

## Document Citation

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U of MINN FILM SOCIETY  
275 Ford Hall

February 2-4, 1968: Today - 7:30, 10:00 p.m.  
Saturday - 2:30, 7:30, 10:00  
Sunday - 7:30

NO SMOKING IN THE AUDITORIUM. PLEASE USE LOBBY.

(Please also do not strew program notes on floor, since we have to sweep up.)

COMING: Wed. here, CABINET OF DR. CALIGARY; 3:30 & 7:30; THE LAST LAUGH, 8:45.  
Fri. THE CRIMSON CURTAIN, 7:30 (1952, France; directed by Alexander Astruc; with Anouk Aimee; "new wave" precursor and an astounding example of film style at 8:45 AMELIE, OR THE TIME TO LOVE (France, 1960) by Michel Drach, the prize of the year for the most talented film direction. With Jean Sorel. (See season brochure.)

TONIGHT: HAMLET, 2 hours, 20 minutes. Plus a short.

(season brochure in lobby. Note these changes. No Sat. show Feb. 17. Held on Sun. 8 p.m. Feb. 18 - SARAGOSSA MANUSCRIPT; No Sar. eve. shows on WARRENDALE Feb. 24. 2:30. afternoon Sat. however. BIRTH OF A NATION set for last Wed. will be shown mid. Feb.)

**HAMLET (U.S.S.R., 1964).** Production Company, Lenfilm; Director, Grigori Kozintsev; Assistant Director, I. Shapiro; Screenplay, Grigori Kozintsev, from the play by William Shakespeare; Translation, Boris Pasternak; Photography, I. Gritsyus; Editor, E. Makhan'kova; Art Directors, E. Ene, G. Kropachev; Costumes, S. Virsaladze; Music, Dimitri Shostakovich; Orchestra, Leningrad State Philharmonic, N. Rabinovich, conductor; Sound, B. Khutoryanski.

Leading Players:

Hamlet	Innokenti Smoktunovski	Laertes	C. Oleksenko
King	Michal Nazwanov	Guildenstern	V. Medvedev
Queen	Eliza Radzin-Szolkonis	Rosencrantz	I. Dmitriev
Polonius	Y. Tolubeev	Fortinbras	A. Kreval'd
Ophelia	Anastasia Vertinska	Gravedigger	V. Kolpakor
Horatio	V. Erenberg	First Actor	A. Chekaerski

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

From FILM, August, 1967. (British Film Society's organ)

'The best way for the director is to know his subject.' Grigori Kozintsev was talking to members of the London Regional Group of the Federation of Film Societies during a recent visit. The result of my research was my book. After that I tried to forget it and everything I know about Shakespeare's time. Only then did I begin to have my own imagination. But first of all I am obliged to know everything.'

(Kozintsev's "Shakespeare, Time and Conscience" was published by Hill and Wang, New York, 1966.) \$5.95

'I think it is absolute nonsense to say that any particular way of interpreting Shakespeare on the screen is the right way and that other ways are false. There are many ways of interpreting his tragedies and comedies. I know very well the Shakespeare films by Olivier and Welles. I have the records of Olivier's HAMLET at home and I very much enjoy listening to them in my free time. I found the interpretation of characters in CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT very interesting but I have my own imagination, my own Falstaff and it is another one. It isn't a question of whether the direction is good or bad, but I have an absolutely different idea of Falstaff's character. The general subject is tragi-comical history, not just comical history. The situation is an old man and a young man. It is the story of an old fat man in service who loved very much a boy and when the boy begins to be a king, he kills him and that's the tragedy. In my opinion Welles destroyed the origin of this character; he made only a comical story generally. This is in my opinion, but once more, the film was of great interest to me.

'There are many different schools of Shakespeare translation in my country. There is a good scientific translation with one line of Shakespeare and the same one in Russian--the ancient Elizabethan metaphor and the same one in ancient Russian. Boris Pasternak had another method, absolutely free translation. Scientists hated his translation: "It's nonsense and modern, it's impossible that Shakespearean heroes would speak it." But I like it. I prefer this way and think that the best way to translate Shakespeare into a foreign language is to make a national version. HAMLET by Pasternak is a Russian version of Shakespeare without any kind of declamation, high style or complicated metaphors. Certainly only a major poet like Pasternak has the possibility to lay hands on such a work and it would be awful if a lesser poet tried to make a free version of a Shakespearean tragedy. Boris Pasternak was a genius and it was the work of a genius.'

Despite his remarkably youthful appearance, Kozintsev is in his early sixties and he has been making films for nearly 45 years. In his history of the Russian and Soviet film, "Kino", Jay Leyda records how in the early 'twenties, immediately after the civil war, "Two boys, Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, are excited by American serials and comedies and organise their friends, including a painter Sergei Yutkevich into a boisterous ambulant studio-theatre." The group went on to found FEX, the Factory of Eccentric Actor, claiming to have found the means to reform the socialist theatre in principles derived from circus and vaudeville. In 1924 their stage production of Gogol's MARRIAGE infuriated one critic by employing film sequences and they were soon invited to the studios. Their first film, THE ADVENTURES OF OKTYABRINA, made in 1924, was an unsuccessful fantasy but their first popular film, THE DEVIL'S WHEEL came two years later. During this period they were strongly influenced by the German cinema and the films of Kuleshov and Eisenstein. After STRIKE

Leyda reports that Kozintsev addressed the FEX group: "All that we're doing is nonsense, we must see STRIKE again and again, until we can understand it and adopt its power for our own." The distinctive style of Kozintsev and Trauberg rapidly developed and their greatest successes were THE NEW BABYLON right at the end of the silent cinema and the Maxim trilogy made in the 'thirties. Their collaboration lasted until 1945 and PLAIN PEOPLE which was condemned along with Eisenstein's IVAN THE TERRIBLE PART II and Pudovkin's ADMIRAL NAKHIMOV in the early post-war political climate.

'The whole of my generation began at an early age and for us you were an old man at 21. The first years of the revolution were a very strange time, without food, without milk, everything destroyed, factories stopped, no railways. Everything was in the past. During this period, many young artists made special experiments with bright colours, in the carnival way, in the eccentric way. We all thought that now history had changed. The old classical art was strictly academic with no relation to life, no interest in modern questions. It was necessary to destroy everything and begin a new art from an absolutely new place. It was a very interesting period of experiment and now, I think, we have a good many rules as a result of this period in the early 'twenties.

'The word "experiment" is strange. Pablo Picasso once said: "I don't understand this word. I have a great desire to explain something. Maybe I'll do it good or bad but what is this word 'experiment'?" In the 'twenties it had a great sense because it was a new period in history and in the life of our country. It is not a question of "I'd like to shoot in this or that way." You are obliged to have some idea; you are obliged to know what you will.

'When I was in New York some years ago a young director came to my hotel and said "Hello Mr. Kozintsev, I should like to show you my films." I said "With great pleasure. What is the film?" "It is a film on the absolutely real thing." He showed me first a film with the title THE MEAL. Somebody had eaten a mushroom. Very long, alright. After that, THE KISS. A young lady and her boy friend kissed. Well: one minute, two minutes, three minutes...On one sentence! O.K. Well after this the young man said to me, "Now I'd like to show you another film but have you the time?" I asked him "I have the time but what is your subject?" "It is absolutely realistic. A man is sleeping..." "How long?" I asked. "Eight hours." I said "Thank you I'm sure it would be of great interest to me to see the eight hours of how a man sleeps but I am only here a short time and..." (reference to Andy Warhol's films.)

'Maybe it is an experiment, but I don't understand the result. I like very much Peter Brook's stage production. I understand the idea: there is new imagery, new ways of understanding theatre problems and so on. I understand what he is trying to do. Maybe I am with him, maybe I am against him. I have my own opinion, but his opinion is interesting and I understand it. But to see a man sleeping for eight hours is nonsense--emptiness.' What did Kozintsev think of other developments such as changes in screen shapes and the use of colour? 'I prefer wide screen but not especially for blockbusters with mass scenes and expansive sets. From an artistic point of view it is very interesting proportion of man and his world; it has many good points for new compositions. Unfortunately colour technique is not too good in our country. I like Italian colour very much, especially Antonioni's. BLOW-UP is nice colour and I like the colour in Agnes Varda's LE BONHEUR and Japanese colour, but not American--it is too bright for me, their faces are like steaks. Maybe it's O.K. for musicals but not serious subjects. I prefer pastel colours.'

Kozintsev is now preparing to film KING LEAR which he staged in the theatre during the Leningrad blockade. 'There was a bombardment and actors were playing Shakespearean tragedy. There would be a cry "Stop!" and everybody went to the shelters. Half an hour later they would begin again. It was a very interesting period--good for understanding tragedy.'

#### MORE ON KOZINTSEV AND 'HAMLET':

The bibliography of dissertations and studies devoted to HAMLET is twice the size of Warsaw's telephone directory, as Polish critic Jan Kott points out in his recent SHAKESPEARE: OUR CONTEMPORARY. Many different generations have seen their own reflections in this play; as a mirror for modern European audiences, the play has been set in the existentialist cellars of Paris and Warsaw, staged with the concentration camp universe freshly in mind ("The gravediggers know for whom they dig graves," Kott comments), performed in evening dress and in circus tights, for that matter. Kozintsev's notes on HAMLET, which take up more than 60 pages in the appendix of his book on Shakespeare, were written before Kott's work appeared in 1964, Kott's appraisal of "Hamlet at Mid-Century" provides a useful key for reading the play against the prevailing Anglo-Saxon establishment interpretation (stemming from A.C. Bradley and the 19th century interpretations of a "psychological Hamlet"). In this light, Kozintsev's film version (he did a 1953-54 theatrical version at Moscow's Pushkin Theater) must be read, and not as a historical costume picture. Kozintsev here touches on his approach, which had been attacked for being academic, but which has been carefully and deeply thought out in more than a decade of reflection, in the following lines from his book: "HAMLET interests me mainly by its proportion and conformity with contemporary life. It is terrible if a glib radio exchange with the evil of the day is joined to this complex inner connection: a cabbage worn with dramatic inflection. They often stage Hamlet in modern dress, but tell a tale of ancient life. The tragedy must be played in 16th century costume but must be dealt with as a modern story.. "the tragic does not consist in gloom, pathos, or tearing a passion "to tatters" and so on, but in the density of ferment and the tenseness of tome...."