Course Title: CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN CINEMA

Course No.: Russian 330  
Unique No.: 45560

Instructor: Keith Livers  
(Kalivers@mail.utexas.edu)

Meeting Time & Place: MWF: 3:00 – 4:00 (Parlin 206)

Office Hours: TBA

This course will use both contemporary Russian film as a means of exploring the confusion that resulted from the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the search for a new sense of identity in Russia throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. We will look at the work of Russia's best contemporary (and not quite so contemporary) directors, such as Pavel Lungin, Aleksei Balabanov, Nikita Mikhalkov, Andrei Zviagintsev and Aleksandr Sokurov as an entry-point into the soul of contemporary Russia.

Requirements: Active in-class participation, three 6-page papers and one presentation (approx. 15 minute presentation) with a partner.

LIST OF REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED FILMS

The Brother (1997), Aleksei Balabanov  
Close to Eden (1993), Nikita Mikhalkov  
Father and Son (2003), Aleksandr Sokurov  
Four (2003), Ilya Krzhanovskii  
House of Fools (2002), Andrei Konchalovsky  
Luna Park (1991), Pavel Lungin  
Mermaid (2007), Anna Melikyan  
Nightwatch (2004), Timur Bekmabetov  
Of Freaks and Men (1997), Aleksei Balabanov  
Prisoner of the Mountains (1996), Sergei Bodrov  
The Return (2003), Andrei Zviagintsev  
Russian Ark (2002), Aleksandr Sokurov  
Siberian Barber (1998), Nikita Mikhalkov  
The Thief (1997), Pavel Chukhrai

Participation 20%
Grading: 3 essays (5-6 pages) 60%
1 presentation 20%

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (Jan. 17 — 21)

M MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY

W Syllabus/handouts

F INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

WEEK 2 (Jan. 24 — 28)

M FILM SHOWING: LUNA PARK.

W DISCUSSION: LUNA PARK

F DISCUSSION: LUNA PARK

WEEK 3 (Jan. 31 — Feb. 4)

M FILM SHOWING: CLOSE TO EDEN

W DISCUSSION: CLOSE TO EDEN

F DISCUSSION: CLOSE TO EDEN


WEEK 4 (Feb. 7 — 11)
WEEK 5 (Feb. 14—18)

M FILM SHOWING: *HOUSE OF FOOLS*

W DISCUSSION: *HOUSE OF FOOLS*

F DISCUSSION: *HOUSE OF FOOLS*

READ: “Wise Father Stalin and His Family in Soviet Cinema.”

WEEK 6 (Feb. 21—25)

M FILM SHOWING: *THIEF*

W DISCUSSION: *THIEF*

F DISCUSSION: *THIEF*

WEEK 7 (Feb. 28—Mar. 4)

M FILM SHOWING: *OF FREAKS AND MEN*

W DISCUSSION: *OF FREAKS AND MEN*

F DISCUSSION: *OF FREAKS AND MEN*

PAPER NO. 1 DUE
WEEK 8 (Mar. 7—11)

M  FILM SHOWING: FOUR

W  DISCUSSION: FOUR

F  DISCUSSION: FOUR

WEEK 9 (Mar. 14—18)

SPRING BREAK (NO CLASSES)

WEEK 10 (Mar. 21—25)

M  FILM SHOWING: BARBER OF SIBERIA

W  DISCUSSION: BARBER OF SIBERIA

F  DISCUSSION: BARBER OF SIBERIA
   READ: “About Killers, Freaks and Real Men: The Vigilante Hero of Aleksei Balabanov’s Films”

WEEK 11 (Mar. 28—Apr. 1)

M  FILM SHOWING: THE BROTHER

W  DISCUSSION: THE BROTHER

F  DISCUSSION: THE BROTHER

WEEK 12 (Apr. 4—8)

M  FILM SHOWING: THE RETURN
W  DISCUSSION: **THE RETURN**

F  DISCUSSION: **THE RETURN**

**WEEK 13 (Apr. 11—15)**

M  FILM SHOWING: **FATHER AND SON**

W  DISCUSSION: **FATHER AND SON**

F  DISCUSSION: **FATHER AND SON**

**PAPER NO. 2 DUE**

**READ: “The Russian Ark, the Marquis de Custine, and the Theater,” in course pack.**

**WEEK 14 (Apr. 18—22)**

M  SHOWING: **RUSSIAN ARK**

W  DISCUSSION: **RUSSIAN ARK**

F  DISCUSSION: **RUSSIAN ARK**

**WEEK 15 (Apr. 25—29)**

M  FILM SHOWING: **NIGHTWATCH**

W  DISCUSSION: **NIGHTWATCH**

F  DISCUSSION: **NIGHTWATCH**

**WEEK 16 (May 2—6)**
M  FILM SHOWING: *MERMAID*

W  DISCUSSION: *MERMAID*

F  DISCUSSION: *MERMAID*
   *PAPER NO. 3 DUE.*