

How I Ended This Summer

Russia 2010

Directed by
Aleksey Popogrebskiy

Written by
Aleksey Popogrebskiy

Cinematography
Pavel Kostomarov

Music
Dmitriy Katkhanov

130 mins

Cast
Grigoriy Dobrygin
Pavel

Sergey Puskepalis
Sergey

Welcome back - we hope you all had a fantastic Christmas, generously littered with films of all shapes and sizes. Anybody catch Finnish gem *Rare Exports* on Film4?!

This was the winner of the Silver Bear at last year's Berlin film festival; it is a beautifully shot and superbly acted two-man drama of enormous power and subtlety that had me, for the most part, on the edge of my seat. Alone in this stark windswept wilderness, anything could happen. The film perhaps does not maintain the tension and complexity between the two characters throughout, but it is a gripping, involving and wonderfully acted piece of work.

Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian

How I Ended this Summer has all the makings of a more conventional cat-and-mouse thriller, but it's a subtler, more surprising and nuanced piece of work than that. It's a film about character where dialogue has been stripped to the bone, where body language and gesture speak volumes, and the fractious relationship of distrust and lousy communication rings wholly true. It's a film about temperament and time and territory, clearly shot in arduous conditions in a bleak and breathtaking landscape.

Mark Stafford, Electric Sheep

Aleksei Popogrebsky's icy slow-burner is an education in the shifting tide of Russian cinema. Playing out over the course of a long, cruel Arctic summer, where the sun incessantly circumnavigates the horizon, this valentine to Andrei Tarkovsky and Aleksandr Sokurov deals in reflexivity and metaphysics. But while haunting time-lapse sequences and aging long shots capture the bleak solitude of a bygone era, the film's chief protagonist is the personification of twenty-first-century Russian ideals. In its final third *How I Ended This Summer* will concede its subtle, visceral atmosphere for more full-blooded dramatic tricks. In ratcheting up the suspense and embracing contemporary Russian cinema's mainstream sensibilities, Popogrebsky has turned a potential modern classic into a US remake in waiting.

Adam Woodward, Little White Lies

Shot on super-frank digital film it captures the dilapidated shacks – the ancient mattresses on bunks, pillows like bags of cement – with what builds to be a horrifying clarity. It's as though everything repressed and unconscious has become real enough to be photographed. What a terrific film.

Antonia Quirke, Financial Times

Our next screening...

The Square

Tue 20 Jan 2015 8:00pm

Dir: Jehane Noujaim

Six Egyptian protestors risk their lives during the Arab Spring. Compelling, Oscar-nominated documentary.



Voting for *We Are The Best!*: A-15 B-14 C-13 D-2 E-3 Attendance: 53 Rating: 69%