

BERLIN 2015 Market/France



## Alpha Violet hopes for the best with *Pioneer Heroes*

by FABIEN LEMERCIER

⌚ 23/01/2015 - The French outfit is selling the very promising Russian feature debut, which has been selected in the Panorama, and is getting pre-sales under way for *Marie & The Misfits*



*Pioneer Heroes* by Nataliya Kudryashova

After its incredible success with *The Tribe* [+], French international sales agent Alpha Violet is keeping up its momentum with an editorial policy that shines a spotlight on Europe's young filmmakers. And so, at the [European Film Market](#) during the 65th [Berlinale](#) (5-15 February 2015), the organisation headed by Virginie Devesa and Keiko Funato will be selling *Pioneer Heroes* by Russian director **Nataliya Kudryashova**, a feature debut that won the Work in Progress Award at the Les Arcs European Film Festival in December, thanks to the screening of several particularly promising excerpts. The story revolves around three children, Olga, Katya and Andrey, who, in 1987, dream of becoming pioneers, Soviet heroes, and who will be the last ones to do so. Fast-forward to the present day, and they are now in their thirties and are faced with a different reality that leaves no room for heroics.

"We discovered *Pioneer Heroes* at the end of November at the Baltic Event during the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. It tallies perfectly with what we're looking for: a feature debut and a film directed by a woman. There were a lot of offers on the table, but we have been in a very fortunate position since the success of *The Tribe*," Virginie Devesa explained to Cineuropa. "For us, over and above quantity, the most important thing is to work on good films. We are an independent company, and we have every intention of staying that way."

At Berlin, Alpha Violet will also be kicking off pre-sales for *Marie & The Misfits*, the fourth feature by **Sébastien Betbeder**, following *Nuage* [+] (unveiled at Locarno in 2007), *Nights with Theodore* [+] (Toronto 2012) and *2 Autumns, 3 Winters* [+] (winner of the Special Jury Prize at Turin in 2013). The film started shooting last week with a cast including **Éric Cantona**, **Pierre Rochefort** (*Un beau dimanche* [+]), **Vimala Pons** (*The Rendez-Vous of Déjà-Vu* [+]), Damien Chapelle (*Métamorphoses* [+]), Emmanuelle Riva (*Amour* [+]), Didier Sandre and André Wims. The screenplay was written by the director himself and revolves around Marie, who has left Vincent (an author) and meets Siméon (who is unemployed). Marie is in search of the "right pace". The movie tells a story of drifters between Paris and an island in Brittany, and another story about a story that is being written. Produced by Frédéric Dubreuil for [Envie de Tempête](#), the feature has been pre-purchased by [Canal+](#) and [Ciné+](#), and is benefiting from backing from the Brittany region and the Indéfilms Sofica. The shoot will continue until the end of February in Paris and Lorient, and on the island of Groix. It is also worth mentioning that the score will be composed by Sébastien Tellier and French distribution will be handled by [UFO](#).

Alpha Violet will also have two market premieres on offer at the EFM: *For Some Inexplicable Reason* [+] by Hungarian director **Gábor Reisz** (unveiled at Karlovy Vary, a multi-award winner at Turin and a success in Hungarian theatres) and *Max et Lenny* by French director **Fred Nicolas** (read the [article](#) – with a screenplay co-written by François Bégaudeau).

Lastly of note on the line-up is **Myroslav Slaboskpytskiy**'s second feature, *Luxembourg*, which is currently in development. The director of *The Tribe* is cooking up a film noir that takes place in the high-radiation zone at Chernobyl, with a police officer lurking in the heart of the darkness and a manhunt on the menu. The project, which is produced by German outfit [Tandem](#) and Ukraine's Garmata, has been selected by the Rotterdam-Berlinale Express.

(Translated from French)