

Soyuzmultfilm Wins Back Cartoon Rights

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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After 10 years of court disputes, Soyuzmultfilm regained the rights to the international distribution of its cartoons.

The Moscow Arbitration Court declared void a contract between OAO Soyuzmultfilm and U.S. firm Films by Jove, which received the rights to distribute 1,500 Soviet cartoons in 1992, said Vasily Shilnikov, chief executive of Obyedinennaya Gosudarstvennaya Kinokollektsia, the new name of Soyuzmultfilm.

In 1992, the co-owners of Films by Jove, actor Oleg Vidov and Joan Borsten, paid \$700,000 to OAO Soyuzmultfilm for the rights to distribute Soviet cartoons abroad for 10 years. Two years later, in exchange for returning the rights for part of the collection, the agreement was extended by another 20 years.

In 2003, a judge gave FGUP Soyuzmultfilm, as the legal successor to the OAO, the rights to the whole collection. The FGUP immediately filed suit against the OAO and Films by Jove, saying that since OAO Soyuzmultfilm was a leased enterprise, created in 1989 for 10 years, it did not

have the right to conclude any agreements lasting past 1999, the FGUP's lawyer Alexander Papenkov said.

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