



# In the Fog

(V tumane)

Autumn  
Season  
2013

**Release:** 2012

**Cert (UK):** 12

**Language:** Russian with English sub-titles

**Runtime:** 125 mins

**Director:** Sergei Loznitsa

**Screenwriter:** Sergei Loznitsa from a novel by Vasili Bykov

**Cast:** Vladimir Svirskiy, Vladislav Abashin, Sergei Kolesov

The title of this film describes both the physical scenery and the mental state of the people involved. It is set in World War II Belarus in 1942, the scene of continual occupation by, first the Russians, then the Germans and then the Russians again, leaving the population reeling and trusting no-one. It is thought that up to three million people were killed by one side or the other (and by themselves), about a fifth of the population – the highest percentage of any country. The country during the war has been the scene of several films, including 'Katyn' which we showed in 2009.

The problem for any Belarussian, then, was how to survive; do you try to collaborate with the occupier of the moment, or fight against them? How do you



know what your neighbour is actually doing? *In the Fog* takes up this issue with a small group of partisans who cannot even trust each other. Who is a friend, who is an enemy? The ever-changing allies leave them 'in the fog'. The film concentrates especially on the moral complexities faced by one man, Sushenya, played by Vladimir Svirskiy.

Trusted by neither side, his battle to stay true to himself reminds us of Tolstoy or Dostoevsky.

This is the second feature film by Sergei Loznitsa, both of which have been nominated for the Palme D'Or at Cannes. His first film, 'My Joy', has not been released in Britain yet. Set in the forests of Belarus, this also gives his cinematographer Oleg Mutu great scope for some beautiful photography. Using long takes and muted colours he has succeeded so well that Philip French thinks 'he must now take his place as a leading figure in world cinema'. Keep your eyes open for the first scene which appears to be shot in one long take... We will see Mutu's work again later in the season in 'Beyond the Hills'.

