

Document Citation

Title	The devil's wheel and S.V.D.
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Source	<i>Pacific Film Archive Calendar</i>
Date	1984 Apr 11
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	Moskvin, Andrei Kozintsev, Grigorii Mikhailovich (1905-1973), Kiev, Soviet Union Trauberg, Leonid Zakharevich (1902), Odessa, Soviet Union Fabrika ekstsentricheskogo aktera, Soviet Union
Film Subjects	Chertovo koleso (The devil's wheel), Kozintsev, Grigorii Mikhailovich, 1926 S.V.D., Kozintsev, Grigorii Mikhailovich, 1927

The Devil's Wheel and S.V.D.

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The Devil's Wheel (Chertovo Koleso)

Grigori Kozintzev was 17 and Leonid Trauberg was 20 when they got together in 1922 with cameraman Andrei Moskvina and several actors to form the Factory of the Eccentric Actor, or FEKS, a group that later attracted Eisenstein and others. FEKS began as a futurist theater group that believed in total experimentation, excess and rebellion. Performers practiced acrobatics, mime and physical comportment without any deference to psychologisms. "The tempo of the revolution," believed Kozintzev, "is that of scandal and publicity."

"A drama of the gangster bands that preyed upon St. Petersburg during the Civil War period, *The Devil's Wheel* was based on a novel by Kaverin and was the first FEKS film to achieve a degree of popularity. Today, the film is extremely interesting for its descriptions of the colorful underworld milieu which existed (apparently) well into the twenties. 'The clash between the realistic material and the eccentric treatment by the FEKS seems to have increased the force of the film. All disparate elements were pulled together by the dramatic, expressive, Germanic photography of the cameraman Moskvina.' (Jay Leyda)."
--Tom Luddy and Yvette Biro

Note: Reels 3 and 6 are missing from this and all existing prints.

- Directed by Grigori Kozintzev and Leonid Trauberg. Based on *The End of the Khaza* by V. Kaverin. Photographed by Andrei Moskvina. With P. Sobolevski, L. Semyenova, Sergei Gerassimov. (1926, 45 mins, Silent with Russian intertitles and live English translation, Print from PFA Collection)