

**University of Pittsburgh**  
**Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures**

Russian 0871: History of Russian Film 2  
Spring 2008 (2084)  
Tuesdays 1:00–4:55  
Cathedral of Learning 352

Gerald McCausland  
Office Hours: Wednesday & Thursday 10:30–noon  
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Course Overview

Required Texts

The following texts are required for this course.

Faraday, George. *Revolt of the Filmmakers: The Struggle for Artistic Autonomy and the Fall of the Soviet Film Industry*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State UP, 2000.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: MLA, 2003

Horton, Andrew and Michael Brashinsky. *The Zero Hour: Glasnost and Soviet Cinema in Transition*. Princeton: UP, 1992.

Lawton, Anna. *Imaging Russia 2000: Film and Facts*. Washington, DC: New Academia, 2004.

Woll, Josephine. *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2000.

In addition to these books, copies of several articles will be made available in xerox copies or as electronic texts in PDF-format.

The website for the course is located at <<http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/courses/russ0871/index.html>> and will contain copies of many course handouts as well as material that will not be distributed in class. In particular, a chronology of Russian history will provide an outline of events significant for the history of Russo-Soviet cinema. A reference list of major directors and their major films will also be available only on the website.

Research Resources

Much work on Soviet and Russian cinema has been done in recent years and competent research builds on work already done rather than reinventing the wheel. Therefore, all students in the course should familiarize themselves with the following two locations on the World Wide Web, both produced at the University of Pittsburgh, in preparation for their research and writing.

Padunov, Vladimir, maintainer. *University of Pittsburgh: Russian and Soviet Cinema: Bibliography*. <[http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/video/cinema\\_biblio.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/video/cinema_biblio.html)>

*The Pittsburgh Russian Film Symposium*. <<http://www.rusfilm.pitt.edu>>

Students will be introduced to several other tools and resources for research on Soviet and Russian cinema throughout the course.

Requirements

1. Students are required to attend all class meetings. The instructor should not be expected to make, and will not make, any special effort to accommodate students who are absent from any class

- meeting. Students who miss a class meeting are responsible for screening the film (and any related clips) on their own and for obtaining all relevant handouts and notes from their fellow students.
2. Students are required to complete all reading assignments before the class meeting for which they are listed on the class schedule. Depending on the nature of the readings, students will be expected to have absorbed the factual information contained therein and/or to be ready to discuss the theoretical, aesthetic, or political issues raised by the author(s). Although the instructor may occasionally review the reading assignment during class, the reading should always be considered prerequisite to rather than a first runthrough of the topic for that particular day.
  3. There will be seven required writing assignments during the semester. All required writing assignments must be submitted in hard copy by 1:00 pm on the day of class. Electronic copies of papers submitted by e-mail are not accepted. Late papers are not accepted. Electronic and late submissions will receive a grade of "0" (zero) for that assignment.
  4. Each student is expected to watch one film outside of class above and beyond the 14 films screened in class. This film will be chosen individually from a list of films to be provided by the instructor to the students.

### Evaluation

1. Students are expected to participate in all class discussions and to contribute to the collective work of the group in a thoughtful and informed way. This implies familiarity with the reading assignments and with all films screened in class to date. Students will receive a grade for their participation in class for each class meeting. The instructor will explain the mechanics of this grading procedure during the first class meeting; students are welcome and encouraged to request feedback from the instructor about their class participation at any time throughout the semester.
2. There will be several quizzes given during the semester. These quizzes will all be unannounced. They will be given at the start of class and will test the students' comprehension of the reading material assigned for that day. Any student absent for a quiz or late for the start of that class meeting will receive a "0" (zero) for that quiz.
3. There will be 7 required writing assignment during the semester. Each required writing assignment must be submitted in the specified number of hard copies by 1:00 pm on the day it is due. Each required assignment will receive a letter grade. The grades for all writing assignments will carry equal weight among themselves in the computation of the grade, regardless of differences in the nature and length of each individual writing task.
4. There are no midterm exams. There is one final exam, administered on 23 April 2008 in accordance with University of Pittsburgh guidelines. Students should therefore not plan to leave Pittsburgh before 2 pm on Wednesday, 23 April 2008, as travel plans will not be accommodated in the administration of the exam.
5. Final course grades will be computed according to the following mathematical schema:
  - Papers: 40%
  - Class Discussion: 30%
  - Final Exam: 20%
  - Quizzes: 10%

### Writing Assignments

This course is designed to fulfill the University of Pittsburgh's undergraduate writing requirement (W). Thus, a significant amount of work in the course will take the form of various writing assignments. Each assignment will be designed to develop the student's ability to formulate ideas critically and clearly, to construct and structure an intellectual argument, and to format his/her writing in conformity with the customs and practices of film studies as an academic field. Attention will be devoted to these customs and practices as well as to the individual student's proficiency and adeptness in written expression.

The first three writing tasks will be on specific assigned topics. They will be relatively short and will thus require a highly disciplined and focused writing style. Regardless of the length, all assignments should be well structured, with a clearly identifiable beginning, middle, and end. Each specific writing assignment will be described by the instructor in class, in oral and written form, one week before the assignment is due. The nature of the assignments will vary each week but will form a progression from simple expository writing to complex argumentation using varied secondary sources. Significant attention will be devoted to the development of good judgment in the use of secondary literature and in the complex issues regarding its attribution, documentation, and representation. The formatting of all papers is to conform strictly to the guidelines of the "Russian 0871 Style Sheet," which will be distributed and discussed at the first class meeting.

The last four writing tasks will consist in four discrete steps in the writing of a short critical research paper (length of final product estimated at 10 pages). The form and content requirements outlined in the previous paragraph apply to each stage of this work as well. Each step along the way of writing this paper will be graded individually and all grades will count equally.

All students bear full responsibility, from the second class meeting on, for understanding the notion of plagiarism and for avoiding even the appearance of passing off another's work as one's own. The penalty for plagiarism in this course, intentional or unintentional, is a grade of "F" **for the course** and/or other administrative action according to University of Pittsburgh policies.

Except for the two documents cited above, all students are urged in the strongest possible terms to avoid the use of the internet in the research and writing of their papers during the first seven weeks of this course. In the second half of this course, we will devote some time to a consideration of the many resources available on the internet for cinema studies research and of the way in which judicious use can be made of these resources.

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Schedule of Film Screenings, Reading Assignments, Papers, and Exam

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8 January

**In-class screening:** Mikhail Chiaureli, *The Fall of Berlin* (1949)

15 January

- Gibaldi, Chapter 4, p 131–138; make sure you are familiar with the content of Chapter 3 as well.
- **Writing Assignment #1** due before start of class
- Stites, excerpt from “Holy War and Cold War” (handout)
- Liehm, “The Zhdanov Years.” (handout)
- Woll, Part 1, p 3–29.

**In-class screening:** Mikhail Kalatozov, *The Cranes are Flying* (1957)

22 January

- Gibaldi, Chapter 2, p 65–75
  - Woll, Part 1, p 30–56; Part 2, p 57–99
- In-class screening:** Grigorii Chukhrai, *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959)

29 January

- **Writing Assignment #2** due before start of class
  - Woll, Part 3, p 101–160
- In-class screening:** Andrei Tarkovskii, *Ivan’s Childhood* (1962)

5 February

- Woll, Part 4, p 161–197; Part 5, p 199–228
- In-class screening:** Aleksandr Askol'dov, *The Commissar* (1967)

12 February

- **Writing Assignment #3** due before start of class
  - Faraday, Part 1
- In-class screening:** Vladimir Motyl', *White Sun of the Desert* (1969)

19 February

- Stites, “The Brezhnev Culture Wars” (handout)
  - Horton and Brashinsky, Chapter 3, p 99–124
- In-class screening:** Vladimir Menshov, *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* (1980)

26 February

- **Writing Assignment #4** due before start of class
- Lawton, “The Waning of the Brezhnev Era” (handout)  
**In-class screening:** Rolan Bykov, *Scarecrow* (1983)

4 March

- Horton and Brashinsky, Chapter 2, p 67–98
- Faraday, Part 2
- Stites, “Perestroika and the People’s Taste” (handout)  
**In-class screening:** Vasilii Pichul, *Little Vera* (1986)

18 March

- **Writing Assignment #5** due before start of class
- Horton and Brashinsky, Chapter 1, p 33–66
- Taylor, “Now That the Party’s Over...” (handout)  
**In-class screening:** Aleksandr Proshkin, *The Cold Summer of 53...* (1988)

25 March

- Lawton, “The Time of Troubles”
- Horton and Brashinsky, Chapter 6, 187–216
- Lawton, *Imaging*, 11–38; 51–99  
**In-class screening:** Ivan Dykhovichnyi, *Moscow Parade* (1992)

1 April

- **Writing Assignment #6** due before start of class
- Beumers, “The Russian Hero and the Loss of the Centre” (handout)
- Mikhalkov, “The Function of a National Cinema” (handout)
- Dondurei, “The State of the National Cinema” (handout)
- Lawton, *Imaging*, 111–137; 148–168  
**In-class screening:** Nikita Mikhalkov, *Burnt By the Sun* (1994)

8 April

- Lawton, *Imaging*, 169–240
- Larson, “Melodramatic Masculinity” (handout)  
**In-class screening:** Aleksei Balabanov, *War* (2003)

15 April

- **Writing Assignment #7** due before start of class
- Lawton, *Imaging*, 249–257; 265–271; 283–289  
**In-class screening:** Andrei Zviaginstev, *The Return* (2003)

23 April at 12 noon

- Final Examination