

Document Citation

Title	Archival treasures of the silent screen : Soviet films in the PFA collection : Lev Kuleshov's By the law
Author(s)	Judy Bloch
Source	<i>Pacific Film Archive Calendar</i>
Date	1985 Nov 05
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	Kuleshov, Lev (1899-1970), Russia (Federation)
Film Subjects	Po zakonu (By the law), Kuleshov, Lev, 1926

Archival Treasures of the Silent Screen--Soviet Films in the PFA Collection:

Lev Kuleshov's

(By the Law (Po Zakonu) 9:25

An adaptation of Jack London's story "The Unexpected," *By the Law* is set in Alaska, where the characters have been cut off from civilization by winter storms and spring floods. Filming on a very low budget, using only one interior set and five actors, Lev Kuleshov succeeds in building up an almost unbearable degree of tension in following London's drama of three people's inner turmoil as a result of their complicity in a murder. Jay Leyda has written for The Museum of Modern Art, "The mathematical precision of every gesture and movement contributes to the total effect of each character and episode. Kuleshov taught his workshop that the hands, arms, and legs are the most expressive parts of the film actor's body and we can observe that their movements create as much of the film's tension as does the facial expression. This calculated isolation and intensification of significant detail and gesture, accumulated for totality of effect, Kuleshov had learned from Griffith and from Chaplin's *A Woman of Paris*."

• Directed by Lev Kuleshov. Written by Victor Shklovsky and Kuleshov based on the Jack London story "The Unexpected." Photographed by Konstantin Kuznetsov. With Alexandra Khokhlova, Sergei Komarov, Vladimir Fogel, Porfiri Podobed, Pyotr Galadzhiev. (1926, 90 mins, Silent with Russian intertitles and live English translation,*35mm, Print from PFA Collection)