

Sent to: Film

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 80
For Release
Sunday
Sept. 27, 1959

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART TO SHOW ALL EISENSTEIN FILMS

The first complete retrospective of S. M. Eisenstein's films will be shown for the public at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street. Beginning September 27 - October 3 with STRIKE (1925), not available in the U. S. since the 1920's, the work of the great Russian director will be presented chronologically, each program changing Sundays for a week of daily 3 p.m. showings.

Eisenstein's films will continue October 4 - 10 with POTESKIN (1925); October 11 - 17, TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD (1928); October 18 - 27, OLD AND NEW, not seen before in its entirety; and four programs comprising all that still remains of the unfinished film known as Que Viva Mexico: October 25 - 31, THUNDER OVER MEXICO (1933), edited by Sol Lesser; November 1 - 7, TIME IN THE SUN (1940), edited and with narration by Marie Seton and Paul Burnford; November 8 - 11, QUE VIVA MEXICO: EPISODES FOR STUDY, PART I (1930-31); and QUE VIVA MEXICO: EPISODES FOR STUDY, PART II (1930-31). The two programs of study episodes, prepared by the Museum of Modern Art Film Library from unedited original footage, has never been screened publicly in the United States before.

The series will conclude, November 15 - 21, with ALEXANDER NEVSKY (1938); and November 22 - 28, IVAN THE TERRIBLE, PART I (1944).

Richard Griffith, Curator of the Museum's Film Library, says: "On the occasion of the forthcoming American premiere of Eisenstein's last film, Ivan the Terrible, Part II, it seemed to us fitting to present to his admirers the opportunity to re-view all his work consecutively."

None of the films in the series are recommended for children under 16.

For stills and further information contact Herbert Bronstein, Assistant Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. CI. 5-8900

Schedule and film notes attached

Film showings daily at 3:00 and 5:30 p.m. except where noted.
Music for the silent films arranged and played by Arthur Kleiner.
None of the films in this series are recommended for children under 16.

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

S. M. EISENSTEIN

Since 1919 the film in Russia under state control has been used consciously as an instrument of instruction and propaganda. Theories and experiments likely to result in more effective films were encouraged, and a group of remarkable directors sprang up whose work gained world attention. Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein (1898-1948), son of a prosperous ship-builder, was educated in engineering and architecture, but later became interested in stage design and stage direction. The development of his artistic theories in the theater led him gradually to abandon the stage for the film medium, where his ideas more logically belonged.

September 27 - October 3:

STRIKE (1925), directed by Eisenstein, photographed by Eduard Tisse.
One showing only at 3:00 p.m.

All that Eisenstein had learned from early American and French films can be seen in this, his first masterpiece. Yet the film is peculiarly Russian in feeling; the magnificent grotesqueries of this tale of a pre-revolutionary strike and its bloody post-revolutionary suppression are Chekovian. Though its expressionism stems from the Russian theater rather than from painting, STRIKE anticipates virtually every device later made famous by the international school of experimental film-makers, especially the surrealists.

October 4 - October 10:

POTEMKIN (1925), directed by Eisenstein, photographed by Tisse.
One showing only at 3:00 p.m.

POTEMKIN recreates the spirit of the 1905 revolution through the depiction of one of its incidents, the rebellion of the sailors on the battleship Potemkin at Odessa. It introduced a new film technique, providing a newly conscious conception of the manipulation of film materials to communicate physical sensation. Its influence on subsequent film-making has been second to none.

October 11 - October 17:

TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD (1928), directed by Eisenstein and Gregori Alexandrov, photographed by Tisse.
One showing only at 3:00 p.m.

Planned as part of the Tenth Anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution of 1917, but completed only in 1928, this film recalls events in St. Petersburg from February to November, 1917. It is the purest example of what Eisenstein calls ideological montage. The subject matter is not treated as history - there are obvious omissions and distortions - but in the manner of a political cartoon. The fact that events were re-enacted in the actual settings, with crowds who may well have participated in them ten years before, gives the picture a force which the impact of its deliberate construction greatly enhances.

October 18 - October 27:

OLD AND NEW (1929), written and directed by Eisenstein and Alexandrov, photographed by Tisse.
One showing only at 3:00 p.m.

OLD AND NEW is about the agricultural revolution brought about by Russia's policy of collectivization. For the first time Eisenstein used a fictitious story and individual characters to typify the history of the masses of peasants whose lives were changed by the collective and by mechanization. However, his actors were all non-professionals, and his heroine was Martha Lapkina, a peasant woman who had never been out of her village and was never to star in another film. The film is a prime example of what Eisenstein calls "emotive structures applied to non-emotional material."

EISENSTEIN'S MEXICAN FILM

The films to be shown during the following three weeks are all drawn from the mass of unedited footage shot for the unfinished Mexican film known as QUE VIVA MEXICO! In 1930, with financing collected by Mr. and Mrs. Upton Sinclair, Eisenstein, Alexandrov and Tisse began an ambitious film in Mexico. A year later the backers halted the project before filming was completed. Since then, parts of the filmed footage have been released, but not in the form intended by its makers. Two of these films, THUNDER OVER MEXICO and TIME IN THE SUN, are shown here. During the third week, the Film Library will show in two different sections the study version prepared by Jay Leyda from the unedited footage in the Film Library's vaults. This last version is intended only for instructional purposes: it summarizes Eisenstein's original plan for the film and restores some fragmentary sequences as they came from Tisse's camera, without any attempt to edit them. This will be shown without musical accompaniment, and will be of interest principally to serious students of Eisenstein's work.

- Oct. 25 - 31: THUNDER OVER MEXICO (1933), edited by Sol Lesser, musical score by Hugo Riesenfeld.
- Nov. 1 - 7 (no showing Nov. 4): TIME IN THE SUN (1940), edited and narration written by Marie Seton and Paul Burnford, produced by Miss Seton.
- Nov. 8 - 11: QUE VIVA MEXICO: EPISODES FOR STUDY (PART I)(1930-31), prepared by Jay Leyda. One showing only at 3:00 p.m.
- Nov. 12 - 14: QUE VIVA MEXICO: EPISODES FOR STUDY (PART II)(1930-31), prepared by Jay Leyda. One showing only at 3:00 p.m.

November 15 - November 21:

ALEXANDER NEVSKY (1938), directed by Eisenstein, written by Eisenstein and Piotr Pavlenko, photographed by Tisse, music by Sergei Prokofiev; with Nikolai Cherkasov, Nikolai Okhlopov, A. L. Abrikosov.

Returning in history to the 13th century, this film relates the invasion of Russia by the Order of the Teutonic Knights and their defeat by Prince Alexander Nevsky on Lake Peipus. The patriotic theme had a timely and prophetic emphasis when the film was made. Although here for the first time Eisenstein used professional actors, he still relied more on the use of montage for emotional effects than on the actors themselves. Eisenstein's first sound film included many of his ideas previously published about the use of sound as "audio-visual counterpoint" rather than as an accompaniment to the action.

November 22 - November 28:

IVAN THE TERRIBLE, PART I (1944), written and directed by Eisenstein, photographed by Tisse (exteriors) and Andrei Moskvin (interiors), music by Sergei Prokofiev; with Nikolai Cherkasov, Ludmila Tzelikovskaya.

This was the first of a planned trilogy on the reign of Czar Ivan IV, Part II of which was completed by 1946 but was never shown until it was seen at Brussels in 1958, Part III of which was never made. Part I is composed of a series of episodes in the career of Ivan, from his coronation, through his struggles for power, to his retirement and then his recall by the people of Moscow. Symbolic objects and acts are chosen to emphasize the historic and social implications of events, in spectacular and opulent settings. As in the filming of ALEXANDER NEVSKY, Prokofiev once again worked closely with Eisenstein to create what Eisenstein calls "the contrapuntal use" of sound.

Recommended reading: Film Form and The Film Sense, by Sergei Eisenstein, edited and translated by Jay Leyda, Meridian Books, New York, 1957.

The Film Library wishes to thank Brandon Films, Inc., for lending TIME IN THE SUN for this series, and Artkino Pictures, Inc., for ALEXANDER NEVSKY and IVAN THE TERRIBLE, PART I.