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Author(s)	Jonathan Rosenbaum
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## Ashik Kerib

Capsule by Jonathan Rosenbaum

*From the Chicago Reader*

Sergei Paradjanov's 1988 film, loosely adapted from Lermontov's tale about a Turkish minstrel and maiden, is a relatively minor work with much personal and autobiographical significance. But minor Paradjanov would qualify as something very close to major from most other filmmakers. The style is somewhat akin to the frontal *tableaux vivants* of *The Color of Pomegranates* with the addition of some camera movement, dialogue, and offscreen narration; the Azerbaijani dialogue and the subtitled Georgian narration tell the story proper, and the limitation of the visuals in this case is that they tend to be more illustrative than is usual with Paradjanov. But even if *Ashik Kerib* were only a collection of beautiful shots (and it is clearly more than that), they'd still be some of the most beautiful shots to be found in contemporary Soviet cinema—richly colored, mysterious, and magical.