Hanna Paulouskaya, "Entry on: Icarus and Sages [Икар и мудрецы (Ikar i mudretsy)] by Fyodor Khitruk", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/43. Entry version as of July 13, 2026.

Fyodor Khitruk

Icarus and Sages [Икар и мудрецы (Ikar i mudretsy)]

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1976)

TAGS: Icarus Latin (Language)

We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Icarus and Sages [Икар и мудрецы (Ikar i mudretsy)]
Country of the First Edition	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)
Country/countries of popularity	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Original Language	Russian and Latin
First Edition Date	1976
First Edition Details	*Икар и мудрецы* [Icarus and Sages (Ikar i mudretsy)]. Directed and written by Fyodor Khitruk. Music by Sándor Kallós. Moskva: Soyuzmultfilm, 1976.
Running time	8 min 6 sec
Date of the First DVD or VHS	The movie is available now in a DVD edition of collection of animations called Волшебные крылья [The Magic Wings], released by Soyuzmultfilm in 2005 (http://www.ozon.ru/context/detail/id/2647323/?item=2642827).
Available Onllne	The movie is available on the official "Soyuzmultfilm" youtube channel (accessed: August 17, 2018).
Genre	Animated films, Hand-drawn animation (traditional animation)*, Humor, Short films
Target Audience	Children (6+)
Author of the Entry	Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

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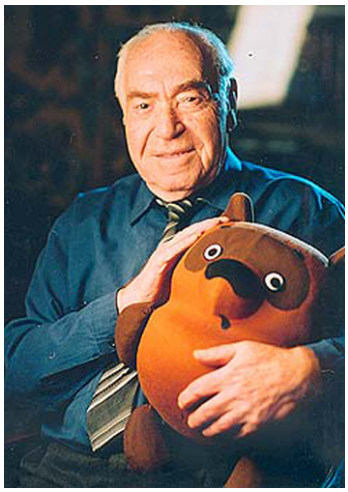
Creators



Courtesy of the project www.kino-teatr.ru (accessed: June 28, 2018).

Fyodor Khitruk , 1917 - 2012
(Animator, Director)

Fyodor Khitruk was an outstanding Russian and Soviet animator, animation director, screen writer, pedagogue, and translator. He made movies for children as well as for adults. His first movie *История одного преступления* (A Story of One Crime, 1962) is perceived as the beginning of the new wave in Soviet animation. His most famous movies for children are his Winnie-the-Pooh series. He is also famous for *Остров* (An Island, 1973), *Фильм, фильм, фильм* (Film, Film, Film, 1968), *Человек в рамке* (A Man in a Frame, 1966). He taught for many years on courses for directors and has created a school of Russian animation.

Fyodor Khitruk was awarded by many orders and won many competitions.

Bio prepared by Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl

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Additional information

Summary

The movie tells the story of Icarus who lives among the sages. “All his neighbours, clever men, have already found their place in life and dedicated their leisure to philosophical conversations. […] And this one was… an eccentric.” During the movie Icarus tries to fly many times and falls watched by the eyes of the clever men, who tell him Latin proverbs. These “unquestionable truths” written on monuments tumble on fallen Icarus from heaven. Nevertheless Icarus tries again using new contraptions.

At some point a miracle happens and Icarus flies (colour is added to the movie, and calm music changes into a solemn one). But the proverb (“Bene qui stat non moveatur”) finds him in the sky and makes him fall. First, the letters of the proverb are written on clouds (on black clouds), they gather in one huge dark mass squeezing Icarus between them. Afterwards the cloud is transformed into a black monument inscribed with the proverb; the monument falls burying Icarus beneath.

Schoolchildren with teachers come to the monument and recite proverbs in Latin. But among the pupils there is one curious boy who looks at the sky and around, and who, after finding Icarus’s feathers, makes his own wings. The boy attempts to fly; in the background we hear Icarus’ flight theme.

Analysis

The movie is based on the contradiction of scholastic dogmatic knowledge and curiosity. It may be interpreted as a metaphor of school and growing up, and in a broader sense as a symbol of life with open eyes and courage. Although Soviet authorities during the whole history of the regime wanted to educate and discipline students, at the same time, pathos of discoveries and fearlessness were always present in the educational discourse. It is hard to say whether it was a cartoon addressed to some real situation or whether the movie aimed to invoke a spirit of freedom and enlightenment. In any case the atmosphere of the movie invites the viewer to become Icarus and not to be afraid of falling.

In a late interview, Fëdor Khitruk said that he regretted adding a happy ending to the movie. He would have preferred to finish with the

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black monument standing where Icarus fell. He said that he did not have enough courage to promote this ending.*

*Khitruk, Fëdor [Хитрук, Фёдор], *Профессия аниматор* [The Profession of Animator (Professiia animator)], t. 1, Moskva: Gaiatri, 2008, 180–181.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Icarus Latin (Language)
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Coming of age Disobedience Invention Learning School Success and failure
Further Reading	Khitruk, Fëdor [Хитрук, Фёдор], *Профессия аниматор* [The Profession: Animator (Professiia animator)], t. 1, Moskva: Gaiatri, 2008, 175–183. Director's bio at kino-teatr.ru (accessed: August 17, 2018). Profile at kinopoisk.ru (accessed: August 17, 2018). Profile at animator.ru (accessed: August 17, 2018).

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