

## Document Citation

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Author(s)	Judy Bloch Tom Luddy Yvette Bíró
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Tuesday, January 5

Early Soviet Cinema: Rare 35mm Prints

from the PFA Collection

By the Law 7:30

① An adaptation of Jack London's story "The Unexpected," *By The Law* was filmed on an extremely low budget, using only one interior set and five actors. The setting is Alaska, where three characters have been cut off from civilization by winter storms and spring floods. Kuleshov succeeds in building up an almost unbearable degree of physiological tension in following London's drama of three people who undergo inner turmoil as the result of their complicity in a murder. Most critics consider *By The Law* to be Kuleshov's best film.

② The mathematical precision of every gesture and movement contributes to the total effect of each character and episode. Kuleshov taught his workshop that the hands, arms and legs are the most expressive parts of the film actor's body and we can observe that their movements create as much of the film's tension as does the facial expression.

③ This calculated isolation and intensification of significant detail and gesture, accumulated for totality of effect, Kuleshov had learned from Griffith and from Chaplin's *A Woman Of Paris*. — Jay Leyda, "Film Notes, The Museum of Modern Art"

④ Notes by Tom Luddy, Yvette Biro

• Directed by Lev Kuleshov. Screenplay by Victor Shklovsky and Lev Kuleshov, based on "The Unexpected" by Jack London. Photographed by Konstantin Kuznetsov, supervised by Alexander Levitsky. Designed by Isaac Makhlis. With Alexandra Kokhlova, Sergei Komarov, Vladimir Fogel, Porfirii Podobed. (1926, 90 mins, 35mm, silent, translation of Russian titles provided, Print from PFA Collection)

Steph: in other words, pls. make whole note a quote by Luddy & Biro, with Leyda in single quotes and his credit in parens. thx.

Note from 7/2/80