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Envisioning Russia: A Century of Filmmaking

Thursday, October 30, 2008 8:30 p.m. Alexandra Aleksandr Sokurov (Russia, 2007)

## Envisioning Russia: A Century of Filmmaking

The Battleship Potemkin The Ascent Sadko Tractor Drivers Carnival Night The Cranes Are Flying The Letter Never Sent Jewish Luck Uncle Vanya Bed and Sofa The Mirror The Russian Question Happiness The New Moscow

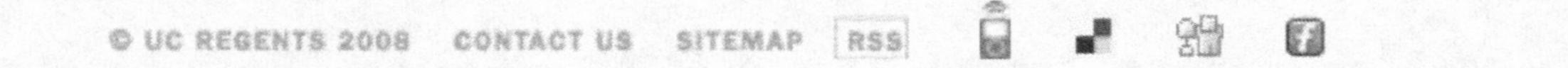
Elegy of Life: Rostropovich, Vishnevskaya (*Aleksandra*). No living filmmaker has been more obsessed with the state of the Russian soul than Aleksandr Sokurov. In his viscerally powerful *Alexandra*, this great filmmaker ponders the cost of war. Mother Russia herself, a blunt, grimly humorous babushka (indelibly played by octogenarian opera diva

Galina Vishnevskaya), pays a visit to her grandson's unit in Chechnya. She rides among the young recruits in a troop transport and later, a tank. However incongruous, her tour of inspection through this dusty, sun-bleached landscape has a terrible familiarity. Seldom has a filmmaker so directly addressed his fellow citizens.

-Richard Peña

• Written by Sokurov. Photographed by Alexander Burov. With Galina Vishnevskaya, Vasily Shevtsov, Raisa Gichaeva, Andrei Bogdanov. (92 mins, In Russian with English subtitles, Color, 35mm, From Cinema Guild)

Alexandra





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