

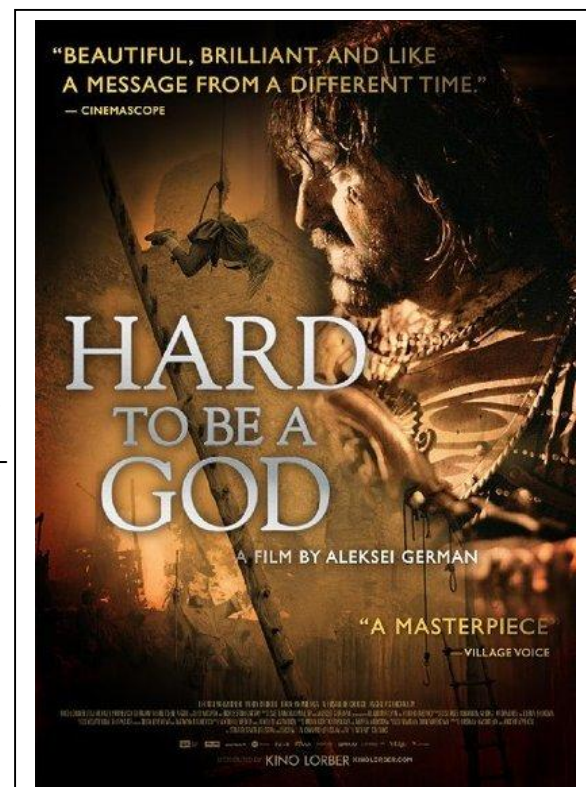


HARD TO BE A GOD

Spring
Season
2016

Release: 2013
Cert (UK): 18
Runtime: 177 mins
Director: Aleksey German
Screenwriters: Arkadiy and Boris Strugatsky
Cast: Leonid Yarmolnik

The past is another planet – they do things differently there. This monochrome dream-epic of medieval cruelty and squalor is a non-sci-fi sci-fi; a monumental, and monumentally mad film that the Russian film-maker Alexei German began working on around 15 years ago. It was completed by his son, Alexei German Jr, after the director's death in 2013. If ever a movie deserved the title folie de grandeur it is this, placed before audiences on a take-it-or-leave-it basis: maniacally vehement and strange, a slo-mo kaleidoscope of chaos and also a relentless prose poem of fear, featuring three hours' worth of non-sequitur dialogue, where each line is an imagist stab with nothing to do what has just been said.



This is a true cinematic experience – a world perpetually locked in the Middle Ages: “a world beset with tyranny and factional wars between groups called “Blacks” and “Greys”. In the midst of this, what looks like an imperious baronial chieftain called Don Rumata, played by Leonid Yarmolnik, walks with relative impunity: this sovereignty is based on his claim to be descended from a god.” – Peter Bradshaw