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KARAGANDA: RED MAFIA Releases on over 100 Screens in the Russian Federation, Beginning January 30th, 2025

Filmmaker Max Weissberg Explores the Complexities of One of the World's Most Notorious Criminal Organizations

(Moscow, Russia) —January 30, 2025-- ***KARAGANDA: RED MAFIA*** is set for its highly anticipated Russian Federation release in over 100 cinemas in 58 cities throughout the Russian Federation. This follows the film's premiere in Russia at the 46th Moscow International Film Festival in 2024, which Max Weissberg attended and also served as a member of the short film jury.

Written and directed by **Max Weissberg**, **KARAGANDA: RED MAFIA** stars **Konstantin Lavysh** (*Room 104*, *Power Book IV: Force*) as Vladimir, **Nikita Bogolyubov** (*Zero Day*, *Barry*) as Aleksei, **Dimiter D. Marinov** (*Green Book*, *For All Mankind*) as Vanya, **Natasha Blasick** (*Paul T. Goldman*) as Elena, **Richie Stephens** (*Mayor of Kingston*) as Lyosha, **Alexander Karavay** (*The Unusual Suspects*) as Monya, and **Irina Dubova** (*The Perfect Couple*) as Masha.

Set in the shadowy underworld of the Vory v Zakonye (Thieves-in-Law), an elite criminal organization with roots dating back to czarist Russia, the film follows Vladimir, a Russian gangster in the 1990s. After a violent shootout at a Russian airbase, he becomes embroiled in a deadly mafia war that forces him to confront an old friend from their time in Soviet prison camps. This encounter sets him on a harrowing journey to rescue his wife from within the brutal Soviet penal system.

The film has been dubbed into Russian for its Russian release and has a shorter run time than its American version. In Moscow, the film will screen at the Karo Cinemas throughout the city. Neotonix, Inc is handling the local release.

“Considering the political situation, I am surprised as anyone that a film like ours was approved by officials in the Russian Federation for wide release,” explained Max. “My hope is that if we can make a deal with Russia, so can Trump.”

Not only does the film include Ukrainian actors, it also had Bruce Alan Greene as an additional photographer. Greene was the cinematographer behind such Zelensky films as *ME. YOU. SHE. HE, LOVE IN THE BIG CITY, THE 8 BEST DATES* and many others.

“Though our team consisted of a diverse set of people who disagreed on political matters, we were able to work peacefully towards a common goal,” Max said.

The story of **KARAGANDA: RED MAFIA** began to take shape while Weissberg was studying abroad in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2004. While outlining the screenplay, Weissberg experienced a personal tragedy when his sister Nicole disappeared in the 2004 tsunami in Thailand. This profound loss is mirrored in the emotional core of the film, where the protagonist’s desperate search for his wife reflects Weissberg’s own grief. In 2008, Max began his career in the film business telling the tragic story of his family in *HOTEL GRAMERCY PARK*, a documentary that included cameos from Ben Stiller, Kanye West, Karl Lagerfeld, and Jared Leto.

KARAGANDA: RED MAFIA is inspired by **Weissberg’s** award-winning thesis film, **KARAGANDA (2014)**, filmed at the American Film Institute, which won five awards across 26 film festivals. The feature version expands on the original narrative, delving deeper into themes of loyalty, power, and survival within one of the world’s most infamous criminal organizations.

KARAGANDA: RED MAFIA is produced by Nina Gortinski and Max Weissberg, with executive producers Sameer Dua, and Ego Mikitas, and co-producers by George Hume and Gregory Oelke. The film was lensed by cinematographer Derrick Jacinto Cohan.

Link to purchase tickets in the Russian Federation: https://taplink.cc/cinemaus_studio

For more information, visit the official websites:

- www.karagandafilm.com
- www.luftmenschfilms.com

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