DOP) from 1982-1988.

Mait started working as an operator's assistant. Since 1991 he has been the DOP for 16 feature films, many short films and a number of documentaries and TV series. His portfolio includes *The Awakening* (1989), *Shop of Dreams* (2004), *I Was Here* (2008), *The Wish Tree* (2008) *Oleg* (2010), *Tashi Delek!* (2015) and others.

Mait has vast experiences with international co-productions. He was the DOP for BBC's documentary *Robbie Williams: Fans Journey to Tallinn* and the Tallinn live concert film of Robbie Williams's Take the Crown tour.

Since 2003, Mait has been leading the cinematography course at Baltic Film and Media School. He has been awarded for his cinematography and for developing the visual language of Estonian movies, which can be described as having a strong influence from art and paintings.

MARE RAIDMA | Costume Designer

Mare has a Master's degree in the field of costume design. She has worked as costume designer for nearly 40 feature and short films.

Her portfolio includes such films as *1944* (2015), Sergey Lozhnitsa's award-winning *My Joy* (2010), *The Wish Tree* (2008), *Georg* (2007), *Ruudi* (2005) *Set Point* (2004), *Somnambulance* (2003) and 18 TV series.

Mare's versatile portfolio also includes theatre productions in Estonian National Opera, The Estonian Drama Theatre, Vanemuine and Russian Theatre.

She has held personal exhibitions as well as published a diary about Estonian film designers (Eesti filmikunstnikud, 1996).

MARJATTA NISSINEN | Costume Designer

Mare studied Art and Design in Helsinki (Aalto University) in the Fashion department and graduated in 1986.

Marjatta worked as a designer in Marimekko 1986–1990 and after that again turned to movies and opera. She had the opportunity to work for great costume designers in Finland like Airi Turunen TV 1 head designer, Barbara Baum from Germany in *Maschenka* (1987), Richard Bruno in *Gorky Park* (1983) and Gabriella Pescucci in *La citta delle donne* (1980) in Italy.

Her first big period feature was the *The Gold Fever in Lapland* (1997-1999) and big war movies like *Beyond Enemy Lines* (2003) and *Tali-Ihantala 1944* (2007). Her life is full of research, collecting, various craftsmanship connections and lovely hard-working wardrobe crews.

KRZYSZTOF A. JANCZAK | Composer

Krzysztof A. Janczak is one of the most remarkable composers of young generation in Poland. The laureate of over a dozen international concert and film music competitions among others; *Eyes & Ears of Europe* in Munich, *Red Dot* in Berlin, *New York Festivals* in NY, *European Talent* and *Universal Music Award* in Cologne, and *Transatlantyk Young Composer Award* in Poznan. In 2012, he received a nomination to a special RMF Classic Award for young film music composer of a year. In 2017 supported by the letters from Max Richter and Monika Willi (editor of Michael Haneke) he has become a member of **European Film Academy**.

Since his debut in 2003, when *The Winter* won The Golden Tadpole at Camerimage festival, he created the music for over 40 movies, dozens of orchestral, chamber and piano pieces, that have been performed all over the world, and the music for TV channels such as; **Disney Channel**, **NBC Universal**, *13th Street*, *Kabel Deutschland* and many others.

After graduating in Musicology at Warsaw University, as a bursar of French Government and Nadia and Lili Boulanger Foundation, headed by Daniel Barenboim and Martha Argerich, he moved to Paris, where after five years of studies he received the diplomas of composition and orchestration in the most prestigious French school École Normale de Musique de Paris and Maurice Ravel Conservatory, in classes of remarkable Michel Merlet, a student of Olivier Messiaen and Igor Stravinsky. In 2007, after composing the Warsaw Uprising Symphony, an homage of young generation to those who fought for Warsaw in Second World War, he was honored **The Silver Cross of Merit by President of Poland**.

He perfected his skills and craft attending numerous master classes led by such composers as: Howard Shore, Alberto Iglesias, Max Richter, Michael Nyman, Jan A.P. Kaczmarek, Patrick Doyle, Don Davis, Trevor Morris, Rolfe Kent, Christopher Young, Marc Isham and Marco Beltrami. In 2013, he was selected from over 4400 applicants from 137 countries to attend the **Berlinale Talents** program.

Currently he collaborates with the directors and musicians all over the world, composing the music for many feature, documentary and animation films. He is regularly a guest at **Abbey Road Studios**, leading

and supervising the recordings with the best soloists and orchestras, among others **London Symphony Orchestra**.