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RUNAWAY TRAIN (1985) 111 minutes

Directed by Andrei Konchalovsky

Story by Ryuzo Kikushima and Hideo Oguni

Based on a screenplay by Akira Kurosawa

Screenplay by Edward Bunker, Djordje Milicevic, and Paul Zindel

Produced by Yoram Globus and Menahem Golan

Original Music by Trevor Jones and Alan Howarth

Cinematography by Alan Hume

Eric Roberts' boxing coach Danny Trejo

Jon Voight....Oscar 'Manny' Manheim

Eric Roberts....Buck

Rebecca De Mornay....Sara

Kyle T. Heffner....Frank Barstow

John P. Ryan....Ranken

T.K. Carter....Dave Prince

Kenneth McMillan...Eddie MacDonald

Stacey Pickren....Ruby

Walter Wyatt....Conlan

Edward Bunker....Jonah

ANDREI KONCHALOVSKY (20 August 1937, Moscow) has directed 21 films and written 25 screenplays. Some of the theatrical and tv films he directed are "The Odyssey" (1997), *The Inner Circle/The Projectionist* (1991), *Tango & Cash* (1989), *Maria's Lovers* (1984), *Dyadya Vanya/Uncle Vanya* (1970), and *Malchik i golub/The Boy and the Pigeon* (1961).

EDWARD BUNKER (31 December 1933, Hollywood—19 July 2005, Burbank. Complications from cancer surgery) wrote 3 screenplays and acted in 24 films. Some of his acting jobs were *The Longest Yard* (2005), *Distant Cousins* (1993), *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), *Tango & Cash* (1989), *The Running Man* (1987), *The Long Riders* (1980) and *Straight Time* (1978). *Straight Time* was based on his novel, *No Beast So Fierce*.

ALAN HUME (London, 16 October 1924) has shot 94 films, among them "The Return of the Native" (1994), *Eve of Destruction* (1991), *A Fish Called Wanda* (1988), "John and Yoko: A Love Story" (1985), *Octopussy* (1983), *Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi* (1983), *Eye of the Needle* (1981), *For Your Eyes Only* (1981), *Caveman* (1981), *Carry On Emmanuelle* (1978), *Gulliver's Travels* (1977), *Sex Play* (1974), *Captain Nemo and the Underwater City* (1969), *Carry On Regardless* (1961) and *No Kidding/Beware of Children* (1960).

JON VOIGHT (29 December 1938, Yonkers) has acted in 68 films, among them *National Treasure* (2004), *The Manchurian Candidate* (2004), *Ali* (2001), *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* (2001), *A Dog of Flanders* (1999), *The Rainmaker* (1997), *Mission: Impossible* (1996), *Heat* (1995), *The Champ* (1979), *Coming Home* (1978), *The Odessa File* (1974), *Conrack* (1974), *Deliverance* (1972), *Catch-22* (1970), and *Midnight Cowboy* (1969). He won one best acting Oscar (*Coming Home*) and was nominated for three others (*Ali*, *Runaway Train* and *Midnight Cowboy*).

ERIC ROBERTS (Biloxi MS, 18 April 1956) is one of the great movie creeps. He currently has five films in production or post-production. Some of his released films are *Spit* (2005), *Border Blues* (2004), *The Long Ride Home* (2003), *Cecil B. DeMented* (2000),

Spawn 3: Ultimate Battle (1999), *T.N.T.* (1998), "The Odyssey" (1997), *The Cable Guy* (1996), *Nobody's Fool* (1986), *The Pope of Greenwich Village* (1984), *Star 80* (1983) and *King of the Gypsies* (1978).

REBECCA DE MORNAY (29 August 1962, Santa Rosa, CA) has acted in 43 films and television programs, some of which are "The Practice" (2004), "ER" (1999), *Never Talk to Strangers* (1995), *The Three Musketeers* (1993), *Backdraft* (1991), *And God Created Woman* (1988), *The Trip to Bountiful* (1985), *Risky Business* (1983), and (1982).

From IMDb.com

The Russian theatre and film director Andrei Konchalovsky is an elder brother of Nikita Mikhalkov, born August, 20, 1937. As a youngster he planned to pursue a career of a musician and learned to play piano but his love for cinema outweighed and he entered VGIK-the major state film school where he studied under Mikhail Romm. At VGIK he met Tarkovsky, they collaborated on *Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev*. For his length feature debut *The First Teacher* (1961), he chose the book by Chingiz Aitmatov about the post-1917 Revolution period in the southern Russia. His next film, a black and white *Asya Klyachina's Story* although made in 1966 was not released until a decade later because it failed to comply with the strict requirements of the Russian censorship of the period. *A Nest of Gentry* (1969) - a study of the 19 c. aristocracy - was praised for its visual beauty but attacked by critics as mannered. Konchalovsky's powerful *Uncle Vanya* (1970) from the play by Chekhov is regarded by many people as one of the best films in the Russian language ever but it was not until he made his next two films that he became a worldwide famous film maker. A larger than life love story *Romance for Lovers* (1974) won an honor at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival and *Sibiriade* (1979) - a dramatic and realistic story of the lives of the people of Siberia - was internationally acclaimed and brought Konchalovsky to the attention of American and European producers. From then onwards his career has been international in scope. Pleasing critics and cinema-goers worldwide he made English language artful films *Maria's Lovers* (1984), *Runaway Train* (1985), *Duet for One* (1986) (praised for Max von Sydow's brilliant performance), and *Homer and Eddie* (1989) starring Whoopi Goldberg. Much to his fans' disappointment Konchalovsky moved to the mainstream territory with the action packed *Tango and Cash* (1989). Characteristically he still insists that this work is no less laudable than any of his others. He also directed plays and operas in a number of European cities. In the early 1990s he returned to Russia and directed several theatre productions most notably *The Seagull* by Chekhov and *Miss Julie* by August Strindberg. Currently residing in Moscow Konchalovsky sometimes makes short excursions to Hollywood to make mainstream TV productions: "The Odyssey" (1997) and "The Lion in Winter" (2003) in which Glenn Close gave an award-winning performance. His Russian-French co-production *House of Fools* (2002) - a story set in an asylum that stands on the border between Russia and Chechenya during the war in Chechenya - was warmly received in Europe and won an honor at the 2002 Venice Film Festival. However the film antagonized the critics in Russia who accused Konchalovsky of being a war-monger. In the very beginning of his career he used a double surname and was credited in his early films as Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky. Later he adopted his mother's maiden name to distinguish himself from his younger brother, Nikita Mikhalkov, who was rapidly becoming a well known film maker.

from The Illustrated History of the Soviet Cinema. Neva Zorkaya . Hippocrene Books NY 1989

Tarkovsky was a graduate of Mikhail Romm's celebrated studio (1961), also attended by Vassily Shukshin, Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky, and Alexandra Mitta.

Twenty directors made their debuts in 1964 alone, and a number of movie patriarchs (directors in their sixties) "recovered their breath" and continued to work hard, Mikhail Romm among them.

After his first successful films on Lenin, Mikhail Romm (1901-1971) was the acknowledged leading Soviet film director....Romm trained a whole group of young directors, among them Chukhrai, Tarkovsky, Shuksin, Daneliya, Konchalovsky, Shepitko, Mitta, and many others. All of them owed professional skills and background to him. They could always rely on him while making pictures of their own. But perhaps the main role he played was extending their artistic horizons and developing their individualities.

In the sixties filmmakers became increasingly conscious of such complex, contradictory characters. Film director Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky showed a man similar to Trubnikov, severe looking but kindhearted and vulnerable, a fanatic dedicated to his ideals, in his film *The First Teacher*, produced by the Kazakh Film Studios (1965). It was a screen version of Chingiz Aitmatov's story of the same title. ...The young Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky's interpretation of the lyrical story of *The First Teacher* is authentic, and the tragic balance in his portrayal of uncompromising revolutionary struggle is worth a special description....

Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky's film was up to the expectations of his teacher Mikhail Romm, and his senior colleagues, who had taken notice of him when his diploma picture, *The Boy and the Pigeon* (1962), won the Grand Prix for best short at the Venice Film Festival. Later the young filmmaker wrote a script for *Andrei Rublev*, together with its director, Andrei Tarkovsky. From Kirghizia in the postrevolution years (depicted in *The First Teacher*), Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky turned to modern times and Central Russia. All these two films had in common was the fact that their action was set in the Soviet period. His second and most original film, released in 1967 and based on a screenplay by Yuri Klepikov, was originally titled "Asya the Lame," later "The Story of Asya Klyachina, Who Loved But Did Not Marry," and finally "Asya's Happiness."

The film, shot in the countryside, was performed by amateurs. Only three cast members, among them the gifted Iya Savvina ...were professional actors This screen improvisation was made of three stories....The three life stories are told in a reserved, simple manner, but this unpretentiousness reveals an inner purity and nobility among those who somehow remain humane in the most inhuman conditions.

Such is the world of the blue-eyed heroine, lame Asya, a farm cook. Pure in soul and selfless, Asya follows her principles, which often makes her behavior unpredictable and impractical. She turns down a town admirer who offers her, a cripple, his heart, hand in marriage, and a good apartment: she is in love with another, a reckless driver who becomes father of her child. Asya is proud;

and no matter how submissive she might look, this hidden pride (typical of a Russian woman!) Plus the emancipated outlook of a Soviet farmer (Asya can always rely on the community for support for her child and herself) make a poetic Russian character, beautifully portrayed by the actress.

Regrettably, the film industry administration did not understand the picture and regarded it as slanderous. Nonsense, of course, for though the director did not look upon reality through rose-tinted glasses, he obviously respected the rural lifestyle, ways and traditions. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky was not strong enough to stand up against the bureaucrats and prevent heavy editing: he agreed to make cuts and the time-serving corrections and alterations that followed. The shortened version of the film (it ran for less than ninety minutes), symptomatically titled *Asya's Happiness* greatly differed from the original. In some sequences rough cuts disrupted the continuity.

It was a serious failure, and the director plunged into erratic experimenting. After an attempt to screen Russian classics, he made the obscure *Lovers' Romance*, then the four-part *Siberiada*, an epic of the Soviet oil industry, and eventually a number of Hollywood-type pictures.

More regrettable than his personal failure was the fact that it nipped in the bud the filming of "countryside prose" as in his *Story of Asya*. The social portrayal of rural life, so remarkable in the film, continued the line started by Vasily Shuksin in his books and movies and anticipated the works by such outstanding Russian writers as Fyodor Abramov, Vasily Belov, and Valentin Rasputin, who founded a new trend in the Soviet literature of the late sixties. Of course, the cinema continued to explore this avenue, but such masterpieces as Elem Klimov's *Farewell* (after Rasputin's book *Farewell to Matyora*) appeared much later.

Artists working in other genres continued to create portraits of their contemporaries and analyze their characters, but the lovely Asya Klyachina remained unknown to the public....

Many filmmakers of the sixties turned to history to review the past or to resolve existing social problems.

In 1965 a screenplay titled *Andrei Rublev* and written by Andrei Tarkovsky and Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky was published in the journal *Iskusstvo Kino* (Nos. 4 and 5). It was a poetic, imaginative play whose genre was hard to define. The action was set in early Russia, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the country was under the Tatar-Mongol yoke....

The impact of the film on the cinema in general and on the historic genre in particular was enormous. What was especially striking were the author's rejection of costume-drama and his successful attempt to show the continuity of history.

...Tarkovsky had a high opinion of cinematography as an art; he understood its global impact/ Tarkovsky often repeated that the cinema is as important for the modern time as drama used to be in antiquity and the novel in the nineteenth century. "As far as I'm concerned, cinema is a moral rather than a professional category," said Tarkovsky on the threshold of the seventies. "It is essential for me to maintain my perception of art as something very serious, stretching beyond the framework of such concepts as, say, theme, genre, form, etc. The mission of art is not only to reflect reality but also to arm man and enable him to face life."...In his understanding of the role of art, [he] adhered to a Russian cultural tradition and its basic principles.

Ioseliani [shooting in France, 1984] was the third Soviet film director (after Andrei Tarkovsky filming in Italy and Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky working in the USA) who made a picture abroad. Before that, only actors had taken parts in foreign films, and directors participated solely in joint productions.

Just one more film in Buffalo Film Seminars XII, Spring 2006

Apr 25 Karel Reisz **The French Lieutenant's Woman** 1981

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