If you lived in Russia in the 1970's, you probably have seen Cherburashka.

Only when YouTube came around was anyone in the US and most English speaking countries introduced to these two odd characters. One is a crocodile named Gena. The other character which looks like an Australian koala bear is actually a creature called a Cherburashka. As far as I know, there's no such creature. Then again, I've never seen a talking crocodile, so why should it matter? I guess the point of Cherburashka is he's cute and appeals to kids when telling the stories.

There's a definite old world feel to the films which were made in 1971. Gena plays an accordion while singing, and the musical theme is catchy and mellow. According to the description there were only four films made, which is surprising because the production values look great for the time. Roman Kachanov was the director and he made the films for the production company called Soyuzmultfilm. Possibly under communist rule, it would be great to learn more about how they financed the project and under what conditions. As you can see in the picture I posted for the film, the poses of the puppets convey a look unique to certain European films. I guess it might be hard for others to see, but in the tilt of the head - you can sort of understand the additude of the animator setting that shot up. It's great to see. Below you can watch the film which now has English subtitles, so everyone can understand it.

{youtube}JhPSAvZaujk{/youtube}

{youtube}gaUxuAH6ufg{/youtube}