



SCOP
production

Presents
Animated film

based on

Tonino Guerra's short story

"A Ladder to Heaven"

Director Anna Gantimurova

Russia, Lebanon, Italy



A Ladder to Heaven

Story

A merchant passes through an abandoned mountain and sees its last habitant, an old woman. This encounter will change his life forever.

Running time: 9 minutes

Technics: 2D and 3D animation/
watercolor, pastel, guash, didigital

Audiences I2+

A Ladder to Heaven

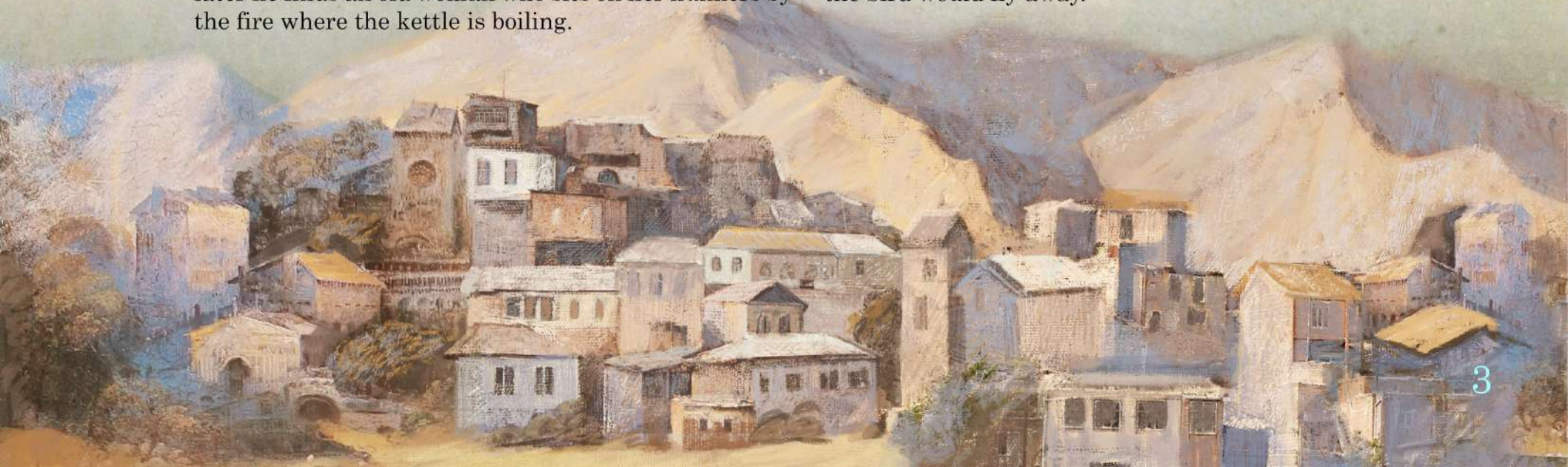
Synopsis

Many years ago, there was a mountain village here. The monks were mowing grass on the monastery roof. The wind was playing with the seeds, tossing them under the wrecked roofing and in some rainy years nettle, poppy seeds, and oat grew right through the roof.

Now the village is deserted, some violent act of nature must have happened and people have abandoned these places. Now this is a secluded land, only stones remain here. The merchant stops his caravan in the meadow and looks around. Not a soul in sight. A little while later he finds an old woman who sits on her hunkers by the fire where the kettle is boiling.

She works her hand free out of her shawl – she wears a silver bracelet with chainlets. He wishes to buy it – it seems like a good deal. It means he didn't just waste four days getting here through the rocky mountain road in the burning heat in vain.

The merchant demonstrates clothes, necklaces, odds and ends. He offers the old woman money. He lays out the stamps. The old woman picks up the stamp with a bird on it, she searches in the drapes of her skirt and takes out scissors. She cuts out a bird and places it on her palm – as if she believed the bird would fly away.



A Ladder to Heaven

Synopsis

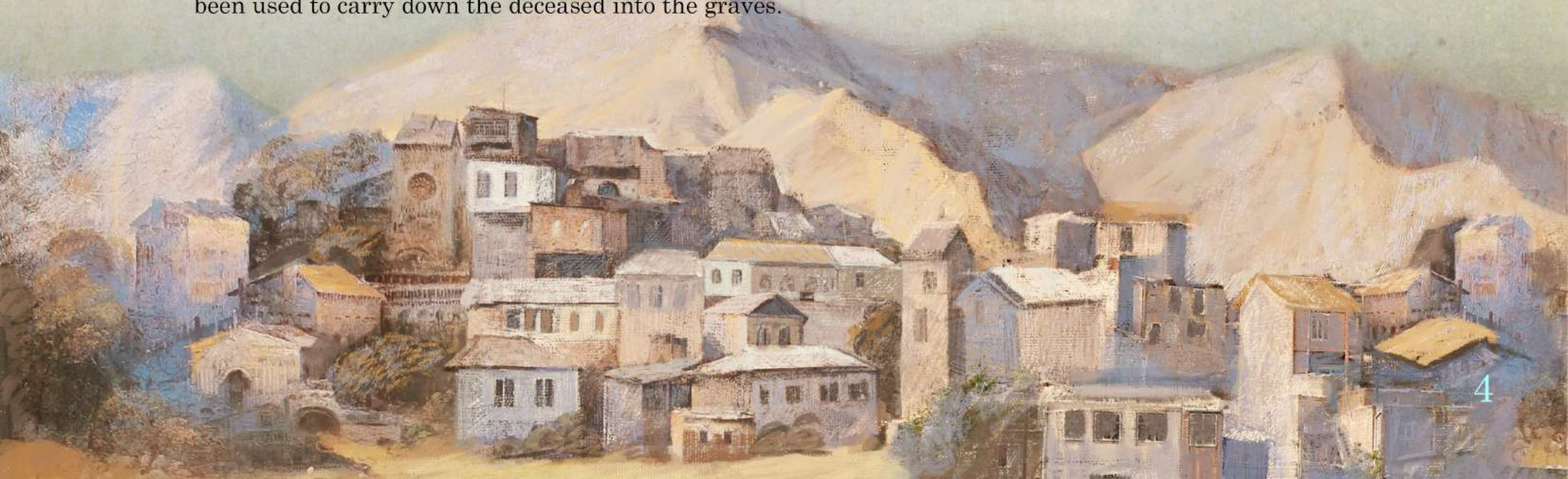
And indeed, the wind picks up the paper bird, the old woman laughs, claps her hands, looks at her bird flying in the sky next to real birds who were scared off the pond by the noise. The old woman draws a stairway on the ground. She motions to the merchant, showing him that she wishes to get the wood that one of the mules carries. The merchant refuses – that's expensive Lebanon cedar, that's not a good deal.

The angry merchant wanders around the village and stumbles upon an old cemetery. There is a wooden ladder next to every grave — the ladders must have been used to carry down the deceased into the graves.

And then the ladders were just left so that souls could easily come up to heaven.

The merchant makes up a bed in one of the abandoned houses. In the night, he dreams about stairways with deceased villagers sitting on top of each. There is one more grave dug out in the ground, but there is no ladder next to it.

The next morning the merchant crafts a stairway for the old woman and stays in the village.



Tonino Guerra



Tonino Guerra is one of the most famous Italian screenwriters, poets and writers. Born on March 16th in 1920 in the small town of Santarcangelo di Romagna (not far away from Rimini), he lived his whole life in this neck of the woods. Tonino Guerra penned screenplays for such great masters of cinema as Federico Fellini, Michelangelo Antonioni, Andrei Tarkovsky (“Nostalgia”, and documentary about location scouting for this film – “Voyage in Time”), Francesco Rosi and Theodoros Angelopoulos. His first collaboration with the famous Russian animation director Andrei Khrzhanovsky was the film “The Lion with the White Beard” which had great success with international audiences and film critics and was awarded at numerous film festivals. He was nominated for an Oscar for Best Original Screenplay three times – for Casanova 70, Blow Up and Amarcord.

Director



Anna Gantimurova was born in 1992 in Krasnodar, Russia. Graduated from the Art College (Fine Arts) and the Institute of Cinematography named after A. Gerasimov (artist of animated films), Moscow. Her animated film "Spring Fantasy" (2012) participated in the prestigious Russian festival 'Suzdal-fest' and other fests. She successfully participated in many competitions and exhibitions – both in Russia and abroad, and completed summer internship Gobelins l'école de l'image (school-animation studio, Paris). In 2016-2018 she works as an artist of the animated projections for the theater performances "Report to the Academy" - Kiel, Germany; "Blue Life", "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Old, Old Fairy Tale" - Taganka Theater; "Crime and Punishment" - Perm Youth Theater; "The Last Father" - Saratov Youth Theater; "Red Wheel" - New Space of the Theater of Nations, "Konek-Humpback", "Dog's Heart" - Tilsit Theater. Since 2019 she also works as an artist in Kacheli publishing house in Russia. She has seven books with her illustrations published by Foxton Books (London).

Producer



Maria Zeid (Ivanova) is a producer and director. CEO of Buta Films production company (www.butafilms.ru, new name - Scoop Production) and organizer of international cultural events. One of her significant works - short film "Sonuncu" ("The Last One") which she produced, premiered in the Official Competition of the 67th Cannes Film Festival, participated in 87 international film festivals and received 9 awards. In 2016 Maria conceived and organized the first Russian film festival in Lebanon and started to actively collaborate with Middle Eastern region. In 2017 Maria presented her directorial debut – documentary about Syrian refugees called "Fleeing the War". This film got a special prize from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees representative in the Russian Federation and received the main film critics' award at the International Human Rights Film Festival 'Stalker' film festival. In 2018 Maria launched two online platform series – "The Booth at the End" and "Pro Gogol" (by Boris Akunin). In 2019 started the development of two feature films – her live action feature debut "The City of Strangers" and "Spider" by renowned director Igor Voloshin. Also, in 2019 she started to work on the project "THERE" by Boris Akunin, as well as the animated film based on Tonino Guerra's short story "A Ladder to Heaven" ("La Ladder che va verso il cielo").



Creative group:



Lora Guerra

The head of Tonino Guerra foundation



Maria Kobzareva

British Higher School of Art and Design and Chelsea College of Arts alumna. Master of Fine Arts, international curator, coordinator of several biennales and art-shows. Former artist and illustrator.



Olga Artemyeva

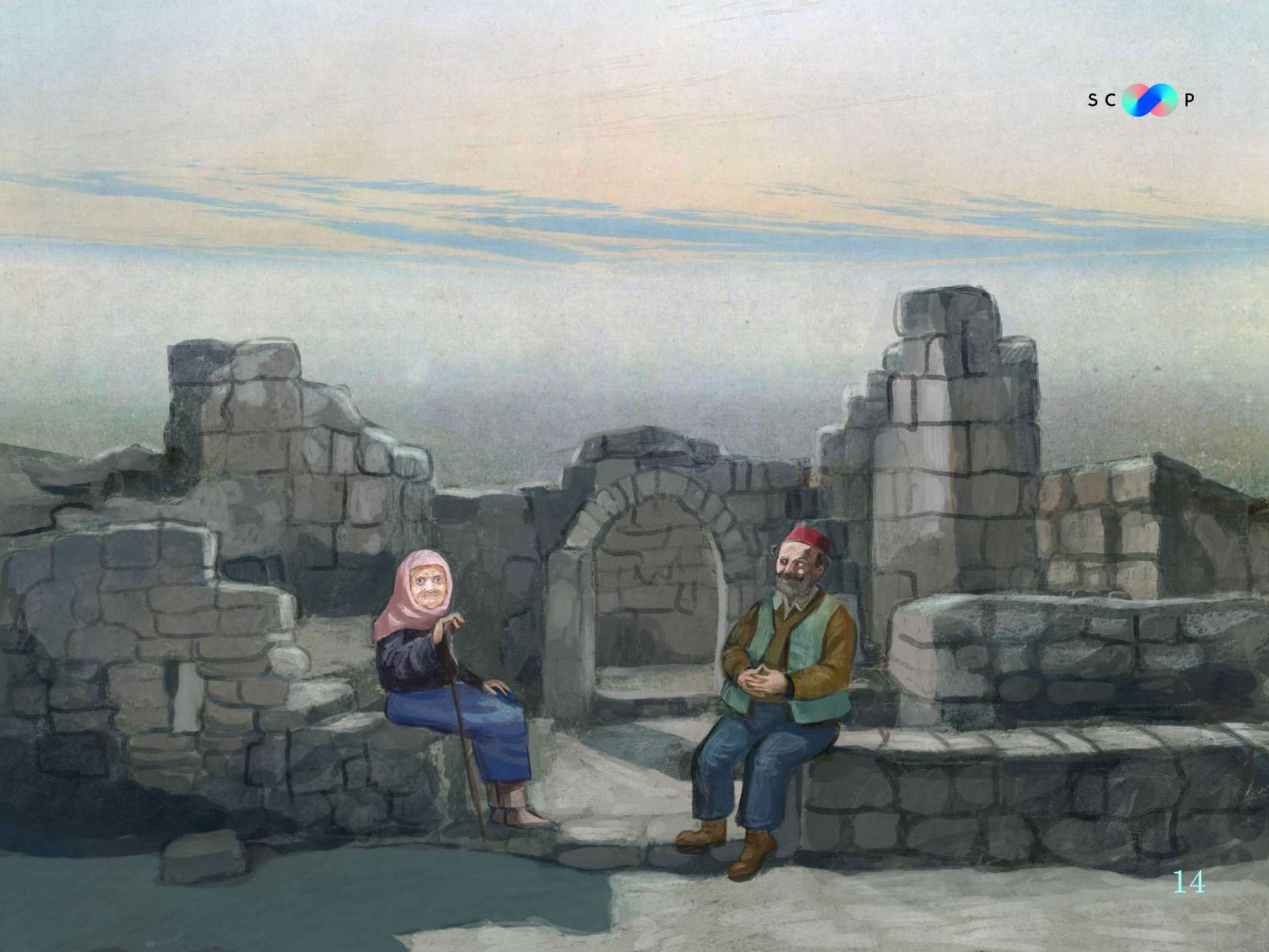
Graduated from the film studies department, PhD in Art History. Screenwriter, film critic and creative producer at TV and film. Was associated with several film companies and film festivals in New York and Los Angeles. In 2007 started working at the Moscow International Film Festival in different capacities; since 2015 works as a short films programmer at MIFF. Since 2018 also curates contemporary cinema programming at the Film Museum in Moscow.











Budget

Total budget: 75 000 Euro

Funding strategy:

The Ministry of Culture of the
Russian Federation 25 000 Euro

Lebanon 25 000 euro.

International co-production 25 000 euro.



Production schedule

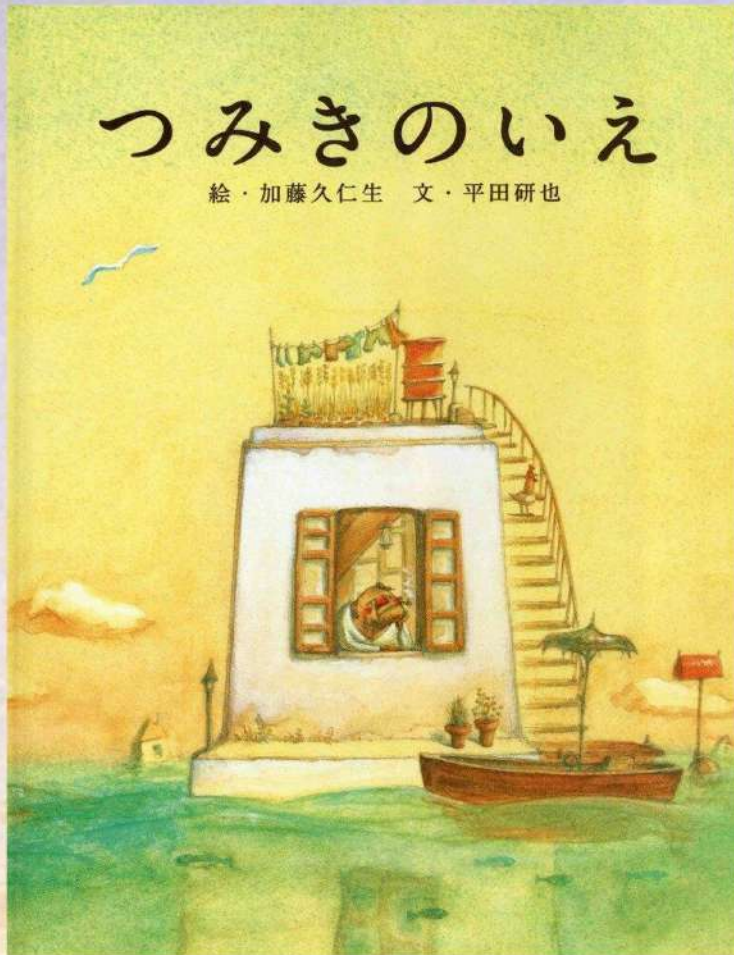
January-April 2020 – pre-production

April-October 2020 – production

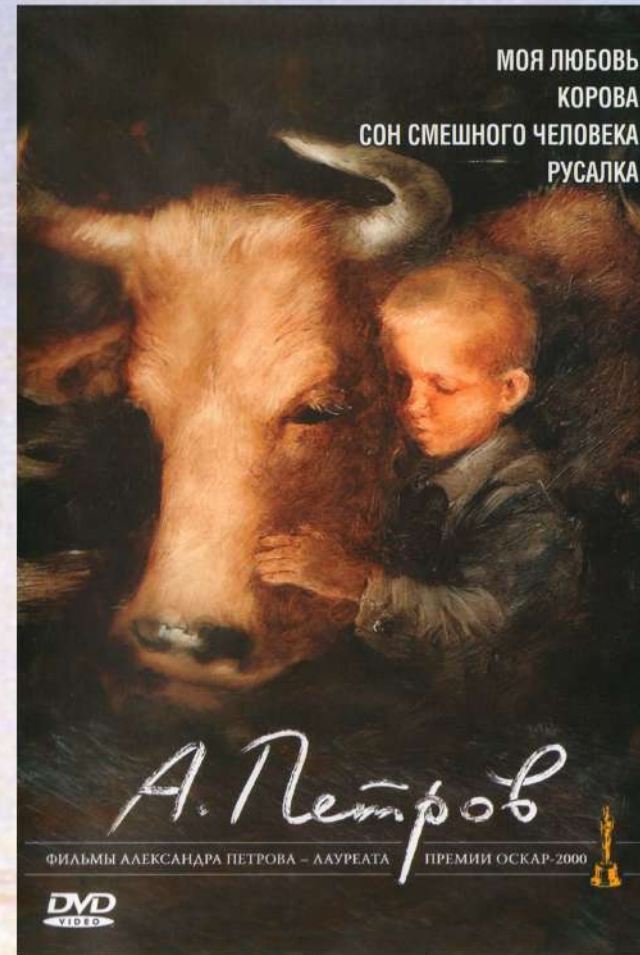
November 2020 – March 2021 – marketing and distribution



References



The House of Small Cubes
Kunio Kato (Oscar 2008)



The cow
Aleksand Petrov
(Oscar-winning director, Russia)

S C  P production

maria.z@superscoop.ru