

# *Saving North*

## *Story synopsis*

A feature documentary film, *Saving North* provides an insider look into the insular Russian North and the epic struggles of an ensemble of remarkable characters whose passion for disappearing wooden architectural masterpieces is contagious.

At the center of the tale is an iconic Russian restorer of ancient wooden churches, Alexander Popov who one day out of the blue gets a challenging commission from America. He is to create in his remote northern restoration center in the town of Kirilov a towering Russian wooden windmill of ancient design. Then, he is supposed to break it down, transport it to Northern California, and reassemble it as the world's only working wooden windmill. Popov accepts this challenge knowing that he has less than a year to complete this task. The "mill" must be ready in time for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the historic Russian settlement at Fort Ross State Park.

In the course of the story, Popov gets caught up with two "foreigners" -- a California builder and a British architectural photographer. This unlikely trio, and the handful of women and men around them, work together in a total of three remarkable building projects that evolve in parallel over the course of our story: the windmill in northern California, the restoration of a three hundred year old bell-tower in a north Russian village, and the complex restoration of a 100 year old wooden house in a sizable north Russian town that most Westerners have never heard of.

Over the course of this 88 minute film, people of the East and the West are united by ancient tools, remarkable architecture, and their shared struggle to preserve what's worth saving. The results are unexpected and transformational.