Russian Artyom Bystrov Named Best Actor at Locarno Film Festival

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 18, 2014

Bystrov won the best actor award.

Russian actor Artyom Bystrov was named best actor at the annual Locarno Film Festival held in the Swiss city of the same name.

Bystrov was recognized for his role in "The Fool" by Russian director Yury Bykov, ITAR-Tass reported. The film revolves around an ordinary, honest plumber Dima Nikitin, played by Bystrov, who finds himself fighting an entire corrupt system of bureaucrats in order to save the lives of 800 inhabitants of a dormitory that is on the brink of collapsing.

The film was recognized as one of the major hits of the Locarno Film Festival, which finished Saturday, even if it did lose out to the marathon 5 1/2-hour Philippine film "From What Is Before" directed by Lav Diaz, for the prestigious Golden Leopard prize.

Only two films in Russian have taken the top prize at the festival. Prominent Soviet film

director Grigory Alexandrov took the prize in 1953 for "Glinka," and Svetlana Proskurina won in 1990 for "The Accidental Waltz."

The global sales rights to "The Fool" have been quickly snapped up by Berlin production company M–Appeal, ITAR–Tass reported.

Success for the director Bykov comes just over a year after "The Major," his second feature film, was met with great reviews after being screened as part of Critics' Week at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2013.

"The Major," which Bykov funded himself, revolves around a police officer who asks his colleagues for help in concealing a crime after he accidentally knocks down a child on a highway while driving too fast. The film also saw Bykov acting in a key role while directing. He also wrote the screenplay.

"The Major" won the award for best feature film at the 16th Shanghai International Film Festival, and Bykov won best director for the film at the 2013 Cottbus festival.