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Alexander Dovzhenko's

Arsenal and Fruits of Love 7:00

Arsenal

Arsenal is a tribute to the workers of the Ukraine, tracing their struggles from World War I, through the February and October Revolutions, to the suppression of a workers' revolt in 1918. Dovzhenko presents harsh, realistic scenes of Czarist brutality and war's destruction, but his juxtapositions are impressionistic and symbolic. Jay Leyda writes in *Kino*: "The first masterpiece of the Ukrainian cinema broke entirely with traditional film structure and subject, depending solely on a flow of ideas and emotions rather than upon conflicts between individual characters.... [The] extraordinary dependence on image and symbolism in *Arsenal* can no more be fully translated into concrete meanings than the imagery and rhythm and color of a poem...." In the film's most famous sequence, Czar Nicholas writes in his diary, "Today I shot a crow"; cut to an old peasant collapsing from exhaustion in a field. In another powerful, disturbing image, a Ukrainian lights a candle before a portrait of the national poet; the picture suddenly comes alive and the face in it blows out the candle.

- Directed and Written by Alexander Dovzhenko. Photographed by Danylo Demutsky. With Semyon Svashenko, Mikola Nademsky, Ambrose Buchma. (1929, 65 mins, Silent with Russian and English titles, 35mm, Print from PFA Collection)