

Helicopters by Dmitriy Kubasov (2018)

Online film program / Other Zones



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Since his childhood, Mikhail Farikh dreamt of becoming a pilot. Having served in the Soviet army, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Farikh opened his own business – and, as time went by, his dream seemed to become more and more distant. Finally, at the age of 54, he took his destiny by his own hands, purchased a helicopter, and eventually became the first Russian to fly around the world.

“Helicopters”, Dmitriy Kubasov’s latest movie, centers around this figure: a man who not only exemplifies an unflinching (perhaps even a bit antiquated) desire to fulfill his childhood dreams; but that also speaks to the universal aspiration to overcome limits and venture into unexplored territories.

At a certain point in the movie, during a break from flying in the Omsk region in Russia, Farikh interacts with a passerby and explains the reason why he is travelling. “I am flying home”, he says. This scene is crucial, as it captures the paradox of Farikh’s vicissitudes: one the one hand, the longing for the sky, for the unknown; on the other, an unconscious force that inevitably drags him home.

“Helicopters” is the final movie of the *Other Zones* series, the program of biweekly screening curated by Vladimir Nadein for the

2020 Russian Federation Pavilion. It was selected for its terrific photography and for the unbelievable landscapes that it unveils – literally, the entire world is the set of this film.

What is more, the camera's bird's-eye view gives the spectator a privileged perspective. As the movie follows the pilot in his expedition around the world, almost two thirds of the scenes depict Russian territories – a figure that gives a sense of the magnitude of the country. It is as if all the “islands of otherness” portrayed by previous films featured in the program would finally come together, under a dreamy, unifying gaze.