

## Document Citation

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## Mother and Son

*Mat' i syn*

**RUSSIA/GERMANY** 1997, 73 min.

In Russian with English subtitles

**DIR** Aleksandr Sokurov

**PROD** Thomas Kufus **SCR** Yuri Arabov **CAM** Alexei Fyodorov **ED** Leda Semyonova **CAST** Alexei Ananishnov, Gudrun Geyer **PRINT SOURCE** Celluloid Dreams

*Village Voice* critic J. Hoberman was one of the first Americans to write about this extraordinary film after its February world premiere at the Berlin Film Festival, where it was awarded two of the major critics' prizes. "One of the least compromising filmmakers in the world," writes Hoberman, "an obsessive individual whose fastidiously crafted movies typically concentrate on the most fugitive sensations, Sokurov outdoes all his previous efforts with this astonishing chamber piece. The director's trademark twilight zone is here, the shadowland between consciousness and oblivion. A woman is dying, attended by her grown son in an isolated country cabin. Their speech is muffled, the light is fading, the perspective is unfixed, and yet these ethereal sounds and images have a startling precision—even as the movie appears to float somewhere in space, casting its faint shadow on the screen. Pondering a postcard from her unknowable past, the son treats his enfeebled mother with a lover's tender solicitude. At times he seems the doting parent and she the child—refusing to sleep or eat, then experiencing some sort of attack. The two audiences with whom I saw this masterpiece seemed genuinely rapt. A movie of incredible stillness, **Mother and Son** evokes overwhelming solitude amid creation—the filmmaker's not the least. Watching it is like watching the last sunset."

### Wind (Szél)

Inspired by Lucien Hervé's 1951 photograph *Three Women*. (Marcell Iványi, Hungary 1996, 6 min., Hungarofilm Ltd. Cinemagyar Division)

**Selected Filmography:** Aleksandr Sokurov (b. Irkutsk, Russia, 1951) *Whispering Pages* (SFIFF 1995), *The Second Circle* (1990), *Save and Protect* (1989), *Days of Eclipse* (1988), *The Solitary Voice of Man* (1978)

### North American Premiere