

Document Citation

Title	Hamlet
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Sovexportfilm</i>
Date	
Type	distributor materials
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	6
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Gamlet (Hamlet), Kozintsev, Grigorii Mikhailovich, 1964



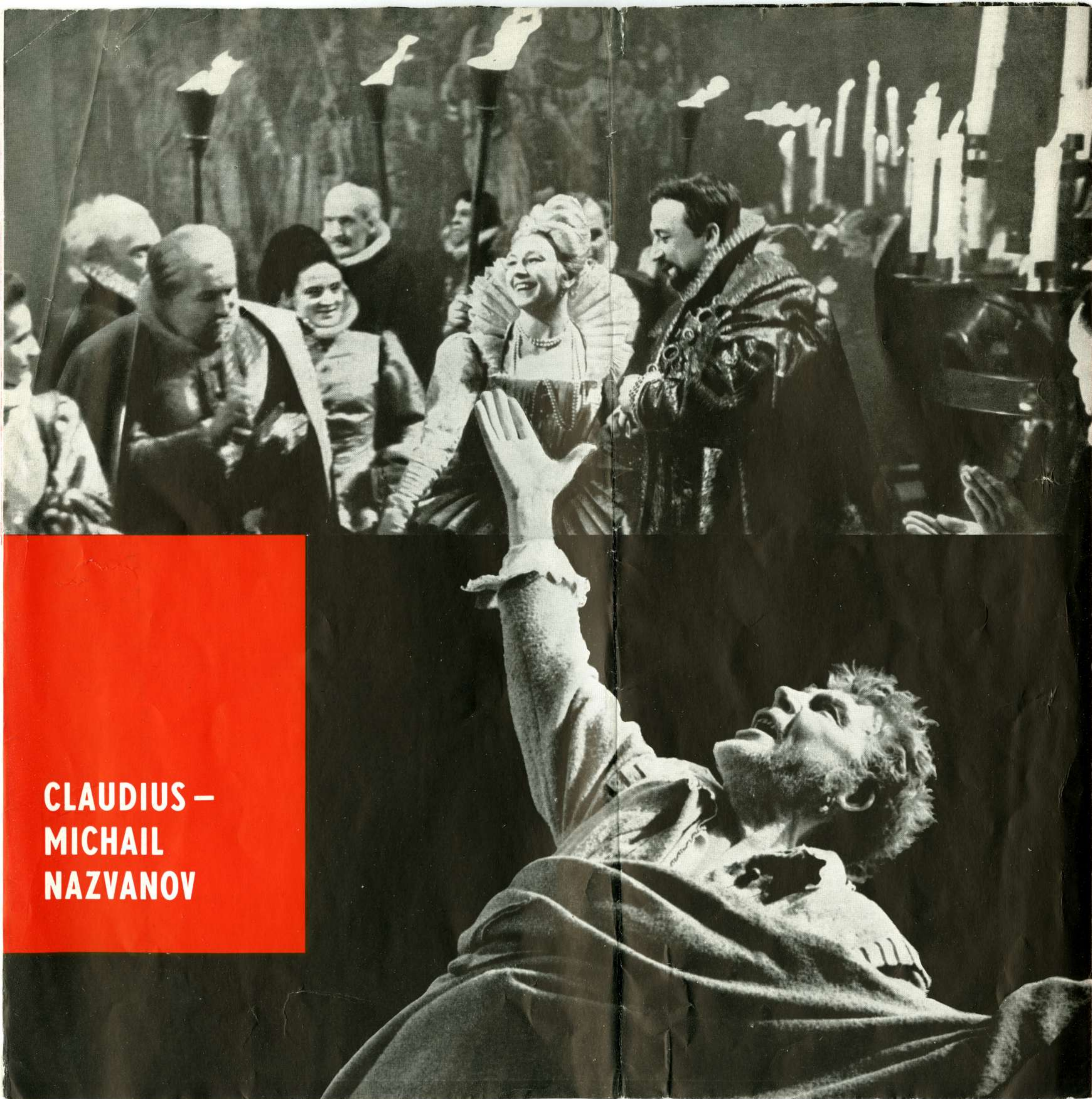
Hamlet

By William Shakespeare

**HAMLET –
INNOKENTY
SMOKTUNOVSKY**

**OPHELIA –
ANASTASIA
VERTINSKAYA**



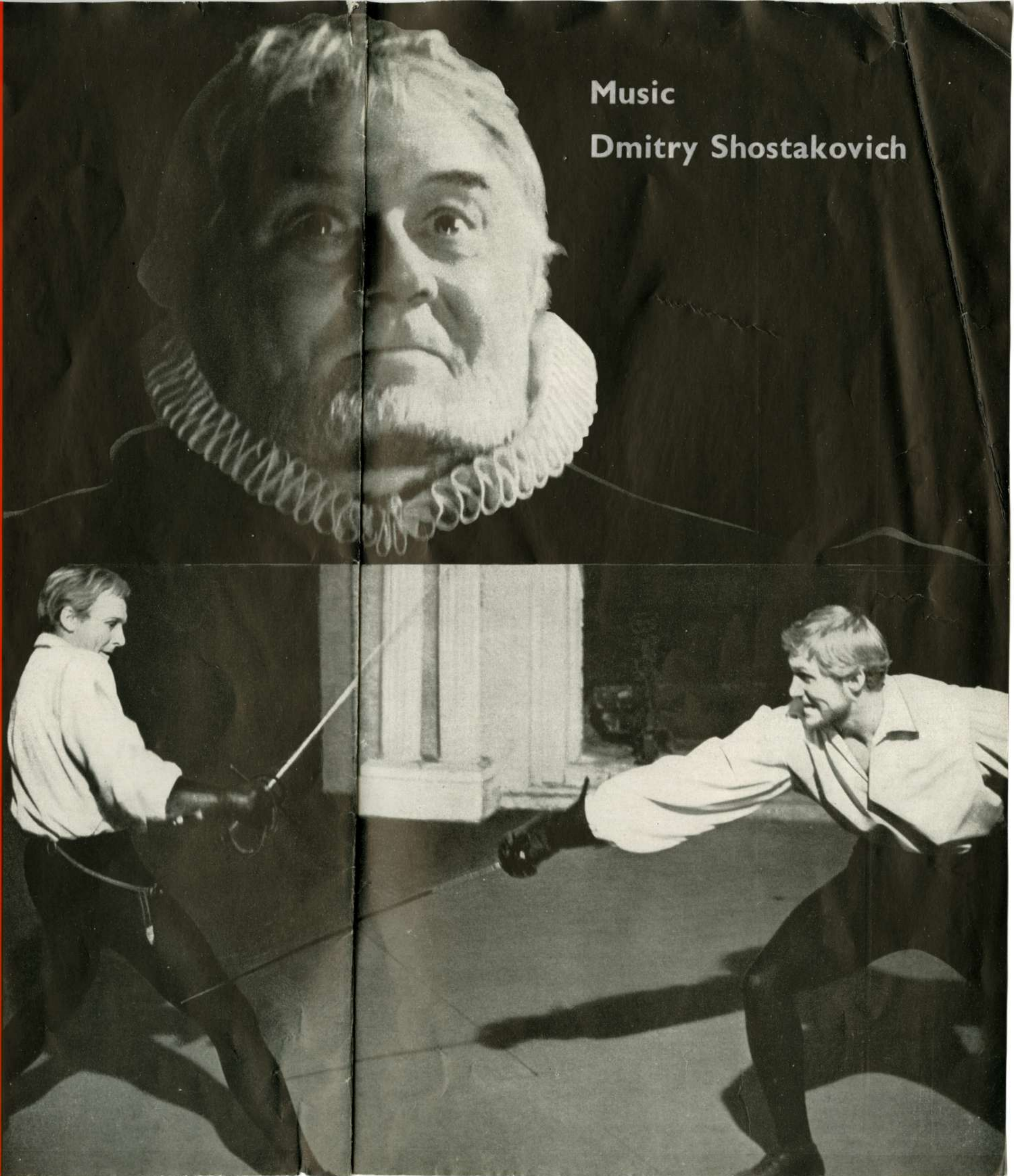


**CLAUDIUS —
MICHAEL
NAZVANOV**

Screenplay and direction - GRIGORI KOZINTSEV

Music

Dmitry Shostakovich





Hamlet

On the screen is a man rather above average height, negligently dressed, with thoughtful, piercing eyes under a shock of fair hair. He says nothing. He is listening, waiting. He is consumed by some big, disturbing idea.

The man is Hamlet.

Another Hamlet—one of the hundreds or even thousands of Hamlets who have appeared on the stage or the screen in the past 360 years. This is the Hamlet of director Grigory Kozintsev's Lenfilm production, in two parts, of the play, with Innokenty Smoktunovsky in the title-role.

This new cinema version of Shakespeare's famous tragedy is a significant event in the art world. Kozintsev's "Hamlet" will be hailed as more than just another screen version of the stage play, more than another meeting with the Prince of Denmark impersonated by a brilliant Russian actor. It will be welcomed as an unusually sensitive and careful translation of a classic into the language of the screen, as an example of creative reading of a world masterpiece, as a film where creativity and poetic inspiration are wedded to scholarly research and the zeal of the explorer.

The author of the script and director of the film, Grigory Kozintsev, has brought two rare qualities to the task—artistic inspiration and true scholarship.

Time will settle the place to be accorded to Kozintsev's film in cinema history, in the history of Shakespeariana. But even at this early date we can say that a new word has been spoken from the screen about the interpretation of Shakespeare's characters, his noble ideas and stirring emotions. Yes, Kozintsev's film is another step forward along unexplored roads of art as yet unexplored, daring, original step forward, high-lighted by novel touches and happy finds.

A big victory for the makers of the film, a "revelation," is what we should call the impersonation of the title-role. Smoktunovsky's Hamlet, we are sure, will become the subject of scholarly treatises and hundreds of critical articles; it will be hotly discussed and debated. The Hamlet of this film is absolutely Shakespeare's, and yet a world removed from the traditional stereotyped approach that only too often mars the interpretation of the role.

In a word, this is Shakespeare in a new, modern reading, Shakespeare as the artists of the sixties of the 20th century know and understand him. This is Hamlet seen in a contemporary light.

Grigory Kozintsev is one of our foremost directors. His name is connected with such film masterpieces as "The Youth of Maxim," "The Return of Maxim," "Vyborg Side," and "Don Quixote." He is also well known as a theatrical director, and a learned professor, and an authority on Shakespeare, about whom he has written several interesting books.


His talented production of "Hamlet" at the Pushkin Theatre in Leningrad has made Soviet stage history. The present screen version of the play is thus the fruit of years of work and study, quest and reflection. It is a slice, and no small one, of his life.

Kozintsev has assembled an unusually strong and gifted cast of actors for the roles.

Smoktunovsky, the Hamlet of the film, literally soared to fame in a few years' time on the strength of his acting in various stage plays and films. His performance as Prince Mishkin in the stage version of Dostoyevsky's novel "The Idiot" or as Kulikov in Mikhail Romm's "Nine Days of One Year" added to his laurels. Smoktunovsky is an actor of great emotional depth, subtle psychological portraiture, large tragic compass.

Ophelia is played by the charming Anastasia Vertinskaya, daughter of the famous Russian singer Alexander Vertinsky, Polonius by the distinguished Soviet actor Yurie Tolubeyev (and all who saw Kozintsev's "Don Quixote" will remember his Sancho Panza), the king by the popular film star Mikhail Nazvanov.

Soviet Russia is called Shakespeare's second home land. Kozintsev's Hamlet supports the claim. It is worthy of Shakespeare and his great tragedy.



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