

Document Citation

Title	The red snowball tree
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Los Angeles International Film Exposition</i>
Date	
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	67
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Kalina krasnaya (The red snowball tree), Shukshin, Vasili Makarovich, 1973



FILMEX 75

The Red Snowball Tree

7:00 p.m. American premiere.

20¢

USSR, 1974. Color. 95 minutes.

In Russian with English subtitles

Producer/Director/Screenwriter: Vasili Shukshin

Cinematographer: A. Zabolotsky

Music: P. Chekalov

Principal cast: Vasili Shukshin, L. Fedoseeva, I. Ryzhov,
M. Skvortsova, A. Vanin

Production company: Mosfilm

Source: Sovexportfilm, State Dept. of Cinematography,
Moscow, USSR

● A realistic movie with strong religious overtones and a gloomy, violent ending, *The Red Snowball Tree* contradicts most of the rules of Soviet filmmaking and many of the shibboleths of official cultural policy. It is the story of Yegor Prokudin, a professional criminal with several jail sentences behind him. This alone makes the movie unusual, as Soviet movie heroes are usually good Communists. The religious symbolism in the film has also been ignored by official critics; at several crucial moments, the hulking forms of crumbling, abandoned Russian Orthodox churches fill the screen. The empty churches seem to echo Yegor's plea for a "holiday of the spirit." The only symbol of tranquility Yegor can find are Russia's infinite birch trees, which he strokes and talks to as though they were human. The film's unusual realism involves the looks on faces, the relationships between persons in authority and those below, the responses of ordinary people to extraordinary situations. Most contemporary plays and movies idealize Soviet life beyond recognition, eliminating the image of themselves that audiences like to see. Shukshin's film is full of those images.

● *Short: Straf (Punishment)* Pim de la Parra, Jr. (Netherlands, 1974), 9 minutes. Children reflect their parents' behavior.