



FILM ON VALMINUD EESTI VABARIIGI TOET. SÜNNIPÄEVAKS

MOONIKA SIIMETSA FILM

# SELTSIMEES LAPS



THE LITTLE COMRADE  
ТОВАРИЩ РЕБЁНОК

# The Little Comrade

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INITIAL RELEASE: MARCH 23, 2018 (ESTONIA)

NOVEMBER 23, 2018 (FINLAND)

# Historical background

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➤ The film takes place in the 1950s.

It is the period after the WW2.

➤ Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union.

➤ Soviet deportations from Estonia were a series of mass deportations by the Soviet Union from Estonia:

- 1941

- 1945 –1951

# Historical background

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- The Estonian Internal Security Service has brought to justice several past organizers of these events.
- The deportations have been repeatedly declared to constitute a crime against humanity by
  - the Parliament of Estonia
  - acknowledged as such by the European Court of Human Rights.

# Historical background

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- People were deported to remote areas of the Soviet Union, predominantly to
  - Siberia and
  - northern Kazakhstan



Railroad cattle cars – means of transportation to Siberia

- Entire families, including children and the elderly, were deported without trial or prior announcement.
- Of March 1949 deportees, over 70% were women and children under the age of 16.

# Historical background

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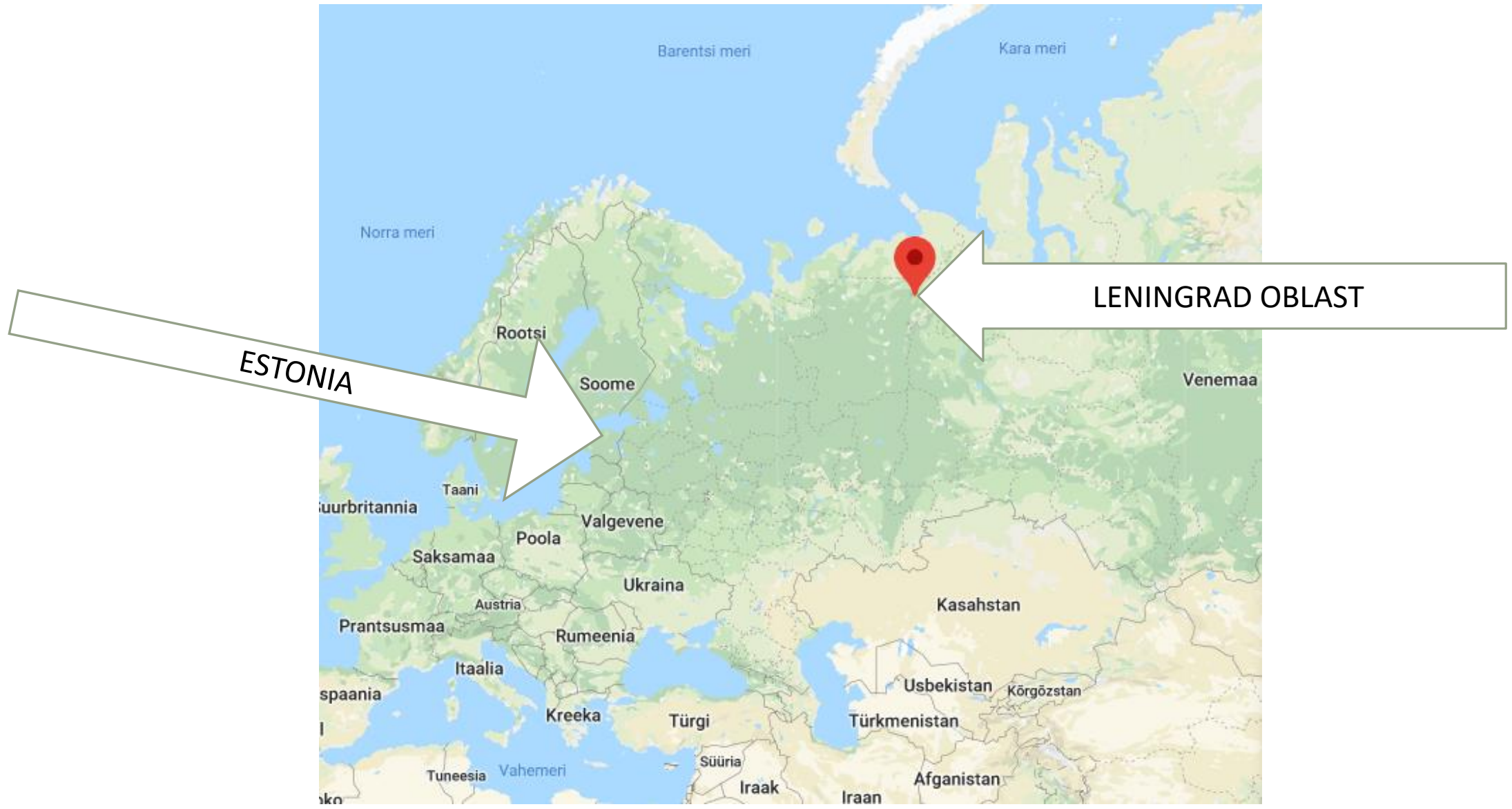
- The two largest waves of deportations:
  - June 1941
  - March 1949
  - simultaneously in all three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).
- The deportations targeted various categories of anti-Soviet elements and "enemies of the people":
  - nationalists,
  - bandits,
  - kulaks and others.



# Historical background

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- There were deportations based on nationality (Germans in 1945 and Ingrian Finns in 1947–1950) and religion (Jehovah's Witnesses in 1951).
- Estonians residing in the Leningrad Oblast had already been subjected to deportation since 1935.



# Main roles

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- Helena Maria Reisner- Leelo
- Tambet Tuisk- Feliks
- Eva Koldits- Helmes
- Juhan Ulfsak- Paul Varik
- Liina Vahtrik- Aunt Anne



# Supporting roles

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- Lembit Peterson – grandfather Robert
- Maria Klenskaja – grandmother Minna Katariina
- Julia Aug – Ljudmilla
- Argo Aadli – Ratsasõidu Jaan
- Maria Avdjuško – Makajeva
- Indrek Taalmaa – uncle Artur

# About film

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- The movie is based on the autobiographical novel written by the renowned Estonian writer, **Leelo Tungal**.
- It tells the story of the six-year-old Leelo, whose mother was sent to a Soviet prison camp.



# Characters

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➤ 6-year-old Leelo



➤ Leelo's father Feliks



➤ Leelo's mother Helmes



# Awards

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- BERLINALE - Berlin International Film Festival (Germany), 2016
- Locarno Festival (Switzerland), 2017
- Busan International Film Festival (South Korea), 2018
- Waterloo Historical Film Festival (Brussels, Belgium), 2018, **Critics Jury Prize, Best Actress - Helena-Maria Reisner, Grand Prix - Best Film**
- Nordic Film Days Lübeck (Germany), 2018



Waterloo Historical Film Festival (Brussels, Belgium), 2018



# Awards

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- The film festival held on Kimolo Island in Greece.
- 8 films from around the world competed in the festival - New Zealand, Tunisia, Turkey, Venezuela, Iran, Dominican Republic, Estonia and Hungary.
- According to the organizer, the competition programme selected the work of directors who can be described as "cinematic visionaries".

# Film makers

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➤ Director: Moonika Siimets



➤ Music composed by: Tõnu Kõrvits



➤ Producer: Riina Sildos



➤ Screenplay: Moonika Siimets

# Film making

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- The movie is based on the autobiographical novel written by the renowned Estonian writer, Leelo Tungal, and tells the story of the six-year-old Leelo.
- It took 5 years to make the film.
- It was quite difficult as it was impossible to create the atmosphere of Tallinn in 1950s.

<http://www.animationboss.net/seltsimees-laps-vfx-breakdown/>

# Different opinions on film

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## Cineuropa

- *The Little Comrade* is a beautiful portrait of a child and a father-daughter relationship. Delicately focusing on the hunt for traitors in the Soviet Union – which ruled until the death of Stalin in 1953 – and paying tribute to Estonian patriotism.

# The message of the film

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- It is about a person's will to defend their individuality and, on a national basis, to retain an identity.
- Do not lose hope.
- “The Little Comrade” is not just a film about the painful Soviet occupation and the cruel deportations ordered by Joseph Stalin that brutally broke many lives apart, but is also a tale about the preciousness of family, a haven where people help each other without judging.

# Trailer

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDzvbbt3k54>

10.30-16.15

THANK YOU

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