

Document Citation

Title	Voyna i mir
Author(s)	Albert Johnson
Source	<i>Los Angeles International Film Exposition</i>
Date	
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	53
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Voyna i mir (War and peace), Bondarchuk, Sergei, 1967

Monday, April 8, 2:00 p.m.

46A Parts 1 and 2, 215 minutes



USSR, 1968

Complete uncut Russian version, with English subtitles. In 70mm; stereophonic sound. Previously presented in the United States only once.

Director: Sergei Bondarchuk

Screenwriters: Sergei Bondarchuk, Vasily Solovyov

Cinematographer: Anatoly Petritsky

Editor: Tatiana Likhacheva

Music: Vyacheslav Ovchinnikov

Principal Cast: Sergei Bondarchuk, Vyacheslav Tihonov,
Ludmila Savelyeva, Irina Skobtseva,
Anastasia Vertinskaya, Victor Stanitsyn,
Anatole Ktorou

Production Company: Mosfilm

Source: San Francisco Film Festival/Soviet Consulate—San Francisco

(This original, uncut version will be shown in two viewing sessions.)

In recent years, the Soviet cinema has turned toward detailed film adaptations of great literary classics. For years Chekhov's plays have been the main source of creativity in this movement and the works of Dostoevsky have proven to be the most difficult to capture on film. Amazingly, Sergei Bondarchuk's epic version of Leo Tolstoy's massive novel, *War and Peace*, has become for all time the most perfect example of novel-into-film ever made.

The film is a labor of love, and its rewards are rich: all the characters, environment, and details of life in Russia are exquisitely recaptured. The authenticity of Bondarchuk's film is unquestionable. To those who have read the novel, the excellences of the film will be obvious, but to the uninitiated, every image will be a revelation. It is a rarity to see a motion picture placed on the level of a reverential ode to life and death.

Voyna I Mir War and Peace

Monday, April 8, 7:00 p.m.

46B Parts 3 and 4, 178 minutes



PART I—PRINCE ANDREI—AUSTERLITZ

The major characters are introduced as the threat of Napoleon's invasion hangs over all of Russia. The relationship between the autocratic old militarist, Bolkonski, and his son Andrei; the dissolute life of St. Petersburg with the shy Pierre Bezukhov trying to find a place for himself there; and the battle of Austerlitz revolve throughout these episodes.

PART II—NATASHA

The love story which eventually embroils Pierre and Andrei with the irresistible Natasha Rostova is unforgettably preluded by sequences of the ball: a vast, romantic dream of the lyric experience. Natasha's visit to her uncle's hunting lodge and the wolf-hunt sequences are memorable glimpses of the Russian past. A spirit of the life-force rekindled by exceptionally creative performers prevails throughout the second part of Bondarchuk's masterpiece.

INTERMISSION: ONE-HOUR PAUSE FOR DINNER

(Separate admission required for second half)

PART III—BORODINO; PART IV—MOSCOW IN FLAMES

The final sections of the film are dominated by the struggles with Napoleon's army. In Part III, one is overwhelmed by the scope of the battle sequences, through which Pierre wanders in a daze. The portrayal of Natasha, by the amazing Savelyeva, changes from vibrant girlhood to adult forbearance with skillful, emotionally moving conviction. The motivations of all the characters (even Napoleon, who regards the proceedings of battle and his frozen soldiers with prophetic gloom) are carried to Tolstoy's philosophical conclusions in Part IV.

A cinematographic monument, *War and Peace* stands as a tribute to Tolstoy's wisdom and imagination.

—Albert Johnson