

# Film about Russia's war in Ukraine receives standing ovation in Cannes

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French actress Vanessa Paradis plays a war reporter in Šarūnas Bartas's film "Frost." The movie, which was partly filmed in Donbas, received a standing ovation in Cannes on May 23.

Photo by Luxbox Films

"Frost," a film by Lithuanian director Šarūnas Bartas featuring French actress Vanessa Paradis, received a standing ovation after its May 23 screening at the 49th Directors' Fortnight, an independent section held parallel to the Cannes Film Festival.

The general producer of Ukrainian film office Insight Media Volodymyr Filippov posted a [video](#) on his Facebook page on May 23 showing the Cannes audience standing up, applauding and chanting "bravo" non-stop for a couple of minutes at the end of the screening.

Insight Media worked on "Frost" alongside Lithuanian film production company Studija Kinema, French production company Kinoelektron, Polish film company Donten & Lacroix, and Ukraine's Tato Film.

The film tells a story of a young Lithuanian man Rokas (played by Mantas Janciauskas), who volunteers to drive a humanitarian aid truck to Donbas, where he goes with his girlfriend Inga (Lyja Maknaviciute) and where, amid shooting and death, they meet different war reporters, one of whom is played by Paradis.

The movie was filmed in Ukraine's war-affected towns of Kurakhove, Marinka and Krasnohrivka (sometimes as close as 200-300 meters to the frontline) as well as the peaceful settings of Kyiv and Dnipro in Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania.

"Some people call it crisis or something else, but it's a war, it's a real war, even though it's not officially declared to be such," Bartas said during the Q&A session after the press screening of the film, "It's easy to say who's wrong and who's right when you're far away. That's why our film crew of 30 people travelled to (the Donbas) where everything is in smoke and the shooting can start any minute."

Apart from Paradis and the Lithuanian protagonists, "Frost" features Polish actor Andrzej Chyra, Ukrainian soldiers playing themselves, Ukraine's Ministry of Defense spokesperson Vilen Pidhorny, and foreign and Ukrainian frontline journalists. Ukrainian film critic Andriy Alferov says "Frost" is like Russia's war against Ukraine through a foreigner's eyes.

"For the first time you can see a dirty frontline truth on the screen, something you could only encounter in private conversations before," Alferov said in a Facebook post on May 23, "Not an easy film, but truly a patriotic one."

French website Libération earlier [listed](#) "Frost" as one of the twenty must-watch films for 2017.

But some foreign film critics said the film focused on the characters too much, and not enough on the war in Ukraine.

Like the Cannes Film Festival itself, the Directors' Fortnight runs until May 28. Another partly Ukrainian-made film, "A Gentle Creature" by Serhiy Loznitsa, was presented in the main part of the 70th Cannes Film Festival on May 25.