

A Film by GEORGE MENDELUK

# BITTER HARVEST



## Starring

Max Irons

Samantha Barks

Barry Pepper

Tamer Hassan

with Terence Stamp

## Synopsis

Based on one of the most overlooked tragedies of the 20th century, *Bitter Harvest* is a powerful story of love, honor, rebellion and survival as seen through the eyes of two young lovers caught in the ravages of Joseph Stalin's genocidal policies against Ukraine in the 1930s. As Stalin advances the ambitions of communists in the Kremlin, a young artist named Yuri (Max Irons) battles to survive famine, imprisonment and torture to save his childhood sweetheart Natalka (Samantha Barks) from the "Holodomor," the death-by-starvation program that ultimately killed millions of Ukrainians. Against this tragic backdrop, Yuri escapes from a Soviet prison and joins the anti-Bolshevik resistance movement as he battles to reunite with Natalka and continue the fight for a free Ukraine.

Filmed on location in Ukraine, this epic love story brings to light one of the most devastating chapters of modern Europe. The stellar cast also includes Barry Pepper, Tamer Hassan and Terence Stamp. Director George Mendeluk co-wrote the screenplay with Richard Bachynsky-Hoover based on Bachynsky-Hoover's original story. The film is produced by Ian Ihnatowycz, Stuart Baird, George Mendeluk, Chad Barager and Jaye Gazeley. Dennis Davidson, Peter D. Graves and William J. Immerman serve as executive producers. Richard Bachynsky-Hoover is executive producer (Ukraine). The film will be released in Canada by dFilms on March 3, 2017.

## Cast

**MAX IRONS (Yuri)** has seized the industry's attention with his impressive body of work, which spans television, film and stage. With several exciting projects coming up, the next few months promise to firmly establish him as an international acting presence to watch. Irons is currently in Glasgow working on independent feature *The Wife*, written by Jane Anderson and based on Meg Wolitzer's 2013 novel of the same name. Björn Runge directs and Irons stars opposite Glenn Close, Jonathan Pryce, Frances McDormand and Christian Slater.



**SAMANTHA BARKS (Natalka)** garnered rave reviews for her performance as the iconic Eponine in *Les Misérables*, directed by Tom Hooper and co-starring Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe, Eddie Redmayne, Amanda Seyfried and Anne Hathaway. For the role she received the Breakout Award at *Glamour's* Women of the Year Awards, Best Female Newcomer at the Empire Awards and the Spotlight Award at the Hollywood Film Festival. She was nominated for Young British Performer of the Year by the London Critics Circle.



**BARRY PEPPER (Yaroslav)** is one of Hollywood's most talented actors and has amassed an impressive body of work. Ever since he gained critical attention for his portrayal of Private Jackson in the Academy Award<sup>®</sup>-winning feature *Saving Private Ryan*, Pepper has been sought out for compelling roles with award-winning filmmakers. Pepper's starring role in Billy Crystal's critically acclaimed HBO film "61\*" earned him Golden Globe, Emmy and Critic's Choice nominations. The film tells the story behind the competition between the New York Yankees' Roger Maris (Pepper) and Mickey Mantle (Thomas Jane) to break Babe Ruth's single-season home-run record in 1961.



**TAMER HASSAN (Sergei, Co-Producer)** has appeared in more than 70 feature films including Nick Love's acclaimed "soccer hooligan" film *The Football Factory*, with Danny Dyer; Matthew Vaughn's thriller *Layer Cake*, alongside Daniel Craig, and Vaughn's superhero satire *Kick-Ass*, with Nicolas Cage.

**TERENCE STAMP (Ivan)** has, in a career spanning six decades, mesmerized generations with his thespian magic and all-around artistic sensibility. From the big screen to the small screen and the stage, with voice-overs and books in between, he has delighted, dazzled and persevered. Now, 50 years after his cinematic breakthrough, Stamp continues to entice with his riveting portrayals. Most recently, he was reunited with director Tim Burton on the fantasy adventure *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*. Stamp recently wrapped shooting on the feature *Crooked House*, co-starring Glenn Close, Gillian Anderson and Christina Hendricks.



### About the Principal Producer

**IAN IHNATOWYCZ** is the financier and a principal producer of the epic romance, *Bitter Harvest*. This is his first venture into the film industry. It is a project close to his heart as the tale sheds light on one of the 20th century's greatest tragedies: Joseph Stalin's brutal and deliberate starvation of the Ukrainian people in 1932-1933, an act of genocide which to this day remains shrouded in secrecy and misinformation. Being a first generation Canadian of Ukrainian descent, Ian grew up with a first-hand knowledge of Stalin's Reign of Terror through the stories of his grandparents who left Ukraine in the 1940s, his heritage fuelling his passion for this project.

Toronto based, Mr. Ihnatowycz is an entrepreneur with over 30 years of experience in the investment management industry. Formerly Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Acuity Investment Management Inc. and Acuity Funds Ltd., Acuity was the first Canadian advisor to the United Nations on the integration of environmental, social and governance factors within investment management. Acuity Funds was the recipient of numerous awards for investment performance. Following the sale of Acuity in 2011, Mr. Ihnatowycz founded First Generation Capital Inc., which has investments in a number of cutting edge medical, biotech and hightech companies. It also incubates new ventures, backing the next generation of entrepreneurs.

An established philanthropist in his communities, Mr. Ihnatowycz also actively participates on the Boards of a number of not-for-profit institutions in the areas of arts and education, including: founder and member of the Advisory Board of the Ihnatowycz Institute for Leadership at Ivey; the Advisory Board of the Ivey Business School; and, member of the Board of Directors of the Royal Conservatory of Music. He was also a major donor toward the rebuilding of the Royal Conservatory of Music with the Ihnatowycz Hall a living testimony to his generosity.

Mr. Ihnatowycz's honorary distinctions include: Fellow of the Royal Conservatory of Music (2007); Hon. Doctor of Philosophy, Ukrainian Free University, Munich (2009); and, Honorary Doctor of Laws, Western University (2013).

## Canadian Release Activity

➤ **General Release Date:** Friday, March 3rd 2017 **Across Canada:**

- Can be viewed in:**
- **Vancouver**
  - **Edmonton**
  - **Calgary**
  - **Regina**
  - **Saskatoon**
  - **Winnipeg**
  - **Windsor**
  - **London**
  - **Toronto**
  - **Thunder Bay**
  - **Kingston**
  - **Montreal**
  - **Halifax**