

REES 233Z / RULE 233Z / RUSS 233Z / FILM 333Z / WLIT 255Z

## Introduction to Russian and Soviet Cinema

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10:00am-12:00pm & 2:00pm-4:00pm

Dates: January 7-22, 2025 Location: Boger 112

Professor: Roman Utkin

Office Hours: By appointment, email [rutkin@wesleya.edu](mailto:rutkin@wesleya.edu)

This winter session course provides an intensive introduction to the history and poetics of imperial Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russian cinema. From the avant-garde experimentation of Lev Kuleshov, Sergei Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov to the masterpieces of Andrei Tarkovsky, Sergei Parajanov, and Kira Muratova, the course will explore the development of film from the Soviet and post-Soviet periods as artistic medium and as national tradition. The discussion and comparative analyses of different forms and genres, including silent cinema, propaganda films, blockbusters, and auteur cinema, will be situated within the cultural, political, and aesthetic contexts of the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia and Ukraine. No knowledge of Russian is required or expected.

*All course materials will be available electronically on Moodle.*

### Course Requirements & Grading

Attendance and Class Participation	25%
10 Short Film Responses: (ca. 200 words each)	25%
Paper 1: Sequence Analysis (5 pp.)	20%
Paper 2: Film Analysis (7 pp.)	30%

### Course Plan

Pre-Term	Read Chapters 1 and 2 in Birgit Beumers's <i>A History of Russian Cinema</i> (pp. 1-74)
Tuesday, Jan 7	<b>The Kuleshov Effect, Early Cinema and Its Cultural Reception</b> Watch in Class: <i>Trofim</i> (Alexei Balabanov, 1995, 25 min.); <i>The Cameraman's Revenge</i> (Wladyslaw Starewicz, 1912, 13 min.) and <i>Child of a Big City</i> (Evgeny Bauer, 1914, 37 min).
Wednesday, Jan 8	<b>Revolution on Film &amp; Montage Theory</b> Watch before Class: <i>The End of St. Petersburg</i> (Vsevolod Pudovkin, 1927, 90 min.) Read before Class: Vance Kepley on <i>The End of St. Petersburg</i> ; Sergei Eisenstein, "Methods of Montage" Watch in Class: <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925, 72 min.)
Thursday, Jan 9	<b>Cinema, Reality, and the New Documentary Aesthetic</b> Watch before Class: <i>Man with a Movie Camera</i> (Dziga Vertov, 1929, 68 min.) Read before Class: Vertov's manifestos Watch in Class: <i>Earth</i> (Oleksandr Dovzhenko, 1930, 76 min.)
Friday, Jan 10	<b>Screening Socialist Realism</b>

Watch before Class: *Circus* (Grigory Alexandrov, 1936, 90 min.)  
Read before Class: Salys, "Circus: The Spectacle of Ideology"  
Watch in Class: *Three Songs about Lenin* (Dziga Vertov, 1934, 59 min.)

Monday, Jan 13

**Cinema and the Nation**

Watch before Class: *Ivan the Terrible Part 1* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1944, 100 min.)  
*Ivan the Terrible Part 2* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1958, 87 min.)

- Rough draft of Paper 1 due in class

Tuesday, Jan 14

**War Drama, Melodrama, and Soviet Neo-Realism**

Watch before Class: *The Cranes Are Flying* (Mikhail Kalatozov, 1957, 97 min.)  
Read before Class: Prokhorov, "Soviet Family Melodrama of the 1940s and 1950s"

Watch in Class: *Wings* (Larisa Shepitko, 1966, 86 min.)

Wednesday, Jan 15

**Soviet (Non) Russian Film**

Watch before Class: *The Color of Pomegranates* (Sergei Parajanov, 1969, 75 min.)  
Read before Class: Steffen, "The Color of Pomegranates: The Making and Unmaking of a Film"

Watch in Class: *White Sun of the Desert* (Vladimir Motyl, 1970, 85 min.)

- Paper 1 due in class

Thursday, Jan 16

**Auteur in Soviet Cinema**

Watch before Class: *Mirror* (Tarkovsky, 1975, 108 min.)

Read before Class: Andrei Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*: Introduction and Chapter V, "The Film Image"

Watch in Class: *The Long Farewell* (Kira Muratova, 1971/1987, 95 min.)

Friday, Jan 16

**Soviet Genre Cinema and Animation**

Watch before Class: *The Diamond Arm* (Leonid Gaidai, 1969, 124 min.)

Watch in Class: *The Glass Harmonica* (Andrei Khrzhanovsky, 1968, 20 min.);  
*The Hedgehog in the Fog* (Yuri Norshtein, 1975, 10 min.); *The Tale of Tales* (Norshtein, 1979, 29 min.)

Monday, Jan 20

**Everything Was Forever: Cinema of Perestroika**

Watch before Class: *Little Vera* (Vasily Pichul, 1988, 140 min.)

Watch in Class: *The Needle* (Rashid Nugmanov, 1988, 81 min.)

Tuesday, Jan 21

**Post-Soviet Film**

Watch before Class: *Brother* (Aleksei Balabanov, 1998, 99 min.)

Watch in Class: *Three Stories* (Kira Muratova, 1997, 135 min., selection)

Wednesday, Jan 22

**The Future of Nostalgia**

Watch in Class: *The Russian Arc* (Alexander Sokurov, 2002, 99 min.)

- Rough Draft of Paper 2 due in class
- Paper 2 due Friday, January 24