



AKI KAURISMÄKI

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FILMS

1983 / Feature / OV Finnish

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

1985 / Feature / OV Finnish

CALAMARI UNION

1986 / Feature / OV Finnish

SHADOWS IN PARADISE

1986 / Short / Music Video

ROCKY VI

1987 / Feature / OV Finnish

HAMLET GOES BUSINESS

1987 / Short / Music Video

THRU THE WIRE

1987 / Short / Music Video

L.A. WOMAN

1987 / Short / Music Video

RICH LITTLE BITCH

BIOGRAPHY AKI KAURISMÄKI WRITER, DIRECTOR, EDITOR AND PRODUCER

BORN IN FINLAND 4.4.1957, BUT ...

Aki Kaurismäki, born in 1957, grew up into “the age terrorized by the television”, and has tried and managed to stick totally to the inseparable realities of the real world and the “deep screen” that only the 35 mm film – light against the electronic machinations, the beauty of artisan tradition against technological overkill – makes possible. He never used any other material, least of all video, and he is simply very proud for having joined in the continuity and tradition of “real cinema”. His minimalist style is all his own (and that of the great cinematographer of all his films, Timo Salminen); he never entered the Finnish Film School (as he was suspected to be “too cynical”). At the same time his films are full of quotations (he mentioned JUHA would have more than hundred) but always invisible, a part of a constant dialogue where particles of film culture reveal realities of human environment, society and psyche as it is now, and as it was during the tender years of Aki’s childhood; only vaguely known to foreign spectators, there is always an overwhelming presence of Finnish typicalities, “objects of love” and references to well-known sources of Finnish literary evergreens, painting or of course popular music (or our beloved films). //////////////////////////////////////





FILMS

1988 / Feature / OV Finnish

ARIEL

1989 / Feature / OV English / Finnish

LENINGRAD COWBOYS GO AMERICA

1990 / Feature / OV Finnish

THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL

1990 / Feature / OV Finnish

I HIRED A CONTRACT KILLER

1991 / Short / Music Video

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

1992 / Short / Music Video

THESE BOOTS

1992 / Feature / OV French

LA VIE DE BOHÈME

Then comes a group of strange road movies, the charming “cheapies” that have attained a cult status in many countries. CALAMARI UNION (1985), according to Jean-Pierre Gorin “I Vitelloni filmed by Dreyer”, is based on an absurd anecdote and shows the odyssey of a group of guys (played by the most luminous rock’n’roll musicians of the day) from the poor part of Helsinki to the rich downtown environments. All the characters are called Frank, several of them die along the way ... TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARF – TATJANA (1993) is another stroke of genius, a film about a weekend of two Finnish workingmen. It takes place simultaneously in imaginary past, in the 60’s, and in a most realistic world, where the efforts of the very Finnish heroes to be themselves in their manic loneliness dominated by Koskenkorva vodka and Finnish tango are much affected by the presence and mentality of our eastern (Russian, Estonian) neighbours. The films about Leningrad Cowboys introduce “the world’s worst rock’n’roll band” complete with their incredible cone-shaped hairstyles and spiked shoes. Two full-length films (one deeply entertaining, another a look at the margins of Europe that is worlds apart from the brave new Europe of Brussels and Strasbourg) were complemented by half a dozen (superb) short films, and TOTAL BALALAIKA SHOW (1993), a documentation of the amazing meeting of East and West in the concert given by Leningrad Cowboys together with Red Army Ensemble (with its 200 singers and musicians). These are the words of Chris Marker about “that milestone in post-modern kitsch”: “There are moments of pure emotion, and when historians will look for a vignette to encompass the brief autumn of utopia that followed the fall of the Empire, I doubt they can find a more significant and poignant one”. //

FILMS

1993 / Music Documentary

TOTAL BALALAIKA SHOW

1993 / Feature / OV Finnish

TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARF – TATJANA

1994 / Feature / OV English

LENINGRAD COWBOYS MEET MOSES

1996 / Feature / OV Finnish

DRIFTING CLOUDS

1998 / Feature / Silent

JUHA

2002 / Feature / OV Finnish

THE MAN WITHOUT A PAST

2006 / Feature / OV Finnish

LIGHTS IN THE DUSK

“My soul could not tolerate the kind of rough realism necessary to depict the modern city of Helsinki – I am as if forced against the stonewall. I am as well forced to redesign all the towns behind several decades. I can’t show a modern car, as they are so ugly and impersonal. I managed to photograph London and Paris without showing one single car, and in spite of that my films were set in modern times. I’m for a camera that gets identified with the sets of the epoch it is depicting – and represents that epoch in all its savagery.” (Aki Kaurismäki)

The vision of Aki Kaurismäki is always two-fold. Both time and places – ARIEL (1988) was “dedicated to the memory of Finnish reality” – are dreamlike, dense cityscapes that Aki Kaurismäki manages to create in his films and that basically do not have an equivalent in “real life”. This basic fact goes through all his films that can be roughly divided into three or four genres. // The first category consists of “literary classics”; instead of being pretentious “translations” these films are animated dialogues with the author colleagues of the past as if they were live conversation partners. The almost megalomaniac start of a modernized CRIME AND PUNISHMENT (1983) was followed by HAMLET GOES BUSINESS (1987), a nearly prophetic film about the Finland of the 80’s soon to collapse in a wild circle of financial speculation, and his version of Murger’s LA VIE DE BOHÈME (1992), a genteel and poetic vision of France, filmed in the outskirts of Paris and in French (Kaurismäki made his other ‘foreign’ film, I HIRED A CONTRACT KILLER (1990), in London and in English, with Jean-Pierre Léaud, the alter ego of his youth). JUHA (1998), a Finnish classic previously filmed three times, got its toughest and most lucid treatment in his version and is his ultimate interpretation about silence (it is the “last silent film of 20th century”) in the country living in the pseudo-communication of portable phones and internet (both of which have the highest user numbers in Finland). //



The third category, the films about underdog. The “working class trilogy” consists of SHADOWS IN PARADISE (1986), ARIEL (1988), and THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL (1990) – the laconic, almost cruel masterpiece that yet it radiates suppressed tenderness – belongs even under international consideration to recent most sensitive descriptions of working class milieu and proletarian identity that are done with true insight. They unfold some kind of colonial Finland, a third-world Finland found in the depths and outskirts of towns, where resilient, authentic humanity prevails spiced by biting humour and healthy contempt of bureaucracy and the official way of life and their con men and speculators. // The follow-up DRIFTING CLOUDS (1996) was the start of a new trilogy (“losers” trilogy), complemented by MAN WITHOUT A PAST (2002) and LIGHTS IN THE DUSK (2006), respectively based on the themes of unemployment (“I wouldn’t have the nerve to look at my face in the mirror if I would not make a film about unemployment now” Aki Kaurismäki said at the time when Finland had been for years suffering from a dramatic, structural and – as many saw it – “terminal” unemployment), homelessness, and solitude. Their protagonists, have-nots or “losers”, will not give up, even if the pressures bring them to the brink of human endurance. A ray of optimism shines through all this gloom (a vision that many have compared to the tradition of a Capra or a De Sica) – in the two first films. The third breaks the niceties of human fable. And might be, after consideration, the most optimist of all, as it is so mercilessly centered on the realities, and on the theme of dignity of man as the foremost value. /////////////// (Peter von Bagh, 2006)



CRIME AND PUNISHMENT /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1983
HAMLET GOES BUSINESS /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1987
I HIRED A CONTRACT KILLER /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1990
LA VIE DE BOHÈME /// Feature / OV French / 1992
JUHA /// Feature / Silent / 1998

LITERARY CLASSICS



CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

RIKOS JA RANGAISTUS

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT is a modern adaptation of the classical crime story by F.M. Dostoevsky – but faithful in its spirit to the original. The principal character – a young slaughterhouse worker – commits a senseless crime. Through his act he finally drifts out of society and into loneliness. Only a young girl who accidentally arrives at the scene of the crime wants to follow him. Guilt and the tightening net of the police throw a shadow over their desperate love affair.
The nocturnal concrete jungle serves as a backdrop for the struggle for intellectual supremacy between the police and the murderer. Rahikainen's only weapon in this struggle is his total indifference to everything.
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT is, however, first and foremost a film about the last desperate rebellion of a young man against society. The society that – as we know – is a merciless machine. Perhaps we are all guilty – guilty of what? This unbearable question faces us everywhere, hands on hips, sneering at us. As you wish. We'll die anyway.
CAST /// MARKKU TOIKKA / AINO SEPPO / ESKO NIKKARI / HANNU LAURI ...
CREW /// PRODUCER Mika Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki/Pauli Pentti CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Mikael Sievers EDITING Veikko Aaltonen A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1983 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour /// LENGTH 93 min. /// Original version: Finnish



LA VIE DE BOHÈME

BOHEEMIELÄMÄÄ

Rodolfo, a refugee from Albania and a great painter, Marcel, a great French poet, and Schaunard, a great Irish composer, become acquainted by chance while chasing each on the same battlefield, by every imaginable means, a beast called the five-franc coin. They cannot take more than ten steps on the boulevards without meeting an acquaintance, or thirty steps, wherever, without encountering a creditor. This melancholy comedy – which, incidentally, is actually a melodrama – tells of their life, especially in relation to Mimi and Musette, two country belles lost in the maelstrom of the big city, and to more commonplace characters, such as the landlord and immigration officers.
Their daily subsistence calls for brilliant virtuosity; these men could get Harpagon to lend them money and would find champignons on the raft of Medusa. When necessary, they can adhere to abstinence as well as any hermit, but if even so much as a pittance comes to hand, they will at once be seen driving the most expensive steeds of caprice, drinking the best and the oldest, with never enough windows from which to throw money into the street.



HAMLET GOES BUSINESS

HAMLET LIIKEMAAILMASSA

A bloody power-struggle has taken place at the top of a large company. Who murdered the general director? Will the mills be sold in exchange for the world-monopoly in rubber-ducks? Where is the driver's cap?
HAMLET GOES BUSINESS tells the story of the unbelievable adventures of a sensitive young man whose heart is as warm as a refrigerator. Hardly ever before has the poetry of Shakespeare been respected to such an extent that it has remained untouched after the adaptation into another art form. No wonder Ophelia is crying bitterly in the corner of her bathroom. Money offers resistance to capital like an animal to a butcher's knife. Who will be the winner, who will suffer in this horrible black and white underground-b-movie-classical drama? It is not us to judge ...
But don't be fooled by the plastic beauty of this movie: the question is about money – a matter of life and death.



A special language is spoken in the film, borrowed from the prattle in artists' studios, the backstage argot of the theatre and newspaper editorial offices. Pitch words of all styles can be encountered in this strange dialect; turns from Revelations appear next to plain gibberish, the vulgarity of rustic speech combines with skilful sentence periods that might have been turned on Cyrano's lathe. The vocabulary of the bohemians is the hell of old rhetoric and the paradise of linguistic reformation, or vice versa.
The plot of the film is so complicated that a committee should be appointed to disentangle it. Potential female viewers are recommended to supply themselves with handkerchiefs, for the ending of the film may be the saddest since "Waterloo Bridge".



CAST /// PIRKKA-PEKKA PETELIUS / KATI OUTINEN / ELINA SALO / ESKO SALMINEN ...
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Veikko Aaltonen / Jouko Lumme EDITING Raija Talvio A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1987 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / b/w /// LENGTH 86 min. /// Original version: Finnish

CAST /// MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / EVELYNE DIDI / ANDRÉ WILMS / KARI VÄÄNÄNEN / CHRISTINE MURILLO / JEAN-PIERRE LÉAUD / LAIKA ...
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme / Timo Linnasalo EDITING Veikko Aaltonen A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1992 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / b/w /// LENGTH 100 min. /// Original version: French

I HIRED A CONTRACT KILLER

Henri Boulanger wants to die, for reasons too personal to be explained here. Since his helpless attempts to end his days go down the drain, partly because of a gas strike, partly because of his own impracticality, he ends up hiring a contract killer to send him to happier rubber-stamping grounds. While waiting for the killer to do his job, however, he makes the mistake of sipping, for the first time in his life, a whisky, and finds the courage to encounter the opposite sex eye to eye, also for the first time. Everything would be ready for setting up a family, but, unfortunately, the killer's contract cannot be canceled. //////////////////////////////////////

The film moves from everyday realism through melodrama towards a surprise ending with a cinematic structure swinging between Dreyer and Melville without touching either of them in any way. (Aki Kaurismäki) //////////////////////////////////////

CAST /// JEAN-PIERRE LÉAUD / MARGI CLARKE / KENNETH COLLEY / SERGE REGGIANI ...
 CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Timo Linnasalo EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy //////////////////////////////////////
 TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1990 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour ///
 LENGTH 80 min. /// Original version: Finnish //////////////////////////////////////



JUHA

Literature is full of triangle dramas, but very few of them can beat Juhani Aho's JUHA (1998) for deepness of emotions and understanding of all three parties. //////////////////////////////////////

The story is straight and strong, yet full of detail, just waiting to be ruined by cinematic means. //////////////////////////////////////

I had planned to film JUHA almost as long as we had planned to make a silent movie with composer Anssi Tikanmäki. One day we were clever enough to put the ideas together and the catastrophe was ready. //////////////////////////////////////

Afterwards I'm not surprised that all efforts (except Tati's MON ONCLE) to make a silent film during the last decades have somehow failed; the easiness of explaining all by words has polluted our story telling to a pale shadow of original cinema. //////////////////////////////////////

We can never again make films like BROKEN BLOSSOMS, SUNRISE or QUEEN KELLY because since film started to gable with mumble and all that hoochie-coochie and fancy words, stories have lost their purity, cinema its essence: innocence. (Aki Kaurismäki)

CAST /// SAKARI KUOSMANEN / KATI OUTINEN / ANDRÉ WILMS ... //////////////////////////////////////
 CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki BASED ON A NOVEL BY Juhani Aho CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Anssi Tikanmäki EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy //////////////////////////////////////
 TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1998 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / b/w / Dolby Digital /// LENGTH 78 min. /// silent with music //////////////////////////////////////



CALAMARI UNION /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1985

TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARF – TATJANA /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1993



THE CHARMING CHEAPIES

CALAMARI UNION

This so-called "film" is a rather manic story of seventeen young braves who, spitting in the face of all kind of dangers, don their dark glasses and set off on a desperate trek from the working-class quarter of town to the Eldorado of the fashionable waterfront, replete with green, wavelapped and wind-caressed beaches. But the way is long, and the city's labyrinthine streets are infested with a bizarre array of loitering, huddled human wrecks, stray dogs, and permanently defunct streetlamps. // Only the strongest survive the course, and what happens to them isn't a lot to write home about. Life is tough, and the world keeps changing its shape. Why do the boys cheat on the girls, and the girls keep throwing over the boys? Questions, questions, questions! How green was my valley. And then the Majorcans came. //

CAST /// MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / PUNTTI VALTONEN / SAKKE JÄRVENPÄÄ / PIRKKA-PEKKA PETELIUS / KARI VÄÄNÄNEN / ASMO HURULA ...
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Aki Kaurismäki / Raija Talvio A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1985 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / b/w
LENGTH 80 min. /// Original version: Finnish



TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARF – TATJANA

PIDÄ HUIVISTA KIINNI, TATJANA

TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARF – TATJANA is a road-movie about the unbelievable adventures of two Finnish men, driving a black Volga station wagon through Southern Finland some time in the mid-sixties. Valto, the owner of the car, drinks enormous amounts of coffee, Reino, a mechanic, drinks booze and blabbers endlessly. Already at the early stages of the journey, two ladies come along, one Estonian, the other Russian, and, in spite of understandable difficulties in communication and the obvious incapability of our men to approach the opposite sex, this absurd comedy gains, towards the end, some sentimental tones.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR SCARF – TATJANA is a film about the amazing state of mind of the Finnish man, and an almost surgically cutting investigation into the Finnish-Estonian-Russian relationships.

CAST /// MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / PUNTTI VALTONEN / SAKKE JÄRVENPÄÄ / PIRKKA-PEKKA PETELIUS / KARI VÄÄNÄNEN / ASMO HURULA ...
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1993 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / b/w
LENGTH 65 min. /// Original version: Finnish



SHADOWS IN PARADISE /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1986

ARIEL /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1988

THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1990

THE WORKING CLASS TRILOGY



SHADOWS IN PARADISE VARJOJA PARATIISISSA

The terrifying mouth of a garbage crusher, the sea crushing upon the shore, a few kisses and the tragicomic life in a metropolis. SHADOWS IN PARADISE tells the love story of a garbage truck driver and a supermarket cashier. It is a film about losers, about the necessity of love and also about humility, dignity and pride. // Nikander is a garbage truck driver in Helsinki – a job with little social prestige but which he can only endure as he has developed a kind of pride in his work. He has only ever read comics his whole life long and therefore never learnt that he should achieve something in his life. He is almost like an innocent in a potentially evil world. It is only a sudden movement in his heart, initiated by Ilona, a supermarket cashier as low down and replaceable in the social hierarchy as himself, that causes Nikander to think about himself and regard himself from a distance. //

CAST /// MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / KATI OUTINEN / SAKU KUOSMANEN / ESKO NIKKARI ... // CREW /// PRODUCER Mika Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Raija Talvio A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy // TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1986 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour / Dolby Stereo /// LENGTH 76 min. /// Original version: Finnish //



ARIEL

Ariel is dedicated to the memory of Finnish reality. The film begins as an unemployment story, picking up romantic overtones before turning into a description of prison life completed with a break-out, and finally becoming a crime tale. It portrays Western reality with passionate, sad strokes. Stylistically, the film toes the line between realism and black comedy. The result is a film as dark and beautiful as a September evening. // ARIEL is an exciting film. So stylish and so finely tuned that it is pure enjoyment to watch, it is nevertheless locked into such strict realities, that it does not deceive while delighting. (Helsingin Sanomat, 1988) //

CAST /// TURO PAJALA / SUSANNA HAAVISTO / MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / EETU HILKAMO // CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Raija Talvio A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy // TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1988 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour / Dolby Stereo /// LENGTH 74 min. /// Original version: Finnish //



THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL TULITIKKUTEHTAAN TYTTÖ

Suddenly, last spring, I was running aimlessly round the city, talking too much and twisting and shaking my head in the most ridiculous way. // The next day I spent lying silently under my bed and hated myself bitterly. In revenge I decided to make a film that will make Robert Bresson seem like a director of epic action pictures. // Later, I named this piece of junk THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL, as the name is long enough to be easily forgotten. (Aki Kaurismäki) // THE MATCH FACTORY GIRL is an astonishingly stylish work. It proves that simplicity is best, both morally and stylistically. The narrative style is severely ascetic. Every unnecessary element has been scrapped, as well as all unnecessary dialogue. // Kaurismäki's narrational ellipses are so crystallised that, besides not showing the normal intermediate stages in the development of the story, he can refrain from showing us the end results (Mikko Piela, 1989) //

CAST /// KATI OUTINEN / ELINA SALO / ESKO NIKKARI / VESA VIERIKKO ... // CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki / Klas Olofson / Katinka Faragó SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy // TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1990 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour /// LENGTH 70 min. /// Original version: Finnish //





THE WORLD'S WORST ROCK'N'ROLL BAND

ROCKY VI /// Short / Music Video / 1986

THRU THE WIRE /// Short / Music Video / 1987

L.A. WOMAN /// Short / Music Video, 1987

RICH LITTLE BITCH /// Short / Music Video / 1987

LENINGRAD COWBOYS GO AMERICA /// Feature / DV English / Finnish / 1989

THOSE WERE THE DAYS /// Short / Music Video / 1991

THESE BOOTS /// Short / Music Video / 1992

TOTAL BALALAIKA SHOW /// Music Documentary / 1993

LENINGRAD COWBOYS MEET MOSES /// Feature / DV English / 1994



L.A. WOMAN

The Leningrad Cowboys perform a cover of the famous song by The Doors. // // // // //

CAST /// THE LENINGRAD COWBOYS // // // // // **CREW** /// CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme // // // // // **TECHNICAL INFORMATION** /// Finland 1987 /// Short music feature /// **FORMAT** 35 mm / colour /// **LENGTH** 5 min. // // // // //

THRU THE WIRE

Nicky escapes from a prison somewhere between Alabama and Utah – sometime in the future. He looks for his girl in various bars and hotels, but all that he sees in his new freedom is that no one cares for the future of human culture. // // // // //

CAST /// NICKY TESCO / MARJA-LEENA HELIN / MATO VALTONEN / SAKKE JÄRVENPÄÄ / SILU SEPPÄLÄ / SAKU KUOSMANEN // // // // // **CREW** /// CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy **TECHNICAL INFORMATION** /// Finland 1987 /// Short music feature /// **FORMAT** 35 mm / b/w /// **LENGTH** 6 min. // // // // //



ROCKY VI

Rocky defends the Free World, fights against the Siberian boxer Igor – and loses. // // //

CAST /// SILU SEPPÄLÄ / SAKU KUOSMANEN / HEINÄSIRKKA / MATO VALTONEN / MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / JAAKKO TALASKIVI / SAKKE JÄRVENPÄÄ / NEKA HAAPANAN / ASMO HURULA / JUSSI KERSCH / MARJAANA KYKKÄNEN // // // // // **CREW** /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki / Sleepy Sleepers EDITING Aki Kaurismäki / Raija Talvio CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme / T.T. Oksala / Tom Forsström A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy // // // // // **TECHNICAL INFORMATION** /// Finland 1986 /// Short music feature /// **FORMAT** 35 mm / b/w /// **LENGTH** 8 min. // // // // //

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Set in Paris, *The Leningrad Cowboys* perform their version of the known song: A solitary man leading a donkey is turned away at a restaurant door, he and the beast walk down to “La Maison du Vin” where, despite a “no donkeys” sign, they enter and the man proceeds to feed the donkey. His care and feeding of the animal impresses the women singing with the band – she and the visitor connect, but who will watch the donkey if they slip away? // // // // //

CAST /// THE LENINGRAD COWBOYS / KIRSI TYKKYLÄINEN // // // // // **CREW** /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy // // // // // **TECHNICAL INFORMATION** /// Finland 1991 /// Short music feature /// **FORMAT** 35 mm / b/w /// **LENGTH** 5 min. // // // // //



LENINGRAD COWBOYS GO AMERICA

Somewhere in the tundra, in no-man’s land, lives the worst rock’n’roll band in the world, an outfit with no audience and absolutely no commercial potential. And so they decide to bury their national sentiments and go to the United States where people swallow any kind of shit. // // // // // This film is the story of their journey over the ocean and through the continent, a story of seamy bars and honest folk in the backyards of the Hamburger Nation. Ugly actors, good feelings. Yeah. // // // // // This parody of Jim Jarmusch (and paeon to sullen drunkenness) is the only example in town and the film’s single joke – a band of grotesque European rock musicians discover the New World – happens to be a good one. (J. Hoberman, Village Voice, 1990)

CAST /// LENINGRAD COWBOYS / NICKY TESCO / MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / KARI VÄÄNÄNEN // // // // // **CREW** /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki / Klas Olofson / Katinka Faragó SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme / Jyrki Hytti / Matti Hukkanen EDITING Raija Talvio A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy // // // // // **TECHNICAL INFORMATION** /// Finland 1989 /// Feature /// **FORMAT** 35 mm / colour / Dolby Stereo /// **LENGTH** 78 min. /// Original version: English/Finnish // // // // //



RICH LITTLE BITCH

Melrose performing their song "Rich Little Bitch", filmed during the shoot of HAMLET GOES BUSINESS. //

CAST /// MELROSE //
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jyrki Hytti A PRODUCTION OF Villealfa Productions Oy //
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1987 /// Short music feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / b/w /// LENGTH 5 min. //

THESE BOOTS

The history of Finland 1950–69 seen through the eyes of a *Leningrad Cowboy* as a child. *The Leningrad Cowboys* version of "These Boots are made for walking" by Nancy Sinatra. //

CAST /// THE LENINGRAD COWBOYS / KIRSI TYKKYLÄINEN / JAAKKO TALASKIVI //
CREW /// CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy //
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1992 /// Short music feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour /// LENGTH 5 min. //



LENINGRAD COWBOYS MEET MOSES

After years of fame and misfortune in Mexico, the members of the worst rock'n'roll band in the world set off back home, to their native village in Siberia. They are guided by Vladimir, their former manager, who now calls himself Moses. The journey over the ocean and across the European continent is hard and full of dangers. The people murmur against Moses and doubt his motives. They are continuously tormented by the lack of money, fuel, food and beverages. On top of this they are persecuted by a certain member of the American intelligence agency who is hunting for the lost nose of the Statue of Liberty. //
This film automatically brings up only two points of comparison: John Huston's THE BIBLE and Robert Bresson's LE PROCES DE JEANNE D'ARC. Not to mention countless pearls of festivals of the worst films in the world. //

CAST /// LENINGRAD COWBOYS / MATTI PELLONPÄÄ / KARI VÄÄNÄNEN / ANDRÉ WILMS ///
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme / Timo Linnasalo EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy //
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1994 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour / Dolby Stereo /// LENGTH 93 min. /// Original version: English //



TOTAL BALALAIKA SHOW

On June 12, 1993, more than 50 000 people witnessed a historical event on the Senate Square in Helsinki. For the first time and on the biggest screen stage ever seen in Finland, the rock group *Leningrad Cowboys* performed together with the 100 singers, 40 musicians and 20 dancers of the *Alexandrov Red Army Chorus and Dance Ensemble*. The programme included rock classics from "Happy Together" and "Delilah" to "Gimme All Your Lovin'" and "Knocking On Heaven's Door", as well as traditional hits from the Ensemble's own repertoire. From the beginning to the end, the concert was a roaring success. //
TOTAL BALALAIKA SHOW is a documentary on the concert, an extraordinary, unforgettable encounter of the old and the new, of East and West. //

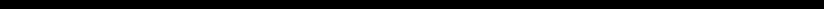
CAST /// LENINGRAD COWBOYS and the ALEXANDROV RED ARMY ENSEMBLE //
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Heikki Ortamo SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Timo Linnasalo MUSIC RECORDING Heikki Savalainen / Mauri Sumén / Timo Ojala A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy //
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1993 /// Music-Documentary /// FORMAT 16/35 mm / colour / Dolby Stereo /// LENGTH 55 min. //



DRIFTING CLOUDS /// Feature / OV Finnish / 1996
THE MAN WITHOUT A PAST /// Feature / OV Finnish / 2002
LIGHTS IN THE DUSK /// Feature / OV Finnish / 2006

THE LOSER TRILOGY





DRIFTING CLOUDS KAUAS PILVET KARKAAVAT

DRIFTING CLOUDS is a film about unemployment with a happy ending. // Ilona loses her job at the restaurant "Dubrovnik", the best restaurant in town (right after the war it was anyway). Lauri, her husband, draws the lowest card when four out of eight tramway-drivers have to be fired. They see no reason to worry, after all they are both well under fifty. A few months later Melartin, the former porter of the Dubrovnik, proposes Ilona that they should open their own restaurant. Since they cannot prove to the bank that they do not really need a loan their request is turned down. Ilona empties her savings account and Lauri takes the money to the casino to multiply it. You will laugh a lot. DRIFTING CLOUDS is dedicated to Matti Pellonpää. ///

CAST /// KATI OUTINEN / KARI VÄÄNÄNEN / ELINA SALO / SAKARI KUOSMANEN ... ////////////////
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy //
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 1996 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour / Dolby Stereo /// LENGTH 96 min. /// Original version: Finnish //



THE MAN WITHOUT A PAST MIES VAILLA MENNEISYYTTÄ

THE MAN WITHOUT A PAST delivers a new edge to the story that stirred viewers all around the world in DRIFTING CLOUDS. Without side-stepping bitter issues, one could paint an image of a small country in the North in a touching, amusing, and liberating way. At the beginning of this new film, a man has travelled to Helsinki in search of work, gets mugged, loses his memory, and has to start completely anew, from scratch. He discovers love, and is forced to discover values with which man will not be ashamed to live. A small story about people who still know how to be gentle, an enormous cinematic experience ... //

CAST /// MARKKU PELTOLA / KATI OUTINEN //
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen EDITING Timo Linnasalo SOUND Jouko Lumme / Tero Malmberg A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy //
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 2002 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / colour / Dolby SRD /// LENGTH 96 min. /// Original version: Finnish //





LIGHTS IN THE DUSK LAITAKAUPUNGIN VALOT

LIGHTS IN THE DUSK concludes the trilogy begun by DRIFTING CLOUDS and THE MAN WITHOUT A PAST. Where the trilogy's first film was about unemployment and the second about homelessness, the theme of LIGHTS IN THE DUSK is loneliness. // Like Chaplin's little tramp, the protagonist, a man named Koistinen, searches the hard world for a small crack to crawl in through, but both his fellow beings and the faceless apparatus of the society see it their business to crush his modest hopes, one after another. // Criminal elements exploit his longing for love and his position as a night watchman in a robbery they pull off, leaving Koistinen to face the consequences. This is done with the help of the most callous woman in the history of cinema since Joseph L. Mankiewicz's ALL ABOUT EVE (1950). Thus Koistinen is deprived of his job, his freedom, and his dreams. // Luckily for our protagonist, the author of the film has a reputation of being a soft-hearted old man, so we can assume there is a spark of hope illuminating the final scene. //

CAST /// JANNE HYYTIÄINEN / MARIA JÄRVENHELMİ / MARIA HEISKANEN / ILKKA KOIVULA / MATTI ONNISMAA ...
CREW /// PRODUCER Aki Kaurismäki SCRIPT Aki Kaurismäki CAMERA Timo Salminen SOUND Jouko Lumme / Tero Malmberg EDITING Aki Kaurismäki A PRODUCTION OF Sputnik Oy
TECHNICAL INFORMATION /// Finland 2006 /// Feature /// FORMAT 35 mm / Colour / Dolby Digital /// LENGTH 80 min. /// Original version: Finnish



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