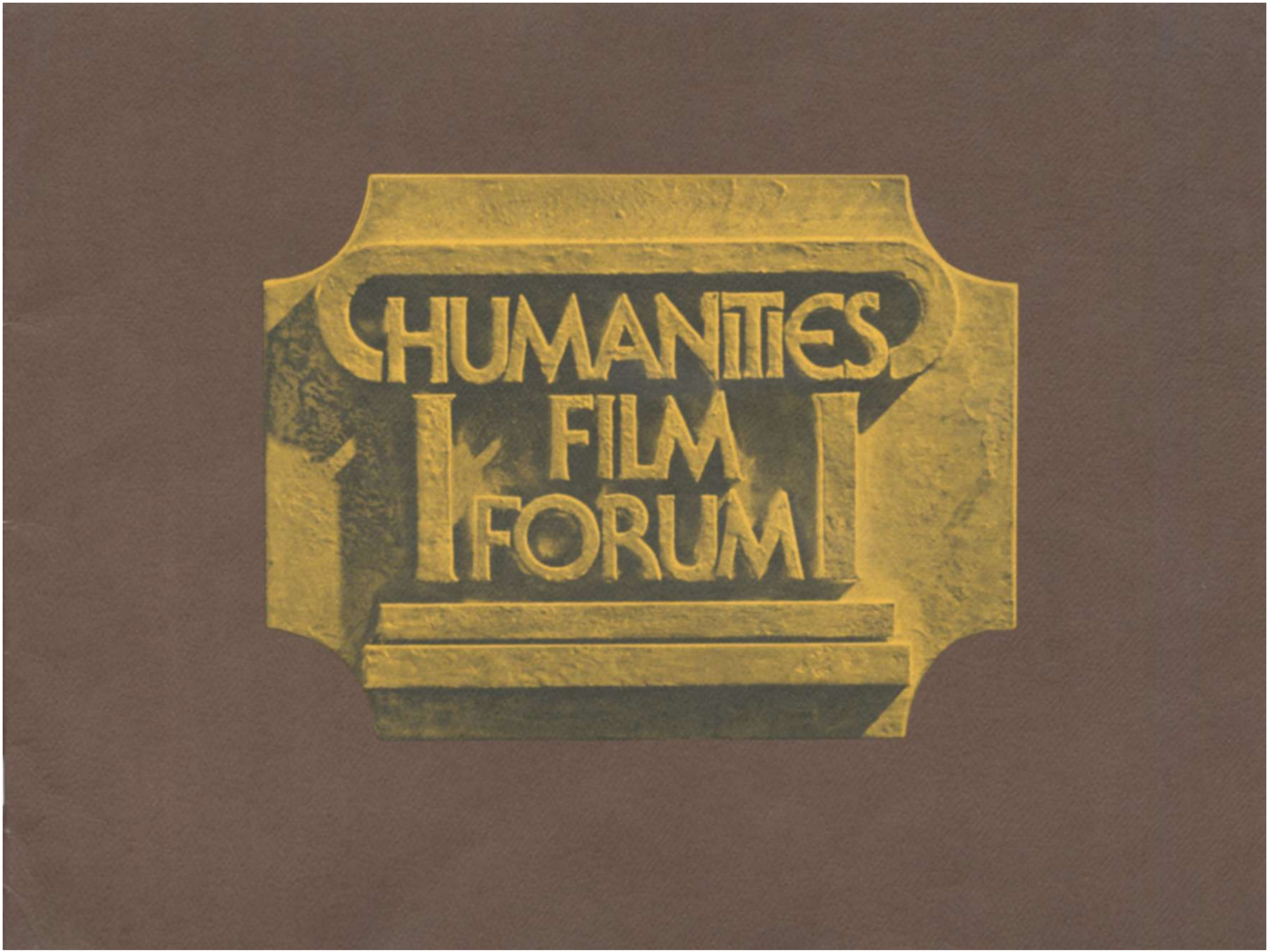
# Document Citation

| | |
|---|---|
| Title | **Humanities Film Forum** |
| Author(s) | |
| Source | *Community Television of Southern California* |
| Date | c1973 |
| Type | program |
| Language | English |
| Pagination | 1-28 |
| No. of Pages | 32 |
| Subjects | |
| Film Subjects | Umberto D., De Sica, Vittorio, 1952<br>Richard III, Olivier, Laurence, 1956<br>Oliver Twist, Lean, David, 1948<br>Aleksandr Nevskii (Alexander Nevsky), Eisenstein, Sergei, 1938<br>Ballada o soldate (Ballad of a soldier), Cuhraj, Grigorij, 1959<br>Hamlet, Richardson, Tony, 1969<br>La prise de pouvoir par Louis XIV (The rise to power of Louis XIV), Rossellini, Roberto, 1966<br>Letjat zhuravli (The cranes are flying), Kalatozov, Mikhail, 1957 |



**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES**

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20506

The National Endowment for the Humanities takes great pleasure and pride in supporting the presentation of the Humanities Film Forum to the television viewers of the United States.

Included in this series are ten outstanding films from Italy, Russia, France, England and the United States. Some of them, like Olivier's RICHARD III, are direct cinematic translations of great literary works in the humanistic tradition. Others, like the Russian films represented, provide us with insights into historical conditions. They have in common high quality as examples of the art of film, intense dramatic thrust, concern for human values and, perhaps most important, proven ability to provoke thought and discussion.

The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM has in fact been designed so that educational discussion may accompany experience of the film. Some of the nation's leading humanists will discuss these films in detail upon their completion. These discussions about the content of HAMLET, OLIVER TWIST, ALEXANDER NEVSKY, BATTLE OF CULLODEN, and THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL, among others, should allow new insights into these masterpieces.

In previous seasons the National Endowment for the Humanities has supported the production of such highly acclaimed offerings as THE CHEROKEE: THE TRAIL OF TEARS, THE WRIGHT BROTHERS: ORVILLE AND WILBUR, and TO BE YOUNG, GIFTED AND BLACK for presentation to the nation's television audience. The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM is the first full series to be sponsored entirely by the Humanities Endowment. In this initial undertaking we welcome your participation and support.

Ronald Berman
Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities

# THE HUMANITIES FILM FORUM

Produced by KCET, Los Angeles, Community Television of Southern California
Made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

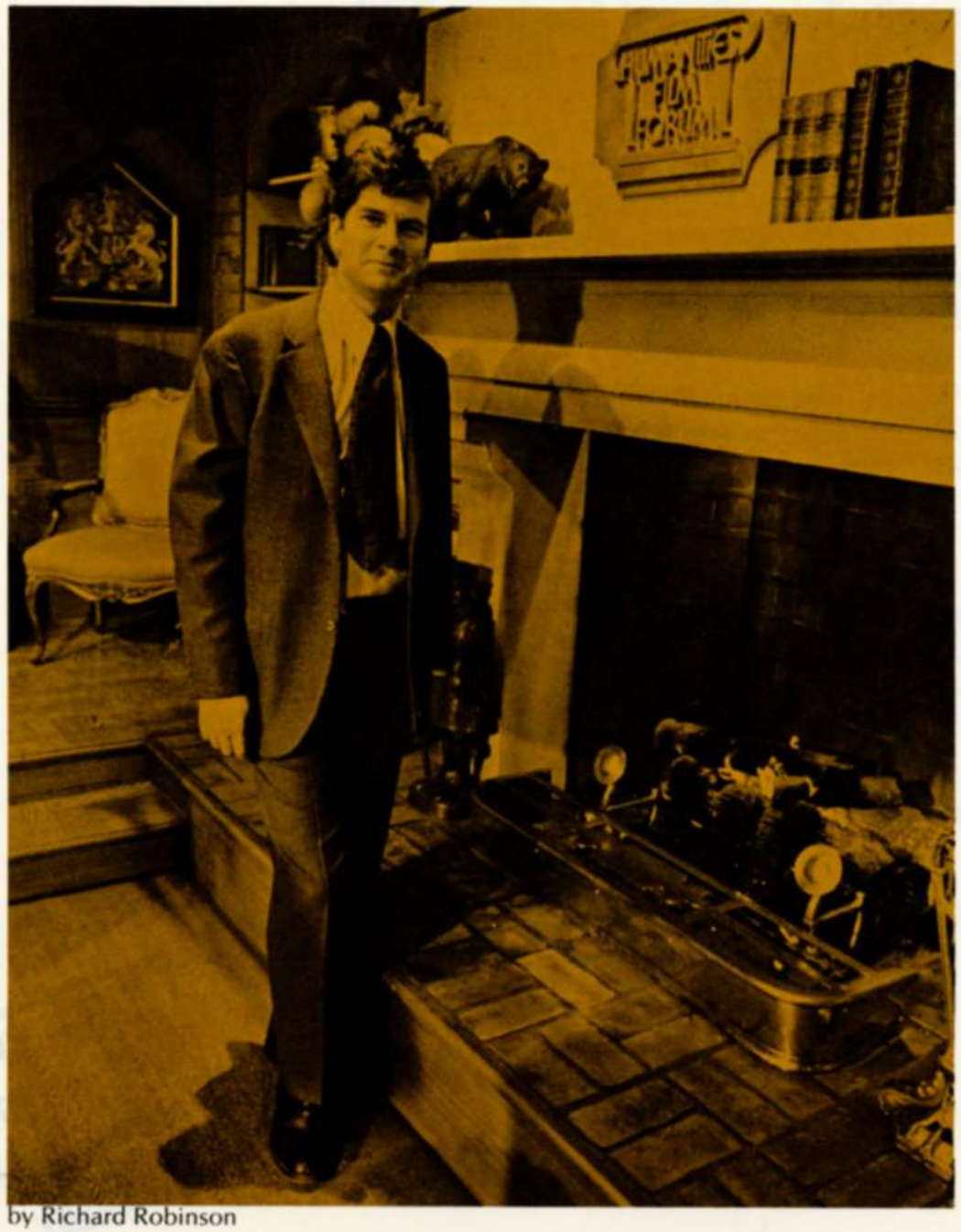
## Table of Contents



Presented on Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. EST and PST, at 7:00 p.m. CST, and repeated the following Saturday at 8:00 p.m. EST and CST and at 9:00 p.m. PST.

*In the second cycle (air dates to be announced), RICHARD III and OLIVER TWIST will be replaced by UMBERTO D and THE CRANES ARE FLYING.

# PERSPECTIVE



by Richard Robinson

Welcome to the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM, in which the National Endowment for the Humanities invites you to combine the recreation of fine films with the re-creation of history. We will present, without interruption, rarely seen feature films about the past—followed in most cases by a brief discussion among distinguished humanists of issues and ideas that bring historical perspective into the present.

The humanities apply man's most miraculous gift—his ability to think—to his most priceless endowment: the experience of the past. America's National Endowment for the Humanities hopes that you may join our guests in applying your individual thoughts to some of this human heritage we all share, on the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM.

History comes from a Greek word meaning inquiry; but the word also suggests to us the telling of his-story (and hers!), the story of people. Thus, the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM brings you history—and literature—with a human face. Through the magic of film, the human face will speak out of the past directly to you in the present.

Most of the faces you will meet in these films will be portrayals of real historical characters—human faces often

Dr. James H. Billington, Professor of History at Princeton University, is an authority on Russian intellectual history. He is the author of several books and articles dealing with Russian culture and world affairs. In 1971, Dr. Billington was appointed by President Nixon to the Board of Foreign Scholarships and is currently serving as Chairman.

dealing with inhuman forces. In the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM you will see the faces of those caught up in a world at war with itself: Teutonic knights and Russian peasant warriors battling on the ice, led by the face of victory ALEXANDER NEVSKY; the rival houses of Lancaster and York battling on Bosworth Field for the throne of England in RICHARD III; the bloody decimation of highland Scotland in the last war ever fought on British soil: THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN; and the bitter aftermath of our own Civil War, which led to America's only execution for war crimes: THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL.

You will meet the face of power itself in THE RISE OF LOUIS XIV of France, the most absolute of European monarchs, who likened himself to the sun and built the great palace at Versailles. And you may find a kind of beauty in the powerless — the simple soldier: that faceless modern Everyman, who meets death before life has really begun in BALLAD OF A SOLDIER and THE CRANES ARE FLYING.

The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM will also introduce you to characters of fiction that have acquired a historical importance of their own: OLIVER TWIST, a helpless young boy in Victorian London who takes us into the heart — and the heartlessness — of the modern city; HAMLET, the angry young man whose search for identity in medieval Denmark has haunted the modern Western imagination; and UMBERTO D, a tired old pensioner whose struggle for a little dignity in the twilight of life is set in post-war Rome, but takes place everyday, everywhere.

Human faces call for human feelings; and I suspect you will be moved — as I was — by many of these films. The first civilization of free men in ancient Greece deepened its feelings by coming together in open-air theatres to share the first great dramas of the Western tradition. The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM hopes that even in the indoor electronic theatre of today, our lives may be enriched by sharing in some of the aspirations, anguish and achievements of those who have gone before us.

A common theme through all the films on HUMANITIES FILM FORUM will be "Man and Authority": the problem of people coming to grips with powers they did not create and cannot control. We will look, moreover, on each of these films as a human record of two different eras: the distant period it describes and the more recent period in which the work of history or literature was itself made. As we learn something, hopefully about both the era it depicts and the time it represents, we may also learn something about the timeless human condition and the common humanity which we all share.

# HAMLET

*We cannot be mistaken in attributing to the Hamlet of earlier days an exquisite sensibility, to which we may give the name "moral," if that word is taken in the wide meaning it ought to bear... And the negative side of his idealism, the aversion to evil, is perhaps even more developed in the later Hamlet... in fact, HAMLET deserves the title "tragedy of moral idealism" quite as much as the title "tragedy of reflection."*

A. C. Bradley, "Shakespeare's Tragic Period—HAMLET," in D. Bevington, TWENTIETH CENTURY INTERPRETATIONS OF HAMLET (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1968), pp. 14-16.

*Hamlet is inhuman... a spirit of penetrating intellect and cynicism and misery, without faith in himself or anyone else... a poison in the midst of the healthy bustle of the court....*

G. Wilson Knight, "The Embassy of Death," in D. Bevington, TWENTIETH CENTURY INTERPRETATIONS OF HAMLET, p. 110.

*... intense feeling, ecstatic or terrible, without an object or exceeding its object, is something which every person of sensibility has now; it is doubtless a subject of study for pathologists. It often occurs in adolescents.... The Hamlet of Shakespeare is not an adolescent, he has not that explanation or excuse. We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for him. Why he attempted it at all is an insoluble puzzle....*

T. S. Eliot, "Hamlet and his Problems," in D. Bevington, TWENTIETH CENTURY INTERPRETATIONS OF HAMLET, p. 26.

What time was it in the world? The first year of the 17th century in the exuberant England of Queen Elizabeth. England has survived the religious wars of the 16th century, crushed the mighty Spanish Armada, opened trade routes through Russia to Persia while sending ships on through Hudson's Bay, the Indies and indeed around the world.

England spanned the globe, and within its bustling capital of London, its greatest writer stood astride another globe. William Shakespeare had just helped found the Globe Theatre.

Having successfully produced comedies and history plays throughout the 1590's, Shakespeare now turned at the beginning of the new century to his first major tragedy, HAMLET. In the midst of this age of exploration, Shakespeare thrust out onto the Globe stage the brooding Hamlet: one of the most enigmatic explorers of the world within man.

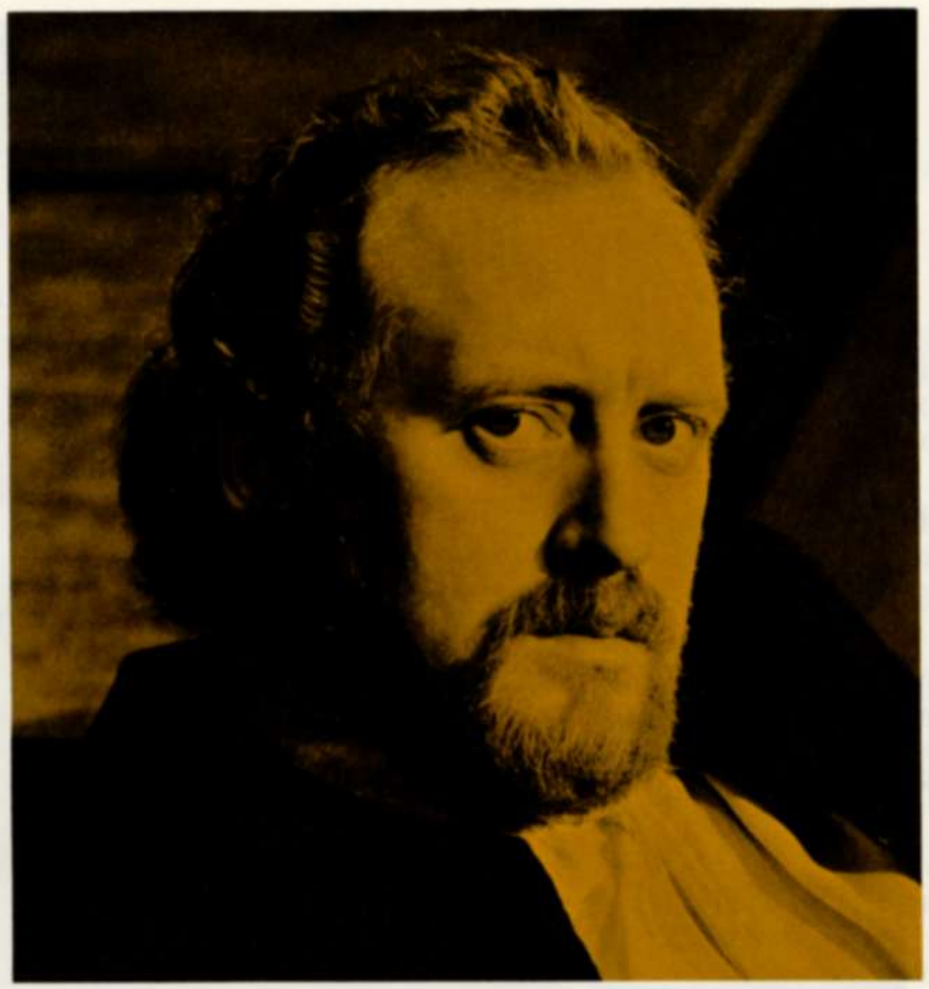
Perhaps no character in all of art has more tantalized and eluded understanding than Hamlet. Like the smile of Da Vinci's famous portrait "Mona Lisa" (a creation of the same era), Hamlet's madness and his musings do "tease us out of thought"; but with Shakespeare as with Leonardo, the enigma is bathed in the beauty of Renaissance art.

Hamlet is a young Danish prince from the largely legendary medieval past. He has returned from the university to find nearly everything "rotten in the state of Denmark." His father has been killed and his mother, Queen Gertrude, has quickly remarried his father's brother, King Claudius. On the ramparts of Elsinore Castle, which still stands where the Baltic Sea goes out into the Atlantic Ocean, the ghost of Hamlet's father tells the young prince that he was murdered by the new king, and calls on Hamlet to take revenge. But Hamlet turns instead to introspection and mockery—of the corrupt court dominated by the windbag Polonius and even of Ophelia whom Hamlet once loved. He helps traveling actors reenact the poisoning of his father, and eventually finds the courage to be—and to act—in a bloody finale of poison, swords and potions.

Like all tragic heroes, Hamlet was of high estate: a "noble mind" to Ophelia and a "noble heart" to his friend Horatio. A medieval hero in a Renaissance play, Hamlet is, nevertheless, one of the most contemporary of tragic heroes. Generation after generation of young men in the modern world have found something of themselves in Hamlet's egocentric, yet idealistic, search for the meaning of life and the key to action.

Hamlet: the poet, procrastinator and potential Prince in every man, challenges us to look for "more things in heaven and earth... than are dreamt of in [our everyday] philosophies"—if only to determine what we are to make of the baffling hero himself.

From more than a dozen screen versions of Shakespeare's Hamlet, the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM presents for the first time on television Tony Richardson's 1969 film of his London stage production with Nicol Williamson's challenging and incisive interpretation of the title role.



## CAST

**Hamlet**
Nicol Williamson

**Claudius**
Anthony Hopkins

**Gertrude**
Judy Parfitt

**Polonius**
Mark Dignam

**Ophelia**
Marianne Faithfull

**Laertes**
Michael Pennington

**Horatio**
Gordon Jackson

**Osric**
Peter Gayle

**Rosencranz**
Ben Aris

**Guilderstern**
Clive Graham

## CREDITS

Based on the play by William Shakespeare

Directed by Tony Richardson for Woodfall Films

Produced by Neil Hartley

Photographed by Gerry Fisher in Technicolor

Edited by Charles Rees

Music by Patrick Gowers

117 minutes. Color.

Great Britain 1969

Richardson's HAMLET was filmed on the stage of the Roundhouse in London. While not a full-scale cinematic reinterpretation of Shakespeare's play, this HAMLET succeeds in avoiding many of the problems in filming off the stage. Working with dark, shadowed backgrounds, throwing strong, key lights onto his actors, Richardson transforms the court at Elsinore into an indefinite claustrophobic cell and concentrates his focus upon the faces of his leading players; above all, upon Williamson's sharp, edgy, ironic Hamlet. The political overtones of the play are intentionally muted, with most of the overt references to Denmark as a state at war or to the soldier Fortinbras radically cut.

In speech and manner, as well as appearance, Williamson defies the traditionally romantic portrayal of the melancholic, young Prince. His Hamlet is abrasive, sardonic, defensively (but cleverly) playful and as alienating as he is alienated. In fact, he seems cast in the mold of those brilliant, self-indulgent "angry young men" whom Richardson and dramatist John Osborne were largely responsible for introducing to the British theater and cinema during the 1950's and early 1960's.

Tony Richardson directed Osborne's LOOK BACK IN ANGER first on the stage and then, in 1956, on film. His other films include A TASTE OF HONEY, THE ENTERTAINER, THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG DISTANCE RUNNER, TOM JONES and THE LOVED ONE. Nicol Williamson is also noted for his leading role as the protagonist in Osborne's INADMISSABLE EVIDENCE, which he played on the stage in London and New York and then in the film.

As perhaps the most famous play in the English language, HAMLET has been a perennial film subject for nearly seventy years. Sarah Bernhardt's performance was captured in a French short made in 1900. Asta Nielson starred in a German version of 1920. The Museum of Modern Art, in New York, preserves John Barrymore's screentest in the role. Sir Laurence Olivier's major production was filmed in 1948.

And the noted Russian filmmaker Grigori Kozintsev released his lush, extravagant version in 1964. But in some ways, the Richardson-Williamson HAMLET is the most unconventional film treatment of them all.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Robert Hamilton Ball. SHAKESPEARE ON SILENT FILM (New York, 1968).

David Bevington. TWENTIETH CENTURY INTERPRETATIONS OF HAMLET: A Series edited by Maynard Mack

David Bevington. TWENTIETH CENTURY INTERPRETATIONS OF HAMLET: A A COLLECTION OF CRITICAL ESSAYS (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1968); Series edited by Maynard Mack.

Charles W. Eckert. FOCUS ON SHAKESPEAREAN FILMS (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972).

Jan Kott. SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY (Garden City, N.Y., 1966).

Roger Manvell. SHAKESPEARE AND THE FILM (New York, 1972).

# RICHARD III

*Richard, the third son, of whom we now treat, was... little of stature, ill-featured of limbs, crook-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right. ... He was close and secret, a deep dissembler, lowly of countenance, arrogant of heart, outwardly companionable where he inwardly hated, not hesitating to kiss when he thought to kill, pitiless and cruel, not for evil will always but oftener for ambition and either for surety or increase of his position. "Friend" and "foe" were to him indifferent: where his advantage grew, he spared no man's death whose life withstood his purpose.*

Thomas More, THE HISTORY OF KING RICHARD THE THIRD (1543); reprinted in Paul M. Kendall, RICHARD III: THE GREAT DEBATE (New York, 1965), p. 35.

*Richard, in his regal capacity, was an excellent king, and for the short time of his reign enacted many wise and wholesome laws.... Certain it is that in many parts of the kingdom, not poisoned by faction, he was much beloved; and even after his death the northern counties gave open testimony of their affection to his memory.*

Horace Walpole, HISTORIC DOUBTS ON THE LIFE AND REIGN OF RICHARD III (1768); reprinted in Paul M. Kendall, RICHARD III: THE GREAT DEBATE, pp. 189-190.

What time was it in the world? Once again, the England of Queen Elizabeth in 1593 just five years after the crushing of the Spanish Armada. Exuberant in its success, England was nevertheless strangely uncertain about the future. London had just been racked by the plague; and Elizabeth was sixty and a virgin queen who threatened to die childless and to bring an end to the mighty Tudor line of monarchs.

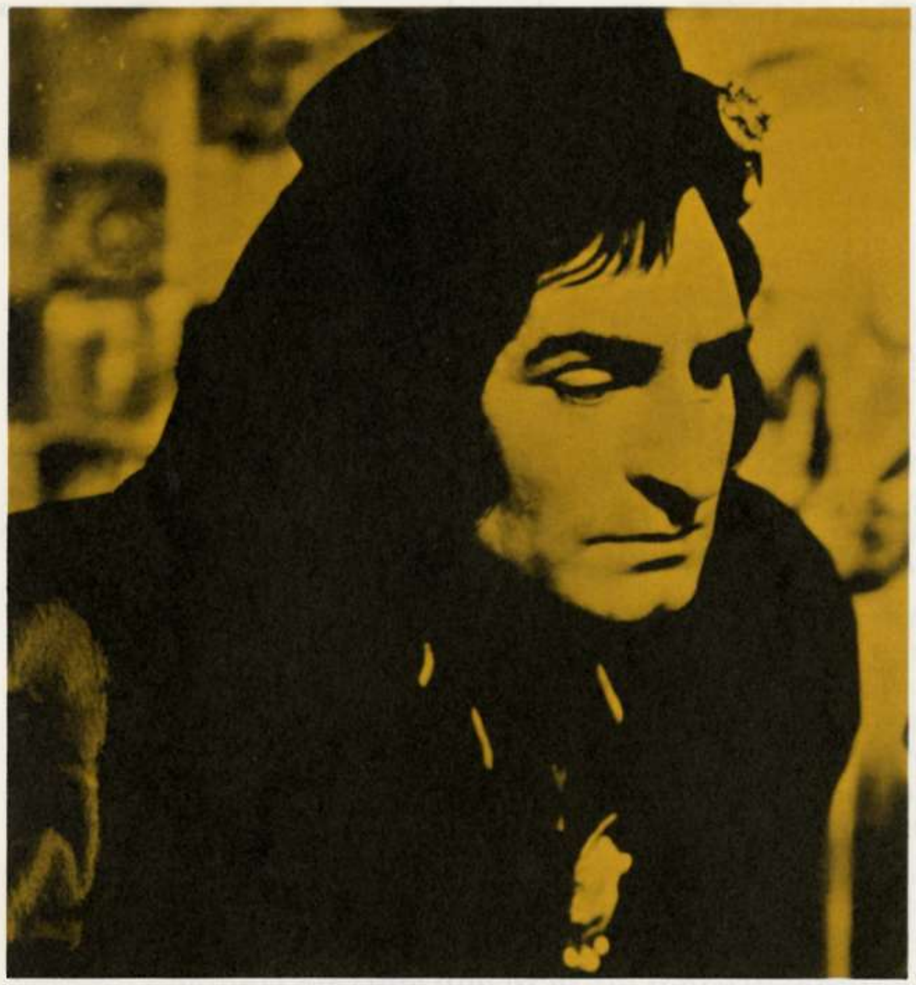
Uncertain of its destiny, England looked to the past for guidance. In the age of humanism, the guide to history was no longer the monastic chronicler but the poetic playwright—and the greatest of these was William Shakespeare. In 1593, he wrote the extraordinary political-historical play RICHARD III.

Richard had been King of England for only two turbulent years, 110 years earlier. There is much debate over just how murderous he was. But there was every reason for Shakespeare to portray him as a villain. Like all Elizabethans, he sought to celebrate the Tudor line of kings that began with Elizabeth's grandfather, Henry of Richmond, or Henry VII, who had defeated and succeeded Richard III as king.

History is usually written by the victors; and victory seems more necessary if one's predecessors were evil. Thus, in this 16th century enactment of the last stage of the 15th century War of the Roses, the House of Lancaster (the Red Rose of Henry Tudor) is painted without thorns. The White Rose of York and of Richard III is almost black.

Beyond the problem of how faithful Shakespeare's play is to history lies the question of how true it is to life. Does Shakespeare's picture of Richard's climb to power simply illustrate the way a modern man moves up through any organization you have ever known—"adding colors to the chameleon... changing shapes with proteus for advantages" and setting "the murderous Machiavelli to school"?

The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM invites you to enjoy this Elizabethan drama of royal intrigue and knightly battle—presented by a cast led by Laurence Olivier that includes four knighted actors and comes perhaps as close to royalty as a modern movie has ever done. A kingly tragedy with an all too human face: Shakespeare's RICHARD III.



## CAST

**Richard III**
Sir Laurence Olivier

**Edward IV**
Sir Cedric Hardwicke

**Edward V**
Paul Hudson

**Henry VII**
Stanley Baker

**Buckingham**
Sir Ralph Richardson

**Clarence**
Sir John Gielgud

**Norfolk**
John Phillips

**York**
Andy Shine

**Cardinal Bourchier**
Nicholas Hannen

**Rivers**
Clive Morton

**Dorset**
Douglas Wilmer

**Grey**
Dan Cunningham

**Hastings**
Alec Clunes

**Stanley**
Laurence Naismith

**Lovel**
John Laurie

**Ratcliff**
Esmond Knight

**Catesby**
Norman Wooland

**Tyrrel**
Patrick Troughton

**Brackenbury**
Andrew Cruickshank

**Lord Mayor**
George Woodbridge

**Queen Elizabeth**
Mary Kerridge

**Anne**
Claire Bloom

**Jane Shore**
Pamela Brown

**Duchess of York**
Helen Haye

**Dighton**
Michael Gough

**Forrest**
Michael Ripper

Lord Olivier has directed and starred in three major film productions of Shakespeare—HENRY V in 1945, HAMLET in 1948, and RICHARD III in 1956. (The film of his OTHELLO, however, directed by John Gielgud in 1968, was basically a film record of the stage performance.) Each of these films has approached the problems of transition from play to film in differing ways.

HENRY V begins with a reconstruction of an afternoon's performance of the play on the stage of the Globe Theatre. With the first battle sequence, the film opens to a broader canvas, moving back into the time the play portrays. HAMLET is a full-scale, romantic production set in a mist-shrouded castle of Elsinore. RICHARD III features large open sets, dominated by key symbolic elements.

## CREDITS

Based on the play by
William Shakespeare

Directed by
Sir Laurence Olivier

A London Films Production
—Sir Alexander Korda

Filmscript by Sir Laurence
Olivier and Alan Dent

Photographed by Otto
Otto Heller in Technicolor
and Vista Vision

Music by
Sir William Walton

Art Direction by
Carmen Dillon and
Roger Furse

Edited by Helga Cranston

Sound by Bert Rule

156 minutes.

Great Britain 1956.

Far more elaborate than stage backgrounds, they do not attempt to reproduce every detail of palace or battlefield. RICHARD III has a number of carefully worked-out visual motifs, most notably the constant use of Richard's shadow as a counterpoint to his performance.

Olivier speaks direct to camera in his long monologues, drawing us as audience into Richard's plots and schemes. While close to Shakespeare's original idea, this staging is an adventurous experiment for the film, one which gives this production a special vitality and force.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Ronald Berman. THE READER'S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS, A DISCURSIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY (Chicago, 1965).

Constance Brown. Olivier's RICHARD III: A Reevaluation," in Charles W. Eckert, ed., FOCUS ON SHAKESPEAREAN FILMS (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1972), pp. 130-145.

Tom F. Driver. THE SENSE OF HISTORY IN GREEK AND SHAKESPEAREAN DRAMA (New York, 1967). See especially Chapter V, "Nemesis and Judgement: The Persians and RICHARD III," pp. 87-115.

Paul Murray Kendall. RICHARD THE THIRD (New York, 1955).

Paul Murray Kendall. RICHARD III: THE GREAT DEBATE (MORE'S HISTORY OF KING RICHARD III, WALPOLE'S HISTORIC DOUBTS) (New York, 1965).

Jan Kott. SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY (Garden City, N.Y., 1966). See especially Chapter I, "The Kings," pp. 3-55.

Roger Manvell. SHAKESPEARE AND THE FILM (New York, 1972).

A. L. Rowse. BOSWORTH FIELD: FROM MEDIEVAL TO TUDOR ENGLAND (Garden City, N.Y., 1966).

# OLIVER TWIST

*OLIVER TWIST is directed against the poor-law and workhouse system, and in our opinion with much unfairness. The abuses which he ridicules are not only exaggerated, but in nineteen cases out of twenty do not at all exist. . . . We object in toto to the staple of OLIVER TWIST—a series of representations which must familiarize the rising generation with the haunts, deeds, language, and characters of the very dregs of the community. . . .*

QUARTERLY REVIEW, June, 1839.

*In his novels from beginning to end, Dickens is making the same point always: that to the English governing classes the people they govern are not real. It is one of the great purposes of Dickens to show you these human actualities who figure for Parliament as strategical counters and for Political Economy as statistics. . . . What does a workhouse under the Poor Laws look like? What does it feel like, taste like, smell like? How does the holder of a post in the government look? How does he talk? What does he talk about? How will he treat you? What is the aspect of the British middle class at each of the various stages of its progress? What are the good ones like and what are the bad ones like? How do they affect you, not merely to meet at dinner, but to travel with, to work under, to live with? All these things Dickens can tell us.*

Edmund Wilson, THE WOUND AND THE BOW, Chapter I, "Dickens: The Two Scrooges" (London, 1961), pp. 23-24.

What time was it in the world? Eighteen-thirty-seven, in London, England, the first year of the reign of Queen Victoria. Enough of the propertied middle classes had received the vote in the Reform Bill of 1832 to avert the kind of revolution that had swept over Europe in 1830. The Industrial Revolution was filling English cities with a new working class—and with a vast underworld living on the borders of sustenance and the fringes of the law. Complacent reformers boasted that the new law of 1834, creating a new type of workhouse for the poor, was "the first great piece of legislation based upon scientific or economic principles." No more malingering on welfare, but a disciplined atmosphere of hard work designed to make the poor self-reliant.

In London, the largest city in the Western world, a young parliamentary and judicial reporter named Charles Dickens had just turned from political debates to the deeper social concerns of the modern city. Thus, even before finishing his spectacularly successful first serial novel, PICKWICK PAPERS, Dickens now began publishing in February, 1837, the first chapters of OLIVER TWIST, which were unlike anything ever seen before in English prose. "It's all among workhouses and pickpockets and coffinmakers," cried Lord Melbourne who refused to read it. "I don't like those things . . . in reality and therefore I do not like to see them represented."

But Dickens, who had seen the underside of Victorian society and had been abandoned as a small boy to work for a time in a shoeblacking factory when his father was thrown in a debtor's prison, put much of himself into this tale of young Oliver's odyssey from anonymous birth in a provincial workhouse on through the London underworld to a new life of wealth and expectation.

The ending and much of the story may seem sentimental to us, but the perennial appeal of the fictional orphan's saga was revived in the post-war era by David Lean's memorable film version of 1948.

Film is a particularly appropriate medium for Dickens, and the great Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein has suggested that sections of OLIVER TWIST were even a kind of scenario form, as if Dickens were scripting movies fifty years before they existed. His vivid cast of characters cries out for pictorial representation and seems inseparable from the original Cruikshank illustrations: the purity of passive, little Oliver; the creatures of the Victorian underworld who fascinate us even though the novel eventually enables Oliver to escape them; the criminal Bill Sykes; the fallen Nancy; the prince of pickpockets, Alec Guinness' Fagin. They lend urban vitality to Dickens' novel and become personality types in their own right; influencing the social consciousness that they claim to be describing.

## CAST

**Oliver Twist**
John Howard Davies

**Bill Sykes**
Robert Newton

**Fagin**
Alec Guinness

**Nancy**
Kay Walsh

**Mr. Bumble**
Francis L. Sullivan

**Mr. Brownlow**
Henry Stephenson

**Mrs. Corney**
Mary Clare

**Oliver's Mother**
Josephine Stuart

**Mr. Sowerberry**
Gibb McLaughlin

**Mrs. Sowerberry**
Kathleen Harrison

**Mrs. Bedwin**
Amy Vaness

**Monks**
Ralph Truman

**The Artful Dodger**
Anthony Newley

## CREDITS

Directed by David Lean

Produced by
Ronald Neame for
The Rank Organisation

Screenplay by David Lean
and Stanley Haynes

Based on the novel by
Charles Dickens

Photographed by
Guy Green

Sets by John Bryan

Edited by Jack Harris

116 minutes. Black and
White.

Great Britain 1948.

David Lean's film of OLIVER TWIST was made following the international success of his first adaptation from Dickens, GREAT EXPECTATIONS (1946). It shares with his earlier film the careful craftsmanship that is a constant of Lean's work. The quality of production, in lighting, sets, performance, especially in editing, shows the British filmmaking tradition at its highest level. Both OLIVER TWIST and GREAT EXPECTATIONS are also models of one method of transferring literary classics to the screen. With energetic precision, the traditional Dickens characters are brought to life in a detailed reconstruction of Victorian London.

OLIVER TWIST depicts the full spectrum of society, from the workhouse to the fashionable home of the Brownlows; from the dark attics where Fagin trains his boys in theft under the shadow of St. Paul's Cathedral to the avenues and backstreets of London teeming with life. The narrative is a compressed version of Dickens' intricate plot, but the flavor of his world, the broad lines of his famous story are dramatized with great skill.

American release was delayed until 1951, and the version distributed then was reduced in length. The problem was controversy over Alec Guinness' interpretation of Fagin, which was condemned as anti-Semitic. The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM will present the full original version, seldom shown before in America, and never broadcast on American television.

David Lean began in film as an apprentice film editor, and worked his way up to director through the studio system. His major films include IN WHICH WE SERVE (1942), BRIEF ENCOUNTER (1946), BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER (1954), SUMMERTIME (1955), THE THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI (1957), LAWRENCE OF ARABIA (1962), DOCTOR ZHIVAGO (1966), RYAN'S DAUGHTER (1969).

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Philip Collins. DICKENS AND CRIME (London, 1965).

Humphry House. THE DICKENS WORLD (London, 1941). Revised edition, 1952.

Steven Marcus. DICKENS: FROM PICKWICK TO DOMBEY (New York, 1965).

Ada Blanche Nisbet. "Charles Dickens," in Lionel Stevenson, ed., VICTORIAN FICTION: A GUIDE TO RESEARCH (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).

Peter Quennell. MAYHEW'S LONDON: SELECTIONS FROM "LONDON LABOUR AND LONDON POOR" (New York, 1969).

David Thomson. ENGLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (1815-1914) (Baltimore, Md., 1950).

Angus Wilson. THE WORLD OF CHARLES DICKENS (New York, 1970).

# BALLAD OF A SOLDIER

*The picture of the Soviet Union at war is one of a cooperative people, friendly and self-sacrificing...The story is a little too much sweetness and light... As much as this indicates a change from the usual Stalinist film, it does not tell us too much about human nature.*

Paul Beckley, NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, December 27, 1960.

*The authors were not afraid of the "negative" element in the character of their hero, showing his fear before the deadly moving machines of the enemy, because they were trying to pass on not the facsimile but the truth of life.*

N. Ignat'eva, ISKUSSTVO KINO, January, 1960.

What time was it in the world? Sometime in the early stages of World War II, somewhere on the Eastern front. Russia still reeling from the German attack in June 1941, is in the midst of an agonizing war effort that cost her nearly twenty million—or one-tenth of the whole population—killed.

In the confusions of the battlefield, a young Russian signal corpsman becomes almost accidentally a hero. He picks up a gun apparently cast aside by someone else, destroys two tanks, and is given a brief four-day pass to see his mother. His odyssey back provides glimpses of the Russian home-front and a condensed picture of the goodness and warmth of an idealized 19-year-old, who never has a chance to be anything but a soldier. His name is Alyosha, suggesting perhaps the most spiritual of the brothers Karamazov and—even more strongly to Russians—the folk tale of Alexis, the simple man of God.

The poignant, pathetically brief reunion at the end, before returning to the battlefield, brings film technique and human emotion together in the marvellous image of a mother rushing back through the wheat fields and brambles.

Names, places, and dates are all obscured in this poetic, even sentimental, film, which is a kind of living, lyric evocation of the unknown soldier; appropriately entitled BALLAD OF A SOLDIER.

It is the work of a young Soviet director, Grigori Chukhrai, who was himself a paratrooper, fighting often behind enemy lines and wounded five times during the war. His focus, however, was not on the battlefield—we never see an enemy soldier in the entire movie—but on the homefront. The picture is one of fatherly generals, generally clean-shaven and friendly soldiers and civilian cooperation and camaraderie—reflecting as movies of wartime often do, the way people would like to remember themselves more than the way it actually looked.

Nevertheless, this movie stands in marked contrast to the epic war movies of the Stalin era, where the emphasis was on the wisdom of the leader and the heroics of the masses. The focus is on ordinary people, and there is an almost total absence of the wooden party figures and propaganda messages that had previously (and have to a considerable extent since) dominated Soviet films. The use of camera effects to suggest human moods and the centrality of simple human emotions (a boy noticing a girl's leg and crying in his mother's arms) clearly date this as a movie of the short period of humanistic assertion, known as the "thaw," that followed the frozen monumentalism of the Stalin era.

## CAST

**Alyosha**
Vladimir Ivashov

**Shura**
Shanna Prokhorenko

**Alyosha's Mother**
Antonina Maximova

**The General**
Nikolai Kruchkov

**The Wounded Soldier**
Evgeni Urbanski

**Truck Driver**
Valentina Telegina

## CREDITS

Directed by
Grigori Chukhrai

Screenplay by
Grigori Chukhrai and
Valentin Yoshov

Photographed by
Vladimir Nikolayev and
Era Saveleva

Music by Mikhail Siv

Edited by B. Nametcheck

A Mosfilm Production

86 minutes.
Black and white.

U.S.S.R. 1959.

Grigori Chukhrai's THE BALLAD OF A SOLDIER is an attempt to come to terms with the devastating experience of World War II in Russia, from the perspective of fifteen year's distance. The title of the film provides an important clue to its method and message: the filmmaker has tried to imitate both the simplicity and the generalization of the folk ballad.

The film opens and closes with the stunning image of Alyosha's mother, alone and forever waiting amid the rolling fields of the homeland. Her feelings and her vulnerable, stoic presence are closely defined in personal, not allegorical, terms. Thus, she exemplifies rather than symbolizes "Mother Russia," by simply *being* a mother painfully concerned about the safety of her nineteen-year-old son, her only son, at the front.

Alyosha's journey back through the war-lines to pay her a brief (and unknowingly final) visit becomes a series of fleeting encounters with various individuals, each of whom touches him personally while also representing different aspects of the war experience: the legless soldier afraid to return home to his wife; the unfaithful wife of a fellow-soldier at the front who couldn't wait; the old, solid peasant woman nursing an ancient supply truck through muddy, rutted back roads; and the girl Shura, with whom he falls in love within the space of a few, crowded hours and leaves behind forever. Like stanzas in a ballad, these poignant, lyrical vignettes are balanced and framed by the scenes surrounding them.

Unlike most war films, there is no direct expression of hatred or fear of "the enemy" in BALLAD OF A SOLDIER. The war is like a natural disaster—something to be borne and survived, so that the rhythms of life can begin again to flow more freely, much like the swaying fields of wheat in Alyosha's homeland. This sentimental concept is constantly reinforced by the visual style of the film, not only with the opening and closing long-shots but even more with the many intervening close-ups that are essentially warm character portraits composed with classical lighting.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Alexander Dallin. GERMAN RULE IN RUSSIA, 1941-1945: A STUDY OF OCCUPATION POLICIES (New York, 1957).

Mathew P. Gallagher. THE SOVIET HISTORY OF WORLD WAR II: MYTHS, MEMORIES, AND REALITIES (New York, 1963).

Jeanne Vronskaya. YOUNG SOVIET FILM-MAKERS (London, 1972).

Alexander Werth. RUSSIA AT WAR: NINETEEN FORTY-ONE TO NINETEEN FORTY-FIVE (New York, 1964).

# ALEXANDER NEVSKY

*Under Stalin's influence, works of history and art glorified many other tsars and princes, portrayed in an extremely distorted fashion. Thus the legend of Aleksandr Nevsky was revived... hushing up the fact that he called the Tartars into Novgorod to suppress a popular rebellion.*

Roy Medvedev, LET HISTORY JUDGE (New York, 1971), p. 519.

*Reading at one and the same time the 13th century chronicles and the newspapers of today, one loses the sense of a difference of time, because that bloody horror, which in the 13th century was loosed by the attacking knightly orders, is hardly distinguished from that which is done today in some countries of the world.*

Sergei Eisenstein, 1938

*... military defensive in its content, heroic in spirit, party-line in its direction and epic in style.*

Nicholai Cherkassov on ALEXANDER NEVSKY, 1953

*It was on Saturday, at sunrise, that the two armies met, and there was terrible carnage, and the crash of spears and their breaking and the clash of swords smiting as they moved over the frozen sea; and you could not see the ice, it was so covered with blood.*

Description of the battle on the ice from a late 13th or early 14th century LIFE OF ALEXANDER NEVSKY

What time was it in the world? Twelve-forty-two A.D. — or as the Byzantine and early Russian calendars reckoned in those days — the year 6750 since the creation of the world. Early Russian civilization had need for the reassurance that they still lived in a created universe and that the God of Eastern Orthodoxy had not forgotten them. For Russia was beseiged — as Russian civilization was so often destined to be in later times — by enemies on two sides. The Mongol or Tartar horde, under Ghengis Khan and his successors, had overrun most of the cities of the Russian steppe, leaving only a few cities to the north and west like Novgorod and Pskov free of the Mongol yoke. These cities in turn were threatened by a second menace: the Teutonic and Livonian knights, Baltic warriors who were continuing the Western assault against Eastern Christendom which had recently caused crusades to humiliate fellow Christians and occupy the Eastern Christian empire at Constantinople. Now crusading knights were occupying Pskov in the North — and heading for a showdown in a battle fought on ice with the forces of Russian Novgorod under the prince they summoned to lead them from the wooded interior: ALEXANDER NEVSKY.

This saga of national resistance and epic battle is the subject of Sergei Eisenstein's great patriotic film ALEXANDER NEVSKY. Completed at the height of the Stalin era on the eve of World War II, this film tells us as much about the period in which it was made as it does about the period it describes. Harassed by Japan on its Manchurian border, Russia was even more worried by the rise of Hitler's Germany. Russia's greatest film director, Sergei Eisenstein, had been in disgrace with the regime for his earlier artistic experiments. He won his way back into official favor by producing this classic statement of official patriotism that Stalin was then encouraging.

In the call for strong, central leadership to rally a quarrelsome people, Stalin apparently saw something of the image of himself as the new absolute dictator after the purge period. In the pointed warning to warlike Western invaders at the end, worried Russian officials sought to convince themselves and impress resurgent Germany (whose ambassador was at one point invited to see the film).

Such propagandistic purpose in 1938 did not, of course, prevent the sudden return to pro-German subjects, once the Nazi-Soviet pact was concluded the following year; and in 1940 Eisenstein found himself staging a production of Wagner's "Die Walküre" in the Bolshoi Theatre.

Yet Eisenstein's film did prove prophetic of the popular resistance which eventually stopped the mechanized German advance once the Germans advanced with the sword in 1941. Eisenstein's artistic genius proved, in any case, capable of rising above all conditions of servitude; and in ALEXANDER NEVSKY, the remarkable camera shots of Tisse fused in counterpoint with the score of Prokofiev provide an unforgettable illustration of the elements of old Russia in the service of the new Soviet state.

For old Russia was not primarily a verbal culture so much as a culture of sights and sounds. Icons and music were more important than words for old Russia, much as Eisenstein's epic is built on a kind of symphonic interaction of powerful pictures and magnificent music.

## CAST

**Alexander Nevsky**
Nikolai Cherkassov

**Vassily Buslai**
N. P. Okhiopkov

**Gavrillo Olexich**
A. L. Agrikossov

**Ignat, the Armorer**
D. N. Orlov

**Olga**
V. S. Ivasheva

**Vasilissa**
A. S. Danilova

**Master of the Teutonic Order**
V. L. Ershov

## CREDITS

Directed by Sergei M. Eisenstein, Assisted by D. M. Vasiliev

Written by Sergei M. Eisenstein and Peter Pavlenko

Photographed by Edward Tisse

Musical Score by Sergei Prokofiev

A Mosfilm Production

105 minutes.
Black and white.

U.S.S.R. 1938.

ALEXANDER NEVSKY stands in the middle ground of Eisenstein's career in film, separating his bold experiments in silent film of the Twenties, from the later, intricate, operatic design of the multi-part IVAN THE TERRIBLE. It is the only completed film to come from the many projects Eisenstein began in the decade from 1930 to 1940. In many ways, NEVSKY is uncharacteristic of Eisenstein —there is a straight dramatic story-line, an exalted hero figure, even a secondary "love interest." It is perhaps the closest that the great film innovator ever came to making a conventional movie.

He had come to film from the ferment of experimental theater. Under the influence of Meyerhold, he had integrated brief film sequences into one play, staged another in a real chemical factory. His first feature STRIKE (1925) was a bold poster-like experiment, almost a live-action satirical cartoon, filled with grotesque images of pre-revolutionary Russia. That same year, at the age of twenty-seven, Eisenstein made his most famous film, POTEMKIN. This story of revolt on a Czarist battleship during the struggles of 1905 became the controversial symbol of the new art of cinema. It was followed by OCTOBER (TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD) in 1928, and OLD AND NEW, on the subject of collective farming, in 1929. Each of these films represented a highly individual exploration of the power of film; rejecting the imitation of traditional forms from other arts in favor of the cinema where the combination of images, their order and duration, would carry the meaning in forceful terms. Eisenstein aimed for a way of portraying history and events with the "mass" as hero, rather than developing standard heroic figures.

During the Thirties, the goals of the Soviet cinema changed and free experiment was no longer as encouraged. Old forms seemed to work better to convey the message of the new Russia. ALEXANDER NEVSKY was developed as a clear historical parallel to the Nazi threat, as a call to defense of homeland under the banner of a great leader. It is Eisenstein's first completed sound film, and special care was taken, in collaboration with the composer Prokofiev, to develop a strong and active interrelation between image and music. The film was shot on a rushed schedule—the original plan had been to mount the spectacular "Battle On the Ice" in winter, but plans were changed to get the message out sooner, and the scene was shot on a artificially prepared field in July of 1938. It premiered in Moscow on November 23 of the same year, and restored Eisenstein for a brief period to official favor.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Mikhail Cherniavsky. TSAR AND THE PEOPLE: STUDIES IN RUSSIAN MYTHS (New York, 1969).

Isaac Deutscher. STALIN: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY, 2nd Rev. Ed. (New York, 1967).

Sergei Eisenstein. FILM FORM (New York, 1969).

Jay Leyda. KINO. A HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN AND SOVIET FILM (New York, 1972).

George Vernadsky. MONGOLS AND RUSSIA (New Haven, Conn., 1953).

# THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN

*What is properly called the Highlands of Scotland is that large tract of mountainous Ground to the Northwest of the Forth and the Tay, where the natives speak the Irish language. The inhabitants stick close to their ancient and idle way of life; retain their barbarous customs and maxims; depend generally on their Chiefs as their Sovereign Lords and masters; and being accustomed to the use of Arms, and inured to hard living, are dangerous to the public peace; and must continue to be so until, being deprived of Arms for some years, they forget the use of them.*

Duncan Forbes, Lord President of the Court of Session, Summer, 1746; quoted in John Prebble, CULLODEN (New York, 1962), p. 35.

*The Hanoverian army, and the Duke of Cumberland who commanded it, displayed in their triumph a barbarity which recalled the memory of Sedgemoor and of the bloody Assize while the courage, the loyality, and the touching fidelity of the Highlanders to their fallen chief cast a halo of dramatic interest around his cause.*

William E. H. Lecky, A HISTORY OF ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, Vol. I (London, 1883), p. 458.

The time was 1746. Britain was at the height of its power with the Union Jack flying at the headwaters of the Ganges and of the Mississippi. The last serious rebellion of the old monarchists against the new Hanoverian dynasty had been crushed thirty years earlier. The first modern democratic revolution—the American War of Independence—lay thirty years in the future. Ruled by its aristocrats, England had just become the first country to adopt an official national anthem: "God Save the King," and her ingenious middle classes had just begun the chain of inventions and innovations that was soon to make England the home of the Industrial Revolution—and the world's leader in manufacture as well as commerce.

Yet George II felt strangely insecure. The new British kings had come from Germany; and many in the British Isles—particularly among persecuted Catholics—still cherished the memory of the native Stuart line of kings. When the last Stuart pretender, the famed Bonnie Prince Charlie, returned from exile in France for a final effort to reclaim the throne, George II's forces pursued them with bloodthirsty vengeance to the northernmost highlands of Scotland for the last battle ever fought on British soil: The Battle of Culloden.

Historians have described Culloden as "one of the most brutal and mishandled battles ever fought." Yet for nearly two centuries most British historians tended to represent this defeat of Charles Stuart's forces as a victory for progress against rebellious rural reactionaries. They downplayed or overlooked the savagery of the fighting and the subsequent massacre of the surrounding native population of Highland Scotland. Recent writers, however, have tended to stress the horror of the war rather than its outcome—and to see in the rape of northern Scotland an early example of the cultural and physical genocide which powerful modern states sometimes inflict on less developed lands.

In this anti-war, anti-traditional school stands Peter Watkins, who produced the remarkable film reenactment of the battle and its aftermath which the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM presents for the first time on American television.

Watkins' THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN reflects the 1960's as much as the 1740's—the filmmaker's hatred of war, of legends glorifying military leaders, and of authority generally. Though he presents a careful historical reconstruction of the battle, Watkins rapidly fires selected facts and images at the viewer in a conscious editorial effort to elicit emotion and deny the viewer the time to pursue any independent train of thought. He projects back in time modern television techniques of cameras on the battlefield and on-the-spot interviews with unseen reporters.

His focus throughout, however, is not so much on the bayonet or grape-shot as on the people who feel, fire, and fall. We are reminded that man's inhumanity to man is not an invention of recent times, nor a monopoly of people generally thought to be uncivilized. In our continuing study of "Man and Authority," Watkins' BATTLE OF CULLODEN seems to suggest that neither royal nor rebel authority was worthy of the human lives sacrificed by both sides in this bloody battle.

## CREDITS

Written and Directed by
Peter Watkins

A production of British
Broadcasting Corporation
Documentary

Battle Coordinator:
Derek Ware

Photography: Dick Bush

Historical Advisor:
John Prebble

73 minutes. Black and
white.

Great Britain 1964.

This documentary re-creation of "one of the most brutal and mishandled battles ever fought in Britain" was the first film to bring Peter Watkins to international attention. It enabled him, on commission from the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1966, to make the project for which he is most noted. THE WAR GAME describes the nature and after-effects of a possible nuclear attack on Britain. The subject of atomic war was of great concern then, but generally treated in abstract, theatrical terms. Watkins extrapolated his scenario from probability studies; naming the British cities most likely hit and illustrating the predicted casualities with graphic shots of suffering, panic and chaos. THE WAR GAME was never shown on BBC, nor has it been televised anywhere in the world. It was considered too powerful for direct television transmission, and distributed only on a limited non-theatrical basis in Britain and the United States.

Watkins' other films share much of the method and drive of THE WAR GAME. Each begins with a clear description of a hypothetical situation, then builds upon detail and characterization to convince an audience dramatically that the premise could be real. He works as a filmmaker not so much to demonstrate probability as to immerse the audience in a predictive situation. Each film describes an alternate future where a current problem has run to the extreme; in PRIVILEGE (1967, a rock star is the tool for a totalitarian attempt to take over Britain; in the GLADIATORS (1968), war has become a televised contest among national mercenaries, a combination Hollywood film and Olympic Games where the blood is real; PUNISHMENT PARK (1971) deals with the suppression of radical elements in America.

THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN is Watkins' only film about the past; yet it has much the same immediacy and polemic force as his later films in "future tense." Based on careful, historical research, it recreates the Battle as if it had been covered by a team of sophisticated documentarians. The main concept is much the same as the old "You Are There" television series, but Watkins uses the technique with far greater discipline and a whole new level of intensity.

He adopts all the technical qualities and mannerisms of actuality footage—the man who tries to keep the camera from entering a prison cell, the distraught woman losing control as she tells her story, the camera that shakes when the explosion hits. Against this visual context, the narration is cold and hard: "This is grapeshot..." "This is what it does...."

In comparison with the sentimentality of a film about the "tragedy of war," such as BALLAD OF A SOLDIER, CULLODEN is brutal. But it is also filled throughout with a deep concern for the men and women who are "merely" extras in most films, both fictional and documentary... the common soldiers and the noncombatants who suffer and die in "spectacular" action scenes.

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sir Charles Petrie. THE JACOBITE MOVEMENT, THE FIRST PHASE, 1688-1716 (London, 1948).

Sir Charles Petrie. THE JACOBITE MOVEMENT, THE LAST PHASE, 1716-1807 (London, 1950).

John Prebble. THE LION IN THE NORTH: A PERSONAL VIEW OF SCOTLAND'S HISTORY (New York, 1971).

John Prebble. CULLODEN (New York, 1962). The most complete account of the Battle and its aftermath, based upon a broad selection of manuscript and published materials. Mr. Prebble was the Historical Advisor to director, Peter Watkins.

Alistair and Henrietta Taylor. 1745 AND AFTER (London, 1938). Contains John William O'Sullivan's "Narrative" (1747) and "Letters" (1746-1760).

# THE RISE OF LOUIS XIV

*He reigned, indeed, in little things; the great he could never reach.... He liked nobody to be in any way superior to him. Thus he chose his ministers, not for their knowledge, but for their ignorance; not for their capacity, but for their want of it.... Naturally fond of trifles, he unceasingly occupied himself with the most petty details of his troops, his household, his mansions; would even instruct his cooks, who received, like novices, lessons they had known by heart for years. This vanity, this unmeasured and unreasonable love of admiration, was his ruin.*

Duc de Saint-Simon (1676-1755), MEMOIRS; reprinted in William F. Church, ed., THE GREATNESS OF LOUIS XIV: MYTH OR REALITY? (Lexington, Mass., 1959), p.33.

*One owes this much justice to public men who have benefitted their own age, to consider the point from which they started in order to perceive more clearly the changes they wrought in their country. Posterity owes them eternal gratitude for the examples they gave, even though such examples have been surpassed. Such lawful glory is their only reward. It is certain that the love of such glory inspired Louis XIV, at the time of his taking the government into his own hands, in his desire to improve his kingdom, beautify his court and perfect the arts.*

Voltaire, THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV (1751); reprinted in William F. Church, ed., THE GREATNESS OF LOUIS XIV, pp. 62-63.

What time was it in the world? Sixteen-sixty-one in France — the most populous nation in Europe with twenty million people — yet a troubled kingdom whose largely peasant population had an average life expectancy of less than twenty-five years and a penchant for rebellion. The treasury had been emptied by a long war with Hapsburg Spain. For a half century the only effective political leaders were not kings, but worldly Cardinals of the Church, Richelieu and Mazarin.

And now, in March, 1661, Cardinal Mazarin lay dying in his castle at Vincennes. Everyone remembered that after Richelieu's death a generation earlier, provincial noblemen had torn the kingdom apart in the so-called insurrection of the *Fronde* driving the king out of Paris on three separate occasions. Now, as the deathwatch set in for Mazarin, divisive scheming was already beginning among the fawning courtiers who followed the king around like a nomadic troupe from one castle to another.

Into this power vacuum at the claustrophobic court stepped the hitherto unimpressive, 23-year-old King himself: Louis XIV. At daybreak on the very morning after Mazarin's death, Louis announced that henceforth he would rule France without even a Prime Minister. He began to assert royal power against his old ministers, his brother, and even his Austrian mother — and to become during the next 55 years the most powerful and pretentious of all modern kings in the Western world.

Louis' seizure and consolidation of power is the subject of Roberto Rossellini's THE RISE OF LOUIS XIV, one of the remarkable series of historical films for television which Rossellini has been making during the last decade after a spectacular earlier career as a founder of "neo-realist" cinema in post-war Italy. What Rossellini calls the visual teaching of history involves evoking the mood and filling in the details of food and dress as well as reenacting past events.

His LOUIS XIV compresses 21 years of history from the death of Mazarin to Louis' installation at the new court of Versailles in 1682. The slow beginning deliberately suggests a pace of life different from the modern experience and makes the movement out into the open air and onto the court at Versailles all the more impressive.

André Maurois has claimed that Louis inaugurated the modern style of life at Versailles, by letting light shine in to dominate the interior of a great palace. Enlightenment shone forth as well from his famous court, which impresses us with its artificiality but actually served the useful political purpose of destroying the independent power of the provincial nobility and filling their lives with ritual as a kind of occupational therapy.

But does such royal pride anticipate a fall? By seriously likening his daily risings to those of the sun, did Louis sow the seeds for the revenge of Paris in the Revolution of 1789 against the successors of Louis XIV who left for Versailles a century before?

THE RISE OF LOUIS XIV avoids either glorification or caricature. It allows each of us to make our own judgment on the seventeenth century "Sun King."

## CAST

**Louis XIV**
Jean-Marie Patte

**Colbert**
Raymond Jourdan

**Mazarin**
Silvagni

**Anne of Austria**
Katherine Renn

**Madame du Plessis**
Dominique Vincent

**Fouquet**
Pierre Barrat

**Louise De La Valliere**
Francoise Ponty

**D'Artagnan**
Maurice Barrier

## CREDITS

Directed by Roberto Rossellini

Produced for ORTF

Written by Jean Gruault and Jean-Dominique de la Rochefoucauld

Based on a story by Phillipe Erlanger

Photographed by Georges LeClerc in Eastmancolor

Décor by Maurice Valay

Costumes by Christiane Coste

Edited by Armand Ridel

Music arranged by Betty Willemetz

89 minutes.

France

1966

Roberto Rossellini's THE RISE OF LOUIS XIV (LA PRISE DE POUVOIR PAR LOUIS XIV) is part of a growing series of historical and educational films to which he has devoted most of his energies during the last decade. The range of these projects, filmed on commission for various European television networks, is astonishingly broad. They are neither documentaries nor customary theatrical features. Rather, Rossellini is working to develop a new *genre* of films about history, one which draws upon the specific possibilities of both film and television.

> *History, through teaching visually, can evolve on its own ground rather than evaporate into dates and names. Abandoning the usual litany of battles, it can surrender to its social, economic and political determinants. It can build not on fantasy, but on historical knowledge, situations, costumes, atmospheres, and men who had historical significance and helped the social developments by which we live today. Some characters, then, considered from a psychological viewpoint, can through their human qualities, become the embodiment of action.*[1]

Among the subjects already filmed by Rossellini under this new credo are: THE AGE OF IRON (1964)—five episodes supervised by Roberto Rossellini and directed by his son, Renzo Rossellini; THE STRUGGLE OF MAN TO SURVIVE (1967)—twelve episodes, directed by Renzo and produced by Roberto Rossellini; THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (1968)—five episodes, directed by Roberto Rossellini; SOCRATES (1970), ST. AUGUSTINE (1971), and PASCAL (1971) all directed by Roberto Rossellini. Other similar projects are currently in progress.

THE RISE OF LOUIS XIV describes, in an austere set of precise actions, the manner in which the "Sun King" took control of the government of France. The film is both rich and selective in historical detail. Rossellini attempts to communicate the "spirit of the time"—the luxury of court life, the political intrigue, the manipulation of courtiers. But he also restricts the scope of this investigation; downplaying drama and viewing spectacle as ritual in order to reveal the logic of power and politics.

He presents us with a Louis who is drained of many of the contradictions revealed by historical records; with an intense, solemn young man following out a carefully structured strategy. This is an historical interpretation, one which Rossellini would be the first to accept as limited; but it is also a manifestation of his attempt to create a new visual method of presenting history.

Rossellini's previous film work includes OPEN CITY (1945), one of the most acclaimed of neo-realist films; PAISAN (1946); GERMANY YEAR ZERO (1948); VOYAGE IN ITALY (1953); INDIA (1958); GENERAL DELLA ROVERE (1959); and VIVA L'ITALIA (1960).

[1]Rossellini in 1963, quoted in Jose-Luis Guarner, ROBERTO ROSSELLINI (London, 1970), p. 117.

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


William F. Church, ed., THE GREATNESS OF LOUIS XIV: MYTH OR REALITY? (Lexington, Mass., 1959).

Pierre Goubert. LOUIS XIV AND TWENTY MILLION FRENCHMEN (New York, 1970).

Albert Guerard. FRANCE IN THE CLASSICAL AGE (New York, 1956).

W. H. Lewis. SPLENDID CENTURY: LIFE IN THE FRANCE OF LOUIS XIV (New York, 1971).

Andrew Lossky, ed. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY 1600-1715 (New York, 1967).

Orest Ranum. PARIS IN THE AGE OF ABSOLUTISM (New York, 1968).

John B. Wolff. LOUIS XIV (New York, 1968).

G. Ziegler. AT THE COURT OF VERSAILLES (New York, 1968).

# THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL

*The assassins of the president disposed of, the Government will next take in hand the ruffians who tortured to death thousands of Union prisoners. The laws of civilized warfare must be vindicated; and some explanation must be exacted for the most infernal crime of the century.... In respect to Captain Werz [sic], for instance... it may be shown that he went into his business of wholesale murder, on express instructions by superior authority.... It is manifest that this maltreatment must have proceeded from some general design upon the part of the rebel Government....*

NEW YORK TIMES, July 26, 1864; quoted in William Hesseltine, CIVIL WAR PRISONS: A STUDY IN WAR PSYCHOLOGY (Columbus, Ohio, 1930), p. 238.

*I was at Andersonville when the delegation of prisoners spoken of by Jefferson Davis [President of the Confederacy] left there to plead our cause with the authorities at Washington; and nobody can tell... what fond hopes were raised, and how hope sickened into despair, waiting for the answer that never came. In my opinion, and that of a good many others, a good part of the responsibility for the horrors of Andersonville rests with General U.S. Grant, who refused to make a fair exchange of prisoners.*

Henry M. Brennan, ex-prisoner at Andersonville, as quoted in Jefferson Davis, THE RISE AND FALL OF THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT, Vol. II (New York, 1881), p. 603.

What time was it in the world? The late summer of 1865 in a troubled America: in the sultry, sweltering capital of Washington, D.C. The bitter Civil War had just ended with a half million dead — as many Americans as have been killed in all other wars combined in which Americans have fought before and since.

These were once again *united* States — but the atmosphere was still poisoned, vindictive and violent. President Abraham Lincoln had been assassinated shortly after the surrender, and there had been summer rioting in the capital. Much of the bitterness within the victorious North was focused on a dramatic trial unique in American history: the trial of Henry Wirz, Swiss immigrant who was to become the only American ever tried and executed for war crimes on American soil.

The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM is proud to present a dramatic reenactment of that historic event: THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL, an Emmy Award winning drama produced by Hollywood Television Theater at KCET, and directed by George C. Scott. It is the only American offering in our series on history with a human face, but it deals with one of the most powerful and enduring problems posed by our general theme of "Man and Authority:" the rival authorities of military discipline and moral conscience.

The man on trial, Henry Wirz, challenges all of us to ask if we would have done differently than he as commanding officer of the Southern camp for Northern prisoners of war at Andersonville, Georgia. This camp was the site of one of the worst cases of man's inhumanity to man on American soil. But when we move from outrage to judgment, how do we — as the broader court of humanity — relate the particular horrors of Andersonville to the fuller picture which historians now have of our Civil War; as in some respects the first total war of modern times, with a complexity of causes and a multiplicity of atrocities on both sides? How, moreover, would we in Wirz's place have balanced the authority of superior military officers and of loyalty to one's own ravaged wartime community with the rival authority of human compassion based on religious and ethical values that alone raise us above the level of the beasts?

This is the stuff of high tragedy — and of all too much recent history.

## CAST

**Ambrose Spencer**
John Anderson

**Henry Wirz**
Richard Basehart

**Davidson**
Michael Burns

**Otis Baker**
Jack Cassidy

**Dr. John C. Bates**
Buddy Ebsen

**Jasper Culver**
Lou Frizzell

**Major Hosmer**
Wright King

**General Lew Wallace**
Cameron Mitchell

**James W. Gray**
Albert Salmi

**Lt. Col. N. P. Chipman**
William Shatner

**Chandler**
Harry Townes

## CREDITS

Produced by KCET
Los Angeles—
Hollywood
Television Theater

Executive Producer:
Lewis Freedman

Director: George C. Scott

Written by Saul Levitt

Technical Director:
Gordon Baird

Cameramen:
Tom Ancell
Rick Bennewitz
Larry Bently
Jack Reader

Set Designer: Jan Scott

Costume Designer:
Michael Travis

Lighting Designer:
Danny Franks

2 hours 19 minutes.

U.S.A. 1970.

Among the most honored of Public Television programs, THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL received the coveted "Emmy" Award for Best Single Drama Program of 1970, as well as for Best Drama Adaptation, Best Technical Direction and Best Camera-Work. It was also awarded the prestigious George Foster Peabody Broadcasting Award. The Hollywood Television Theater production, taped at the studios of KCET in Los Angeles in the fall of 1970, inaugurated a continuing series of national television presentations of major plays, including such works as U.S.A., THE POET GAME, ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST, BECKETT: FROM BEGINNING TO END, AWAKE AND SING and WINESBURG, OHIO.

A play by Saul Levitt, adapted from the novel ANDERSONVILLE by MacKinlay Kantor, THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL premiered on Broadway in 1959/60. Drawing also upon surviving trial records and the memoirs of ex-prisoners at Andersonville, Levitt has fashioned a taut and intense courtroom drama, that stands in the theatrical tradition of THE CAINE MUTINY COURT MARTIAL and INHERIT THE WIND. Like these earlier plays of the 1950's, THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL attempts not only to recreate an intrinsically dramatic moment in American history, but also to use the courtroom setting as a battleground for contesting points of view and as a forum of debate on broad, humanistic issues. The success of this technique clearly depends upon the playwright's ability to balance arguments and create forceful, articulate combatants. While there is no doubt that Colonel Chipman, the Government's prosecuting attorney, wins his day in court, he does so only after considerable confrontation with Wirz's non-military defense counsel, with the defendant himself, and with the presiding judge who vigorously questions the propriety of introducing moral evidence in a military court.

The Broadway audience that responded so enthusiastically to this play in 1959/60 could recognize obvious, and probably intentional parallels to the Nuremburg trials.

The Hollywood Television Theatre production marks the debut of George C. Scott as a major television director. Mr. Scott, who starred in the original stage version of THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL, has had a distinguished career as an actor on both stage and screen. He is perhaps best known for his Academy Award portrayal of General Patton and well remembered for his earlier film performances in THE HUSTLER (1963), DR. STRANGELOVE (1964), FLIM-FLAM MAN (1967), and the network series EASTSIDE/WESTSIDE (1963). Since his association with Hollywood Television Theater, he has directed his first feature film, RAGE.

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Ovid L. Futch. HISTORY OF ANDERSONVILLE PRISON (Gainesville, Fla., 1968). Includes also a comprehensive bibliography.

William Best Hesseltine. CIVIL WAR PRISONS (Columbus, Ohio, 1930). See especially pp. 131-133, 237-258.

MacKinlay Kantor. ANDERSONVILLE (Cleveland and New York, 1955). This is the novel upon which Saul Levitt's play THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL is based.

Darrett B. Rutman. "The War Crimes and Trial of Henry Wirz," in CIVIL WAR HISTORY, Vol. VI, No. 2 (June 1960), pp. 117-133.

# UMBERTO D

*The vast program of social reconstruction includes the "Plan for Increased Employment of Workers."...The fundamental purpose of the "Plan" is to increase employment and at the same time construct low-priced houses for workers....The Plan, officially inaugurated in 1949 is of seven-years' duration, and should be completed by March 31, 1956.*

ITALY TODAY. Published by the Documentation Center of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy (Rome, 1955).

*In Italy no one can afford to delude himself. The most obscure and unambitious individual will be derided, swindled, betrayed if he does not clearly know his way about. The lower his condition the more vulnerable he is and the quicker he must recognize the real rules governing life in order not to prosper but merely to survive....*

Luigi Barzini, THE ITALIANS (New York, 1964), p. 185.

*Man is by no means alone here. He is immersed in humanity. He is aided, comforted, protected in many ways. In fact, life can often be gay, animated and satisfying. It is, anyway, all these things for those who do not insist upon abstract and impartial justice, or expect the legal apparatus to function smoothly.*

Luigi Barzini, THE ITALIANS (New York, 1964), p. 189.

What time was it in the world? Nineteen-fifty-one in Rome, Italy. Memories of wartime suffering were beginning to fade. Under Christian Democratic political leadership, Italy had begun to benefit from the general West European post-war recovery.

Yet all was not well in the land of sunlight. Visible human suffering still remained—nearly twelve percent destitute, nearly two million unemployed. And there were the invisible tragedies of those trying to live with some kind of dignity on small, fixed incomes in a time of inflation; and of those uprooted and left alone in this land of deep, family feeling.

Italy, which fostered the humanist spirit at the dawn of the modern era, was forced to confront its own unexamined inhumanity through the vehicle of its new humanism: the "neo-realist" cinema. And in 1951, a master of that school, Vittorio De Sica, produced UMBERTO D, a film of gentle beauty on perhaps the most forgotten and invisible men of Italy and the modern Western world, as well—those left to face old age and death without means or friends.

Umberto Domenico Ferrari is an old pensioner who lives alone with his dog upon woefully inadequate resources. Enduring symbols of Italian culture—operatic music from his landlady, classical monuments in the streets, even a rosary he takes in the hospital—all serve to mock his plight as he tries to raise overdue rent on his pitiful apartment.

In a way, Umberto lives outside the history of our traditional textbooks which largely deal with great events. But if history has a human face, it must include the good as well as the great; lives that happen as well as plans that unfold. And in our examination of "Man and Authority," there is one authority that none of us can escape: age and approaching death as the inescapable facts of life.

The figure of Umberto, beautifully played by a non-professional actor, leads us not only into the Rome of 1951, but into the broader contemporary problem and universal drama of old age.

## CAST

**Umberto Domenico Ferrari**
Carlo Battisti

**Maria**
Maria Pia Casilo

**The Landlady**
Lina Gennari

**The Landlady's Fiancé**
Alberto Albani Barbieri

## CREDITS

Directed by
Vittorio De Sica

Screenplay by
Vittorio De Sica and
Cesare Zavattini

Based on a story by
Cesare Zavattini

Photographed by
G. R. Aldo

Edited by E. Da Roma

Art Director Virgilio Marchi

Music by
Alessandro Cicognini

89 minutes. Black and white.

Italy 1951.

Vittorio De Sica dedicated this film to his father, Umberto. It is, first of all and perhaps most powerfully, a study of the lonely struggles of old age. But it is also a very specific study of Italian society at the time the film was made. This combination of universal theme and pointed social comment is one of the hallmarks of the post-war Italian renaissance in cinema, the movement called "neo-realism." The script for UMBERTO D was written by Cesare Zavattini, the key theoretician and the most influential neo-realist screenwriter (SHOESHINE and THE BICYCLE THIEF, both directed by De Sica). Of this new direction in Italian film, Zavattini has written:

> The most important characteristic of and the most important innovation, of what is called neo-realism... is to have realized that the necessity of the "story" was only an unconscious way of disguising a human defeat, and that the kind of imagination it involved was simply a technique of superimposing dead formulas over living social facts. Now it has been perceived that reality is hugely rich, that to be able to look at it directly is enough; and that the artist's task is not to make people moved or indignant at metaphorical situations, but to make them reflect (and, if you like, to be moved and indignant too) on what they and others are doing, on the real things, exactly as they are.[1]

Under Mussolini, the Italian film was forced into a tight mold—divided between patriotic epics and escapist fantasy (the whole period has been called the era of the "white telephone" film for its celebration of fluffy luxury). Vittorio De Sica began as a film actor during this period. His first feature in 1942 was THE CHILDREN ARE WATCHING US. Then in the aftermath of war, he made SHOESHINE, a tragic, uncompromising look at the way society can corrupt its youth. His later films include THE BICYCLE THIEF (1949); MIRACLE IN MILAN (1953); a brilliant performance in Rossellini's GENERAL DELLA ROVERE (1959); and his most recent Academy-Award winning film, THE GARDEN OF THE FINZI-CONTINIS (1971).

Umberto Domenico Ferrari is played by a university professor from Florence. This use of non-professional actors is basic to the credo of neo-realist cinema. For the neo-realists were attempting to make films in which the flow of everyday life is suggested, not by engineering a plot in the theatrical tradition, but by relying upon the accurate and penetrating perception of the camera's eye. The intent of these films, and of UMBERTO D in particular, is to show us what is happening in the lives of people whom we all too easily ignore.

[1]Cesare Zavattini, "Some Ideas of the Cinema," in Richard D. MacCann, FILM: A MONTAGE OF THEORIES (New York, 1966), p. 217.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Roy Armes. PATTERNS OF REALISM: NEO-REALISM IN ITALIAN CINEMA (Cranbury, N.J., 1971).

Luigi Barzini. THE ITALIANS (New York, 1964).

André Bazin. WHAT IS CINEMA? Vol. II (Berkeley, Calif., 1971).

Muriel Grindrod. THE NEW ITALY: TRANSITION FROM WAR TO PEACE (London, 1947).

H. Stuart Hughes. THE UNITED STATES AND ITALY, rev. ed. (New York, 1968).

Bernice Neugarten. MIDDLE AGE AND AGING (Chicago, 1968).

Ethel Shanas and Peter Townsend, et al. OLD PEOPLE IN THREE INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES (New York, 1969).

## CAST

**Veronica**
Tatyana Samoilova

**Boris**
Alexi Batalov

**Fyodor**
Vasily Merkuryev

**Mark**
Alexander Shvorin

**Irina**
Sophia Kharitonova

**Volodya**
Konstantin Nikitin

**Stepan**
Valentine Zubkov

**Grandmother**
Alla Bogdanova

## CREDITS

Produced and Directed by Mikhail Kalatozov

Screenplay by Victor Rozov, based on his play "Alive, Always"

Photographed by Sergei Urusevsky

Art Direction by E. Evidetelev

Music by M. Vainberg

A Mosfilm Production

Received Best Picture, Director, and Actress Awards at Cannes Film Festival, 1958.

91 minutes. Black and white.
U.S.S.R. 1957

THE CRANES ARE FLYING was the first Russian film to be imported to the United States under a special Cultural Exchange agreement signed in 1959. It was the most widely released of the seven Soviet films included in the exchange, and was generally received with strong, critical favor. TIME magazine called it "with the exception of Eisenstein's IVAN THE TERRIBLE,... probably the best Russian movie seen in the United States since World War II." The exchange, however short-lived, was symptomatic of the post-Stalinist "Thaw," as was, far more directly, the vitality and force of this film by Mikhail Kalatozov and Victor Rozov.

Kalatozov has been working in Russian film since the great silent screen period of Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Dovshenko. One of his first films, a documentary on a remote, hard-pressed region of the Soviet Union, SALT FOR SVETIANA, has been called a classic of the form, comparable to such works as Luis Bunuel's LOS HURDES (LAND WITHOUT BREAD). But Kalatozov had entered the Soviet film after the first full burst of creative excitement, and the films he made throughout the Thirties and Forties were often restricted from wide distribution and in a few cases, actually banned. Most of his work has never been seen in the West.

Victor Rozov is a prominent Soviet playwright. THE CRANES ARE FLYING initiated his collaboration with Kalatozov; repeated three years later with THE LETTER THAT WAS NEVER SENT.

In THE CRANES ARE FLYING, Kalatozov plays with a number of different film styles. There are bravura sequences of experimentation (Boris' death and Veronica's near suicide) which draw directly on the Russian silent tradition. The scenes at the railroad station, filmed in long, intricate camera takes with little dialogue, fill the screen with a constantly changing array of "typical" faces. Whereas dialogue scenes are shot in a more static, picturesque style, with dramatic, key lighting displaying the virtuosity of cameraman, Sergei Urusevsky.

Kalatozov demonstrates throughout the film a full emotional commitment to his material and a range of expression that reflects both the relaxation of ideological restrictions upon Soviet art at this time and the remarkable talent of this veteran filmmaker.

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Edward Crankshaw, ed. KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS (Boston, 1970).

Priscilla Johnson. KHRUSHCHEV AND THE ARTS: THE POLITICS OF SOVIET CULTURE, 1962-1964 (Cambridge, Mass., 1965).

Boris Pasternak. DOCTOR ZHIVAGO (New York, 1958).

Walter N. Vickey, ed. and translator. THE YEAR OF PROTEST, 1956; AN ANTHOLOGY OF SOVIET LITERARY MATERIALS (New York, 1961).

# THE CRANES ARE FLYING

*Possessing unlimited power he [Stalin] indulged in great willfulness and choked a person morally and physically. Let us take, for instance, our historical and military films and some literary creations; they make us feel sick. Their true objective is the propagation of the theme of praising Stalin as a military genius. . . . Everything is shown to the nation in this false light.*

Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" at the Twentieth Party Congress in February, 1956; in KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS, Edward Crankshaw, ed. (Boston, 1970), p. 650.

*The actress [Tatyana Samoilova as Veronica] followed the most difficult path, conforming to the contradictory truths of life rather than pre-conceived schemes . . . thanks to the ability of the authors of the film to read through the human drama, the film spoke a new word in the remarkable art of the cinema.*

Soviet review of THE CRANES ARE FLYING by I. Katsev, in ISKUSSTVO MILLIONOV, 1958.

What time was it in the world? Nineteen-fifty-seven in Soviet Russia. Nikita Khrushchev had just shaken up the Communist world with his secret speech denouncing the crimes of Stalin. Despite cruel repression in Hungary, cautious liberalization continued inside the U.S.S.R.

People began to breathe a little easier and to speak of a "thaw" after the deep freeze of the Stalin era. Having lived for twenty-five years in an atmosphere of terror where it was only safe to produce forced smiles and monster monuments to the dictator, creative artists now sought to rediscover some of the rich, humanistic heritage of Russia. In this relatively humane period of Soviet history, they turned in a more human way to their greatest collective accomplishment — the suffering and victory in World War II — and produced the new type of war movie we shall see in THE CRANES ARE FLYING.

Unlike most Western war movies, this Russian film focuses on the home-front rather than the battlefield. Unlike the heavy Stalinist epics, it shows the sordid as well as the glorious side of the Russian ordeal. It is war with a fallible, human face rather than a synthetic heroic mask — and the dominant face is that of the beautiful Tatyana Samoilova as Veronica, photographed in a manner sometimes reminiscent of the ancient icons.

Veronica is in love with a young man who dutifully goes off to die in World War II against the invading Germans. Shocked by the loss of her parents and by continued bombings, Veronica sheds the Stalinist stereotype of faithfulness and fury on the war production line. She marries instead her fiancé's malingering musician cousin, through whom we meet a thoroughly corrupt world of Stalinist officials. Unusually bold for a Soviet film is the picture of a corrupt local authority wearing a Stalin jacket and the kind of light, lined boots that were thoroughly unobtainable by ordinary people and strikingly different from the heavy boots that we see on soldiers at the front. At the end, the heroine recovers a measure of love and hope in ways that we should not spoil by description.

The film is typical of the "thaw" period in that it represents the re-emergence of a talent long submerged during the Stalin era: the director of CRANES, Mikhail Kalatozov. Having produced in his native Georgia one of the greatest of Soviet documentaries in 1930, Kalatozov had been largely reduced to propaganda projects with such titles as THE MAN FROM WALL STREET. He has since the early Sixties, sadly enough, been largely routed back to propagandistic subjects in such films as I AM CUBA (1965), though even this was criticized for emphasizing artistic effects over a revolutionary message.

# NOTES ON FILM AND HISTORY

Newsreels, in their original release state or (more often) as compiled into more ambitious accounts of Twentieth Century history, are approved as the materials for the history classroom's use of film. The screening of certain "documentary" films, including the totally staged TRIUMPH OF THE WILL, is also encouraged. However, there has been a general unspoken taboo on the use of fictional films for the study of history. I believe a change in this attitude to be our main objective in deepening the use of film for historical research. It is at this appropriate moment that the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM shows us a group of films to suggest the scholar's next task.

The distinction between the "documentary" film and the "fictional" film (often miscalled "feature," a merely quantitative term) has been exaggerated by those who build their teaching principles on categories. *All* films employ some degree of selection and arrangement. For those of us patient enough to examine each film work on its own values, it is apparent that the automatic discard of fictional films means a neglect of the largest quantity of historical records that has ever awaited the attention of researchers.

It is not enough to point out the inconsistency of accepting the minimum level of artistic interference in the newsreel or the greater interference in the ideas and emphases of the compilation film, while rejecting the maximum artistic controls of the fictional film. We are obliged to turn away from our old film-going habits, to examine films beneath their entertainment function. The other contents of a film do not cancel this function: it is sometimes the most entertaining film that can reveal the most truth about the time and people that produced it. Of many German attempts to analyze the Nazi years through the films produced then, I recall that the most informing of these studies was one on the musical comedy films of those years.

The most recent introduction to American film history reminds us that "commercial films mimic or imitate the social standards of their times."[1] I would go further: I see them as saturated in the mores and ethos of their times and makers, even when those makers are unconscious of the revelations in their work. I can't believe there is any fuller medium for the conveyance to the future of an epoch's character. I am convinced, for example, that we will not find works in any other medium that will tell us more about Twentieth Century China than its films. Seen alongside more objective pictures of China, such as Antonioni's ZHUNG-GUO, are there certain known attitudes and facts that are missing in Chinese fictional films? That, too, is significant.

It will take more than mere logic to overcome scholarly objections to the analytical investigation of fictional films. There are physical difficulties; but what genuine research is not difficult? I can remember a time when it was frowned upon to consult newspapers for historical or literary research: "too unreliable," "undignified," "rewards too small in relation to required time," "bound newspapers too unwieldy," "too dirty," "there's too much of them," etc. Similar obstacles are now mentioned in evading film inspection, particularly the large task of inspecting a nation's films made over a period of years. I hope that the near future will show us such rewards in this field that the waiting archives will be sought out and properly exploited.

In looking closely at fictional films, we grow conscious that "historical" or "biographical" films are also documents of

the times that produced them. Even when we cannot be sure that a filmmaker was aware that the choice and treatment of his subject were governed by factors of his "today," this need not obscure the true content of his film for us. The degree of *present* historical pressure upon these choices of *past* historical realities is one of the many fascinating problems waiting to be investigated. It is often difficult to see this use of the past until the film has receded into the real past, even a few months later.

The underlying German use of LA KERMESSE HEROIQUE (CARNIVAL IN FLANDERS), a gentle period comedy about surrender, was not noticed until actual surrenders took place in 1939-1940. Whether its authors, Spaak and Feyder, knew then (or ever!) the use made of their talents, is, so far as I know, not yet a matter of record, but there is no doubt that Pavlenko and Eisenstein were fully conscious of NEVSKY's aim. The political parable at the base of ALEXANDER NEVSKY was intended to be clear to every Soviet spectator: Watch out for potential aggressors, especially those maddened by a "crusade." No one missed the point, least of all Nazi Germany, that demanded the shelving of NEVSKY when the Soviet-German pact was signed. Clearly both KERMESSE and NEVSKY are documents of World War II; to ignore their values as documents is to dispose carelessly of their real historical riches.

I can easily imagine that in the late thirties people working at Warner Brothers' Studio and in the Hollywood community saw the choice of Zola and Juarez subjects as determined by the new make-up and character problems they offered to Paul Muni. We can now see these two films as part of the Roosevelt revival of democratic American aspirations, in the same way that the past revolutionary setting of LES MISERABLES was Hugo's reminder to France of its revolutionary spirit.

The film use of Shakespeare's historical plays provides a tangle of motives that includes a "star." On the bottom layer is the real fact, almost totally obscured by the next layer, the Elizabethan and Tudor attitude to the fact, as well as the Tudor motive for choosing that fact for theater and poetry[2]—and then we come to the top layer, the motives of Olivier and those modern "forces" in needing Henry V or Richard III just then.

Let T.S. Eliot have the last word: "...a work of historical fiction is much more a document on its own time than on the time portrayed."[3]

—Jay Leyda

[1]Laurence Kardish, REEL PLASTIC MAGIC, A HISTORY OF FILMS AND FILMMAKING IN AMERICA. (Boston, 1972), p. 227.

[2]A model detective work on Tudor motives: Josephine Tey's THE DAUGHTER OF TIME (New York, 1970).

[3]Introduction to Charlotte Eliot's SAVONAROLA. A DRAMATIC POEM (London, 1926).

Jay Leyda is currently Professor of Film Studies at York University in Toronto. A former student of Sergei Eisenstein at the Moscow Film School, Professor Leyda is the translator and editor of most of Eisenstein's writing on film, as well as the author of major studies on the Russian, Soviet and Chinese cinemas.

# POINT OF VIEW

The discussions that conclude most segments of The HUMANITIES FILM FORUM are designed to illustrate both the *time-bound* and *time-less* qualities of the "historical films" presented in this series on "Man and Authority." Scholars from various humanistic disciplines, including history, philosophy, drama, anthropology and comparative literature, address themselves to a number of questions that may also prove instructive to teachers considering the use of fictional films in their own courses.

The discussions cannot, within the limits of available time, purport to exhaust the topics raised. But they will, hopefully, provoke further thought, excite the creative imagination, and offer critical hints on how fictional films might be employed as viable resources for recording, reconstructing and interpreting history.

Each film is regarded not only as an object of historical study, but also as a formal statement on the human condition and ultimately, as a vibrant, visual experience—an organic work of art that seizes a particular form (e.g., the epic in ALEXANDER NEVSKY, "neo-realism" in UMBERTO D, the folk ballad in BALLAD OF A SOLDIER, courtroom drama in THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL), to shape its special content. Thus, any full-bodied approach to these films must be inter-disciplinary; challenging both teacher and student to examine these works with historical scrutiny, philosophic vision and aesthetic sensitivity.

Each of these perspectives commands, in turn, a particular critical apparatus, which the study of these films can help to develop. In combination, they encourage the ability to inter-relate levels of meaning and to place specific situations, in this case historical, within broader, conceptual frameworks. Such qualities of mind not only characterize the best of creative scholarship, but exemplify as well the living tradition of the humanities.

In terms of form and content, one of the films presented on the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM, Peter Watkins' THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN, offers a meticulous example of historical reconstruction through dramatized simulation. This technique has recently been translated into a teaching method known as "Historical Reality Construct," in which students, after intensive research in primary and secondary sources, relive the history of a given period by reenacting certain key episodes; role-playing the major figures involved and making pivotal decisions on the basis of historical feasibility.

Among the many problems raised in the discussions on the HUMANITIES FILM FORUM, several relate to historical method and clearly invite further study. To what extent, for instance, does the artist's selection of historical material approximate the historian's own selective focus in forming an analytical interpretation of the past? Can we really assess the value of these films as history, unless we *already* know something about the period? Do the artist's personal or cultural biases intrude upon the historical picture? What does the film (or play) tell us about the society in which it was produced—its values, its myths, its desired image of the past? Has the artist availed himself of the full, historical record where this was possible? Does the film merit our attention if it is inaccurate in historical detail, but true to the "spirit" of the times?

Questions such as these are by no means new to historians, although, as Professor Leyda has suggested in the article above, the case for using fictional films as historical evidence and historical interpretation is still being made. In 1967, the American Historical Association initiated a pilot Feature Films Project, intended to explore the use of fictional films in teaching history. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Historical Association produced, in 1971, thirty-minute excerpts of four quality feature films on historical subjects, each accompanied by a readings book "designed to place the film and its issues in historical perspective." Panel sessions on Film and History have since become regular fare at the annual meetings of the American Historical Association. Several other films with edited readings are currently in preparation and will be available to teachers for classroom use.

The journal, FILM AND HISTORY, which evolved from the American Historical Association's Historians Film Committee, now appears quarterly, featuring articles on films made by historians; film reviews; descriptions of history courses that have effectively incorporated or been thematically built around film materials; and reports on new Film and History projects in the United States and abroad.

In addition, the journal, THE HISTORY TEACHER, has recently inaugurated a "Media" section, which promises "reviews of films for various fields in the history classroom, including uses and availability; surveys of the activities of historians in all aspects of media, whether in the classroom, as filmmakers, or through their publications; guides to the accessibility and use of Super 8, the cassette, and the sound archive; trends in filmstrip and 16 mm. film," etc.

The innovative study of film as history and history on film is beginning to challenge and excite a growing number of scholars in the United States. The Humanities Film Forum is proud to offer a glimpse of this new wave in American education to a national audience over the Public Broadcasting Service.

# CREDITS

HUMANITIES FILM FORUM

**Producer**
**Mark Waxman**

**Host**
**Jim Billington**

Directed by
Jerry Hughes

Historical Consultant
Robert Lear

Film Consultant
Michael Barlow

Assistant-to-producer
Melinda Benedek

HUMANITIES FILM FORUM
a Presentation of

KCET

4400 SUNSET DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90027