

Press release**Rublyovka – Road to Bliss**

A documentary by Irene Langemann

Rublyovka Road is the traffic artery connecting the powerhouse Moscow with the Russian outback. At all times, the region bordering on Rublyovka has had always a magnetic attraction for the ruling elite classes: Tsars, dictators, presidents. Of course, also present-day head of state Putin resides here. In Putin's Russia, Rublyovka has become synonymous with wealth, social ascent and decadent lifestyles. Tell-tale signs of the past and gross excesses of Russian cutthroat capitalism have created a bizarre microcosm that does not have a parallel elsewhere in this giant empire. *Nouveau riche* upstarts have caused prices of properties on the Rublyovka to rocket sky-high. Now the fight for the last remaining pieces of land has broken out. The last remaining huts of the poor are swept aside to make way for the palaces of the wealthy by means that could not be any more unfair or brutal. The Russian State, celebrating an imperial comeback bolstered by petro-billions, has declared open season on the weak and poor. Like "Indians in their reservations", they feel. And hardly anyone dares to protest. No wonder. Rublyovka is a strictly guarded maximum security area, where many things are hushed up and kept under wraps. In spite of grudgingly granted filming permits, the film team was constantly harassed and threatened by the Russian security service FSB, traffic police and each and every security company. Many parts were filmed with a hidden camera. Nevertheless, the film was completed.

The camera follows losers and profiteers, rich and poor, the powerful and their string puppets through their daily lives, in which the social divide has become increasingly wide. The film draws a social portrait of present-day Russia, in which Putin's "steered democracy" increasingly assumes dictatorial features.