

Ruslan Krysenko and Oksana Shapoval in documentary film

FINE LINE



Director:
Anna Barsukova

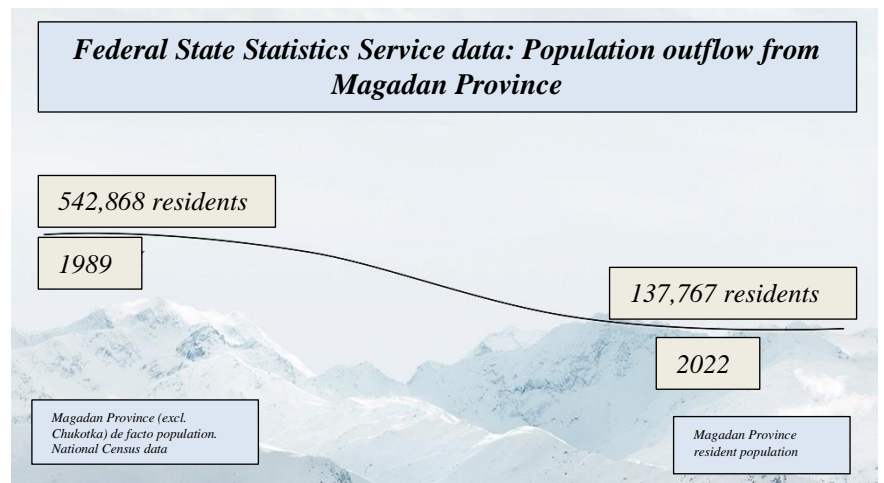
Music:
Gyuli Kambarova



FINE LINE
 Documentary
PRESS KIT

One of Russia’s most promising provinces, the Far East appears in the country leaders’ strategy as “eastern vector”. Promoting its development is not without challenges, though, the biggest one being demography: the area’s northernmost city, Magadan, is experiencing a rapid population decline.

One thing northerners have in common is postponed life syndrome. They don’t see their homeland as where they want to spend their whole lives. Some leave upon reaching retirement age, others right after school... Largely contributing to their decision is the quality of life with high grocery store prices, harsh climate, poor logistics, underdeveloped health care, education services and entertainment. Younger generations cite as reasons for leaving the lack of employment and opportunities for career growth and self-fulfillment. People want to be wanted. They want to be involved in the decision-making.



Magadan Governor Sergey Nosov is open about the situation getting worse:

“Young people and able-bodied residents leaving for other places is a crucial problem here. At the same time, there is an increase in migrant workers. Often with poor qualifications and barely able to speak Russian, they come to make some money and go back home, being a poor solution to our brain drain problem. Imagine the amount of money required to re-train and make them equally good replacements. It just isn’t economically expedient.”

Nothing changes by itself, nor can changes happen overnight. Continuous effort is needed for positive changes to start happening. Bigger projects should be accompanied by smaller ones – those targeting to improve people’s daily lives, increase comfort and bring quality service. Decent pay, access to health services, training opportunities, entertainment, outdoor recreation and whatever contributes to living a more interesting life are some of the decisive factors. For people to be willing to stay in the Far East, the government should be able to invest in human capital, alongside projects such as road construction and medical and research centers.

ABOUT FILM

Our crew sees its **mission** as contributing to the development within the province of Magadan and the Far Eastern Federal District at large by using documentary films as a way to reach out to the target audience.

Cinematography represents a powerful tool for promoting territorial development. By making the audience feel as though they are a part of the story, films evoke emotions and give food for thought. Population retention has been a topic with many filmmakers, but the negative trend persists in Northern Russia. We often hear people say it would be nice to rid the Kolyma Region of its stereotypes for people to finally start seeing it as a resident friendly place. It would, indeed, and we also agree that knowledge of our own history is absolutely essential. There is no future without the past. The more ignorant and unaware we remain of the real consequences of the past events, the further our society drifts from the truth. We must learn to analyze our past experiences and draw conclusions that can lead to positive change and revival in the Russian hinterland. We designed Fine Line to offer **informative, compelling** content.

While giving viewers reasonable cause for hope, Fine Line has been intended as a true portrayal of the grim reality resulting from a series of events that started 30 years ago.

Remoteness and limited communication with major population centers are juxtaposed by wealth of minerals, clean air, pristine nature, stunning landscapes and its most important asset – people. The life of northerners is that of harmony and battle with harsh climate.



With this in mind, and given how remote the Far Eastern District is from other parts of Russia, we sought to show the life in the Far North as it actually is. Choosing the right main character was absolutely vital: a story built around a personality who is interesting to follow inspires trust! Our film has **two main characters, two destinies, two storylines** that run parallel but are closely intertwined.



OKSANA AND RUSLAN are neighbors. **Oksana** is a social worker at the local nursing home and has moved to Sinigorye, Magadan – a half-abandoned, sparsely populated settlement on the banks of the Kolyma River amid blue mountains – from a

big city, driven by her desire to contribute to the local community. Oksana’s social skills immediately make her a valuable team member and a friend to the inhabitants of what seems a comfortable oasis amidst the permafrost.

Oksana and the team of caregivers provide care and assistance to those who need them every day. Among the nursing home residents is Ruslan’s mother, who Oksana takes care of until her last day. Oksana is the one who is compassionate and empathetic. Her feelings and emotional state are shown in an attempt to humanize our attitude to problems of old age and disability, to help people connect, empathize and find strength to help those in need, for old age (and age-related diseases) spares no part of the world and no stratum of society.



Ruslan is a native of Sinegorye and has witnessed the drama of the '90s which had put an end to Sinegorye as a thriving Russian town (there were many small towns in the Russian Far East that went into decline).





A true patriot of his home town, Ruslan speaks with undisguised regret about what once was a prosperous place filled with laughter of happy children.



It is with conflicting feelings that Ruslan narrates about Sinegorye. It may seem he has resigned himself to the depressing reality with little prospect for improvement, but this perception changes towards the end of the film. You need to watch to find out why.

Ruslan's fate is an example that even in the most desperate of situations **people should never abandon hope.**



SPECIFICATIONS			12+ ; documentary; running time: 49 min ; color; Ultra HD; stereo; 2023
TYPE, GENRE, FORMAT, YEAR;			
SHOOTING LOCATIONS			Locations:
<i>Pos.</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Q-ty</i>	1. Urban locality Sinegorye, Magadan Province
1.	SEASON	WINTER, SPRING	2. Urban locality Yagodnoye, Magadan Province
2.	NUMBER OF LOCATIONS	5	3. Sinegorye Airport
3.	EXT. SINEGORIYE, MAGADAN PROVINCE	3 (30.45)	4. Magadan Nursing Home in Sinegorye
4.	EXT. YAGODNOYE, MAGADAN PROVINCE	1 (01.15)	5. Character's private place (Oksana's home).
5.	INT. SINEGORIYE, NURSING HOME	4 (16:00)	
6.	INT. SINEGORIYE, OKSANA'S PLACE	1 (01:45)	
	TOTAL :	(49 m 05 s)	
CREW & ACTORS			Crew:
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>АВТОР СЦЕНАРИЯ, РЕЖИССЁР, ОПЕРАТОР-ПОСТАНОВЩИК</p>  <p>Барсукова Анна</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>МУЗЫКА, АРАНЖИРОВКА</p>  <p>Гюли Камбарова</p> </div> </div>			1. Written, directed, camerawork & editing by Anna Barsukova 2. Aerial photography: Ruslan Kinzyabitov Valentina Dementieva Oleg Kalinin Grigory Bosak 3. Audio mixing: Viktor Solodov 4. Music & arrangement: Gyuli Kambarova 5. Actors: Ruslan Krysenko, Oksana Shapoval
RELEASE			1. Cinemas
DISTRIBUTION			2. Film festivals
			3. Television
			4. Online
CONTACT PERSON			Cell: 8(904) 505-12-30
ANNA BARSUKOVA, FILM DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER			Email: kosinka1981@mail.ru; annabarsukova.com@yandex.ru
Member of the Russian Filmmakers Association Member of Documentary Film and Television Guild			Web: http://annabarsukova.com/

LOGLINE:

Twenty-two years after the collapse of the USSR the residents of the once thriving town of Sinegorye regain hope for better future and revival of the home town.

STORYLINE:

Oksana leaves big city life for a remote northern place and a job at nursing home. She gets to know the local people and about what happened to the once thriving town of Sinegorye, Magadan Province. Local resident Ruslan takes Oksana to the house where he grew up and shows her the airport and other derelict buildings as illustrations of the consequences of the events that started 30 years ago. The sight comes as a shock and is enough to cause utter despair, but after a while the life in town begins to change for the better...

DIRECTOR'S BIO:



Anna has been doing sports and played music since she was a child, winning top prizes from rhythmic gymnastics competitions and regional violin contests. Anna earned her degrees in Violin and Symphony Orchestra Conducting in 2001 from Music College and holds one more degree from the Rachmaninov State Conservatoire in Rostov, which she completed in 2006. She played together with many accomplished composers and musicians of our times including Yuriy Bashmet, Sergey Yakovenko and Giya Kancheli. In 2016 Anna retrained to be a cinematographer and did her Film Direction degree with honors. Web: <http://annabarsukova.com/>

FILMOGRAPHY:

You Are Not Alone (Short Documentary 2017)

Voice for the Voiceless (Short Documentary 2019) <http://www.film donate.ru/>

Fine Line (Full-Length Documentary 2023) <http://finelinefilm.com/>

FINE LINE Trailer: https://youtu.be/9zzVCAfg_xI

PRESS RELEASE:

1. Fine Line is a documentary film about the place called Sinegorye in the Far North. The period between 1970s and 1980s saw Sinegorye actively building civil and industrial projects, one being the one of its kind Kolyma Hydroelectric Station, matched by a burst of cultural activity and social growth. However, like many other settlements in Magadan Province, Sinegorye started to fall into decline after the USSR collapsed... Life in harsh climate isn't easy for Ruslan and Oksana, the two main characters, but they chose to stay and work for the benefit of the Sinegorye community. Oksana spends her days at the local nursing home, easing the loneliness of the elderly and encouraging them to live and enjoy life. Her caring attitude brings her in touch with her neighbor Ruslan who is surviving the loss of his mother. Feeling nostalgic, Ruslan invites Oksana on a trip to his childhood home and some of the now abandoned sites, which puts them both into a state of utter hopelessness. Its past achievements gone, Sinegorye quietly awaits its death like residents of its nursing home. Ruslan feels bitter and begins to think about leaving for a better place. Only a radical improvement can make him change his mind. But is there any hope for Sinegorye? Watch the film to find out.

2. Rationale:

Remoteness from road infrastructure and low quality of life forces many northerners to leave their long established residence for better places. As a result, the **areas in the Russian Far East now have fewer prospects for development**. Population decline can be stopped by improving people's living conditions.

Population retention has been a topic with many filmmakers, but the negative trend persists in Northern Russia. We often hear people say it would be nice to rid the Kolyma Region of its stereotypes for people to finally start seeing it as a resident friendly place. It would, indeed, and we also agree that knowledge of our own history is absolutely essential. There is no future without the past. The more ignorant and unaware we remain of the real consequences of the past events, the further our society drifts from the truth. We must learn to analyze our past experiences and draw conclusions that can lead to positive change and **revival in the Russian hinterland**. We designed Fine Line to offer **informative, compelling content**. It is important that viewers get this message that **under no circumstances should one lose heart**. **Even in the most difficult of life situations**, it's very important to **never lose hope**. The film follows two characters who chose to live in geographically challenging conditions to benefit their community. *"Do what you can, with what you've got, where you are."* (Theodore Roosevelt). The characters provide their own version of the political events that started thirty years ago to lead to irreversible deplorable consequences. By showing things as they are, we allow viewers to make their own judgements and conclusions, hoping that one day **positive changes will start happening in the Russian hinterland**.

FILM SHOTS:





PRODUCTION STILLS:





FEDERAL STATE STATISTICS SERVICE INFORMATION:

©Federal State Statistics Service
Office for Magadan Province, 2012

Source <http://www.magadanstat.ru>

According to the 2010 National Census, Magadan Province had 157,000 residents. Compared to 2002, its population size had decreased by 25,700, or by 14.1%: the urban population had decreased by 18,900 residents, or 11.2%, and the rural one by 6,800, or 48.7%. Contributing to the decrease are migration outflow and natural population decline (there are more deaths than births).

As of October 14, 2010, Magadan Province comprised 85 settlements. Of them, 14 had no permanent residents at the time of the 2010 National Census, including 3 urban and 11 rural settlements.

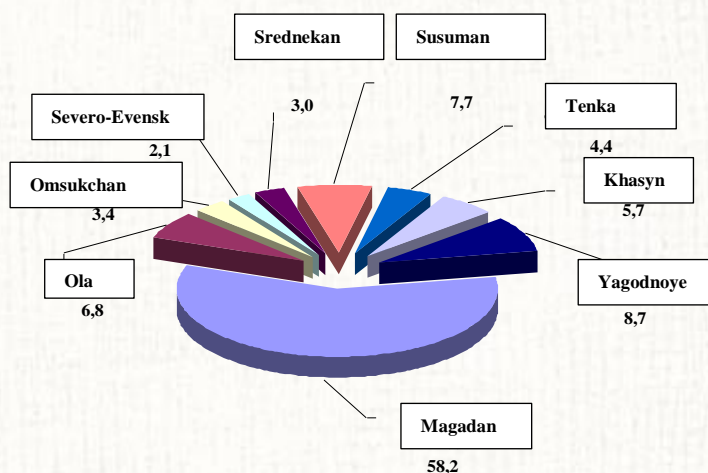
In the inter-census period, 34 rural settlements had been deregistered as no longer existing.

POPULATION DYNAMICS¹⁾

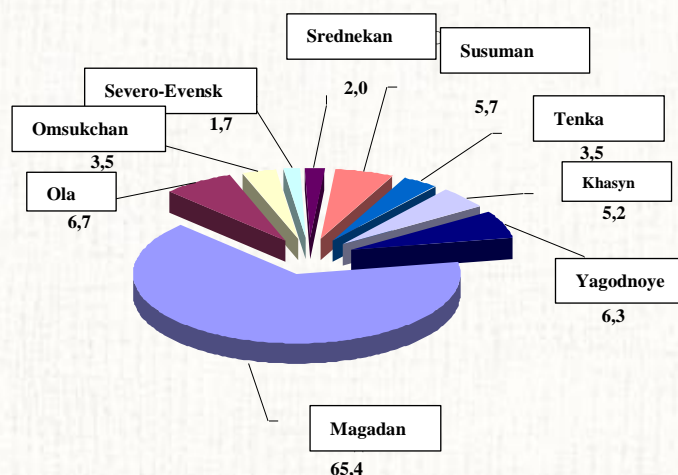
Year		Urban and rural population	incl.		% compared to previous census	
			urban population	rural population	urban population	rural population
1959	January 15 census	188,889	16,4176	24,713
1970	January 15 census	253,013	192,124	60,889	117	2.5 times
1979	January 17 census	336,951	270,912	66,039	141	108
1989	January 12 census	391,687	328,293	63,394	121	96
2002	October 9 census	182,726	168,725	14,001	51	22
2010	October 14 census	156,996	149,811	7,185	89	51

¹⁾ 1959 – de facto population; 1970, 1979, 1989, 2002, 2010 – resident population. **De facto population** consists of all persons who are physically present in the country or area at the reference date, whether or not they are usual residents. **Resident population** is all the people who live in a country or area including those who are temporarily absent.

2002 NATIONAL CENSUS



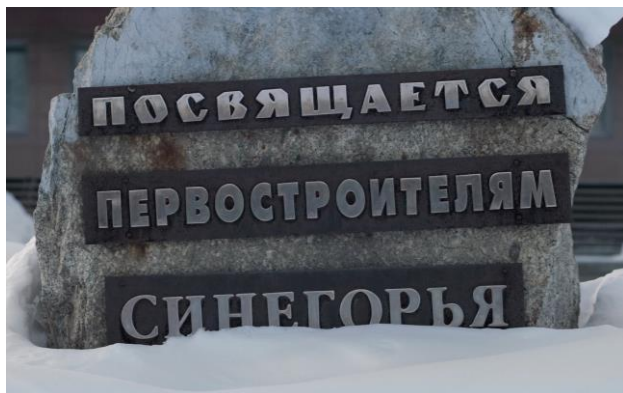
2010 NATIONAL CENSUS



INTERESTING FACTS

Sinegorye:

Situated on the left bank of the Kolyma River, Sinegorye traces its history to February 12, 1971, when a survey peg was placed by geodetic party to mark the place for the deployment of the builders camp for the future Kolyma Hydroelectric Station. Residential houses were built in stages, each commissioned with with all modern amenities: cold and hot watery, sewerage, central heating, and electric stoves. At the end of 1978, Sinegorye commissioned its airport and regular flights began on December 9 between Sinegorye and Magadan. Reputed as the “town of romanticists and urbanists”, Sinegorye was glorified not once in poems and musical works, but is now in decline... Still functioning are its health care center and sport center – only a small part of the facilities it once had... In 2022 Sinegorye had a population of only 1,752.



Aviation:

In Magadan Province, air carriages were once as accessible as road transport. Settlements used to operate several flights to Magadan per day. But, what happened in the country in the '90s could not but affect the air traffic: the number of domestic flights was reduced to a minimum, as was the number of the rural airports. In January 2022, for the first time in more than 20 years, Sinegorye resumed the (weekly) flights to Magadan using TVS-2MS turboprops. It is now possible to get from Magadan to Sinegorye in 1.5 hours for RUB 2,200 rubles, a price comparable to that of a bus ticket (bus ride from Magadan to Sinegorye takes 8 to 9 hours). Air connection and small aircraft are high on the agenda of the Magadan authorities. The plan is to establish flights to all the settlements along the Kolyma River. Small aircraft represent the only mode of transport for 80% of the Far Eastern territories and for 90% of Magadan Province.



Air route network expansion is a prerequisite for quality life in the Russian Far East.

Upon the initiative of the President of Russia, the government-run program “Transport System Development” now has a section targeting to accelerate development in the Far East, which involves the overhaul of local airports and increased focus on small aircraft. In 2018, for the purposes of air traffic and on behalf of Magadan Governor Sergey Nosov, the Magadan Ministry of Transport and Road Management set up the regional unitary enterprise **Kolyma Aviation** and leased two TVS-2MS aircraft for passenger transportation. The funding for the aircraft lease has been provided by Gazprombank, and relevant flight operation agreement was entered into with SiLA Airline. The flight schedule can be viewed, and tickets purchased (service fee free), on <https://sila-aero.ru/>. *With two TVS-2MS aircraft, the area's remoter parts enjoy better transport accessibility and regular mail delivery. If necessary, both the aircraft can be used for medical transport.* TVS-2MS aircraft are manufactured by RUSAVIAPROM. Acting as suppliers to domestic and international markets is PMI Aero. (Text by Evgenia Gorkina)

Between despair and hope: Is there a way out?



When we're in despair we often ask ourselves if our strivings still make sense. And as we watch the things we cared for fall apart, we lose touch with our goals. We lose our footing. Trapped in fear and emotional pain, we let go of the reins... The opposite of despair is hope. Hope is what inspires us to believe in better future, better outcome. If you have hope, all is not lost. The one who holds firmly to hope will never lose their guiding light and will do whatever they can to make it work.



A miracle always awaits us somewhere near despair.

There is always a place for miracles in the lives of those who have hope!

From the author

It's the world of media consumption we are living in. Viewers seem to have high expectations of cinematography and low *frustration tolerance*. Edifying content is what they want least. All moviegoers want today is entertainment and easily digestible content. But can something which is superfluous encourage people to think? One source of compelling contents offering cognitive enrichment and entertainment is documentary film genre. A great documentary makes us look inward and ask, "Who am I and why am I here? What is my purpose?" It immerses us into the story world, evokes emotions and even inspires to take action. When the audience identify with the character, that character becomes their guide, their vehicle towards their dreams.

One of the great benefits of documentary film genre is that it allows filmmakers to use real people in *real life situations* to tell a story.

In documentaries, characters live normal life, allowing the camera to watch them from the side. The many hours of footage get transformed into a short film, the scattered frames become one whole story, the natural course of events builds into scenario. Sometimes life gives us stories that just cannot be made up.



Thank you for your time.