

"Angel Street" and World Premieres: How the First Day of the 21st "In the Family Circle" Festival Went in Yaroslavl

"In the Family Circle" Festival Went in Yaroslavl



Jaroslavl, Russia Jul 8, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - Since July 4, Yaroslavl has become the center of world family cinema for four days. The 21st International Film Festival "In the Family Circle" kicked off with a record-breaking geography of participants, a film that moved audiences to tears, and the opening of "Angel Street" — a place where miracles aren't announced, they simply happen.

The festival is held with the support of the State Corporation "Rostec," PSB Bank, and the Government of the Yaroslavl Region.

The square in front of the Millennium Concert and Exhibition Center that day resembled the set of a big family film — with the only difference being that everything was happening for real. The festival brought together stars that Yaroslavl had been waiting for all year: Nikita Mikhalkov, Fyodor Dobronravov, Darya Pitsik, Roman Kurtsyn, Nonna Grishaeva, Igor Zhizhikin, Elena Alferova, Dmitry Dyuzhev, Danila Yakushev, and many others. Before the red carpet, the band "Bratya Grim" and Darya Pitsik performed for the festival guests.

The opening ceremony was accompanied by a live orchestra, which set the festive atmosphere from the very first notes.

Alexander Kovtunets, opening the event, welcomed the festival guests and said:

"Twenty-one years ago we started with a dream, and today that dream has become the largest family film festival in the world. Thank you for being with us — here, in this hall, and on the other side of the screen, in 10 cities of Russia and 30 countries around the world. Thank you to each of you for choosing family. Because family is not just a word. It is what stays with us forever."

Governor of the Yaroslavl Region Mikhail Evraev delivered a welcoming address. He emphasized that over the 10 years on Yaroslavl soil, the festival has become not just a cultural event, but a tradition that people look forward to and love.

"For the tenth time, the Yaroslavl Region is hosting the International Film Festival of Family and Children's Films 'In the Family Circle.' This is a great source of pride for us. Preserving family values is one of the main priorities of our work," said Mikhail Evraev.

When Nikita Mikhalkov took the stage, the audience rose to their feet. It was not just a greeting — it was an acknowledgment. He was received with respect and reverence, with applause that lasted several minutes.

"Today, when there are so many events and celebrations around, I want to speak about the main thing. A true celebration is one that is created consciously. The people who organize it understand: there are difficulties in the world, there is pain, there are trials. But that is precisely why we need a celebration. Not to forget — but to remind ourselves: we are together. We don't fall apart when things get hard. We unite. This is a right kind of celebration. A celebration that gives us strength to move forward. I wish the 'In the Family Circle' festival to remain just that — conscious, needed, genuine. Because only such celebrations stay in our hearts and help us overcome everything — no matter what happens," Nikita Sergeyevich greeted the guests.

Then Mikhalkov invited Stanislav Lyubshin to the stage, who serves as the permanent jury chairman and comes to Yaroslavl every year. Yulia Voronova, assistant to the head of the State Corporation "Rostec," took the stage with a welcoming address. She read a message from CEO Sergey Chemezov, who congratulated the organizers, participants, and audiences on the opening of the 21st "In the Family Circle" festival.

During the ceremony, festival president Alexander Kovtunets presented Governor Mikhail Evraev with the award for the Preservation of Family Values, which was established for the first time this year as part of the event. This award was also given to People's Artists of the RSFSR Nikita Mikhalkov and Stanislav Lyubshin, Yulia Voronova (assistant to the head of Rostec), Vera Podguzova (Senior Vice President and Director of External Relations at PSB Bank), Metropolitan Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk (Chairman of the Publishing Council of the Russian Orthodox Church), and Fyodor Dobronravov.

"The opening of the 21st 'In the Family Circle' festival is a landmark event. Twenty-one years is the age of maturity. Just as a person at this stage recognizes their own worth and opens new horizons, the festival has grown into a true cultural tradition while preserving its core mission — creating a space for heartfelt dialogue between generations. Today, when the pace of life keeps accelerating, this dialogue is what people need most: it offers a chance to slow down and spend quality time with loved ones. As a festival partner, these values deeply resonate with us. That is why we support a project where the strong bond between children and parents is built through shared emotions and vivid impressions," commented Pyotr Fradkov, Chairman of PSB Bank.

Metropolitan Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk, in his speech, reminded the audience that family is not just

a social institution but a space of love and fidelity where the human soul is shaped.

Fyodor Dobronravov warmly greeted all festival guests. Then — accompanied by a live orchestra — he performed the song "There Is Only a Moment." It was an unforgettable moment. The hall fell silent, and after the final chords erupted in applause.

For the first time in its history, the opening ceremony united not only Russian cities but the entire world. Live broadcasts came from 18 countries and 9 Russian cities. Audiences greeted each other from Argentina, Uruguay, Egypt, India, Italy, and many other nations. It was a spectacle that once again confirmed: the "In the Family Circle" festival has become a truly global event.

After the concert, the audience saw what they had come to Yaroslavl for from all over the country: the opening film "Angel Street."

"Angel Street" is a film about how miracles happen if you're ready to notice them. The angel Seraphim had worked on one street for 500 years, but he could no longer, did not want to, and was not going to continue. Alyosha had been pursuing his dream for 15 years, but his parents were against it. And at the moment when their lives hang by a thread, the boy saves the angel and receives his power. If the angel doesn't return to work within three days, he will disappear forever, and Alyosha will live alone for an eternity.

"I haven't cried at the movies in about ten years. But here — I couldn't hold back. This film is about how even in the darkest times, you have an angel. It's just that sometimes you don't see him," shared a Yaroslavl resident.

The main surprise of the first day was the opening of "Angel Street" — a new public space in the center of Yaroslavl named after the film. But the organizers didn't just create an alley; they created a place with soul.

The first installation was the bench of the protagonist — the very one where the film's character sat at the moment of making the most important decision of his life. A place of power where you can hear your inner voice. The uniqueness of the street lies in the fact that one day, when no one expects it, a new object will appear on the street, as if by magic.

Alexander Kovtunets, festival president and director of "Angel Street," explained it this way: "We are not building the street as a finished project. We are launching a tradition. Objects will appear not on a schedule — but as if by themselves. We won't announce when or what will appear. You'll just come one day — and there will already be an angel standing there. Because miracles don't happen on a timetable. They come when we least expect them — and that is the real magic."

The first day of the festival is just the beginning. The program for July 4–7 is rich and diverse: 140 films from 47 countries in the competition program; the "Engineers of Human Souls" film forum — workshops and lectures for young actors and directors; a business program on burnout — how to preserve yourself and stay connected with loved ones in a world that never stops; meetings with directors and actors — live dialogue; a competition for internet projects and the "To Be" award for bloggers creating positive content.



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