

# HOW I ENDED THIS SUMMER

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. **HOW I ENDED THIS SUMMER** was shot on location at the Valkarkai Polar Station on the northernmost tip of Chukotka, Russia (find it on a map!). In what ways does the Arctic Circle become a third character in this drama? How does the setting affect the characters and their motivations?
2. In his director's statement, Alexei Popogrebsky explains his fascination with the ability of early Arctic voyagers "to come to terms with notions of time and space drastically different from our common scale of hours and minutes or blocks and metro stops." How does Popogrebsky explore these notions of time and space in **HOW I ENDED THIS SUMMER**? Do you think Pavel and Sergei share the same concept of time and space?
3. Pavel spends a lot of time listening to music and playing video games. What does this say about his character? Do you think there is a link between his interest in virtual reality and his decision to not give Sergei the radiogram? How would you explain this decision of Pavel's?
4. Comparisons have been made between **HOW I ENDED THIS SUMMER** and the work of legendary Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky. If you are familiar with Tarkovsky's films, what similarities do you see? Do you think it is simply coincidence that the video game Pavel plays is called "Stalker"?
5. At what point in the film does Pavel's descent into madness begin? Does Popogrebsky show us his madness from an objective perspective, or from the character's point of view?
6. Cinematographer Pavel Kostomarov was awarded with the Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Contribution at the Berlin Int'l Film Festival. In your opinion, how did the cinematography contribute to the overall effect of the film? What are some of the most memorable shots?
7. Members of the creative team behind **HOW I ENDED THIS SUMMER** have experience in both documentaries and theatre. How do these two influences play out in the film? In what way is the film theatrical?