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"One of the Year's Best!"

— N. Y. Times — Herald Tribune — N. Y. Post — Saturday Review

"The best Russian movie since World War II... brilliant, vehemently original, beautiful, humorous sentimental journey. Surefire sense of comedy... the theatre booms with an immense amen to life."

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— N. Y. Post

WINNER GRAND PRIZE
SAN FRANCISCO FILM
FESTIVAL

DOUBLE PRIZE-WINNER
CANNES FILM
FESTIVAL

Ballad of a Soldier

A lyrical film of
a bittersweet
encounter



A MosFilm Studio Production • Directed by Grigori Chukhrai • A J. Jay Frankel Presentation • A Kingsley International Release

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Ballad of a Soldier

A Mosfilm Production

Directed by Grigori Chukhrai

Script by Valentin Yoshov
and Grigori Chukhrai

Camera by Vladimir Nikolayev
and Era Saveleva

Music by Michael Siv

A J. Jay Frankel Presentation

A Kingsley International Release

CAST

Alyosha	Vladimir Ivashov
Shura	Shanna Prokhorenko
Alyosha's Mother	Antonina Maximova
General	Nikolai Kruchkov
Invalid	Evgeni Urbanski

Running Time — 88 mins.

SYNOPSIS

(Not for Publication)

His unit crushed and dispersed, Alyosha (Vladimir Ivashov), a young soldier, is pursued on the battlefield by a tank. Finally, exhausted, Alyosha stumbles. He falls, fortuitously, in reach of an anti-tank gun and despite his terror, decides on a last ditch stand. With two lucky shots he knocks out two tanks.

Alyosha is a simple, direct fellow, who does not regard himself as a hero. An understanding General, however, grants him a wish— six days leave; two days to get back to his home to visit his mother; two days to spend with her and to repair the sagging roof of their house; two days to get back.

To get transportation home is very difficult and circuitous under wartime conditions. On the way home he makes a promise to a new-found soldier friend to deliver some bars of soap to his wife, whom Alyosha later discovers to be faithless. Another comrade on his journey is a war-crippled young man returning to a pretty wife whom he is fearful will reject him. Alyosha helps to bring understanding between the two.

In a freight car he comes upon a girl of his own age, Shura (Shanna Prokhorenko), a pretty girl, terrified of the possibility he might make advances to her. They join forces and as the hours go by and their adventures together multiply, they make new discoveries of the wonder of their love.

At the end of his journey, Alyosha has no time left but to embrace his mother in a wheat field, say hello to a few neighbors and friends, turn about and return to the front.



STILL BS-8 MAT 2B
LOVE ON THE RUN is the breathless kind experienced by Shanna Prokhorenko and Vladimir Ivashov in the powerful, romantic drama, "Ballad of a Soldier," which arrives at the _____ theatre. Distributed by Kingsley International Pictures and presented by J. Jay Frankel, "Ballad of a Soldier" is the first Russian picture to be independently released under the Soviet American cultural exchange program.

"Ballad of a Soldier," Acclaimed Prize-Winning Film, Bows Here

"Ballad of a Soldier," acclaimed internationally by press and public and garlanded with numerous awards, including two prizes at the Cannes Festival and the two top prizes at the San Francisco Film Festival will open _____ at the _____ theatre.

A J. Jay Frankel presentation, distributed by Kingsley International Pictures, it is the first Russian film to be distributed independently under the Soviet American cultural exchange program.

The romantic drama co-stars Shanna Prokhorenko and Vladimir Ivashov, a team whose youth, fine looks and acting abilities have enraptured audiences and critics.

With Grigori Chukhrai directing, "Ballad of a Soldier" was filmed in the ancient town of Vladimir, near Moscow, with special units of the Red Army participating. Vladimir Ivashov, the young soldier, Alyosha, in "Ballad of a Soldier," was the seventy-third candidate to be interviewed and tested at the Mosfilm Studios. Young and pretty Shanna Prokhorenko was found by Chukhrai in an acting school.

Chukhrai, who wrote the script with Valentin Yoshov, met his collaborator at the Institute of Cinematography in Moscow. Studying together, they became deep friends.

Yoshov served in the Navy in World War II; Chukhrai was a paratrooper. In writing "Ballad of a Soldier," they drew upon their own war ex-



STILL BS-18 MAT 2A
ROMANTIC ADVENTURES are Shanna Prokhorenko and Vladimir Ivashov in the International film hit "Ballad of a Soldier," which arrives _____ at the _____ theatre. First Russian film to be distributed independently under the Soviet American cultural exchange program, "Ballad of a Soldier" is a J. Jay Frankel presentation, distributed by Kingsley International Pictures. Highly praised by the press in this country, "Ballad of a Soldier" won awards at Cannes and the two top awards at the San Francisco Film Festival.

periences. Chukhrai was wounded five times, three times seriously.

A hero of the defense of Stalingrad, who later was a member of the units which pursued the Germans across Austria, Chukhrai was awarded medals several times for his unusual bravery.

His first film, "The Forty-first," brought his work to the attention of international film

makers, and at a recent Cannes Festival, it won a prize. "Ballad of a Soldier" was the second film under his direction.

Chukhrai has said that through his simple, yet profound love story of the adventures of a young boy and girl, he hoped to bring to the screen a feeling of the uselessness of war and the power of love for understanding among people of the world.

"Ballad of a Soldier" Star Makes It in First Role

Shanna Prokhorenko makes her first screen appearance in the co-starring role of Shura in "Ballad of a Soldier," the internationally acclaimed romantic drama, due _____ at the _____ theatre.

The young, pretty star, a member of the Moscow Art Theatre, was born in Poltava, the heart of the Ukraine.

After the death of her father, a Soviet air force officer, in 1941, Shanna and her mother were evacuated to the city of Orenburg in the Ural region. The war over, Mrs. Prokhorenko and her daughter went to live in Leningrad. There, Shanna continued her primary education and was graduated from high school.

With the reluctant consent of her mother, Shanna decided she wished to become an actress. When the Moscow Art Theater, which was visiting Leningrad, auditioned her, she performed impressively. The

directors accepted her and she left with a troupe to become an actress student in Moscow.

At present, as is her co-star in "Ballad of a Soldier," Vladimir Ivashov, she is continuing her film studies at the Institute of Cinematography in Moscow. She expects to receive her diploma in 1963. Shanna is at work on her second film, "If This Is Love."

In sports, she is fond of horseback riding and swimming. For hobbies she creates and designs her own dresses and actually likes sewing.



STILL BS-22 MAT 1B
LOVELY Shanna Prokhorenko is the fetching star of "Ballad of a Soldier," the internationally acclaimed romantic drama opening _____ at the _____ theatre. The Kingsley International release, a J. Jay Frankel presentation, is the first Russian film to be distributed under the Soviet American cultural exchange agreement.

Got Film Part In "Ballad" After Ordeal

Vladimir Ivashov, who is the young soldier in "Ballad of a Soldier," the award winning film drama coming _____ to the _____ theatre, got the role which has made him internationally famous, after a hard struggle for an audition. He was the seventy-third candidate interviewed and auditioned by director Grigori Chukhrai.

"Ballad of a Soldier," a J. Jay Frankel presentation, distributed by Kingsley International Pictures, is the first independently distributed Russian film released here under the Soviet-American cultural film exchange.

Vladimir Ivashov was born in Moscow, the second of three children. His father is the controller of an airplane factory building jet passenger planes, such as the Tupolev-104.

After graduating from the Moscow high school, "Volodia" as his friends call him, enrolled as a student at the Moscow Institute of Cinematography. He is still a student there and expects to graduate with a diploma in 1963.

His next film is "Thunder Clouds," described as a film about the struggle of a half pagan religious sect in Russia which still survives.

Vladimir excels in swimming, boxing and horseback riding. He loves to play the Balalaika and sing folksongs in Russian and English. His favorite, he says, is "Home On The Range" which he can sing in English, after learning the words by rote.



STILL BS-7 MAT 1A
SHANNA Prokhorenko and Vladimir Ivashov are the romantic young stars of "Ballad of a Soldier," the internationally renowned film drama opening _____ at the _____ theatre. The J. Jay Frankel presentation, distributed by Kingsley International Pictures, is the first Russian film to be released independently under the Soviet American cultural exchange program.



STILL BS-12 MAT 1C
Handsome, young Vladimir Ivashov, is star of "Ballad of a Soldier," international prize winning romantic drama opening _____ at the _____ theatre. The J. Jay Frankel presentation, distributed by Kingsley International Pictures, is the first Russian film to be released independently under the Soviet American cultural exchange program.

TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

CINEMA

New Wave in Russia?

Ballad of a Soldier (Mosfilm; Kingsley-Frankel). A Russian soldier scuttles like a desperate bug across an open field. Like a big grey toad, a German tank relentlessly pursues him. Bullets frisk about his heels. He dodges, drops his gun, falls, runs on, gasps, reels with exhaustion. The screen reels, tilts crazily, tilts further. . . Suddenly the image is upside down, the world is upside down. Yet still across a sky of mud the soldier flees, and still the tank pursues him.

With this brilliant cinemetaphor of war's madness, Director Grigori Chukhrai begins the best Russian movie made since World War II—a vehemently original, beautiful, humorous, patriotic, sentimental journey through war-churned Russia. Released in the U.S. less than a year after *The Cranes Are Flying* (TIME, Feb. 22, 1960), another Soviet film of bone-jarring energy and independent spirit, *Ballad* suggests that a New Wave may just possibly be rising in Russian cinema. *Cranes* made some mild but definite criticisms of the Communist society; *Ballad* simply ignores it, as though it were not there.

When the Russian soldier (Vladimir Ivashov) can run no more, he falls in a foxhole, finds a bazooka there, turns it on the pursuing tank, destroys it and another one too. Offered a medal, the hero—who is only 19 years old—begs leave instead to go home and see his mother. His journey is the thread on which three luminous episodes are strung.

In the first of these, the hero meets a soldier (Evgeni Urbanski) whose leg has been amputated. Invalided home, he is ashamed to face his wife as only half a man, decides to get lost instead—"Russia is big." The hero persuades him to go home. They arrive. The wife is not there. The soldier hangs on his crutches, a broken man. Suddenly a woman screams his name. His head snaps up. She runs to him, covers his face with kisses. All at once he sags with relief; a terrible joy fills his face; he crushes her in his arms.

In the second episode, which is interspersed with the third, the hero delivers a precious gift of soap to a soldier's wife, finds her living with another man,

snatches back the soap and runs out. "Please," she cries after him, "please understand!" But he is too young.

In the third episode, the longest and most variously appealing of the three, the hero hitchhikes a ride on a train. At a whistle stop, a pretty young girl (Shanna Prokhorenko) climbs into his boxcar. The train starts. "Mamma!" she screams, when she sees the hero. "Mamaaaaaa!" she screams. Nervously they make friends. He offers her a bite of salt pork. "Just a nibble," she says shyly. She wolfs the whole pound—raw. After half an hour boy and girl are so innocently and unleniently in love that only a mad dog of a capitalist could fail to be in love with them too.

The conclusion—in which the hero reaches home so late that he scarcely has time to kiss his poor mother goodbye before he rushes away to die—covers the steppes as far as eye can see with the Russian equivalent of smarmalade. Also hard to take: Director Chukhrai's fuzzy focus, *pas de deux* romanticism and his bright young mannerisms as a cinematographer. Nevertheless, Chukhrai emerges in this picture as an exuberantly gifted moviemaker. The best of his camera work has force and a creative gaiety. He makes inspired use of sound, silence, rhythm, and a wonderfully witty and expressive score composed by Mikhail Siv. He casts and directs his players faultlessly—as the legless soldier, Actor Urbanski is massively impressive.

Perhaps the most obvious of Chukhrai's talents is his surefire sense of comedy. The poor hilarious schlemiel of a train guard, for example, might have shuffled right off one of Gogol's funniest pages. But certainly the deepest of his gifts is his vital, life-accepting sense of humor. In the film's strongest scene, a rabble of Russian soldiers, ragged and cold and hungry, roll through the night behind the battle lines like cattle stacked in a boxcar and heading for the knacker. They look at each other, they look at what life has done to them, and gently one of them grins and makes a joke; another takes it from there, and suddenly all together they laugh and laugh and laugh until fate's narrow boxcar bursts and the theater booms with an immense amen to life.

THE NEW YORKER

THE CURRENT CINEMA

IN the hands of most of its contemporary users, the movie camera is a mannered, predictable bore. Unobtrusive, impeccably civilized, it does its damndest never to appear awkward; it would rather be clear-eyed than intelligent, and even its decisive movements—its few gestures and headcockings—give evidence of having been rehearsed in front of a mirror. This being the case, it is a refreshing shock to encounter a film in which the camera has been given all the best lines and in which it emerges as a vigorous, far from impeccable, but always exciting leading performer. The movie in question is the new Russian offering "Ballad of a Soldier," which has been directed by Grigori Chukhrai and photographed by Vladimir Nikolayev and Era Saveleva. These craftsmen lose no time in making clear what they will demand of their star, for in the first few minutes of the movie the camera, following the movements of a frightened foot soldier, is in full retreat before two huge German tanks. It zigzags, leaps desperately into hollows, sprints again, and at last, in a moment of startling beauty, darts into the sky like a terrified bird. This, the only acrobatic "effect" in the movie, serves its purpose precisely, for it nails our attention to the sights of "Ballad of a Soldier" rather than to its events.

The story is so slight as to be almost invisible. A nineteen-year-old soldier, as a reward for bravery at the front, is permitted a few days' leave to return to his home. Hitching rides on trains and trucks, he comforts a maimed homeward-bound veteran, delivers two cakes of soap to the family of a comrade, falls in love with and then loses a lovely young migrant, and arrives

home only in time to embrace his mother and depart for the front again. This plot scarcely constitutes drama, but it does offer endless opportunities for the camera eye. Dark trees against a white sky seen from a moving boxcar, steam from an engine enveloping the black silhouette of a railroad bridge, light falling



on the smiling face of the girl as she washes under a pump—these are the rewards of "Ballad of a Soldier." This venturesome camera is also capable of the obvious and the ill-conceived, and there are times when repeated closeups of noble Slavic profiles, and too carefully arranged groups of refugees and tired soldiers, lead one to suspect that one is in the presence of nothing more complex than an anti-war poster. Mr. Chukhrai rights himself, however, by returning his attention always to the faces of his youthful lovers, played by Vladimir Ivashov and Shanna Prokhorenko. They are a beautiful pair, terribly young, and their love affair is conducted entirely through gentle smiles, tentative gestures, and a few childish words. Since the camera's gaze is as guileless as their own, one sees their journey with the eyes of youth and comes to believe that perhaps war is as tragically simple and natural a condition of life as they conceive it to be.

cue movie department

★BALLAD OF A SOLDIER—(89m. touching and tragic prizewinning Kingsley, '60) In Russian: Eng. titles. Deeply moving, tender, drama—of a youth going home on brief furlough from the War—his first sensing of life, love, loss. Exquisitely acted, imaged, directed. Vladimir Ivashov, Shanna Prokhorenko. Dir. Chukhrai. 30

reviews

TIME LISTINGS

CINEMA

Ballad of a Soldier (in Russian). The vehemently original, vibrantly beautiful, richly humorous story of a 19-year-old soldier's furlough trip across battle-churned Russia is the best Soviet film since the war.

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE

The New Movie 'Ballad of a Soldier'

"Ballad of a Soldier" is not only the finest film I've seen from today's Russian cameras, it introduces a director of genius and two young actors of great charm and brilliance.

It opens on a shot of a woman peering across the horizon into the past, the mother of a son who did not return from the war. It cuts to the boy in a battlefield observation post as a company of tanks rattles into view. He runs and the camera runs streaming after him, one shot slanting, tipping, until it flips upside down entirely—a trifle extravagant, perhaps, but it carries over neatly the dizzy feel of the boy's helplessness in the open spiderweb of this tank terrain.

And it shows just how visually adventurous, how technically energetic is Grigori Chukhrai, the director (who also collaborated with Valentin Yershov on the screen play). His editing follows the great Russian style of Eisenstein; it is rhythmic, alive and above all economical, using any reasonable and occasionally what a more conventional director might call an unreasonable device to tell his story quickly, to keep it always to the point. Obviously, this thirty-nine-year-old director-writer is a poet in his medium.

Later in the film he runs two sequences simultaneously, one of the heroine by a railroad right of way, the other of the hero staring from a box car at the passing landscape, a double exposure technique that does not intrude itself but rather once again has that atmospheric fitness that characterizes the ingenuities of a director of genius.

The boy finds an abandoned machine gun and knocks out three of the tanks, turning back the attack. In a command post his general wants to decorate him, but the boy, Vladimir Ivashov, looking scarcely the nineteen years the film credits him with, asks rather for a furlough so he can fix the roof of his mother's home. The rest of the film tells in a dazzling series of incidents the boy's complicated passage home, reaching a climax as he arrives to greet his mother and say good by with the same breath, since he has only enough time left to rejoin his company.

This verbal synopsis gives an impression of almost barren simplicity, but the facts of this film are otherwise. If Chukhrai's style and form are indeed chaste, the range of meaning in his picture, encompassing a nation at war and an incredible tangle of human portraits, is immense.

There is the one-legged veteran, bitter and reluctant to return to a wife he suspects of infidelity. There is the Russian train guard, a little vulgar, a little rapacious, who lets him aboard for a can of beef. There is another soldier's wife to whom he carries two bars of soap only to discover she has a lover in the next room. Oh, there is a panorama of life, within this tragic, humorous, poignant, sweet but never overstated matrix is that of the soldier and the girl who steals into his particular box car, a wonderfully appealing young actress named Shanna Prokhorenko.

When she finds there is a man in the car, she screams "Mama" and throws her shawl of possessions out the door promptly. He stops her from throwing herself after them—he and the trestle girders they happen to be passing at the moment. Miss Prokhorenko has the uncommon grace of looking charming even while bolting food. She gets thirsty, and he misses the train in an attempt to get her some water, only to



Vladimir Ivashov and Shanna Prokhorenko in "Ballad of a Soldier."

find her waiting for him at the next stop. His mess cup is still empty.

The photography is exceptional, clean, strong, luminous, and with those remarkable big close-ups so striking in that earlier Russian film, "The Cranes Are Flying." Not only do I feel this to be one of the ten finest films of 1960, but I feel certain no serious filmgoers will want to miss it.

ADVERTISING

"One of the Year's Best!"

—Bosley Crowther, New York Times

"Not only the finest film
I've seen from today's
Russian cameras, it introduces
a director of genius and
two young actors of
great charm and brilliance."

—Paul V. Beckley, N. Y. Herald Tribune

"★★★★ (FOUR STARS)"
—Wanda Hale, N. Y. Daily News

"Fine film entertainment...top-grade."
—Archer Winsten, N. Y. Post

Ballad of a Soldier



A MosFilm Studio Production • Directed by Grigori Chukhrai
A J Jay Frankel Presentation • A Kingsley International Release

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—N. Y. Times
—Herald Tribune
—N. Y. Post
—Cue
—Saturday Review



Grigori Chukhrai's

Ballad of a Soldier

T H E A T R E

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—N. Y. Times—Herald Tribune—N. Y. Post—Cue—Saturday Review

"The best Russian movie
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brilliant, vehemently original,
beautiful, humorous sentimental journey.
Surefire sense of comedy...
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Ballad of a Soldier

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"One of the Year's Best!"

—N. Y. Times—Herald Tribune—Cue—N. Y. Post—Saturday Review

"The best Russian movie since World War II. Brilliant, vehemently
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of comedy...the theatre booms with an immense amen to life."

—Time Magazine

"Chukrai has truly composed a 'ballad'. Lovely imagery...a
picture poem that has tempo and feeling. It is humorous,
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—Wanda Hale, N. Y. Daily News

Ballad of a Soldier



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A J Jay Frankel Presentation • A Kingsley International Release

T H E A T R E

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—N. Y. Times—Herald Tribune—N. Y. Post—Cue—Saturday Review

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a 'ballad'. Lovely imagery...
a picture poem that has tempo
and feeling. It is humorous,
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—Crowther, N. Y. Times

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Ballad of a Soldier

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A J Jay Frankel Presentation • A Kingsley International Release

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