Hanna Paulouskaya, "Entry on: The Argonauts / Colchis [არგონავტები / Колхида (Argonavtebi / Kolkhida)] by Shalva Azmaiparashvili, Lado (Vladimir) Gudiashvili, Lado (Vladimir) Mujiri", 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/60. Entry version as of November 05, 2026.

Shalva Azmaiparashvili , Lado (Vladimir) Gudiashvili , Lado (Vladimir) Mujiri

The Argonauts / Colchis [არგონავტები / Колхида (Argonavtebi / Kolkhida)]

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1936)

TAGS: Argonauts Golden Fleece Jason Medea





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

General information	
Title of the work	The Argonauts / Colchis [არგონავტები / Колхида (Argonavtebi / Kolkhida)]
Studio/Production Company	Georgia Film Studio / Goskinprom Gruzii
Country of the First Edition	Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)
Country/countries of popularity	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Original Language	Georgian, Russian
First Edition Date	1936
First Edition Details	არგონავტები / *Колхида* [The Argonauts / Colchis (Argonavtebi / Kolkhida)]. Directed by Lado Mujiri. Tbilisi, 1936.
Running time	10 min
Genre	Animated films, Black and white films*, Hand-drawn animation (traditional animation)*, Short films
Target Audience	Crossover (6+)
Author of the Entry	Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

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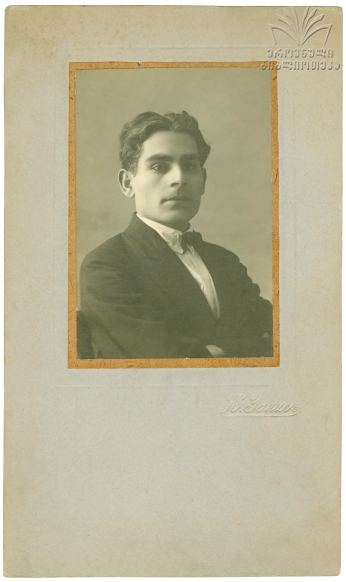
Creators



Shalva Azmaiparashvili , 1902 - 1957
(Composer)

Shalva Azmaiparashvili (შალვა აზმაიფარაშვილი, Шалва Азмайпарашвили) was a Georgian and Soviet composer and conductor. He worked at theatre and radio. In 1943-53 Azmaiparashvili was the principal conductor of the Georgian radio symphonic orchestra. From 1943 he was the principal conductor of the Georgian State Symphonic Orchestra, from 1954 became its director.

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



Lado (Vladimir) Gudiashvili , 1896 - 1980
(Artist)

Lado Gudiashvili (ლადო გუდიაშვილი, Ладо Гудиашвили) was one of the most prominent Georgian artists of the 20th century. He studied at the Tiflis School of Fine Arts and Sculpture (1910–1914), was a part of futurist movement, then lived in Paris, studying at the Académie Ronson (1919–1926), going into “La Ruche” residence together with Amedeo Modigliani, Natalia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov and others. His early works were based on medieval Georgian traditions and French symbolism. He was very fond of Caucasian and Persian traditional art. Gudiashvili worked in different styles and techniques. He returned to Soviet Georgia in 1926.

Photograph of Lado Gudiashvili in Paris, in 1925 by Konstantin Zanisi; it is in public

After the return to the USSR Lado Gudiashvili was accepted by the Soviet authorities and even decorated with a badge of honour in 1937. However in 1945 he was expelled from the Communist Party and fired from his teaching position at the Academy of Arts for making frescoes

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domain and available from Russian Wikipedia and the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia (accessed: July 2, 2018).

for the Kashveti Church in Tbilisi. In 1958, he once again became an honourable member of society and received the Lenin's Order and other decorations.

Source:

Official website (accessed: July 2, 2018).

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



Lado (Vladimir) Mujiri , 1907 - 1953
(Animator, Director)

Lado Mujiri (ლადო მუჯირი, Владимир Муджири, Vladimir Mudzhiri) was a pioneer of Georgian animation. He studied at the Georgian Academy of Arts and began working in film in 1929, becoming the director of Georgia's first animation studio at the Georgian State Film Industry (SakhKinMretsvi). His first feature animated film was *The Argonauts* (Argonavtebi) produced in 1936. According to the database *Kino-teatr.ru* (accessed: February 21, 2019) he made 15 animation movies from 1930 to 1952.

Sources:

Sergei Asenin, *Волшебники экрана* [The Magicians of the Screen], Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1974, 257.

Lali Gorgaslidze, Lia Beruashvili, and Giannalberto Bendazzi, "Georgia", in Bendazzi, *Animation. The World History*. Vol. 1: *Foundations – The Golden Age*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016,

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177–178.

Jimshir Mujiri, ‘მოგონებები შემოქმედსა და მამაზე’ [Mogonebebi Šemok‘medsa da Mamaze; Memories of the Creator and the Father], კინო [Kino; Cinema], 1988, 1: 53–69; 2: 76–93; 3: 79–107.

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

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Additional information

Summary

This is a black and white silent film with intertitles and music. It relates the feats of the Argonauts which are presented as the draining of the Colchis valley and a war with mosquitoes.

The film starts with a quotation from Lavrentiy Beria: “LET US GIVE LEMONS, TANGERINES AND ORANGES TO THE TABLE OF THE WORKING OF THE SOVIET COUNTRY.”

A young man and a girl dressed in Georgian national costumes sit under a tree having a picnic with shashlik. The man plays music, the girl sings. They are Jason and Medea.

The intertitles say:

“COLCHIS WAS RICH IN THE GOLDEN FLEECE SINCE A LONG TIME”
“WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT TASK — TO DRAIN WHOLE COLCHIS!”
“BLACK-EYED MEDEA WAS ATTRACTED BY THE GOLDEN FLEECE”
“AND JASON, BURNING WITH LOVE, PROMISED HER TO GIVE HER ALL COLCHIS”

Jason and Medea start a journey. They put their belongings on a donkey that accompanies them. We see changing Georgian landscapes. There are some obstacles on their way — they have to cross a river and make a catapult to do it.

The real problems start when the couple comes to malaria swamps.

“MOSQUITOS WATCHES PROTECT FORESTS AND SWAMPS”
“AND NOBODY DARES TO ENTRY THE MALARIAN GATES”

Afterwards we see a march of warrior mosquitoes and a war between on the one hand mosquitoes and toads and, on the other hand, Jason and Medea. Medea is captivated like a lady in a silent film should be. But Jason saves her and wins the enemy army with help of a digger.

“AND JASON SLASHED THE ENEMY IN THE FATAL, BLOODY ENCOUNTER”
“A DIGGER RUN BOLDLY TO HELP THE FRIEND”

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After the victory, Jason gives Medea the Fleece and a citrus which is hidden inside it.
Medea eats the fruit and they start to sow fields and to plant vineyards. Time goes by and the land gives plentiful crops. Medea and Jason dance happily near trees full of crops.

The film ends with a kiss of the characters.

Analysis

The film is extremely important, because it is probably the first animation on a Greek mythology topic made in the Soviet Union, and it was the first ever Georgian animation film. The topic of the Argonauts was used often in the Soviet cinema, because of its connection with one of the territories of the USSR (Georgia). Other Soviet productions on this topic are *The Argonauts*, dir. A. Snezhko-Blotskaia, 1971, *The Argonauts or A Merry Chronicle of a Dangerous Voyage*, dir. E. Ginzburg, 1986.

Lado Mujiri's film is produced in the style of early Soviet propaganda animations glorifying achievements of industry and agriculture. It contains elements of Georgian tradition: costumes, songs, and customs.

The production of this cartoon in 1930s Georgia and its use in propaganda prove that the myth was known to a wide audience and was perceived as belonging to the traditional culture. This historical period was difficult for Georgians because of repressions and ideological struggle. Due to the propaganda character of the film, we may suppose that Jason and Medea may symbolize Bolsheviks, who work on renewal of Soviet Georgia.

The atmosphere of the cartoon is cheerful and glorious. The drawings were made by one of the most famous Georgian artists, Lado Gudiashvili.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Argonauts Golden Fleece Jason Medea

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Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Animals Environment Heroism Propaganda War

Further Reading

Asenin, Sergei [Асенин, Сергей], Волшебники экрана [Wizards of the Screen (Volshebniki ėkrana)], Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1974, 256–257.

Bakhtadze, Vakhtang [Бахтадзе, Вахтанг], “Идти собственным путем” ["To go one's own way" ("Idti sobstvennym putëm")], in Sergei Asenin [Сергей Асенин], ed., *Мудрость вымысла* [The Wisdom of Fiction (Mudrost' vymysla)], Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1983, 45–49.

Kapkov, Sergei [Капков, Сергей], ed., Энциклопедия отечественной мультипликации [The Encyclopaedia of National Aniomation (Ėntsiiklopediia otechestvennoĭ multiplikatsii)], Moskva: Algoritm, 2006, 454.

Ginzburg, Semion, *Рисованный и кукольный фильм. Очерки развития советской мультипликационной кинематографии* [Drown-on and Stop-motion Film. Essays on History of Soviet Animated Cinematography (Risovannyĭ i kukolnyĭ film. Ocherki razvitiia sovetskoĭ multiplikatsionnoĭ kinematografii)], Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1957, 150, 242.

Profile at kinopoisk.ru (accessed; August 17, 2018).

Addenda

The Remaining Production Credits:

Screenwriter L. Gugushvili; Music by Shalva Azmaiparashvili; Cinematography by Liubov Kvaliashvili, M. Tservadze; Animators Lado Gudiashvili, Tz. Gozdanov, M. Khubashvili, Revaz Mirzashvili, N. Sulava.

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