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TYCOON

A NEW RUSSIAN

A film by PAVEL LOUNGUINE

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TYCOON

Filmmakers

Directed by PAVEL LOUNGUINE
Written by ALEXANDRE BORODIANSKI
PAVEL LOUNGUINE
YULI DUBOV
Adapted from the novel by YULI DUBOV
Producers CATHERINE DUSSART (CDP)
VLADIMIR GRIGORIEV (MAGNAT)
Associate Producer GALINA SEMTSOVA
Cinematography ALEXEY FEDOROV
OLEG DOBRONRAVOV
Film Editor SOPHIE BRUNET
Sound ALAIN CURVELIER
Music LEONID DIESYATNIKOV

Cast

Platon VLADIMIR MASHKOV
Chmakov ANDREI KRASKO
Maria MARIA MIRONOVA
Viktor SERGEI OSHKEVICH
Moussa ALEXANDRE SAMOILENKO
Mark MIKAEL VASSERBAUM
Larry LEVANI UCHAINESHVILI
Kochkine MARAT BASHAROV
Koretski ALEXANDRE BALUEV

A CDP, ARTE FRANCE CINÉMA, FRANCE 2 CINÉMA, GIMAGES FILMS,
NETWORK MOVIE, ZDF/ARTE MAGNAT, KOMINTER, STV co-production
In association with THE STUDIOS ETALON FILMS and with the participation of
CANAL +, CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA CINÉMA TOGRAPHIE AND MINISTÈRE
DE LA CULTURE DE LA FÉDÉRATION DE RUSSIE

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1:85, DTS

SYNOPSIS

A true story based on the life of Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky.

In 1988, Plato Makovski, an idealistic young academic, convinced four brilliant friends to abandon their science studies in favor of the shady world of post-Soviet business. Set against the backdrop of the many stupendous upheavals that the country was undergoing, including the economic meltdown that followed the fall of Communism, Plato devised a slew of semi-legal financial deals that enabled him to outfox the ongoing opposition of the Russian secret service (the spiritual heirs of the KGB). He quickly became the richest man in Russia, whose financial and political clout equaled that of the government that tolerated and endured him until he eventually became its rival and enemy.

Taking the form of a thriller that follows the police investigation into an attempted assassination of Plato, *Tycoon* draws us into the private lives and backgrounds of these complex and unique characters who loot their country and its inhabitants, yet are also the lifeblood of a nation paralyzed by inertia and the fear of change. Once a freedom-loving idealist, Plato used his genius to become a monster, unhesitatingly sacrificing his ideals and his closest friends. This is the tragedy of this super-talented individual who embodies all that is most creative in the new Russia and, at the same time, all which is worst for the country that he privatized for his own profit.

Set over a fifteen-year period, *Tycoon* is a true saga that begins with the early days under Gorbachev and moves through the heyday of wealth and power during the Yeltsin era. A kind of *Once Upon a Time in Russia*, *Tycoon* shows how one man can help throw a country's entire life into turmoil.

PAVEL LOUNGUINE INTERVIEW

Why did Vladimir Mashkov become the oligarch of the film?

We generally aged all the actors, as the film takes place over a 15-year period. It's very difficult to make someone appear younger on the screen, but it's possible to make him or her grow old. Remember the famous ageing of Marlon Brando in *The Godfather*? At the time the film was made, Brando was about 40. Mashkov, for example, won acclaim for his performance in the play *Sailors' Rest (Matrosskaia Tishina)* in which he portrayed a Jew in his 70's. He is a top-class actor. He has a great sense of humor, and a great deal of inner strength. Indeed, that's what makes an oligarch an oligarch. First of all, he needs an unbending spirit. When it would be natural to step back, he goes further.

Why, after your small-scale film *The Wedding*, did you take on the epochal *Tycoon*?

The Wedding is the story of one small community. But *Tycoon* is a saga, an attempt to describe the history of our entire country over the last 15 years, starting in 1985 and ending with our time, somewhere about the year 2000. This is the entire difference.

It's clear that the story of the film is not that of a real person, although there has been much speculation that the film is about Boris Berezovsky...

The lead character is a collective image of different people. I no longer know whether more came from Berezovsky, or from me. I have met Berezovsky, although I can't say I know him well. I can only create a composite character, filtered through my own imagination.

In making the film, I avoided cheap irony. There was none in Yuly Dubov's book. Instead, it was an attempt to write a serious story about our native land, about how money arrived here, about how our society changed, and about friendship among the company of intellectuals.

The oligarchs are not thugs, nor barbarians — they are university professors. They created big businesses, through cooperatives and criminal acts. They were idealists, dreaming about freedom and friendship. As they gained their first taste of money and authority, they wanted more of both. And that changed them psychologically and qualitatively changed the very concept of their friendships.

In order to build something in an empty place, to see any possibility in a complete ruin, it is necessary to be a madman, a revolutionary or a scoundrel — most likely the third. Oligarchs were necessary for society — society needed their force, energy and imagination. It's easy to pick someone's pocket, but we stood before an enormous state lying in ruins, and didn't know how to restructure it. But they knew.

The oligarchs had folly and poetry simultaneously...

Who are the oligarchs? The Oligarchs are people who change not only their own life, but also the lives of people surrounding them and the entire state. It's a very big responsibility to take on. I have mixed feelings about the oligarchs. If we look closely at

these people and the price they paid for victory, hundreds of questions arise, for which I have no ready answer. The very process of making the film is, in some sense, an answer to all these questions.

The situation on Earth is like this — dinosaurs survived for as long as they were necessary, then they died out. The oligarchs had personality on a grand scale, folly and poetry simultaneously. But now we are in the time of gray people, good managers, but no more.

Look at what has happened in our society. The Communist, Brezhnev era was the period of our childhood. Brezhnev was a strict father, but he led the country. We lived, on the whole, as children, with a feeling that nothing terrible could occur. The last 15 years were our transitional teenage stage, a time of desperate behavior and fitting-in to the freedom of our new life. This period finished with the end of Yeltsin's era.

But I would like to make the point that the oligarchs are also people, and they also suffered. If you make a great deal of money, this by no means follows that you will become happy. At some point, our society forgot some of the simplest biblical truths.

I am astonished by how quickly everything is forgotten. Time flies so rapidly that, already, no one remembers how we lived, say, in 1991 or 94. We attempt to restore historical reality, but somewhere along the line everything disappeared, as though the country, like a criminal, removed the evidence.

New personalities are emerging in the sphere of business. But they appear to be largely the products of powerful PR campaigns.

My oligarchs are people with dual personalities, living like centaurs, half in the old value system of friendship, literature and love, while the other half lives a completely rational life. They are like titanium — a mixture of human frailty and some non-corrosive, bulletproof metal, which gives them authority and money. This is their tragedy and uniqueness.

From *Businessmen* journal, November 2001
Translation © Susan Munter 2001

PAVEL LOUNGUINE filmography

Tycoon (2002)

Wedding, The (2000)

Life in Red, The (1996)

Eastern Romance (1992)

Luna Park (1992)

Taxi Blues (1990)

Christians, The (1987)

Poputchik (1986)

Nepobedimyj (1983)

Everything's the Wrong Way (1981)

Konets imperatora tajgi (1978)

Vsyo delo v brate (1976)

THE OLIGARCHS

RUSSIA'S POWER BROKERS

A Small Group Wields Enormous Influence

From *ABCNEWS.com*

Russian authorities have begun clamping down on tycoon Boris Berezovsky, a man so powerful he is rumored to have played a part in the ouster of two prime ministers. But Berezovsky is just one of the Russian businessmen who wield the power to bend others to their will.

Known as the "oligarchs," a small group of Russian businessmen has gained control of much of the country's key industries, media and banks during the corrupt and chaotic rush to privatization. Their power comes from their media control, substantial political contributions and close personal ties to the executive branch.

THE OLIGARCHS

Boris Berezovsky

As the executive secretary of an alliance of former Soviet republics, Boris Berezovsky is a mogul who uses high-level contacts to buy state assets at often giveaway prices. Berezovsky is now under investigation for reportedly having spent \$3 million on a state-of-the-art bugging network to collect material to blackmail Boris Yeltsin in hopes of protecting his own business interests.

Mikhail Fridman

The head of the influential Russian Alfa Group, Mikhail Fridman has promised a \$100,000 reward for assistance in the investigation of the murder of Duma deputy and leading reformist Galina Starovoitova. Fridman has said that he considers the murder to be "a turning point" in relations between different social groups and political parties in Russia, and believes it is vital to restore the authority of the state.

Vladimir Gusinsky

Russian media tycoon Vladimir Gusinsky's ventures include the recently launched BONUM-1 satellite, which is capable of beaming up to 50 channels to an estimated 200,000 Russian-speaking subscribers. Since the satellite belongs to a subsidiary of Media Most, Gusinsky's privately held media holding company, the Russian government will not be able to influence its programming or broadcasting. Gusinsky is also head of the Russian Jewish Congress.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky

As Yukos Oil Co.'s chief executive, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky is head of Russia's second-largest oil producer. But the company's revenues have plummeted as Russia's oil industry is facing its worst crisis since the start of privatization in 1993. Khodorkovsky and other oil generals have suggested the government cover its deficit by printing rubles,

and the politically powerful oil lobby's opposition was reinforced by the Fuel and Energy Ministry.

Vladimir Potanin

Vladimir Potanin is head of Interros, the financial-industrial group that has the now-struggling Uneximbank at its core. He has offered to give two of his debt-laden enterprises back to the government: the Angarsk refinery near Irkutsk and the Kondpetroleum production unit in Western Siberia, which have long been unprofitable.

Alexander Smolensky

Smolensky is the chairman of the once-leading bank SBS-Agro, the country's second-largest retail bank before Russia was hit by a deep economic crisis in August. He has told the *Kommersant-Daily* newspaper in an interview that he believes some 60 percent of Russia's top 17 banks have assets that are worthless.

Pyotr Aven

Head of the Alfa Bank and a former foreign trade minister, Aven recently denounced liberal reform in Russia and "the young reformers" behind it, claiming that Russia has never had a liberal economy, nor does it have one at present. Aven wants state intervention in economic activities to be increased, and more money to be printed.

BORIS BEREZOVSKY

THE RISE OF AN OLIGARCH

From *Forbes Magazine*, September 4, 2000

By Paul Klebnikov

Reprinted and adapted by arrangement with Harcourt Inc.

Boris Berezovsky occupies a special place in Russian history. As we detailed in an article in 1996 (now the subject of a pending libel suit against FORBES by Berezovsky), this once-obscure car dealer privatized vast stretches of Russian industry. He organized the secret financing of the Yeltsin election campaign in 1996 and three years later helped select Vladimir Putin as Yeltsin's heir. Putin has now declared war on the "oligarchs." Will Berezovsky withstand this threat to his fortune and his liberty? In this excerpt from Godfather of the Kremlin (Harcourt, September 2000), a FORBES senior editor shows how the tycoon survived previous assaults on his empire.

Not long after communism fell and Boris Yeltsin took power, an American entrepreneur named Page Thompson went to Russia in search of deals. Thompson was a former treasurer of Atlantic Richfield, the oil company now part of BP. With a taste for adventure, he had begun a second career selling auto parts to the former Soviet Union. Success came quickly. In 1994 he landed a \$4 million contract to sell Goodyear tires to Avtovaz, the giant auto factory that accounted for half the Russian market for passenger cars.

In the course of the negotiations, Thompson asked Avtovaz for a letter of credit from a Western bank guaranteeing its payment. He was told that French bank Credit Lyonnais would provide it. Credit Lyonnais would later come close to collapse in a famous fraud and embezzlement scandal, but at the time it seemed a strong and respectable bank. Its guarantee was good enough for Goodyear.

Then the deal turned strange. Thompson was told that he had to pick up the letter of credit from an outfit called Forus Services S.A. in the town of Lausanne, Switzerland. He arrived at the Forus office to find two Russian men lounging around.

"They did business in an absolutely empty office, a beautiful office, but it didn't have anything in it, except furniture--just empty desks and empty chairs," he recalls. "There were three or four rooms, a bottle of Jack Daniels and no people except these two guys and a secretary who didn't speak any language I understood."

The letter of credit had not arrived yet, Thompson was told. Come back in two days. When he finally got it, the letter contained the names of Credit Lyonnais, Avtovaz and Thompson's company, but there was no mention of Forus Services S.A.

"It made quite an impression on me," Thompson says. "When I was treasurer of Atlantic Richfield and we wanted to borrow money, I'd pick up the phone and I'd call Chase and I'd say, 'We're interested in borrowing a couple of hundred million dollars' and they'd say 'We're interested in lending it to you, and we'll come out and talk about it.' I didn't have to call Joe, Mike and Moe at, you know, the Wilshire Financial Co. or something to do my borrowing for me at Chase."

Thompson concluded that this strange, unpopulated office was "a company that someone powerful at Avtovaz had set up to run these financing transactions, charge Avtovaz a fee, and then split the fee among the owners. I never knew who the people were."

In fact, Forus Services had been established on Feb. 13, 1992 by car dealer Boris Berezovsky, Avtovaz finance chief Nikolai Glushkov and the big Swiss commodities trader Andr & Cie. Officially Forus was a financial company trading currencies and organizing lines of credit and other financial matters for Russian companies abroad. It remained, however, an insiders' club. And the insiders' ownership was difficult to trace. Forus in Lausanne was owned by Forus Holding (Luxembourg), which in turn was owned at least partly by a Lausanne shell company named Anros S.A. In other words Berezovsky and his partners were insulated by at least two front companies.

Forus was just one of a number of companies owned (directly or indirectly) by Berezovsky in Russia, Cyprus, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Ireland and the Caribbean to take control of the hard-currency revenues of several of Russia's biggest industrial companies. These finance companies earned millions of dollars through unusually high fees, high-interest loans and simply making money off the float (the working capital they handled for their clients). It was a sophisticated financial network, ideal for getting money out of Russia, facilitating financial flows around the world, minimizing taxes and

avoiding scrutiny. Today, several of those companies (including Forus) are the focus of a number of criminal investigations in Russia and Switzerland, in which the investigators suspect embezzlement, fraud, tax evasion and money laundering.

In 1994 the cash cow of Berezovsky's growing empire was the state-owned automaker, Avtovaz. Berezovsky's company, called LogoVaz, was the automaker's largest dealer, selling 45,000 Avtovaz cars annually, nearly 10% of its domestic sales.

Amid the disintegrating Russian economy, the auto industry remained remarkably healthy, producing one domestically made product Russians were still eager to buy. The demand for Avtovaz's vehicles--a sedan known in the West as the Lada and an off-roader called the Niva--consistently outstripped the supply. Blessed with low raw-material costs and cheap labor (the average worker received \$250 a month, usually paid several months late), Avtovaz should have been enormously profitable. In fact, it was bleeding cash and piling on debt.

The problem lay in the corruption of the distribution network. Hundreds of small companies had been created to trade Ladas and spare parts; they were independent, but they were linked to various members of Avtovaz's management.

When I asked Avtovaz President Alexei Nikolaev in the summer of 1996 about his company's dealership network, he explained that he was selling his cars at a loss:

"On average, we get \$3,500 [per car]," he said. "In reality, this car has a much higher production cost--approximately 30% higher [\$4,600]."

Since most dealers sold their Ladas for \$7,000 or more, they were making 50% gross margins, ten times what a dealer would get in the U.S. And that assumes the dealers paid for the goods, which they often didn't. By 1995 Berezovsky's LogoVaz and other dealers owed the automaker \$1.2 billion, one-third of its annual revenues.

"You can't just go over and become a dealer in Ladas," recalls Page Thompson, who was selling tires and lubricants to several big Avtovaz dealers. "If the other people who deal in Ladas allow you to become one, you're going to pay for the privilege. Some guy's going to show up and tell you that you have a partner."

Dealers who tried to purchase cars from Avtovaz without going through the established channels were unlikely to get any cars or, if they did, they would often receive their vehicles with windshields smashed, wiring pulled out and tires slashed. Or, they would get shot.

Thompson cites the example of one of his clients; a big Avtovaz distributor in Moscow called Lada Strong. "He had his cars stored in two lots, and he had to pay one criminal gang tribute for Lot A and another criminal gang tribute for Lot B," Thompson says. "Through some gaffe, one of his employees moved 50 cars from Lot A to Lot B,

whereupon the guys who were collecting a tariff from Lot A kidnapped him and held him hostage in a cellar until the dealership came up with \$50,000 for the insult."

Another of Thompson's clients was a dealership run by a young Russian businessman outside of Avtovaz's gates in the city of Togliatti.

"He was a huge dealer in Ladas and parts and all sorts of hard-to-get stuff. To visit his lair, you came in and there was a whole bunch of tough-looking guys lying around watching Woody Woodpecker cartoons on TV and bristling with firearms. Everywhere he went, there was a car with four armed guys in back of him."

Thompson began doing business with this man, selling him secondhand American cars for shipment to Russia. Thompson says this man boasted to him about how he defrauded and robbed everyone, and how someone inside Avtovaz fed him cars that should have gone somewhere else.

The whole Avtovaz system was corrupt, Thompson says. If a dealer wanted to get a shipment of spare parts, for instance, he had to bribe the manager responsible for spare parts sales. "I knew the guy who used to take the money," says Thompson.

I asked Alain Mayor, the Russia point man for Berezovsky's Lausanne partner Andr & Cie., about the rampant corruption at Avtovaz. "I think that is the case with a lot of Russian companies, not just Avtovaz," he said. "It's a question of mentality: Collective property is property that belongs to everyone."

Andr & Cie. had witnessed this corruption firsthand. In 1993-94 Andr tried to arrange a \$100 million credit for Avtovaz from the Italian foreign trade bank. The money was supposed to be paid back over seven years with the sale of Ladas in foreign markets like Africa. "It didn't work out," notes Christian Maret, head of Andr's Moscow office. "Because each manager of Avtovaz had his own pet distribution network."

Berezovsky's particular scheme was called re-export. Avtovaz export contracts typically stipulated an even lower price for Ladas than domestic dealership contracts, and granted an even longer grace period for dealerships to pay back the auto factory (up to one year). Berezovsky actually sold his cars in Russia--the cars remained in the country, but their documentation showed them to be exported and then imported back into Russia. Their "export" status allowed him to receive foreign currency. While the auto factory was paid by its dealers with constantly depreciating rubles or even worse quality IOUs, Berezovsky received dollars for the cars he sold.

I asked Alain Mayor why the auto factory was selling its cars to Berezovsky on such detrimental terms. "Listen, Monsieur, 90% of cars in Russia are sold in the same manner," he answered. "There is not much of a difference in favor of LogoVaz. There are very different conditions existing as a result of personal relations between people, people who were friends with the managers at Avtovaz."

Berezovsky, the largest Avtovaz dealer, had the best "personal relationship" imaginable, since the Avtovaz chairman, its head of finance and its head of after sale service each owned a substantial portion of LogoVaz stock. In other words, Avtovaz was selling its cars at a loss to Berezovsky's dealership, LogoVaz, and engaging LogoVaz to handle its finances at the same time that the top executives at the auto factory benefited personally from the relationship as LogoVaz shareholders.

While Avtovaz dealers like Berezovsky were becoming immensely wealthy, the automaker slid steadily into bankruptcy. The company was so short of cash that it could not pay its taxes, electricity bills or workers' salaries. Page Thompson continued trying to do business with Avtovaz; he did a few successful deals, lost money on others and finally decided to stop.

"I lost a couple partners," he says. "One of my Avtovaz partners in Bishkek, Kirghizstan, was assassinated in his office. My partner in Togliatti was certainly a major criminal. I've just decided that it ain't a game worth playing over there."

When I asked Avtovaz President Alexei Nikolaev about the problem of gangsters controlling his dealer network, he admitted that the car company did have a problem. In fact, Avtovaz had become arguably the most gangster-ridden major industrial company in Russia.

In 1994 Radik Yakutian, head of the investigative department of the Samara Region prosecutor's office, was assassinated while looking into organized crime at Avtovaz. In 1997 the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) carried out "Operation Cyclone," a combined-forces assault on organized crime at Avtovaz. The raid, involving 3,000 operatives from the MVD, the prosecutor's office and the tax police, all converging simultaneously to block the giant factory's exits and seize its computer files, was the largest anticrime operation of the Yeltsin era. The raid unearthed evidence that gangsters connected to Avtovaz had carried out no fewer than 65 murders of company managers, dealers and business rivals. Dozens of people were arrested. Criminal cases were opened.

In February 1999 the office that was in charge of compiling and pursuing the investigation of Avtovaz--the MVD headquarters in the provincial capital of Samara--was destroyed by a huge fire. The Avtovaz documentation was destroyed; at least 50 investigators and other MVD staffers perished in the blaze. The MVD headquarters in Moscow quickly concluded that the fire was not the result of arson, but it still opened a criminal case against Avtovaz management on tax evasion charges several days later.

It was in this lawless environment that Berezovsky was building his empire. A 47-year-old (in 1993) mathematics Ph.D. who had spent most of his professional life designing computer software, Berezovsky was hardly the type expected to succeed in the world of gangsters. Yet he would not be able to survive in this business unless he could protect his gains from the thugs.

With the Russian government in disarray the most effective "security service" available to businessmen was the Mob. According to several top Russian law enforcement officials, Berezovsky had built his dealership, LogoVaz, under the protection of the Chechen Commune, one of the most feared organized crime groups in Russia. The Chechens were Berezovsky's "roof" in the auto market.

Meanwhile his rivals in the auto market, beholden to other organized crime groups, were jealous of his success and his inside deal with Avtovaz top management. Thus, alone among the big businessmen who would come to be known as "the oligarchs," Berezovsky found himself personally involved in a turf war between Moscow's predominant gangster families.

One of the first attacks occurred on the afternoon of July 19, 1993 when a gang led by a man named Igor Ovchinnikov descended on a LogoVaz showroom at the Kazakhstan Cinema on 105 Lenin Prospekt. The gangsters pulled up in three cars and started shooting--first at the windows, then at the people inside. The LogoVaz men shot back. Within moments, three men lay dead (including Ovchinnikov) and six were wounded.

Several days later, when I asked General Vladimir Rushailo, head of the Moscow RUOP (the organized crime squad of the police) about the incident, he explained: "The cause of the shoot-out was that [LogoVaz] had its own security service and another gang arrived and wanted to collect money from them as well. The result was entirely predictable."

Later, when I asked Berezovsky about the incident, he said he remembered the shoot-out, but didn't know what it was about. He went on to say:

"Today we are witnessing a redistribution of property on a scale unprecedented in history. No one is satisfied: neither those who became millionaires overnight--they complain they didn't earn enough millions--nor those who received nothing and are naturally discontented."

Then he added with a professorial flourish: "Therefore I do not think that the extent of crime exceeds the scale of the transformation process."

Igor Ovchinnikov, the man who had attacked the Kazakhstan Cinema, was a minor player in the mob war. He was subservient to a crime boss--a man nicknamed Cyclops--who in turn was subject to a higher-level gangster organization.

The shoot-out at the Kazakhstan Cinema was just the beginning. In September 1993, on at least two occasions, LogoVaz dealership lots in Moscow were attacked by men with grenades. Several vehicles were damaged, but no people were hurt. Russian newspapers quoted frustrated police detectives as saying that LogoVaz was refusing to cooperate with the investigation. One detective was quoted as saying that the attacks were "a continuation of the war between organized crime groups over the auto market."

Little is known about the measures Berezovsky took to rid himself of the gangster threat. The Russian government was of little help in protecting businesses from the orgy of violence. It was fatally corrupt.

The same month as the gangster attack on the LogoVaz showroom at the cinema, President Yeltsin accepted the resignation of his minister of security (head of the former KGB), Viktor Barannikov. Barannikov had been one of the main patrons of a shadowy commodities trader named Boris Birstein and his Toronto-and Zurich-based company, Seabeco. Birstein was lavish with his rewards to his government patrons. In early 1993 he invited the wives of Barannikov and the first deputy chief of the MVD on a three-day shopping trip to Switzerland. The two ladies bought \$300,000 worth of furs, perfumes, scarves and watches (all paid for by Seabeco) and carried their loot back to Russia in suitcases. They had 20 pieces of excess luggage and were fined \$2,000 by the airline, but this bill, too, was paid by Seabeco. When the scandal came to light, Barannikov and the first deputy chief of the MVD were fired, but never prosecuted.

In Lausanne Berezovsky's business partner, Andr & Cie., was alarmed at the gangster war raging in Moscow in 1993-94. When Andr & Cie. became Berezovsky's strategic partner it had not reckoned on a wave of bombings and assassinations. But Alain Mayor managed to soothe the nerves of his Andr colleagues.

"It was something that was happening in Russia; it wasn't something that was happening in Switzerland," he explained. "We established the facts and ... my superiors at the company accepted the facts. That was all. At that time there were very strong rivalries in the automotive milieu in Moscow, that's for sure. People used very violent methods. It wasn't very reassuring. In fact, it was painful, disagreeable to see."

Andr & Cie. decided to stick by its Russian partner. In the winter of 1993-94, while the mob war was raging in Moscow, Berezovsky spent much of his time abroad. He went to Lausanne to put the finishing touches on his offshore financial network with Andr & Cie. When he returned to Moscow, he was targeted almost immediately. The door of his apartment was booby-trapped with a grenade. Fortunately it failed to explode.

In the late afternoon of June 7, 1994 Berezovsky walked out of the new LogoVaz headquarters in central Moscow and got into the back seat of his Mercedes. His bodyguard sat in front, next to the chauffeur. As the car pulled out, the neighborhood was shaken by a massive explosion. Someone had parked an Opel filled with explosives on the narrow street and detonated the car bomb by remote control as soon as Berezovsky's car passed by. Berezovsky saw his driver decapitated by the blast. The bodyguard was severely wounded--he would lose an eye. Half-a-dozen passersby were injured. Berezovsky stumbled out of the car, his clothes smoldering. His burns were severe, requiring months of treatment in a Swiss clinic.

A few days later the offices of Berezovsky's Obedinenny Bank were also bombed. Berezovsky blamed his competitors in the auto industry for the violence. Nine months later, when he was under suspicion for the murder of Russia's most successful TV

producer, Berezovsky made a private videotaped explanation to Yeltsin and put forward a different version, pointing the finger at his chief rival in the media market, Vladimir Gusinsky.

Like so many other gangster killings, the LogoVaz bombing was never solved. Commenting on another outbreak of mob violence outside the gates of LogoVaz a year earlier, RUOP's chief, General Rushailo, told me: "Many believe that businessmen get killed simply because they are businessmen. Not so. Investigations of cases involving contract killings have shown that the victims were involved in some sort of unclear relationship, to put it diplomatically, with the very people who either ordered or carried out the hits against them. No one kills the law-abiding citizens--those who do not violate the law, who pay their taxes."

In March 1994 a Berezovsky investment fund called Avva had placed money with an institution called Mostorg Bank, buying two 500-million-ruble short-term promissory notes. Mostorg Bank was controlled by a famous mobster called Sergei Timofeev (alias: Sylvester, since he vaguely resembled Sylvester Stallone). Sylvester himself was allied with a powerful organization called the Solntsevo Brotherhood. Sylvester's bank did not pay back the obligation on time, having transferred the money abroad.

After the LogoVaz car bombing had propelled Berezovsky onto the front pages of the newspapers and forced even President Yeltsin to speak out about the "criminal filth" ruining Russia, Mostorg Bank finally paid LogoVaz back (with interest).

The mob war continued. In the early evening of Sept. 13 1993 there was a powerful explosion just off Tverskaya Street, Moscow's most elegant shopping district. Police found a Mercedes S-600 sedan that had been destroyed by a remote-controlled bomb attached to the underside of the car. A charred corpse was pulled from the wreckage. It was Sylvester.

Berezovsky, who by then had returned to Moscow from Switzerland, was briefly considered a suspect. But Sylvester had many enemies, and the case was never solved. With Sylvester's death, the gangster assaults on LogoVaz ceased.

SHADOW OF BEREZOVSKY CAST UPON BIG SCREEN

From *The Moscow Times*, September 19, 2002

By Kevin O'Flynn

He fled Russia two years ago amid allegations of corruption, but billionaire businessman Boris Berezovsky will return Thursday — at least in spirit — when a multimillion-dollar movie, loosely based on his life, opens at cinemas across Moscow.

Instead of starring a balding, middle-aged businessman, however, Oligarch [Tycoon] will feature heartthrob Vladimir Mashkov — once described as the “reigning Russian lover with Gypsy eyes” — as the fictional Platon Makovsky, who, like Berezovsky, starts out as a mathematician before metamorphosing into a successful, and ruthless, businessman.

The much-hyped movie, a joint Russian-French production that will be released as *A New Russian* [Tycoon] in the West, is based on the book *Bolshaya Paika* or *The Big Slice* by Yuly Dubov, director of Berezovsky's LogoVaz auto company.

Pavel Loungine, the director of the movie, said Makovsky should not be seen as a screen version of Berezovsky, 56, although he admits that the character was inspired by the exiled tycoon. Widely demonized as corrupt money-grabbers, the oligarchs are cast by the movie in a fairly sympathetic light.

“It's about how a cultured, intelligent academic becomes a businessman and what happens to his soul,” Loungine said in a telephone interview, comparing the movie to *The Godfather* and *Citizen Kane*. “He's nice and not so nice,” said the Russian-born director, who lives in France. “He's cultured, intelligent and passionate, and he destroys everything that's around him.”

Loungine's comparison to Francis Ford Coppola's Oscar-winning movie might not sit too comfortably with Berezovsky, who once sued Forbes magazine for calling him “the godfather of the Kremlin.” In addition, a book titled *Godfather of the Kremlin: Boris Berezovsky and the Looting of Russia*, by Paul Khlebnikov, describes how Berezovsky siphoned hundreds of millions of dollars out of Russia. Berezovsky has been linked by prosecutors to an investigation into embezzlement at Aeroflot, and he has been accused of funding Chechen rebels. Neither Chechens nor Aeroflot appear in the movie, however.

“It's an attempt to understand history,” Loungine said, adding that the era of people like Berezovsky is now gone. “The epoch of the oligarchs is finished,” he said. “It's like in the beginning of the world — they were like dinosaurs roaming Russia, big and terrible.”

The movie's favorable portrayal of oligarchs has led many people to accuse Berezovsky of funding the film himself in an attempt to persuade the public that the criminal charges against him are politically motivated. The exiled tycoon certainly needs to work on his PR: An opinion poll earlier this year found that only 0.2 per cent of Russians trust him, The Wall Street Journal reported.

Berezovsky denies that he financed the movie's \$5.5 million budget, although part of the film was filmed in the offices of LogoVaz, at his request, and a number of real-life LogoVaz officials even appear in it.

It is unlikely to be the last people hear of Berezovsky. The businessman, a self-confessed "fantastic egoist," complains of how not even half his life is covered in Dubov's book and that all the interesting things that have happened to him occur after the movie's storyline ends in the mid-1990s. "Dubov told me he stopped the book in 1994," said Berezovsky, perhaps pitching for a sequel. And the most interesting things happened after 1994... the 1995 election of former President Boris Yeltsin, 1996 privatization, 1997 — Chechnya, 1998 — CIS, 1999 — the Duma elections, and the election of President Vladimir Putin."

Last week, Berezovsky was charged in absentia with car theft, along with his former LogoVaz partner Badri Patarkatsishvili. In *Oligarch [Tycoon]*, Patarkatsishvili, who is currently an adviser to Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, is said to be the prototype for the character of Larry, a close partner of Makovsky's.

RUSSIAN TYCOON BEREZOVSKY NABBED IN U.K.

Associated Press
Michael McDonough
March 25, 2003

LONDON - British police said Tuesday they have arrested Russian tycoon Boris Berezovsky at the request of Russian authorities who are investigating him for alleged fraud.

An extradition request charges that Berezovsky defrauded the administration of Russia's Samara region while director of a company called LogoVaz between Jan. 1 1994 and Dec. 31 1995.

The Metropolitan Police said officers arrested Berezovsky in London early Monday. A LogoVaz associate, Yuli Dubov, was also arrested Monday, police said.

Berezovsky and Dubov were released on bail, pending an appearance at Bow Street Magistrates Court on April 2, police said.

"Both were charged on the extradition warrant issued by Bow Street Magistrates' Court following a request for assistance from Russian Authorities investigating allegations of a fraud," said a statement from the Metropolitan Police.

"The charge alleges that between Jan. 1, 1994, and Dec. 31, 1995, they defrauded the Administration of Samara Region of 60 billion rubles whilst being directors of LogoVaz," it added.

In December 1995, 60 billion rubles was worth some \$13 million.

A Moscow court last October issued an arrest warrant for Berezovsky, Dubov and another associate in connection with the theft of cars from Russia's largest carmaker AvtoVaz.

LogoVaz was the official dealer for AvtoVaz and later functioned as the holding company for a range of Berezovsky investments. Dubov was general director of LogoVaz.

Berezovsky, an influential member of former Russian President Boris Yeltsin's circle, was emblematic of the politically connected group of so-called oligarchs who amassed huge wealth after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

However, Putin's government targeted Berezovsky in its anti-corruption campaign, and the tycoon became a bitter critic of the Russian leader. Berezovsky says the efforts to prosecute him are motivated by his criticism, and have forced his self-imposed exile in Britain.

VLADIMIR MASHKOV INTERVIEW

There are some actors who don't read novels, sticking only to the screenplay. Have you read *The Big Slice*?

I read the novel for the first time two years ago, even before Pavel Loungine had the idea to turn it into a film. The story of *The Big Slice* is real. There isn't a second of invention in it. There are people who worked in the science field, then were able to reach the apex of the business world. [The novel describes the growth of a business established by a scientific worker called Platon.] They started from nowhere, with nothing, and then seemed to make each kopeck out of the air. But Russian business never conformed to the laws of reality. And the business of our heroes was monstrous. In fact they literally made money from air — from anything! This is one of the greatest achievements of Russian businessmen. The people in the novel are characters, but they are based on real events and real people. This is very important.

Does knowing that the real characters exist interfere with an actor's work?

That question is based on the assumption that Platon and Berezovsky are the same person. Copying directly from life is false, uninteresting, and for me, Platon is interesting as a person. It is tragic the way Platon managed to destroy everything. One of the key lines, which resonates throughout the entire picture, comes from Platon's childhood: "Never tell me no". In my view, this shows how Platon, even from his early years, had a strong desire to manage his life and situation. From childhood, he was already organizing everything around him, and then went on to organize the entire world around himself.

Pavel Semenovitch Lounguine considers that Platon's beginning was very similar to Mozart's.

Pavel and I speak in the same language. I remember an early conversation, when I was in New York, and he was in Moscow, when the word "Mozart" came up. It's very important for me that, working with such a talented and insightful director, we have the same impressions of this character. We don't have any fights about how the character should be played. We trust each other.

I understand that Pavel Lounguine trusts your judgment so much that he took your recommendation to invite an actor from America to play the role of Larry?

The character of Larry is based on Arkady (Badri) Patarkatshvili, a long-time Berezovsky associate and reportedly his "right hand" in many complex business dealings.] Yes, it was Levan Outchaneichvili who appeared in [the 1984 Soviet film] *The Legend of the Suram Fortress*. Levan has been living in the United States for nine years and has a successful career there. We met with him in Los Angeles. And everything came together — he was the best Larry we could find. Pavel agreed with my proposal.

Your character in your latest film, *The Quickie*, also comes from the world of business. Is it true that the film is dedicated to the memory of the Russian businessman Sergei Mazharov?

I cannot say that it's a direct dedication, but I actually knew Sergei well. He was the producer of Denis Yevstigneyev's film *Limita* [which starred Vladimir]. Our remarkable friend was killed in Paris. And in France, as it happens, they deceive. The armored glass of the door of Sergei's house was supposed to withstand a grenade, but it was shattered by the bullets of a Kalashnikov. As I was being filmed in *The Quickie*, I recalled our encounters, and towards the end I believe that Sergei felt his death. It was as if it hovered above him. The film is our attempt to show a man's encounter with his death. It's the story of a man who fell in love with his own death.

You were also recently filmed in *Behind Enemy Lines*, by the Irish director John Moore. Will this film be completed, given the recent events in the world?

Yes, I recently spoke to the director, and the film is nearing completion. There are many complex computer effects. This is a big-budget picture based on real events. I play a tracker searching for two downed American pilots. But my enemy, played by the great Gene Hackman, attempts to save them. I hope that this film will raise the fighting spirit of soldiers. Still on the drawing board is a project [*Red America*] directed by Pavel Chukhrai [since replaced by Andrei Nekrasov] in which my female partner will be Milla Jovovich. I have other planned projects in Hollywood, but it's too early to speak about them.

Who looks after your interests in Hollywood?

I have a manager. Making five pictures a year is a lot for a Russian actor. People here don't understand what a complex and rigid system they have over there. There are practically no slots for the entry of foreigners. You can't even begin to visualize the enormous quantity of actors they have in America. Actors from every English-speaking

country — as well as Latin America — are gathered together in Hollywood. And to get noticed is an accomplishment.

Did you immediately find a common language on set, or it was necessary to adjust your technique?

I saw how controlled Robert DeNiro and Gene Hackman are. They don't want to waste their talent and energy. This is very clearly evident on the screen. For example, DeNiro rehearses very badly, he simply growls his lines, but as soon as the camera starts rolling, he comes alive. And he doesn't do re-takes. Cinema is a very precise technology, which they manage well in Hollywood. Theatre, of course, provides daily training in the profession of acting. But in the theatre you work other muscles, and use another level of energy. If you mechanically transfer everything from the theatre to the film set, the result will be monstrous. It's very rare to find an actor who works instinctively in both the cinema and the theatre. You see that when you are filmed straight after a theatrical play or rehearsal. You fail, because there's too much of you.

I no longer use a scattergun approach, but choose precise targets. While I'm filming *Tycoon*, I won't take on any more projects. Then if I do a play, I'll arrange my life so that I'm not doing anything besides the theatre. This is important.

I understand that you joined the American actors' guild?

There, one must join the union. If you are in a film, you are obligated to be a member of the guild. After being in two films, you are invited to join. The guild ensures the correct working conditions and fees for the actors. Then there's the old game, which occurs every five years, when contracts are revised. The guild then defends the rights of actors and tries to get more pay for them. Indeed, in Hollywood there's a large gap in the fees paid to megastars and everyone else — to say nothing of those actors who are simply filmed in advertisements.

From *eStart.ru*, Translation © Susan Munter 2001

VLADIMIR MASHKOV filmography

Red America (2003)	Thief, The (1998)
Tycoon (2002)	Voleur et l'enfant, Le (1998)
Behind Enemy Lines (2001)	Cabbages and Kings (1996)
Quickie, The (2001)	American Daughter (1995)
American Rhapsody, An (2001)	Limita (1994)
15 Minutes (2001)	Katya Ismailova (1993)
Dancing at the Blue Iguana (2000)	Ivan and Abraham (1993)
Captain's Daughter, The (2000)	Alaska, Sir! (1992)
Mummy (1999)	Love at the Death Island (1991)
Composition for Victory Day (1998)	Do It - One! (1990)
Two Moons, Three Suns (1998)	Ha-bi-assy (1990)
Noch pered Rozhdestvom (1997)	Goat's Green Fire, The (1989)
Sympathy Seeker (1997)	