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Eisenstein's

Strike (Stachka) 9:30

Telling of a factory workers' strike in Czarist Russia in 1912 and its brutal suppression, *Strike* was one of the most original debuts in film history. In its brilliant mixture of agit-prop techniques and comic-grotesque stylization, it reveals the influence of the explosively rich contemporary theater in which Eisenstein was involved. Jay Leyda writes in *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*: "Eisenstein based his film method on his theatrical principle of 'montage of attractions,' meaning that every moment the spectator spends in the theater should be filled with the maximum shock and intensity, within and between each episode. *Strike* is full of cinematic metaphors and images of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste; it is a deluge of real things and surroundings—the spying in the latrine, the union meeting in the row-boat, the hosing of the demonstrating strikers, the final debacle. One of the secondary benefits of the preservation of *Strike* is that...it shows a manifestation of an artistic movement that ended only thirty years ago, 'constructivism', less in surface design...than in the more important matter of *method*: building inventions with the essentials of reality. And in this view of the constructivist attitude of *Strike* we can find a vital source for the method of *Potemkin* that is otherwise difficult to trace either from painting, sculpture or theater."

- Directed by Sergei M. Eisenstein. Written by Proletkult Collective: V. Pletnyov, I. Kravchunovsky, G. Alexandrov, and Eisenstein. Photographed by Eduard Tisse and Vassili Khvatov. With I. Kuvki, Alexander Antonov, Grigori Alexandrov. (1924, 105 mins, Silent with Russian intertitles and live English translation, 35mm, Print courtesy of Francis Coppola)