

TERYKONY

A FILM BY TARAS TOMENKO



PRESS KIT



UKRAINIAN STATE
FILM AGENCY



PRESENT

TERYKONY

DIRECTED BY TARAS TOMENKO

German title: Taubes Gestein

Festivals & Sales: INSIGHTMEDIA

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TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND FILM CREW

Original title: ТЕРИКОНИ

International title: TERYKONY

Running time: 80'09"

Country: Ukraine, 2022

Language: Ukrainian, Russian

Format: 1: 1,85

Image: 4k

Sound: 5.1

MAIN CREW

DIRECTOR: TARAS TOMENKO www.imdb.com/name/nm0866629/

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: MISHA LUBARSKY
www.imdb.com/name/nm8127940

SOUND RECORDIST: OLHA HAVRYLENKO

MUSIC: ALLA ZAGAYKEVYCH www.imdb.com/name/nm1476101

EDITING: VIKTOR MALYARENKO www.imdb.com/name/nm4452458

SOUND DESIGN: VOLODYMYR TRETIAKOV

LINE PRODUCER: YURIY MATE

PRODUCTION MANAGER: SERHII IHNATSEVICH

PRODUCERS: VOLODYMYR FILIPPOV www.imdb.com/name/nm3763922

ALLA OVSIANNIKOVA www.imdb.com/name/nm4452169

ANDRIY SUYARKO www.imdb.com/name/nm4393374

OLEKSANDR KOVALENKO www.imdb.com/name/nm5252737

Production company: INSIGHTMEDIA

with the support of UKRAINIAN STATE FILM AGENCY

SYNOPSIS

LOG LINE

This story is about coming of age and encountering the cruel reality.
And it is about childhood that continues despite war.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Nastya was six when three missiles fired by the Russian army hit her house on New Year's Eve. She survived but lost her father, childhood and faith in life. To the likes of her the war has become something commonplace, like the landscape outside the window. Yet Nastya has dreams. Like every girl, she dreams of a new house and a dog and keeps on writing letters to Santa asking him to bring her father back.

According to official statistics, approximately 10,000 children currently reside in the Donbas warzone.

The method of documentary surveillance of characters and non-intrusion into their personal space made it possible to show the dramatism of children's life on the front line.

TITLE: TERYKONY

Terykony (Ukr. for Boney Piles) – mounds of coal waste distinctively typical of the Donetsk coal basin landscapes – are an allegory for the fate of deprived children to whom war has become part of their life. Living in a state of permanent insecurity and deprived of care, they have no future.

This is a story of children who have suffered from shelling and lost their parents and dear ones but continue to live and love where others have given up on all hope.

DIRECTOR:

Taras Tomenko member of European Film Academy

Film director, scriptwriter, born February 6, 1976, Kyiv, Ukraine.

Education: Karpenko-Kary Kyiv State University of Theatre,

Cinema and Television Arts, Department of Cinema and Television Arts;

Taras Shevchenko Kyiv State University, Department of Philology.

2001 Berlinale Panorama award for Tyr (Shooting Gallery).



- 2021** SLOVO HOUSE. UNFINISHED NOVEL (feature)
- 2017** SLOVO HOUSE (documentary)
- 2016** CHILDREN OF DONBAS (documentary)
- 2015** CHECKPOINT UKRAINE (documentary)
- 2007** PRISON MAMAS (documentary)
- 2006** LIZA (documentary)
- 2004** PARCHED LAND (short feature)
- 2004** DISCOVERING UKRAINE (documentary)
- 2001** TYR (SHOOTING GALLERY) (short feature)
- 1999** SLAUGHTER HOUSE (short feature)

FESTIVAL AWARDS:

Best short film (Panorama) - 51st International Berlin Film Festival, 2001 - TYR (SHOOTING GALLERY)

SPECIAL PRIZE OF FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN FILM DIRECTORS (FERA), 2005 - PARCHED LAND

Mostra internazionale de' l' arte cinematografica, 2001

ARTE FRANCE Award - TYR (SHOOTING GALLERY)

Best silent film - SAPPORO International Film Festival, Japan), 2006 - PARCHED LAND

Best short film - International Film Festival in Thessalonica, Greece, 2006 - PARCHED LAND

Best documentary film, Best camerawork, Special Jury Award for

Best Documentary - NEW CINEMA International Film Festival, Smolensk, Russia, 2006 - LIZA

Best documentary film - International Film Festival, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2006 - LIZA

NASTYA



Nastya, 15, lives in Toretsk, a small coalmining township located 82km north of Donetsk.

Since it was liberated from the combined Russian-separatist forces in 2014, Toretsk has been in the "gray zone" along the engagement line. Almost every day the township comes under fire.

Nastya was born into a family of coalminers, like the majority of Toretsk residents. As the coalmines close down, the township is increasingly depressed by unemployment.

Forced to survive by any means, Nastya collects and sells scrap metal.

Nastya has PTSD. On New Year's Eve in 2015, her house was destroyed by three Grad missiles.

Fortunately, she was not at home at the time, but her father was killed. Now she lives with her mother and grandmother. Her mother has sunk into the underclass and there is no one to support her, so she has to make her own living.

Nastya seeks refuge from this world in the virtual reality. She finds peace of mind in online music and draws hope from the worldwide web.



The shelling is not chaotic: Putin's terrorists purposefully target residential areas. Nastya's school is just 800m from their forward positions and has been shelled many times, which can be seen from dents and holes left by bullets and shrapnel in the façade. In order to distract their traumatized students, the teachers paint blue skies and sunflowers over the dents and holes.

Everyone who had a place to move to has left the warzone. Nastya has nowhere to go. Her family has not received any compensation for the destroyed house.

Nastya is one of more than 10,000 children living in this "gray zone".





The director of *Terykony*, Taras Tomenko, has been working on the theme of the Donbas war since it broke out in 2014. He has collected a multitude of witness accounts and other material.

In 2018, Volodymyr Filippov (Insightmedia producer center) suggested to Taras Tomenko that they make a full-length documentary about children of war. The director agreed and the *Terykony* project started.

In 2019, the *Terykony* project was supported by the Ukrainian State Film Agency.

In last two years more than 200 hours of footage was filmed for the *Terykony* project overall.

In 2021, Film was presented:

- Work in progress section of the 55th of Karlovy Vary IFF.
- Work in progress section of the 11th of Odessa film festival - have won a first prize: for the best Work in progress project.



The virtuoso camerawork by Misha Lubarsky (Berlinale Talent Campus, 2012) deserves special praise. It is thanks to his mastership that children spoke and moved without noticing the camera and the film crew thus succeeded in showing their life from the inside.

A very important member of the crew is the film editor, Viktor Malyarenko, who processed a huge amount of footage, enabling Taras Tomenko to make this film which you can watch in Generation Kplus competition programme at the 72nd Berlin International Film Festival.

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR TARAS TOMENKO

There are questions to the title: *Terykony* (boney piles). What meaning did you put into the title of your film?

Taras Tomenko:

Boney piles are a distinctive part of the landscape in the east of Ukraine. Their cone-like shape and size make them resemble the Egyptian pyramids. Slack and other waste have been piled up in such mounds for centuries. My boney piles are an image of the earth from which all valuable resources have been drained and all that is left is slack.

It's an allegory of human fates. Mass coalmine closedowns made the people jobless and deepened the cleavage in society. The situation was aggravated in 2014 by Russian aggression in the Donbas. Its residents became hostages – just like useless slack.

The problem of deprived children exists in different parts of the world.

Why, in your opinion, did this problem emerge in the Donbas?

Are families like Nastya's typical of that region?

Taras Tomenko:

The war has been going on for more than seven years, keeping the people in constant lethal danger. Children are especially endangered! There is an episode in our film showing the first day of the schoolyear, the 1st of September. Those kids that go to the school for the first time were born in the wartime and haven't seen a single peaceful day! We have a whole generation born in the wartime.

In 2014, my team and I began to film the developments in the Donbas warzone. We traveled a lot along the front line together with a mine safety mission. We visited schools, kindergartens and foster homes where we staged theatrical performances for kids to teach them to keep away from ammunition.

In addition to the horrors of war, we were very deeply impressed by their defenselessness. I saw a lot of children whose limbs were torn off, whose parents were killed in this war, whose homes were destroyed. That's what Putin's hybrid warfare policy brought to our land.

And with this film we want to cry out loud to the world so Putin stops the war that he unleashed against Ukraine.

What were your criteria for selecting the children whose stories your film tells?

Why did you pick these very stories?

Taras Tomenko:

We made the story of Nastya central because we saw that it could best reflect and symbolize this dramatic situation.

Nastya impressed us by her integrity, grown-up way of thinking and deep inner world. The death of her father from Russian shelling and the destruction of her house by Russian Grad missiles came as a formidable ordeal for the 10-year girl.

Nastya showed such a high level of trust and openness to our crew that I as the director

was moved very deeply and Misha Lubarsky, our cameraman, was able to use the best of his skills and achieve maximum documentary accuracy. The kids didn't even seem to notice the camera.

Obviously, Nastya's story doesn't end with this film. There is a clear storyline of her growing up. The film leaves the viewer wondering what is going to happen to Nastya in the future.

Taras Tomenko:

The best we could do was show this story to the world. We mustn't be silent or pretend that this is not happening. Through the fate of one child we speak about a whole generation of Ukrainian children of war. It's hard to predict her future. We only hope our film will somehow help to change her life for the better.

Your experience of filming children in the Donbas must have made you look closer at individual children like Nastya. You obviously shifted your focus from children in general to a child as an individual personality.

Taras Tomenko:

To Nastya, like the overwhelming majority of people living in the Donbas, war has become something ordinary. Shots and explosions at night don't make her shiver or panic anymore. They've become a part of her life. Nastya, like the majority of war-affected children, has post-traumatic stress disorder. They need qualified psychological aid.

We see that Nastya dreams of a new house, a car, a dog, but in real life she earns her living by collecting scrap metal. Shells explode very near, but she doesn't seem to care. At the same time, we always see a smartphone in her hand. Is that the way she escapes from reality and seeks her peace of mind in the virtual world?

Taras Tomenko:

By immersing into the virtual world she tries to escape from the cruel reality which even grownups are unable to endure.

Subconsciously, Nastya constantly looks back upon December 31, 2015, the New Year's night the Russian terrorists shelled her house. Nastya even writes letters to Santa asking him to bring her father back.

The film is filled with symbolism. For instance, in the final frame you point to broken wires of a power line. What do they symbolize?

Taras Tomenko:

The final frame is nothing like scenery from Tarkovsky's movie *Stalker*. It's part of the apocalyptic surroundings in which Nastya lives. And it's an open question to the civilized world.

INFORMATION

Terykony (Ukr. for Boney piles) – mounds of coal waste distinctively typical of the Donetsk coal basin landscapes – are an allegory for the fate of deprived children to whom war has become part of their life. Living in a state of permanent insecurity and deprived of care, they have no future.

Toretsk is a small coalmining township located 82km north of Donetsk. Toretsk has a long history. The coal mining in whole Donbass region began on its territory in 1721. Since it was liberated from the combined Russian-separatist forces in 2014, Toretsk has been in the “gray zone” along the engagement line. Almost every day the township comes under fire. Today there are no working mines left in the town.

Forward positions (the line of contact, also the engagement line) is a buffer zone in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions between the Ukrainian-controlled settlements and the temporarily occupied territories.

“Gray zone” is buffer band of neutral territory. Its width in some places reaches several kilometers, and in others - only two or three hundred meters.

"Grad" (Russian: БМ-21 "Град", lit. 'hail') is a Soviet truck-mounted 122 mm multiple rocket launcher.

VIDEO & AUDIO



vimeo.com/664424977



vimeo.com/664425082

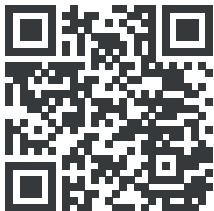


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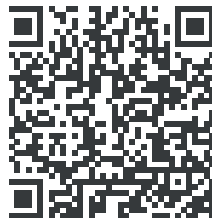


vimeo.com/664425219

Video:



Audio:



Trailer:



CONTACTS



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