

ILLUME LTD PRESENTS

A FILM BY ANASTASIA LAPSUI AND MARKKU LEHMUSKALLIO

PUDANA

LAST OF THE LINE



NADEZHDA PYRERKO

ALEKSANDRA OKOTETTO

ANASTASIA LAPSUI

JEVGENI HUDI

ROZA LAPTANDER

RADION ANAGURITSHI

LJUDMILA ZANNIKOVA

SCRIPT Anastasia Lapsui DIRECTION Anastasia Lapsui and Markku Lehmuskallio CINEMATOGRAPHY Johannes Lehmuskallio EDITING Juho Gartz FIELD RECORDING Sergei Zabenin SOUND DESIGN Pekka Karjalainen / Meguru CAMERA ASSISTANT AND PHOTOGRAPHY Joona Pettersson PUBLICITY AND MARKETING Liisa Lehmusto / Alice POSTER Juha Laasila PRODUCTION SUPPORT The Finnish Film Foundation / Kaisu Isto IN CO-OPERATION WITH YLE Co-productions / Erkki Astala PRODUCTION Pertti Veijalainen & Jouko Aaltonen / Illume Ltd DISTRIBUTION Juha Elomäki / Pirkanmaa Film Centre



International press kit
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PUDANA

LAST OF THE LINE

Featuring in the Generation competition of the 60th International Filmfestspiele Berlin is Anastasia Lapsui's and Markku Lehmuskallio's Pudana Last of the Line. The film is a story of change, upbringing and deprivation of identity, taking place in the Yamal Peninsula during the Soviet Government. The film is based on a true story and is set in director Anastasia Lapsui's childhood surroundings. Pudana Last of the Line is the directors' 14th film directed together and the 7th film by Markku Lehmuskallio to be screened in Berlinale.

Screenings in Berlinale

Thursday	18.02.2010	09:30	Zoo Palast
Friday	19.02.2010	11:30	CinemaxX 3
Sunday	21.02.2010	11:00	Filmtheater am Friedrichshain

Contacts

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In Berlin February 17–21

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Press images

Download high resolution stills at www.lastoftheline.fi





Synopsis

A little Nenets girl Neko (Aleksandra Okotetto) is taken against her will from her home teepee to a boarding school in a remote Russian village. Forced to adapt to a foreign culture and new customs, Neko rebels against the russification and gets bullied by her schoolmates and picked on by her teachers. After several conflicts Neko decides to flee together with her Nenets school mate hoping to get back to her family and old habits. However, the children's flight in the icy tundra is short-lived and the return to the boarding school and new Russian life is inevitable.

The story is told as old Neko's (Nadezhda Pyrerko), or now Nadja's, memory. Now, after long and full life, she recalls the moment that ended her childhood and started her life as a part of the other society. But something important has changed for good; Neko, the last of her family, has grown away from her original roots and lost her skill to sustain the ancient traditions of her family.





About the Nenets people and the Yamal Peninsula

The Nenets people are an indigenous people living in the northwest of Siberia, Russia. According to the latest census in 2002, there are 41,302 Nenets in the Russian Federation, most of them living in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug and Nenets Autonomous Okrug. They speak the Nenets language. In the language of the Nenets, "Yamal" means "End of the World". Today the Yamal Peninsula is the most important production area of natural gas in Russia.

Director Anastasia Lapsui is a native-born Nenets. *Pudana Last of the Line* was shot entirely in Yamal peninsula in and around the villages of Panajevski and Suhnaesale.





Main Characters and Cast

Pudana Last of the Line was cast entirely with indigenous Nenets people, non-professional actors and actresses apart from director Anastasia Lapsui.

Neko as a young girl – Aleksandra Okotetto

The protagonist of Pudana Last of the Line is Neko, a young Nenets girl who lives with her family in the tundra of the Jamal peninsula. She is taken from her home to a Russian boarding school where she is re-named Nadja.

As a young girl Neko is played by Aleksandra Okotetto. She lives in Yamal in a village or Yarsele and goes to school. Aleksandra acts on the screen for the first time on Pudana Last of the Line.

Neko as an adult – Nadezhda Pyrerko

The story of Neko is told by her older self, now Nadja, a Nenets woman estranged from her native roots. She is portrayed by Nadezhda Pyrerko, a Nenets teacher. She plays a character based on herself and her own life story.

Neko's grandmother – Anastasia Lapsui

Neko's feisty grandmother is played by Anastasia Lapsui, the director and screenwriter of Pudana Last of the Line. She is herself a native born Nenets. Neko's grandmother performs a native ritual which the local shaman refuses to do.





Neko's father – Jevgeni Hudi

Neko's father understands that her daughter doesn't want to leave her home teepee and go to boarding school. However he cannot change her future. Nekos father is played by Jevfeni Hudi, who works in the Yamal as a reindeer herder.

Neko's friend Parasi – Radion Anaguritshi

In the boarding school Neko has few friends but she finds a companion in a fellow Nenets boy Parasi, who speaks Russian and translates for Neko. Together with Parasi she escapes and makes the long journey home across the icy tundra, navigating by the stars. Parasi is portrayed by Radion Anaguritshi, a Nenets school boy.

Teacher – Ljudmila Zannikova

"Lenin says: Study, study!", says the teacher of the boarding school, whose duty it is to transform Neko from an illiterate Nenets girl to a Soviet citizen. The work and life in a small town in the middle of the fierce tundra is not easy for her. She is played by Russian pensioner Ljudmila Zannikova.





Directors' Statement

"The life in a boarding school is an excellent way to portray the lives of the minorities, when the smaller cultures are tried to be changed into the dominant culture. A different reality concerning the minorities is hidden inside the official schoolworld, and we wanted to discuss that in our film. The miniature world formed by the boarding school's students shows how cruel, internecine racism may occur also between small cultures. The mutual prejudice and the schemes of things learned at home are ruthlessly exposed through the spontaneous acts and words of the children in the film."

Anastasia Lapsui and Markku Lehmuskallio

About the Directors

ANASTASIA LAPSUI (b. 1944, Yamal Peninsula, Russia)

The collaboration of Nenets born Lapsui and Markku Lehmuskallio has lasted for almost two decades comprising 18 feature films. The couple's films portraying traditional life in the subarctic areas have earned them recognition and awards worldwide. Lapsui has also worked as radio journalist, editor and scriptwriter.

MARKKU LEHMUSKALLIO (b. 1938, Rauma, Finland)

The grand-old-man of Finnish filmmaking and also one of the country's best known directors, Markku Lehmuskallio has directed films since 1973. The majority of Lehmuskallio's work portray traditional life in the Arctic hemisphere, and indigenous people and cultures play a leading role in his films. Local people performing in his fictions gives the films a touch of reality and verity that is seldom seen on screen.





Credits

Title (International)	Pudana Last of the Line
Original title (Finnish)	Sukunsa viimeinen
Genre	Fiction / Drama
Runtime	83 min
Country of origin	Finland
Directors	Anastasia Lapsui Markku Lehmuskallio
Screenplay	Anastasia Lapsui Markku Lehmuskallio
Cast	Aleksandra Okotetto, Nadezhda Pyrenko, Anastasia Lapsui, Jevgeni Hudi, Roza Laptander, Radion Anaguritshi, Ljudmila Zannikova
Cinematography	Johannes Lehmuskallio
Editing	Juho Gartz
Sound Recording	Sergei Zabenin
Sound Designer	Pekka Karjalainen
Production	Illume Ltd Pertti Veijalainen Jouko Aaltonen

In the picture above, from top left: director Markku Lehmuskallio, cinematographer Johannes Lehmuskallio, sound recorder Sergei Zabenin. On bottom row from left: young actress Aleksandra Okotetto playing Neko and director Anastasia Lapsui.

About the production company

Illume Ltd is a production company specialized in creative documentary film making. Since 1987 the company has produced more than 80 films both for national and international television markets. Out of them eight feature documents have been released in cinemas in Finland. Pudana Last of the Line is the first theatrical fiction produced by the company.

Beginning with the Taiga Nomads series in 1992, Illume Ltd. has received numerous prizes and recognition at a variety of national and international festivals for their productions.

Illume Ltd. continues its active role in producing challenging documentaries in different areas of documentary film making. Illume Ltd is a regular co-production partner of the Finnish broadcasting company YLE and co-produces several films internationally every year.

