

Interview with Nikolai Burljajev

Chehov

10.06.13

Translated from English by Alexandra Ovtchinnikova

Notes:

Text that was originally in English.

(Text that was added by translator)

- 00.32 - 00.41 I will begin in English. *My name is Nikolai Burljajev. I was born in Moscow.* In 1946.
- 00.47 I grew up in Moscow.
- 01.13 - 01.37 I was born after the war, that is why...It did not exist for me. I was born in 1946. I saw the aftermath. There were a lot of invalids on the streets, without legs and arms. This I remember. Otherwise, something explicitly related to post-war period I don't remember, because I lived...In Moscow.
- 02.13 - 02.27 I became interesting in acting after my brother, older brother, became an actor. He is two years younger than me...Older than me. He was the first one to appear on screen.
- 02.32 You...Translate if this is important.
- 02.46 - 03.02 Before Tarkovsky, I already had two auditions and one main role in the film *The Boy and the Dove* by Andrei Konchalovsky. He is my godfather in film.
- 03.05 - 03.41 *The Boy and the Dove.* This film won a bronze lion of Saint Marco at the Venice film festival. During the same year as *Ivan's Childhood.* *Ivan's Childhood* got the golden lion and *The Boy and the Dove* the bronze one. And two Andreis once they returned from Venice, told me that they brought me a whole menagerie.
- 03.59 - 04.43 Thanks to *The Boy and the Dove* I got to work with Tarkovsky, because Andrei saw me in Andron's film. After Andrei passed away, somewhere in a book...I read that he agreed to work on the film *Ivan's Childhood*...The film was half ruined by another director, and Andrei Tarkovsky helped, so to speak...Made everything anew. He said: "I accepted this film only because I had four warrants: Kolja Burjajev, director of photography Yusov, composer Ovchinnikov and artist Cherbajev".
- 05.18 Yusov, Ovchinnikov the composer...And Chernjajev...An artist.
- 05.51 - 06.03 Well, it was well-known that such boys existed because the films like *Camp Follower* were shown during that time. During the war...This topic was wellknown.
- 07.04 - 07.17 Andron Konchalovsky called me after we finished working on *The Boy and the Dove* and said: "Start reading the short story by Bogomolov *Ivan.* Andrei Tarkovsky will audition you for the main role".
- 07.46 - 08.12 I read this short story. And was shocked by what I read. But I thought: " How can I be Ivan?". Because at the time I was told that I looked like an American film actor Jackie Coogan. He was...But that's Ivan! And so I was...I doubted that Andrei Tarkovsky would approve of me.
- 08.27 Jackie Coogan, he was...Coogan.
- 08.33 - 08.43 And so we are getting to Andrei now. I came to Mosfilm and saw Tarkovsky for the

- first time. I fell in love with him from the first sight.
- 08.54 - 09.20 I took this feeling ...Even now. I treat him the same way. I only grew older than him. I am 66, and Andrei was 54 when he passed away. So I outgrew him in life. But not in art, that never crossed my mind. He was the man of my destiny.
- 09.46 - 10.00 So the auditions began. Andrei made a lot of auditions for me. I thought that he is hesitant. I had six or seven auditions in front of the camera.
- 10.10 - 10.37 Andrei never said that he was confident that I was the one. And I thought that he is hesitant. He auditioned me with Volodya Vysotsky, and with Iwashev who recently completed the film *The Ballad about the Soldier*. With Zubkov, with Garikov...But I thought: "He is right that he is hesitant. What kind of Ivan am I?"
- 10.49 - 10.55 But he was confident. And I was his warrant for the success of the film. That's how it was. I did not...I did not know, he never told me.
- 10.09 - 10.16 But it was Andrei's habit. He was rather tough with all actors.
- 10.24 So that actors would not get cocky.
- 10.35 So that they would always be tense.
- 11.44 - 12.04 And during the auditions Andrei...During the auditions he told me: "Keep in mind that there will be a scene where you will have to cry right in front of the camera. And not like you cried in Andron's film *The Boy and the Dove*. Andron was there. He gave you an onion to smell. So you cried. This time, you need to start crying in front of the camera just like that".
- 12.15 - 12.23 I was waiting with fear for this scene. The whole film was filmed, and the day when I had to cry in front of the camera has arrived...
- 12.30 - 12.56 Andrei used to tell me about the working methods of great actors, Jean Gabin and others. How Jean Gabin would live in the sets, to settle in, walls, table, chairs, bad. So that everything would be...Well, I could not settle. On the day of the filming I asked Andrei if I could come 4 hours before the team. So that I could get dressed, masked and be left alone.
- 13.25 - 13.35 My work with two great directors Konchalovsky and Tarkovsky, has turned me into a professional actor when I was a child, at fourteen. I was a professional.
- 13.45 - 13.56 And now I am astonished when I look at the screen: "How could this boy act so well?". I would not be able to do this today. With such honesty, and faith in what I do.
- 14.12 - 14.30 And so...I was dressed, masked, and left alone in the dark pavilion. It was a huge pavilion, I don't know about 800 square meters. The sets were somewhere far away. I was alone. So I began to run, winding myself up.

- 14.53 - 15.17 I was running all this time. I believe I run about 20 or 30 kilometers during these four hours. I was running all the time. My legs felt like forty-pounds. My legs were of led. And I could see when the lights were lit. That Yusov was behind the camera. That Andrei is walking around casting glasses in my direction, but is not approaching me. I felt that it was time to go there. That everything was ready.
- 15.46 - 15.53 And I realize that I am making them wait. However, I did not feel like crying.
- 16.00 - 16.20 Suddenly, I noticed Andrei walking towards me from the depth of the pavilion. Straight at me. I shrank. Thinking: "He is going to throw me out! I am talentless! He warned me half a year ago that this will be my main scene. You are not ready! He will tell me – What are you doing? Who are you? An actor or not?! Get out!". I shrank like this.
- 16.40 - 17.03 So Andrei came over. And did something I did not expect. He began to console me. He hugged me, pulled me close, petted me and said: "Kolenka, my poor boy! Why are you suffering so much? I will cancel all of this now! My poor thing! What are you doing to yourself?". And I began to cry. Out of pity for myself.
- 17.27 - 17.43 He...He quickly grabbed me by the hand and put in front of the camera and I did my first take. I was hysterical, I broke loose. He did not take this take. He took the second one where I was calmer. Where I could read the text.
- 18.28 - 18.47 (What do you think about the dreams in *Ivan's Childhood*?) Well, as I wrote in my poem *Dream*, a dream is a rehearsal of the oblivion. It is a rehearsal of what awaits for us there. Dreams were a very important aspect of the surreal life of the soul for Andrei Tarkovsky.
- 18.52 - 19.12 (To the interpreter) Yes? Fine. I was taking care of you. That is why he and Andron Konchalovsky, inserted in the story the dreams, which the author Bogomolov did not have in his short story. And he, the author, accepted them with difficulty.
- 19.47 - 20.40 As an actor who was playing Ivan I was living in two realities. One reality consisted of the heroic deed of that boy-spy. Crawling in the cold swamp, swimming in the cold river in October, in Dnepr, fully dressed - were part of it. Dirt, cold, and emotional breakdowns were also part of it. Tension. All this was one reality. The other reality was - dream. It was even more pleasing to act, because there was even a warm rain when we were in the car with the little girl-sister. And there I was running down the beach. About this...The first day of work. The last scene of the film was shot during the first day of work on *Ivan's Childhood*. I will tell you about it now.
- 21.19 - 21.36 I will give two examples which have humor, an element of humor. In both of these realities, reality of the war and reality of dreams. Two examples.
- 21.40 When I acted in the reality of the war I felt like a hero. When reality was different, surreal dreams, I felt like I was having a holiday.

- 22.12 - 22.44 The first is the reality of the war – the swamp, October. I would crawl in the swamp for the whole day. Yusov, director of photography, suggested that we have trousers made up to here (chest) from plastic to protect us from moisture. I thought it would work but once I was in the water it found its way in and I would squish in the cold water. Translate for now.
- 23.10 And I crawled in the water the whole day. Yusov was moving around the swamp on the trolley, on the boards. He was well dressed, and was warm. Suddenly, he noticed that I was blue. Simply blue. He asked me: "Kolja, are you cold?". I answered: "Yes". He replied: "You should pee. We would warm ourselves in this way in the army". And then he forgot about me. I will finish this thought. So he forgot. Then suddenly remembered, and asked: "So how are you? Have you already..?". I said: "Yes". (Yusov) "So how is it?". (Nikolai) "As cold as before!".
- 24.04 On the boards, on the rails.
- 24.40 - 25.28 This is the first joke. The second one. Ivan's dream that was in the last shot, where he is running along the sandy spit, in water towards the black tree. It was in August, holyday season. The first day of work. Beach. Everyone was swimming. We would film one take and then go straight into the water, into Dnepr. Andrei in a swimsuit as well. So he...The wife is killed...No...I mean...Wife...Ivan's mother is killed, and she was played by Andrei wife Irina. He said: "Let me douse her in water myself!". And he poured water over her, saying: "This is cheese! Oh, this is cheese! This will be Cheese Roquefort!". He used Cheese Roquefort as the highest definition.
- 26.11 - 26.64 **This is cheese, Roquefort. Oh! Beautiful.** And then in the evening, in the evening, we had dinner in Andrei's hotel room. His wife Irina was kind, and warm. Andron Konchalovsky would come from Moscow. This was close to Kiev. And they would sing songs by Gena Shpalikov and Volodya Visotsky. Andrei would take guitar and sing: "Ah, if I drown in the Western Dvina or will perish in some other way. The country would not mourn over me, but my friends will cry for me".
- 27.14 - 27.53 (Do you remember the premiere of the film?) I remember. It was on the 9th of may, in 1962. It was in the Tsentralny cinema, in Moscow next to the Pushkin's monument. The first screening on the Victory day. I remember that there was me, Andrei, Yusov, somebody else from the team, Genja Garikov, Valja Malevina, on the stage. Andrei, the director, was talking. Something long and confusing. And I was thinking: "What is he saying? What is it? This is too complicated for the audience. What are you doing Andrei? Keep it simple!".
- 27.56 - 28.29 Well, it is life. **This is life.** Yes, this is life, so let them drive. They will drive here...So, yes. And I was thinking that his talk was confusing. I was thinking: "What if they ask me, as the main character, to say something, what will I say? I am a stutterer, I stutter since childhood". And I remember the fear of being asked to speak. And my judgment of Andrei, that he was not talking very well. And for too long...
- 29.04 - 29.38 After that the film was taken to Italy, Venice. To the film festival. Both Andreis left. I

stayed in Moscow. I remember I was walking in town and....Then the newspapers were put on display. And I saw a photo of two Andreis with the two lions here. They were....

- 29.46 - 30.23 I have not completed my thought, yes...The photo of two smiling Andreis. Then they called me and said: "We brought to you the whole menagerie". The actress, Valja Baljavina, who was with them in Venice, told me that when it was announced that *Ivan's Childhood* by Tarkovsky is getting the principal prize, before going to the stage to get it he (Tarkovsky) kissed my photograph.
- 30.41 - 30.56 Now I consider this kiss of the photograph to be a confession of the fact that his intuition did not fail. That he made the right choice and his warrant did not let him down.
- 31.18 - 31.45 Then the film started traveling around the world. Everyone was traveling with the film except of me. I remember Andrei told me: "We are going to the film festival in San-Francisco". I went to Zaitsev, to Slava, (Note: Slava Zitsev is one of the biggest stylists and hairdressers in Russia) at the time he was still....We were acquaintances...And he made me, Slava made me, my first white suit. However, I still was not taken to America.
- 32.33 - 33.50 (Do you remember what Tarkovsky's speech after the premiere was about?) I don't remember. Something very long and confusing. But what? About what? I don't remember. (What was the response?) Astonishment. Regarding his speech. (No, response to the film). Aaaa, what kind of response? Stunning response. Good response. From everybody. And I remember the critics. Oh, the critics. I don't know how they did not ruin me. I remember they would pet the head of 14-15 year old me and said: "You are...You are a big artist. Listen your acting is...You are a genius. You are a genius". How can somebody say to a teenager that he is a genius? It is very dangerous. That is why child actors often do not become mature actors. Because after they suddenly become famous, what is next? After that you need to reaffirm (your talent) and grow. How can one grow if one is a genius already? So they drink, inject themselves and so on. How did I survive? I think it was a unique event.
- 34.15 - 34.27 Come a little bit closer to the camera because I always look that way. Both of you stand here. Because I am looking at you Katja. That is why....Like this.
- 34.34 - 35.13 (What did you do between *Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev*?) I worked on a lot of films. Five or six films. And Andrei was not pleased. He told me: "Kolja why do you act in this nonsense?". But I wanted. I was invited so I wanted to try again and again. So Andrei used to tell me: "Kolja, even if you starve, if you die out of hunger, you should never act in something that will make you feel ashamed later!". That is why he did not want to audition me for the role of Boriska in *Andrei Rublev*. It is another story. I will tell it now.
- 35.30 - 36.15 Yes, and then they brought me the screenplay of *Andrei Rublev* and I was offered to read the part that Andrei and Andron have written for me, Andrei Rublev's

apprentice Foma, who was later played by Misha Kononov. I did not like the role when I read it. I did not see it. I was an artist, I had main roles, and this...What is there to act? There is no text, no nothing. So when I got to the end (of the screenplay), to *The Bell* novella, the story shocked me, the same way *Ivan's Childhood* did. And I saw that this is mine. That this is what I want to play.

- 36.49 The sun is shining into the camera. Ask him. Because I can see the sun...Perhaps he should fix it?
- 37.04 - 37.31 Yes, and I auditioned for Foma. Without joy. But I had to since he made the part especially for me, so I had to try. And then I asked: "Andrei can you audition me for the Boriska's part?". He brushed me off: "No you are still young. You are young. I made this part for a different man. He is already 30 years old, he is a poet. You are too young. I wrote a part for you so play it!".
- 37.46 - 38.24 So I orchestrated a sort of military operation for his attack. Via Yusov things did not work out, he said no. Via Sava Jamchikov, the consultant...Andrei told him: "No, Kolja has become a celebrity. He is playing everywhere. It is over". Then Sava helped me. He made a bet with him: "Let's make a bet that you will approve Kolja for the role, because you won't find anyone better?". Andrei said: "Really? Ok". So they made a bet for a box of cognac. And Sava won.
- 39.02 For the box of cognac.
- 39.09 - 39.27 Sava won. Andrei made an audition for me and during the audition I noticed that he was eyeing me, then he started whispering something into my ear like during *Ivan's Childhood*. He began working with me. I felt very good, ah. I also won.
- 40.08 - 40.37 (What did you like about *The Bell* novella?) Everything. The main character's obsession with his dream to cast a bell. Because every man, Tarkovsky, me, has his own bell to cast. Everyone is casting his/her own bell, I felt it is my thing, that is why it inspired me. I like everything there. Every episode, every scene, every line. I did everything with a great joy.
- 40.55 - 41.23 As a matter of fact, now that I have cast my bell, I understand why I felt this way about this episode. Without prior knowledge whatsoever, I have established the biggest, one of the three biggest, film festivals in Russia. I am a president of the Golden Knight film festival. It is already 22 years old. Without prior knowledge I established it.
- 41.51 Also, once they complete the film they can send it to my film festival and it will be shown there. Translate.
- 42.15 - 42.57 (How did Tarkovsky work with you?) The most important thing for a director is to cast a right actor. And for many years I used to say that Tarkovsky does not work with actors. But now I wonder how come I thought he did not, when he did...Why do I play Tarkovsky? In *Ivan's Childhood*, Ivan is not me, he is Tarkovsky. In *Rublev*, Tolja

Solonitsin is Tarkovsky, not Andrei Rublev, not Tolja Solotinsin. And I, too, play Tarkovsky in *Andrei Rublev*. His movements, his nervousness, his aggression, his reaction. How did he do that? Translate this and then I will give an example.

- 43.23 - 44.18 His intonation. It was Andrei. I remember an episode in *Andrei Rublev*. I was about to play a difficult scene. Emotionally difficult. And Andrei was making fun behind the camera. He was walking around with a rubber syringe that is used for blowing on film inside the camera. He was using it to blow into Yusov's ear, the director of photography, and then he would laugh. Then he did it to his assistant, then to the runner. He was walking around toying. And laughing. I told him: "Andrei, I need to act now, work with me". And then he said so that the whole team could hear: "Do you know what Rene Claire answered when journalist asked him how does he work with actors? He said he does not work with them, he pays them money. You get your hundred rubles, so act!". Then he came to me and begun whispering something into my ear. That's it.
- 45.19 - 45.41 (What was he whispering to you?) I don't remember. Because it was on the level of individual phrases, bio-currents. I don't know. It is hard to remember now. But it was something that helped me. He said things that I needed to hear. He convinced me that I was on the right track, that that's how things had to be.
- 45.45 - 46.20 (Did he tell you straightforward phrases about the emotions you had to experience?) No, it was not something that was deployed through time. They were independent images. Something separated. Something that affected emotions. That affected the soul. But I remember that during *Ivan's Childhood*...When I was acting war scenes, he used to say: "You should understand that everyone who that boy had, died. The mother was killed right in front of his eyes. His sister, all his relatives. And now he is going avenge all of them". This I remember, yes.
- 47.06 - 48.12 (What did you think when you saw completed *Andrei Rublev*?) I assessed the film differently as time went by. When I saw the film for the first time, I thought: "This is too long. Andrei why are you doing this?". I never told him that but I would have shortened it. Because I thought it was too long. Only when I saw in for the fourth time in Leningrad, I understood that it was a brilliant film. I went there with Andrei. I came to pick him up from his home in Moscow. He was still in the robe, he was getting ready and sang all the time...yellow submarine...He was very joyful. Then he asked me: "What are you going to wear?". (Nikolai) "This". He said: "Kolja listen, you need some kind of jacket (suit jacket)". And so he gave me his jacket. I was wearing it when we presented the film. At that time, in Leningrad, I understood that the film was brilliant. It was the fourth time I saw it.
- 49.07 - 49.49 Furthermore, for many years I disliked the way I acted there. I am always very critical of what I do. For many years I looked at it and thought: "I am acting so badly! My God! I am displaying only 25 percent of my capabilities!". Actually, I assessed *Ivan's Childhood* in a similar way. That I am performing only 25 percent. I could do more. Now, however, I think that I could never act again the same way I did in *Ivan's Childhood*, and I still approach very critically my work for *Rublev*. The novella itself is

brilliant, but that's Tarkovsky.

- 50.24 - 50.35 If you watch the film *Master and Margarita* where I play the character of Jesus Christ, Ieshua Ga-Nozri, you'll see that there I display 90 percent of my capabilities.
- 50.48 - 51.29 As an actor, I was not convinced by any performance of Jesus in the world cinema. Not a single one. Whether it is Pasolini, Zeffirelli, or Mel Gibson. Well done but you can see that they are in costume. Beard, so to speak, acting. So when I went to see my performance I was very critical, thinking: "Now I will judge what right I had to play Jesus". It was the very first time I could not find anything to criticize. It was not me. Not my plasticity, speech, gait or intonation. But that is not related to our business.
- 52.11 - 52.28 (What was Moscow like when you were growing up?) It was different. It was my home town. Now it has become some sort of ostentatious third Rome. I don't feel at home there.
- 52.41 - 52.59 Contrary to now, there was no spectacular emptiness. At the time it was mostly the life of the spirit, it's life during difficult time. Difficult time for everybody. For Tarkovsky, for me, for my parents. Everybody. Difficult. But it was a wonderful time.
- 53.13 - 53.59 In the 60s, when Andrei created and I lived, Evil was less prominent in the life of my city or my country. Today, however, the presence of Evil can be felt everywhere. In advertisement, in television, oligarchs, politicians who are selling out the country so to speak. Evil everywhere. It was not like this back then. There was a country, unified nation. There was soul. There was Tarkovsky, Vysotsky.
- 55.16 - 56.20 (Was your generation afraid of the government?) Tarkovsky's case may show that this problem did not exist for him. He lived beyond barriers. Yes we all felt the oppression. And Tarkovsky felt the oppression of the censorship, though he knew how to cheat it. It was a game. Between Tarkovsky and the system. He lived beyond barriers. It is amazing. Absolutely. And he was an example for everyone that one can live that way. That one can confess in every film. One can make a film about icon artist, about God's man, about church, in the atheist Russia. It is a miracle that he was allowed to make such film. He lived beyond barriers. We all felt the oppression. Everybody felt it. But it is a different topic.
- 57.56 About dreams?
- 58.21 - 59.05 (Do you remember any of your dreams, fears or nightmares from the time you were working on the films?) I am not very interested in this topic because I don't remember my dreams. There is very little that I remember. That is why this topic is not very interesting. What did I dream about? Well, I dreamt of, as is common for many people, that I am being chased. It was very often. Constant pursuits. But these are the dreams from that time. I am more interested in talking about something else. About something that has to do not so much with the dreams but with another reality. I would talk about that.

- 59.40 - 01.00.15 Andrei Tarkovsky is a sacred soul (Note: he says God's soul), though he was not Orthodox. He was baptized as a baby. He was baptized in 1932. His relatives were not part of the Church. But his life was a journey towards the God. This is the most important thing. Let's talk about this now.
- 01.00.42-
01.01.24 He lived in two dimensions. In present and in another world. This is what shocked me about him. I noticed it during our first meeting. That it looks as if he is here, joking around and everything. He could crack jokes, court women, drink, smoke. Do everything. But at the same time I could see in his eyes that he is not here. That he is in another world. That he is absent. That here is just his shell, while he is there. He lived by that dimension. He knew that another world exists. And with his films he paved a road to that world.
- 01.02.07-
01.02.19 I have prepared a book about Tarkovsky for publishing. It is about his spiritual and religious orientation...In his life and in his art.
- 01.02.29-
01.02.48 Apart of my big article...It is a very big article there will be many new things, I will evaluate Andrei's art....There is also a number of other authors, who will evaluate Tarkovsky as a man of spirit and as a religious man.
- 01.03.02 The title of the book is a quote from Andrei Tarkovsky's diary: "Lord! I feel You drawing near".
- 01.03.23-
01.03.43 The key to Tarkovsky's study lies in his prayer to the God. I will quote it now. You can find it in his book-diary, it is there. But I will quote it now.
- 01.03.48 No, you do this now. Later I...It has to be very precise.
- 01.04.04-
01.04.32 "Lord! I feel You drawing near, I can feel Your hand upon the back of my head. Because I want to see Your world as You made it, and Your people as You would have them be. I love You, Lord, and want nothing else from You. This is Tarkovsky's prayer, all of him is in here. Here is his path to Lord".
- 01.05.01-
01.06.52 (About your last meeting with Tarkovsky) I met our dear director of photography, Yusov, in front of his house on the Miosfilmivskaja street. We went to a café, had a good amount to drink. And it was so that Yusov, while living in the same building with Andrei, had not seen him for five years. That they had not seen or met each other for five years. I, too, had not seen Andrei for five years. And since we both had a bit to drink I suggested: "Let's go see him!". He said: "Let's go!". And we went to see Andrei. Should I continue? I have not seen Andrei this angry. Well, he has always been rather rough but at that time he was aggressive to the limit. He attacked everybody. Bondarchuk, Gerasimov, Kulidgavanov. (Tarkovsky) "Everything is shit!" This one is shit, everyone...He was very aggressive. He said to me then: "Kolja, you could have become an artist. Good artist. With me. And now? You became a director, a poet...You read your poems at the Dom Tvorchesta". To Yusov he said: "And you? You could be a director of photography with me. And what are you doing now? You became a screenwriter. You wrote some sort of screenplay". And then, for the first

time, I said to Andrei...I objected: "Andrei, why do you chop the wings of your close ones?". And I remember Andrei's gaze, he did not answer, but changed. And when we parted he was the same old Andrei. I did not know that this was our last encounter. We hugged in the corridor and parted for good, until our meeting in eternity.

01.08.07-
01.08.58 And I did not answer your question about how did Andrei felt the oppression of the censorship after the completion of *Andrei Rublev*. I took him to my house. My Father made us some food. We were talking for a long time. And at that time I memorized two things Andrei said. This was the first phrase: "The level of film directing worldwide is so low that it won't take a lot of effort to rise above it. I know who I am. And you should know". It was addressed to me. And suddenly he said to my father and my brother: "You should get all relatives involved, they should all write letters to GOSKINO because it seems that the film *Rublev* will be banned. Write letters". Therefore he was very worried about the future of the film.

01.10.17-
01.11.16 (Why did Tarkovsky think that his film will be banned?) Well, he felt that there were many who wanted to banned the film. And I remember that we ended up at Surkov's house during one of the evenings, after finishing filming *Rublev*. He was the chief editor at GOSKINO then. And I remember how Andrei shocked me with the following thing. When we were at the house of Evgeny Donilich, drinking tea, Andrei was telling him: "You are our everything! You are a miracle! You...!". Well, yes. However, ones we were behind the door Andrei told me: "Shit! He won't do anything for the film!". He cursed him so much! And I was thinking: "How can you tell people one thing into their face, and then...". This shocked me. Well. This also happened.

01.12.09-
01.12.43 (The same question) The system as a whole prevented the appearance of such film. It was forbidden to show the domes of the churches. They were always cropped so that the cross would not be seen. This topic was banned. And suddenly there is a film, practically, about a saint. About Orthodox man. About icon painter. About church. About monastery. How was this approved? So Andrei realized that there was a threat. And there was a threat. The film was shelved for seven years.

01.13.18 This film should not have appeared at that time. But with God's help it did.

01.13.54 (What is your favorite episode in Tarkovsky's film?) In...In the films where I performed or in all of Tarkovsky's films?

01.14.11-
01.17.01 (In both) Difficult question. For me everything about *The Bell* novella in *Andrei Rublev* is precious. Everything from the first until the last shot. In *Ivan's Childhood* my favorite episodes were not the once where I had to cry. No. They were...Well, I have to recall everything now...Where Ivan is in real life, where he interacts with the officers of our army, with his friends. Where he is a child and a spy. Where he is uninhibited. These episodes. I love everything that Tarkovsky made. And now you don't have to translate because I will express the essence of my attitude towards Andrei's art. Well, if you can remember something. As a matter of fact, all of Andrei's films carry the same idea, the same theme. His soul has one song. Every director has

one song of the soul. And so Andrei sang this one song in all of his film. From *Ivan's Childhood* to *The Sacrifice*. And this main theme is sacrifice. In *Ivan's Childhood* - Ivan's, my character's, sacrifice. In *Rublev* - Boriska's, again my character's, sacrifice, who is under a threat of being killed by prince for laying and for failing to cast the bell. By a miracle, with the Gods help, he casted the bell. And then *Mirror*, *Stalker*, *Nostalgia* all of them about the sacrifice of the protagonist. The last film is even called *The Sacrifice*. This is Tarkovsky's main theme. The sacrificial nature of the man in this world. Similarly to the way Jesus went to crucifixion, Tarkovsky accepted the crucifixion of his life. He died when he was 54 years old. He was still a young man. He burned himself. Not least without the help of his entourage, that left him without his motherland, Andrei was a rare patriot... I saw few patriots as great as Andrei. And he died because he was left without his motherland. The lung cancer was killing him during the five-six years he was away from his motherland. He was torn off from his beloved Russia, he loved it (her) so much. He was cold in the West. In Italy everything is beautiful, architecture, buildings, but everything is foreign. Same with France, everything is beautiful but foreign. And the same everywhere. This is a very important part. Perhaps, this is the most important part

01.19.01

(Do you have photos with Tarkovsky from that time?) Now we are going to have tea and I will show you. If you have a usb flash drive I will copy them.