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October / Oktyabr New Print!

Sergei Eisenstein and Grigory Alexandrov,
1928; 104m

Little introduction is needed for Eisenstein's towering masterwork of the Russian Revolution, an epic re-creation of the events leading up to the Bolshevik victory in late 1917, told from a decidedly Marxist point of view. Although normally based in Moscow, Eisenstein organized his production at Lenfilm since he wanted to use the actual Petrograd (i.e. St. Petersburg, i.e. Leningrad) locations where the depicted events took place. As in historical fiction, the action moves between historical personalities and the unknown masses who in the film's view were the true authors of the Revolution; Eisenstein's editing strategies continually emphasize the connections and contradictions that abound in any moment of historical change, challenging the viewer to see beyond the façade of appearances. Rarely have film theory and film practice been brought together so effectively.

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