



Press Release

Berlinale *Retrospective* 2012: The Red Dream Factory

The *Retrospective* of the 62nd Berlin International Film Festival has rediscovered a legendary German-Russian film studio: Mezhrabpom-Film and its German branch Prometheus wrote film history from 1922 to 1936.

Moisei Aleinikov, a Russian film expert and producer from tsarist times who had a great instinct for the right topics, and Willi Münzenberg, a German communist and "red media entrepreneur", joined forces in 1922 to combine clever business ideas, a political mission and boundless enthusiasm for new cinematic narratives. And so the film studio Mezhrabpom-Rus (later called Mezhrabpom-Film), a unique German-Russian film venture, was set up in Moscow, with headquarters in Berlin. After producing some 600 films, this international experiment was brutally ended eleven and fourteen years later by Hitler's and Stalin's regimes. Entitled "The Red Dream Factory", the *Retrospective* of the 2012 Berlinale will be dedicated to this studio rediscovered in Russian archives.

"Classics of Russian revolutionary cinema, such as Vsevolod Pudovkin's *Konez Sankt Peterburga* (*The End of St. Petersburg*, 1927), were made by Mezhrabpom-Film. At the same time, the studio focused on topics revolving around people's everyday lives. Artistically sophisticated films from all kinds of genres thrilled international audiences and inspired the entire European film avant-garde," says Rainer Rother, head of the *Retrospective* and Artistic Director of the Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen.

Masterpieces such as Pudovkin's *Potomok Genghis-Khana* (*Storm over Asia*, 1928), Boris Barnet's *Devushka s korobkoy* (*The Girl with the Hat*, 1927) or the portrayal of the revolution on Mars in *Aelita* (1924) by Yakov Protazanov are a must in a studio retrospective such as this one.

What's more, moviegoers will discover much that is new to them: for instance, there is Margarita Barskaya's *Rvanye Bashmaki* (*Torn Shoes*, 1933), a drama about children set in Germany when the Nazis came into power; or the early science-fiction robot film *Gibel Sensatsii* (*Lost Sensation*, 1935) by Aleksandr Andriyevsky. Also among the great feats of this film factory are the Soviet Union's first animated films as well as its first sound film, Nikolai Ekk's *Putyovka v zhizn* (*Road to Life*, 1931).

The "vision of a new life" also inspired documentary film. For Joris Ivens and Dziga Vertov this went hand in hand with the invention of a spectacular sound-film language. And the socially committed cinematic art of the late Weimar Republic such as found in Prometheus films - e.g., Phil Jutzi's works, Leo Mittler's *Jenseits der Straße* (*Harbor Drift*, 1929) and Slatan

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Dudow's *Kuhle Wampe oder Wem gehört die Welt?* (*Whither Germany*, 1932)
- were all Red Dream Factory productions.

Curated by Alexander Schwarz and Günter Agde, the *Retrospective* will present some 30 programmes made up of over 40 silent and sound films. The silent films will all be accompanied by live music performed by renowned artists. The programme includes diverse German premieres of films that are being made available by Gosfilmofond (Moscow) and the Russian State Documentary Film & Photo Archive at Krasnogorsk. The *Retrospective* is being put together in cooperation with the (German) Federal Archives/Department Film Archives, the Cinémathèque de Toulouse, Munich Filmmuseum, the Austrian Film Museum in Vienna, and The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Film.

The film programme will be accompanied by discussions and events at the Deutsche Kinemathek. Berlin's Bertz + Fischer will also be publishing a book for the *Retrospective*. In it, German and Russian authors will illuminate the development of the studio and the aesthetics of the films that were produced there.

Closely related to the *Retrospective* and made possible by a collaboration with Arte/ZDF is the Berlinale's presentation of Sergei Eisenstein's masterpiece *Oktyabr* (*October*, 1928) with Edmund Meisel's original music performed by the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. The film, which re-enacts the revolution in October 1917, will be screened at the Friedrichstadtpalast on February 10, 2012.

The Berlinale and the Deutsche Kinemathek are also delighted to be cooperating with the DOK Leipzig: an extensive retrospective of documentary and animated films from the Red Dream Factory programme will be presented at the 55th International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film in 2012.

This year for the first time, a partnership has been established between The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and the *Retrospective*. The Deutsche Kinemathek, the Berlinale and the MoMA will now collaborate long term and this will lead to joint programmes in the future. Thus the Red Dream Factory programme will present a number of exemplary films from the Berlinale *Retrospective* in New York in March/April 2012.

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