

Yulian Kalisher , Nikolai Karetnikov , Yunna Morits

## The Birth of Heracles [Рождение Геракла (Rozhdenie Gerakla)]

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1982)

TAGS: [Alcmene](#) [Centaur\(s\)](#) [Cerberus](#) [Chiron / Cheiron](#) [Hera](#) [Heracles](#) [Hercules](#) [Hydra](#) [Nemean Lion](#) [Snakes](#)



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Birth of Heracles [Рождение Геракла (Rozhdenie Gerakla)]
Studio/Production Company	Soyuztelemfilm
Country of the First Edition	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)
Country/countries of popularity	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Original Language	Russian
First Edition Date	1982
First Edition Details	<i>Рождение Геракла</i> [The Birth of Heracles (Rozhdenie Gerakla)], directed by Yulian Kalisher, screenwriter K. Kedrov, poems by Yunna Morits, music by Nikolai Karetnikov, Moscow: Soyuztelemfilm, 1982.
Running time	10 min
Genre	Animated films, Myths, Short films, Stop-motion animation films
Target Audience	Children (0+)
Author of the Entry	Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, <a href="mailto:hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl">hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl</a>
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, <a href="mailto:elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com">elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com</a> Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, <a href="mailto:s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk">s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk</a>

## Creators



### **Yulian Kalisher , 1935 - 2007 (Director, Illustrator)**

Yulian Kalisher was a Soviet director of animated movies. He started at puppet theatre as director, working in Tashkent and Moscow. From 1971 to 1995 he worked at the TV association *Ekran* at *Multtelefilm* studio. He is famous for the cartoon *Большой секрет для маленькой компании* [A Big Secret for a Small Company] produced jointly with Yunna Morits.

Yulian Kalisher in 2006.  
Retrieved from [Wikipedia](#), licensed under the Creative Commons [Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported](#) (accessed: December 8, 2021).

Bio prepared by Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, [hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl](mailto:hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl)

---



### **Nikolai Karetnikov , 1930 - 1994 (Composer)**

Nikolai Karetnikov was a Russian and Soviet avant-gard composer. He was influenced by the Second Viennese School. He is most famous for composing operas *Tijl Uilenspiegel* and *Mystery of St. Paul*. His unique musical style and independence were criticized by the Soviet authorities, because of that he worked more for TV and cinema.

Bio prepared by Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, [hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl](mailto:hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl)

---



**Yunna Morits , b. 1937  
(Author)**

Yunna Morits by Dmitry Rozhkov, 2010.

Retrieved from [Wikipedia Commons](#), licensed under the Creative Commons [Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported](#)

(accessed: December 8, 2021).

Yunna Morits is a Russian and Soviet poet and translator, also a children's poet. She often wrote politically engaged poetry and is still acting as a human rights advocate. Her books were banned from publication from 1961 to 1970.

She has been awarded many Russian and international prizes, including Andrei Sakharov Prize for Writer's Civic Courage. Her poems are translated into many languages including Japanese and Chinese.

Bio prepared by Hanna Paulouskaya, University of Warsaw, [hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl](mailto:hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl)

---



## Additional information

### Summary

This is a stop-motion animation, it starts with the depiction of stars and constellations and a poem about the greatness of ancient Greeks who had exceptional astronomical knowledge. Story of Heracles is shown as a fable about stars.

The movie centers on the conflict between Hera and Alcmene. Hera as a ruthless and almighty goddess wants to start a war between humans and gods. For this purpose she sends monsters to Earth (Hydra, Cerberus, the Nemean lion). At that time Alcmene gives birth to Heracles who is destined to be a protector of people. Hera steals baby-Heracles and takes him to the stars to make him a "cruel, mighty" god. Hera and Alcmene fight for the boy. With help of the Centaur Chiron, Alcmene wins, and Heracles is brought again to Earth. He defeats the snakes and grows into adulthood.

The movie finishes with a poem in honour of Ancient Greeks and humans in the style of a Sophoclean hymn to the greatness of man.

---

### Analysis

This movie was planned to be the first part of the series about Heracles, however only one episode has been produced. The film displays a kind, magic atmosphere with serene music and pleasant poetry, sometimes melodies and verses transform into lullabies.

On the one hand, the interpretation of the myth seems to be rational, providing a scientific basis to the origin of myths. On the other, it creates myths and fables of its own. The main message of the film is the greatness of man who has the power to vanquish the most dangerous evils.

---

Classical, Mythological,  
Traditional Motifs,  
Characters, and  
Concepts

[Alcmene](#) [Centaur\(s\)](#) [Cerberus](#) [Chiron / Cheiron](#) [Hera](#) [Heracles](#) [Hercules](#)  
[Hydra](#) [Nemean Lion](#) [Snakes](#)

---

[Character traits](#) [Emotions](#) [Good vs evil](#) [Humanity](#) [Knowledge](#) [Success](#)

---



Other Motifs, Figures,  
and Concepts Relevant  
for Children and Youth  
Culture

---

[and failure](#)

#### Further Reading

Karetnikov, Nikolai [Каретников, Николай], *Темы с вариациями: Рассказы* [Themes with Variations: Stories (Temy s variatsiiami)], Moskva: Astrel, 2011.

Kokurina, Tat'iana [Кокурина, Татьяна], [Как все начиналось](#) [How It All Began (Kak vsë nachinalos')], 2006, available online at [hecucenter.ru](http://hecucenter.ru) (accessed August 17, 2018).

Paulouskaya, Hanna, "Steht Herakles für den Westen? Oder: die griechisch-römische Antike im sowjetischen Animationsfilm" in Markus Janka und Michael Stierstorfer, hgg., *Verjüngte Antike. Griechisch-römische Mythologie und Historie in zeitgenössischen Kinder- und Jugendmedien*, Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2017, 287–312.

[Profile](#) at [kinopoisk.ru](http://kinopoisk.ru) (accessed: August 17, 2018).

Selitskiĭ, Aleksandr [Селицкий, Александр], *Николай Каретников: Выбор судьбы* [Nikolai Karetnikov: Choice of Destiny (Nikolaï Karetnikov. Vybor sud'by)], Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Kompozitor", 2011.

Viazova, Ekaterina [Вязова, Екатерина], "Юлиан Калишер" [Yulian Kalisher], in *Наши мультфильмы: Лица, кадры, эскизы, герои, воспоминания, интервью, статьи* [Our Animations: Persons, Scenes, Sketches, Heroes, Memories, Interviews, Articles (Nashi multfilmy: Litsa, kadry, eskizy, geroi, vospominaniia, interv'iu, stat'i)], Moskva: Interros, 2016, 212–215.

---

#### Addenda

##### **The Remaining Production Credits:**

Art direction by Liudmila Tanasenko (1944– );

Sound director Vitaly Azarovsky;

Actors Lia Akhedzhakova (1938– ), Valentin Gaft (1935–2020), Klara Rumianova (1929–2004).

---



Hanna Paulouskaya, "Entry on: The Birth of Heracles [Рождение Геракла (Rozhdenie Gerakla)] by Yulian Kalisher, Nikolai Karetnikov , Yunna Morits ", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Susan Deacy. *Our Mythical Childhood Survey* (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: <http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/225>. Entry version as of November 21, 2024.

---

---



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood... The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.