

# Living Life: Alexandra Dahlström



**“One must not think they understand Russia. There is a possibility. You don't need to be afraid of submaries, alcoholism, concrete houses and fur hats.”**

When director and actress Alexandra Dahlström was little she believed that she and her mother had their own secret language. When they wanted to tell secrets on the subway they would switch from their Swedish language to Russian and were protected by its Slavic melodies. Therefore it came as a surprise when she was only five-years-old and visited Russia for the first time and their secret language was spoken everywhere. In the fifth episode of Sony's and Rodeo's Podcast “Live the Life” she tells Jenny Seth about when her parents met in the former Soviet Union, on the political hopeless she sees in many Russians and how both her language and her professional life has been affected by being second generation immigrants.

**Bonus Material – Alexandra's five favourite Russian movies:**

1. **Obyknovennoe Chudo (An Ordinary Miracle) by Mark Zakharov, 1978** - “A bear has turned into a man against his will by a bored magician. All he wants is to be a bear again, but he can only get it on one condition; by a kiss from someone he loves. But he is doomed to lose their

love if the curse is not lifted. This magic realism in the Caucasian desert, a modern Sleeping Beauty Tale of the world's best soundtrack. *An Ordinary Miracle* was my favourite movie when I was little because it has everything: grand theatre scenography, blizzards, young love and highly symbolic language from the late seventies.”

2. **Ironia Sudbi (The Irony of Fate) by Eldar Ryazanov, 1975** - “New Year's Eve 1975. Five friends start the evening off according to tradition by having some drinks together. Two of them get into way too much vodka. Zhenya is newly engaged on his way home to celebrate with his new fiancée and Sasha is flying to St. Petersburg to meet his girlfriend. Both Zhenya and Sasha pass out, and general confusion ensues causing Zhenya to end up on the flight instead. When he wakes up in St. Petersburg, he believes he is in Moscow. Without suspecting anything, he takes a taxi home, and the street, the building, his key and the lock are all of the same gray, Soviet default, everything is the same. Zhenya enters the apartment without difficulty, throws his clothes on the floor, crawls into bed and falls deeply asleep. When he wakes up, he meets the apartment's actual owner Nadya who is annoyed and tries to throw him out before her husband gets home. But fate wants something else. This rom-com is shown on Russian television every New Year's eve.”
3. **Nostalgia by Andrey Tarkovsky, 1983** - “My absolute favourite Russian actor goes to my absolute favourite country, Italy, and befriends a Swedish icon, Erland Josephson. Overwhelmingly beautiful scenery and meditative narrative, to see this movie feels like standing in a forest when a drizzle is falling.”
4. **Chelovek Amfibia (Amphibian Man) by Gennady Kazanskij, 1962** - “Ihtiander is a successful result of complex research. He has both gills and lungs and divides his time between land and sea. One day he saves a girl who is drowning and they fall in love. But a bad tradesman who wants to marry her does everything to prevent their love. Glittering, fabulous underwater photography from the early sixties.”
5. **Kavkaskaya Plennitsa (Kidnapping, Caucasian Style) by Leonid Gaidai, 1967** - “This is part of a comedy series about Shurik who gets involved in a kidnapping drama of a young bride. Shurik is manipulated by a bunch of comic villains and meets the love of her life. Sun, slapstick and action!”



Photo: Martha Thisner

*Living life is a series of interviews by Sony and Rodeo digging into our favourite people's less well-known interests. Next segments will be on March 4<sup>th</sup>.*

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