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THE SACRIFICE

A profound last testament by a great Russian artist facing his own death, ***The Sacrifice*** is the most moving and approachable work by one of the true giants of modern cinema. Although Tarkovsky often seemed as much a philosopher as a filmmaker, he also created some of the most vivid and ravishingly beautiful images in the history of cinema. Ingmar Bergman himself has said that "Tarkovsky is for me the greatest, the one who invented a new language, true to the nature of film, as it captures life as a reflection, life as a dream." As his homage to Bergman, Tarkovsky – in exile from the USSR – filmed ***The Sacrifice*** in Sweden, (collaborating with Bergman's master cinematographer, Sven Nykvist, and veteran actor, Erland Josephson) where he created a distilled, hauntingly allusive world composed of pale, wintry exteriors and shadowy, cavernous interiors. The film's grand and urgent theme is the lack of spirituality in the modern world. A writer living on a remote island has his birthday celebration interrupted by a broadcast announcing the outbreak of World War III. Tarkovsky draws an audacious link between his own death and universal annihilation. Internalizing the apocalypse he moves through a dark night of the soul to a fiery "sacrifice" and a radiant final image bombarded with light.

DIRECTED BY ANDREI TARKOVSKY

Sweden, 1986. 145 mins. Color.

In Swedish with English subtitles.

Rental: 400

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