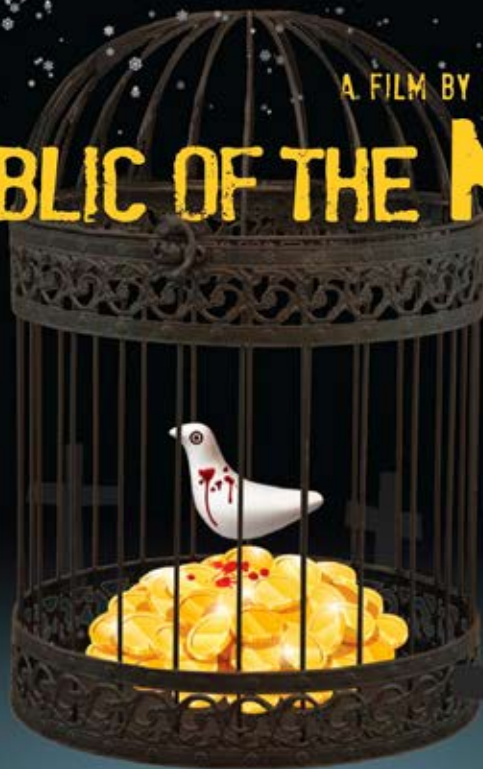




A FILM BY MANUELA MORAR

REPUBLIC OF THE NORTH



*There is a much that a man should not see, should not know,
and if he should see it, it is better for him to die.*

Varlam **Shalamov**, Kolymskie **Rasskazy**

credits

Cinematography **Marius Vlad** *Editing* **Andrei Balasoiu**
Sound **Marian Cazacu** *Translation* **Andrei Sochirca, Mihai Fusu**
Production assistant **Oleg Malii** *Executive Producer* **Roxana Ardelean**
Executive producer **Liliana Ghidirim**
Director **Manuela Morar**





A FILM BY MANUELA MORAR

REPUBLIC OF THE NORTH

A man in a dark coat and hat stands in a dilapidated, dark interior. The walls are peeling and the lighting is low, creating a somber and gritty atmosphere. The man is slightly out of focus, looking down.

Logline

Republic of the North In the middle of a society controlled by a corrupt oligarchic system, in which the tragedies of the past seem to be altered by a present marked by the struggle for subsistence, former Soviet dissident Vasili Kovalyov takes us to the place where he buried (sixty years ago) the most important document of the cause for which he has fought for his entire life: the plan for a separate republic for the former prisoners of Kolyma.

A troubling saga of the unusual destiny of a man and his ideal of liberty, and a meditation on circular time, on the world beyond the prison walls, where nothing ever changes and where nothing has changed, due to inertia . . .

Kovalyov - K437

Vasile Kovalyov is the last Bessarabian survivor of the Kolyma labour camps in the Russian Far Est.

He was a proponent of the Gulag resistance movement, he handcrafted the knives in the Norilsk Revolt of 1953, and he was one of the leaders of the Democratic Party, a subversive cell, which, after the death of Stalin, fought for the abolition of the camps and the creation of a new, separate state for the prisoners of Kolyma.



director's statement

Beyond the historical and geo-political context, this film is an invitation to empathise. The situation of people in Russia's Far East is a tragic one. Most of them still do not have the right to leave the region, and are unable to adapt to home life, having been forced to create a new home and a new identity for themselves in an isolated, harsh, lifeless land. The present-day inhabitants of the penal colonies of Ust-Nera, Susuman, Ust-Omchag and Yagodnoe are the survivors of a perverse system of boundaries, borders and limitations, within a space dominated by cold, emptiness, nothingness.

Seemingly without having any connection with the subject, in 2010 I became interested in the subject of the Soviet deportations, about which I had heard stories at home. My grandfather had lost everything (including his mind) during nationalisation and until his dying day he lived in fear of being arrested. We knew about the politicals, about the people who vanished from home, taken away in a black crow—a secret police van—and about the camps in Siberia.

I knew about Kolyma from Varlam Shalamov's book, the first document of the Gulag, published in New York in 1968.

For almost three years I trawled the archives, I searched for characters via Chişinău and Moscow, I talked to ex-prisoners, and I reached the farthest limits of Siberia: a vast and inaccessible arctic and subarctic region, crossed by federal highway M56, known as the Road of Bones.





Gradually, the camps, the Cold War, and the atomic programme shut off the region, completely isolating it from the rest of the world. *Kolyma znachit smert'* (Kolyma means death) was a saying current in the Soviet Union, which defined the place, regarded as the archetype of labour camp cruelty and the pole of cold and atrocities (according to Solzhenitsyn).

Today, Kolyma is one of the world's largest gold mining regions. Along the highway there stretches a network of pasyolki, camp areas, which have become settlements for freedmen. The locals, mostly the descendants of ex-prisoners forbidden to leave or workers who have come here for the Northern wage increment, focus on subsistence, and *the Continent* and the free world are a distant dream for most of them.

After the documentary *Wolf Ticket* (a work in progress), the second part of *Kolyma: The Geography of a Society under Arrest* is a foray into the underground of the Forbidden Zone, an attempt to salvage the history of a generation sacrificed in the name of the utopian communist project and a manifesto of anti-Soviet resistance, which is still valid in a country where freedom and democratic values remain a myth.

director



MANUELA MORAR

Graduated in 2008 Film Directing , member of the Romanian Filmmakers Union. *Bilet de lup* (Wolf Ticket) is the fifth documentary after *Don't forget*(2006), *Made in Heaven* (2010), *Materik* (2014) and *Once upon a time in Transilvania* (2008). *Once upon a time in Transilvania* received several awards, such as: Special Award, Iasi International Film Fest, 2009; Second prize and Public Award, International Festival CRONOGRAF, 2010, present in the selection for Silver Eye - Jilava 2009 and for the Platform Dok-Web documentary.



director of photography

MARIUS VLAD

Graduated cinematography in 2007 at UNATC I.L. Caragiale. Has worked as cinematographer and producer for numerous short movies, documentaries and television series. Collaborated with National Geographic for the upcoming "Apollo" project and signed the cinematography for "Interior. Block Of Flats Hallway" - Sélection Officielle - Festival de Cannes.



sound

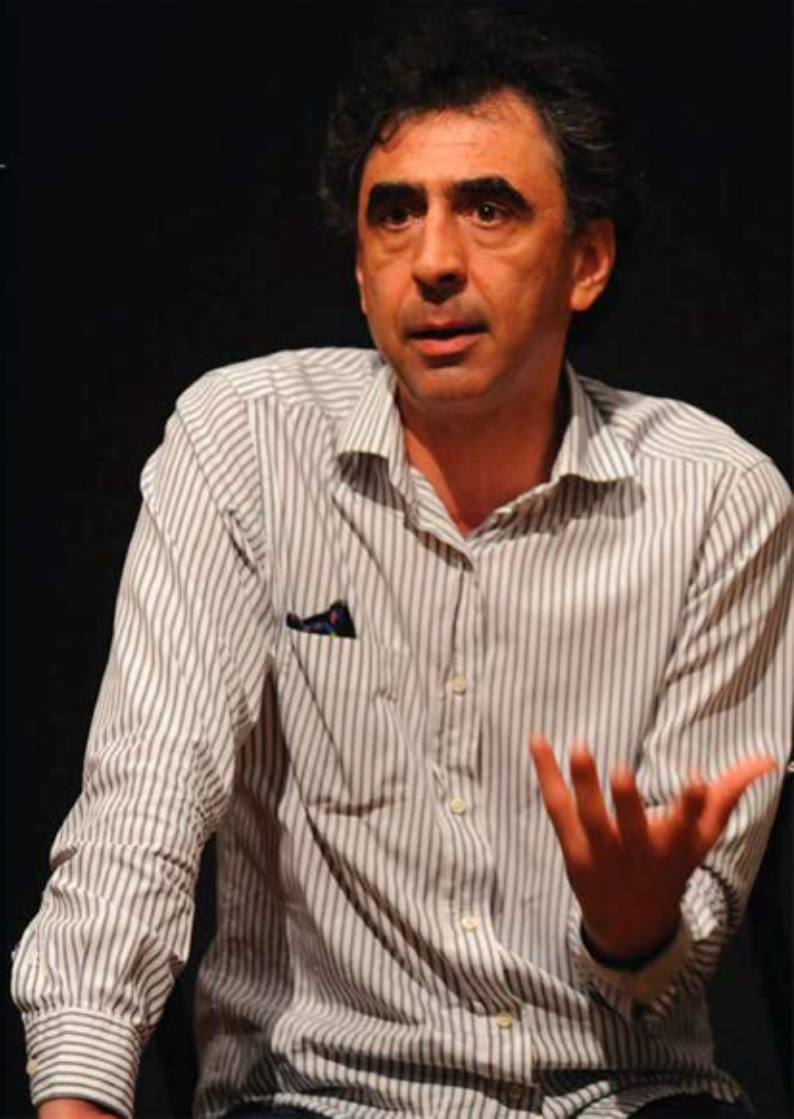
MARIAN CAZACU

Born in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. Graduated in 2005 UNACT "I.L. Caragiale", Bucharest, specialization - multimedia and after that followed a Masters internship in film montage. Since 2006 he is a sound-field technician for various film and television productions including: "Podul din Flori" (Bridge of flowers) - 35mm, documentary (RO), 90' (R: Thomas Ciulei), "Amintiri din Epoca de Aur / Caruselul" (Tales from the Golden Age / Carousel) - 35mm (Mobra Film), "Kapitalism - reteta noastra secreta" (Kapitalism - our secret recipe) - HD, documentary, 90', (R: Alexandru Solomon), "Periferic" - 35mm, 90' (Saga Film), "Doina Groparului" (Digging for Life) - DH, documentary, 90', (HBO), "Cerul Interzis" (Forbidden Sky) - HD, documentary, (Libra Film)

translator

MIHAI FUSU

Actor, director, playwright and TV producer. Studied at „Sciukin Theatre Academy, Moscow”, Russia. Perfected his stages at the Royal National Theatre in London, Great Britain and at National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts in Paris, France. Directed over 30 plays. Is the founder of the document theatre project “A satptea kafana” (Seventh tavern). The drama is translated and played in France, Sweden, Romania, Germany, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.





East Siberian Sea

Wrangle Island

Submerged Kolyma

Bear Islands

Ayon Island

Kapei

Palyavaam

68°N

Indigirka

Alazeya

Chukoch'ye

Kon'kovo

Cherskiy

Rauchua

Malyy Anyuy Range

Bol'shoy Anyuy

Arctic Circle

Lower Kolyma

Berezhnaya

Omolon

Bol'shoy Oloy

Anadyr

64°

Moma Range

Sederjema Kolyma

Ozhogina

Middle-Kolyma

Yukagir Plateau

Karkodon

Cherskiy Range

Pobeda

Fig. 4b

Annachag

facebook.com/bilet-de-lup

www.wolfticket.ro