BULLETIN of the

# GENTER FOR SOVIET & EAST-EUROPEAN STUDIES

*in the performing arts* 

Sylos (SASKIS)

Hungas

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS 62901, U.S.A.

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**SPRING 1970** 

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USSR

No. 3

# "APOLLO 13"

On April 18 the following telegram from Moscow, USSR, was received:

"Herbert Marshall and Leonard Van Camp, Southern Illinois University: CONGRATULATE THE HEROIC COSMONAUTS OF APOLLO 13 AND THE PERFORMANCE OF "LONG LIFE" IN THE ORATORIO OF PROKOFIEV BY YOUR STUDENTS' CHOIR

(Signed) STASEVITCH."

Abram Stasevitch is the famous Soviet conductor who was a guest of The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and S.I.U. in 1968 to conduct the world premiere of Prokofiev's last great work 'IVAN THE TERRIBLE.' An oratorio based on the music he wrote for Eisenstein's film which was conducted by Stasevitch. The performance was a great success, and outstanding was the participation of the Edwardsville S.I.U. Students' Choir trained by Professor Leonard Van Camp of its Music Department. The English version of this oratorio is by Herbert Marshall who also was the Narrator. The St. Louis Symphony is inviting Dr. Stasevitch for 1971 to conduct, among other Russian works, Shostokovitch's recent symphonic poem 'THE EXECUTION OF STEPAN RAZIN' to verses by Yevgeny Yevtushenko, English Version by Herbert Marshall.

# LEV VLADIMIROVITCH KULESHOV (1899-1970)

Mr. Ron Levaco, a graduate assistant of the Center (who received an exchange research scholarship through the Center) arrived in Moscow on April 6 to research into the life and work of Lev Kuleshov and to meet personally with the grand old man of Russian cinema, only to learn alas that Kuleshov had died the day before.

The Center sent the following telegram to his widow, Madam Khokhlova, the Union of Soviet Cinematographers and the All-Union Institute of Cinematography, Moscow

Sincere condolences on death of Lev Kuleshov pioneer of world cinematography and wonderful teacher stop Will publish monograph on his life and work by Ron Levaco with preface by his grateful student from GIK Herbert Marshall.

Kuleshov was the founder of the Institute of Cinematography Moscow, the first in the world, and was one of the teachers, together with Pudovkin, Eisenstein and others, under whom Herbert Marshall studied and worked in the 30's.

Here is the Front Page of 'Zrelischa' No. 37: May, 1923, it reads:

# **ENTERTAINMENT**

#### A WEEKLY JOURNAL

THEATRE, MUSIC, VARIETY, MASS SPECTACLES, CIRCUS, CONCERT PARTIES, CINEMA AND SPORT.

No.

**PROLETCULT** 

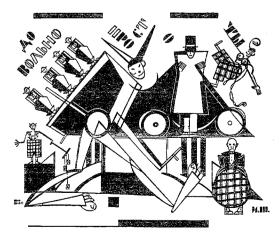
37



ЕЖЕНЕДЕЛЬНИК

ТЕАТРА, МУЗЫНИ, ЭСТРАДЫ, МАССОВОГО ДЕЙСТВА, ЦИРКА, БАЛАГАНА, КИНО И СПОРТА.

# № пролеткульт 37



«НА ВСЯКОГО МУДРЕЦА ДОВОЛЬНО ПРОСТОТЫ».
первый рабочий театр.

"EVEN A WISEMAN STUMBLES"
FIRST WORKERS THEATRE

**1** 

# **OXFORD UNIVERSITY**

Following our first Bibliography of Proletcult material in No. 2 Bulletin, we received the following letter from J. S. G. Simmons, head of the Slavonic Department, Taylor Institution, Oxford.

"Your Bulletin No. 2 restores my faith in human nature! The mere thought that anyone should ever take any of my recommendations seriously is enough to make my day, and I was delighted to see your first list of highly-abstruse proletcult source materials. Congratulations both on having them and on making their presence known. You will reap your reward in the shape of a deluge of requests for micro-films—but that is how learning advances.

I will be mentioning your Bulletin in my contribution to the Year's Work in Modern Language Studies and will give it a resounding slap on the back."

# B.B.C. TV

Following the recent visit of a B.B.C. TV unit to film Professor Herbert Marshall tell of his experiences with Eisenstein for the feature they are making, the following letter was received from the British Broadcasting Association, B.B.C., Kensington House, London, Eng.

"Many thanks for your letter; but especially many thanks for your pieces for the Eisenstein film. What a surfeit of riches you have given me! I wish I could use it all, or even most of it, but if I did, there would be about 20 minutes left for the other 15 speakers!!!

Thank you again.

And all good wishes for Christmas and for 1970.

With warm regards, Norman Swallow (Producer in Charge)"

# **NEW HORIZONS IN EDUCATION**

The famous scientist and inventor, Dr. Werner Von Braun, pioneer of rocketry and the Deputy Administrator for Planning of NASA, has set up, together with Dr. Fred Ordway III, a Science and Technology Center at Huntsville, Alabama, the home of NASA. This is called *New Horizons* 

# CENTER FOR SOVIET AND EAST-EUROPEAN STUDIES IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

Herbert Marshall, FRSA, Director

#### SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. C. Horton Talley, Dean

# **DEPARTMENT OF THEATER**

Dr. Archibald McLeod, Chairman

#### **GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

Helen P. Renick, *Theater Dept.* Lois Anne Harris, *Speech Dept.* Kim B. Harris, *Theater Dept.* 

# CONSULTANTS

U.S.A.

Professor Mordecai Gorelik Professor George Counts Professor Norris Houghton Madame Ida Kaminska Madame Olga Orechwa Dr. Igor Shankovsky in Education. It will deal with the most advanced and complex subjects and is planned to be a series of audiovisual teaching packages. This will be a new development in the work of these extraordinary men, and Professor Marshall has been honored by being asked to contribute to their series. He has been commissioned to do the independent filmstrip series entitled "The Making of Movies" which he will both write, prepare, and narrate.

#### AAASS ANNUAL CONVENTION

Report on the AAASS meeting visited by delegates of S.I.U.: Dr. Stauber, chairman of the European and Russian Studies Committee, by Dr. Kimball of the Social Sciences Division, and by Professor Herbert Marshall from the Center. They all participated actively in the work of the Conference, and in the end Dr. Kimball and Professor Marshall were elected to committees: the first dealing with National Minorities of the USSR and the latter with the Eastern European Satellites.

#### ARCHIVES

A further sampling of journals in the Center's Archives relating to the Performing Arts in the USSR during the 1920's:

1. Zhizn Iskusstva (The Life of the Arts)—published by Gubpolit-prosvet (Petrograd-Leningrad-Moscow)

Reviews, Articles, Bibliographies, Biographies, Letters on Performing and Fine Arts.

Issues	Date	Year
1-49	JanDec.	1923
2-53	JanDec.	1924
1-52	JanDec.	1925
1-52	JanDec.	1926
1-52	Jan,-Dec.	1927
1-50	JanDec.	1928
1-52	JanDec.	1929

 Zapiski Peredvizhnova Teatra (Touring Theatre), of P. P. Gaideburov and N. F. Skarskaya. (Petrograd-Leningrad)
 Articles, programs, biographies, letters.

Issues	Date	Year
33-36	Oct. 8, 17, 24, 31	1922
37-40	Nov. 6, 14, 20, 28	1922
42-44	Dec. 12, 19, 26	1922
45-48	Jan. 1, 16, 23, 29	1923
49-51	Feb. 6, 13, 23	1923
52-53	March 5, 20	1923
54-55	April 9, 24	1923
56-57	May 8, 22	1923
58-59	June 5, 19	1923

The Peredvizhnoi Teatr was founded by Paul P. Gaideburov, in conjunction with Nadezhda F. Skarskaya (actress), in 1903. This theatre developed from the OBSHCHEDOSTUPNYI TEATR (public theatre). First performance of PEREDVIZHNOI took place on March 7, 1905. The repertory was at first classical, which, in addition to the Russian masters of drama, included Plays of Sophocles, Shakespeare, Schiller, Moliere, Ibsen, Shaw. In 1933 appeared a new branch of this theatre, under the heading of KOLKHOZ-SOVKHOZ Touring Theatre, (also known as LENOBLIZPOLKOM).

Gradually the PEREDVIZHNOI TEATR began to exclude tragedy, and change its repertory to meet the tasts and demands of the Party but finally was closed in the thirties. Paul P. Gaideburov is known as an actor and a director. Until 1946 he produced many prominent plays. Gaideburov joined the Kamerny Theatre of Tairov in 1946 and the Vahktangov Theatre in 1955.

3. Zrelishcha (Entertainments). Published by Zrelishcha Publishing House, Moscow.

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Issues	Date	Year
1-89	Aug. 30-June 8	1923

The series of the magazine-program called 'ZRELISCHA' (which can be translated as 'Entertainments' or 'Shows' or 'Spectacles') has a unique collection of articles, essays, criticisms, reviews, as well as all the repertoire of the Moscow Theatres of the period. It is richly illustrated with wood-cuts and line-engravings with numerous portraits of the leading producers, directors, actors and artists of the time. The present reproduction is an example, being a caricature of Eisenstein's production of 'Even a Wiseman Stumbles' on the front page of 'ZRELISCHA' No. 37, May 1923.

4. Rabochii Teatr (Worker's Theatre) (Organ of Leningrad Regional Trades Union Council)

Issues	Date	Year
33	Aug. 15	1926
36	Sept. 5	1926
17	March 26	1930
19-22	April 6-April 21	1930

5. Repertuarnyi Bulletin (Repertory Bulletin-published by Glaviskusstva-R.S.F.S.R. Moscow.)

Reviews of theatres, films, music halls, and programs.

Issues	Date	Year
4-8	April-August	1930

6. Novyi Zritel' (The New Spectator) (Moscow Theatres Publishing

Reviews of theatres, films, music halls.

Issues	Date	Year
38	Sept. 21	1926
39	Sept. 28	1926

7. Rabis (Rabotniki Iskusstv) (Published by the Trade Union of Performing Artists, Moscow.)

Issues	Date	Year
5-17	Feb. 15-April 21	1927

8. Teatra i Muzyka (Theatre and Music) Ezhenedelnyi Zhurnal Zrelishchnykh Iskusstv Pod Redaktsiei Sam. Fried. ("Drama, Dance, Grotesque, Kino") Moscow.

Issues	Date	Year
9 (22)	May 1	1923
11 (24)	May 25	1923
26	June 12	1923

9. Teatr i Iskusstvo (In Russian). Emigre Publication, Paris.

Articles, biographical sketches on Chaliapin, Eleanora Duse. Pavlova, N. Goncharova, etc.

Issues	Date	Year
1, 2		1924

10. The International Theatre (In English) (Published by Cooperative Publishing House, Moscow.)

Articles, reviews on theatre, music, films, and dance.

Issues	Date	Year
1-6		1934

# **EISENSTEIN'S THEATRE** "MONTAGE OF ATTRACTIONS"

Eisenstein's film work has been and is thoroughly documented and studied, but little is really known about his theatre experiments which preceded his transition to the cinema. As a sample of the interesting and unique material from our Archives the following is the first review we have found, giving us at last a more precise idea of how Eisenstein produced and 'mounted' the typical domestic drama of Ostrovsky (the Ibsen of Russia, so to speak). It will be seen that he produced it in 'the theatre in the round,' in the style of a 'circus-bouffonade,' adding new and contemporary characters to the nineteenth century drama, who performed circus and trapeze acts over the very heads of the audience; he gave the leading characters a Diary in film and at the end of the show the lights faded, on the silent cinema screen Eisenstein made his bow to the audience!

Here then is the audience involvement, arena-in-theround production, and multi-media presentation in 1923.

All these innovations, of course, stem from his great and beloved Maestro, Vsevelod Meyerhold, as do the 'innovations' of Piscator, Brecht, Buryan and the EPIC Theatre-of that in another Bulletin.

On page 29 of 'Zrelisch' the Program notes are as follows:

FIRST WORKERS THEATRE OF PROLETCULT, Vozdvizhenka, St. 16, 24, 26 and 27, May:

"EVEN A WISE MAN STUMBLES"

Based on the Comedy of Ostrovsky, Five Acts with a Prologue. Free Composition of the Text by Sergei Tretiakov. Scenario and Montage by S. M. Eisenstein. (From Pages 6 & 7 of 'Zrelisch,' No. 37.

"Even a Wise Man Stumbles . . . . . . '

In The First Workers' Theatre of Proletkult, Moscow, May, 1923.

The article, appearing below does not reflect the opinion of "ZRELISCH." The Editors, wishing to shed some light from many angles on the Proletkult production of "Even a Wise Man Stumbles," commissioned a series of articles from the following writers: Bebutov, Beskin, Brik, Kumeiko, Margolin, Mass and Tretiakov. The first article under discussion is from Kumeiko. Articles by Mass and Tretiakov will appear in subsequent numbers.

#### To Throw Light on the Production

From the circus point of view and that of a circus critic: That is the task the editor assigned to me in reviewing the production at the Proletkult of "Even a Wise Man Stumbles."1

Warning: I shall avoid dealing with the subject in the narrow sense and strive to elucidate it.

#### From All Sides

1. The director-producer was hidden under the title "Author of the Montage of Attractions" but actually he did exist. The literary mind of S. M. Eisenstein placed on the entire work an imprint specifically "bookish" and "intellectual," and not at all circus-like.

The term—a circus-bouffanade which was applied to this

production must have arisen from the fact that the production is heavily laden-and how!-with acrobatic movements, represented by salto-morte ("suicide dive") somersaults and handsprings. All of these techniques, but of course in a much more complicated form, were combined into the so-called "work before the curtain," and made a very interesting spectacle, but if one takes a long five-act play and after every word makes a handspring-cartwheel, however appropriate, the resulting spectacle, with all due deference, becomes very monotonous.

2. The circus-like element of the acting (to be differentiated from the action) could be a justification of the title "circus bouffanade," but alas the acting level of the production was not very high. Among the actors, only Urtsev, and to a lesser degree Eskin, expressed the clownish character of the circus.

3. At the beginning of the performance Sergei Tretiakov (who adapted the text of the play by Ostrovsky) came on stage before the audience and narrated the content of the play and the meaning of its respective situations. This was most welcome, for without it the meaning cannot be easily grasped.

The play is structured without a basic plot and complicationsalong a straight line of the slow unfolding of the path of events. This dulls the interest.

One occurrence is most illustrative. When the silent "Masked Man," appears with green electrical eyes, in a top hat, and the floor-length coat of a detective, he leads one to think that a new and complex plot has entered the play. One's interest increases, but nothing of the kind! This character is fortuitious. He is the same as the others. And that is a great pity. For out of the brilliant tone of colorful semi-acrobatic movements, a cinematic tension could have been created, both interesting and intriquing.

4. The first newspaper reviews noted Meyerhold's and Foregger's influence. I find it difficult to determine in what precisely the citing the only single influence evident in the production. That of Sergei Radlov.<sup>2</sup> reviewers saw these influences. For my part I take a great pleasure in

It isn't my fault that the Moscow critics know neither the life of Petersburg Theatres nor the fact that the circus bouffanades of Sergei Radlov, in his "People's Comedy" Theatre, were the first steps toward a synthesis of Theatre and Circus and later of Cinema.

The difference is that Radlov employed trained and qualified circus and theatre actors, united them all into one ensemble and during the 21/2 years of its existence gave a series of brilliant performances. Radlov's actors did not do acrobatic somersaults ... but let me assure you that his Theatre synthesized circus and other forms of entertainment with great mastery. No somersaults were performed, but instead other theatre tricks were truly entertaining and even "salto morte," if you like.

A propos of this: In the play "The Adopted Child," on a five times longer, and much higher, tightrope they performed a flight over the audience and on the trapeze (in the play "The Sultan and

the Devil").

5. It was Alexandrov, playing the "Masked Man" who left the most pleasing impression, not because he walked the high tightrope so beautifully nor on the strength of any other trick (of which there were many and all good), but because his role had some relation to the plot and gave the impression that it was leading to a dramatic

It was this role more than any other, which brought the Teatre closest to the theme of the Teatre of tricks and entertainment which I touched on in the pages of the January this year's "Entertainments." (No. 21.)

Somersaults by themselves are of little interest and are not necessary. They are not really tricks-but just cartwheel "acrobatics" in the "bad" sense of the word.

A trick should take place as a result of a psychological stimulus, i.e., they should be motivated (for example, technical tricks of the

cinema) and not only as a showing off in space.

6. The Cinema-Diary of Glumovs, in the fifth-act, filmed by the State Cinema Organization (Goskino), is not a novelty-but is very "a propos." True, there is an unpleasant memory of a moment at the end of the film when "The Masked Man" slowly removes his mask with the identical movements and manner of the analogous character in the famous film: "The Mask Which Laughs."

7. Conclusions:

- A. The heading of: "First Workers Theatre of the Proletcult" is obviously only an accidental trade mark for this production.

B. Rudenko is a remarkable trainer.
C. They should have also included Charlie Chaplin in the

- D. Not being a specialist, I shall intentionally omit any reference to the costumes and settings, but were I to be pressed for my evaluation, I would admit that here I consider S. M. Eisenstein top notch. The entire execution is tremendously interesting.
- E. The Technical slickness of the show's action is indispu-
- 8. Finally, following the example of a little girl, who, after visiting a Cinema was asked what it was that she liked best replied:

"The Rooster." (The trade mark of the famous French film company Pathé, which ends every one of their films), so I too shall

What I liked best of all was the moment when, following the applause and cries for the director, there appeared projected on the screen the figure of Sergei Eisenstein-bowing to his most respected audience

That is all.

Eugene Kumeiko

1. An English translation by David Margashack is in his collection of three Ostrovsky plays entitled "Easy Money" pub-

lished by Allen Unwin, London, England, 1944.

2. S. E. Radlov attended classes of Meyerhold-organized first touring Communal Troup to entertain soldiers in the front lines, during the Civil War (1918). Directed Mass entertainments in Petrograd. In 1920-2, headed the People's Comedy Theatre. Took part in Studio Experiments of Meverhold, Produced Opera Ballets, in the Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Leningrad. In 1929 founded the "Young Theatre." Produced Shakespeare with great philosophical depth and free from outmoded tranditions, with new and improved translations by his wife Anna Radlova.

# **GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

Lois Anne Harris-B.A., Carson-Newman College, 1968 (Speech-English major); M.S., S.I.U., 1970 (Speech). Working on Ph.D. in Theater-Speech with emphasis in dramatic literature. Involved in research at the Center. Also assisting Prof. Marshall's course, The Black in the Performing Arts, the first in an American university.

Kim Bradford Harris-B.A., Carson-Newman College, 1968 (Speech major). M.S., S.I.U., 1970 (Theater). Working on Ph.D. in Speech-Theater with emphasis in direction. Investigating Sergei Eisenstein and helping to prepare first volume of his Collected Works for publication.

Research Assistant Mrs. Helen P. Renick has assisted the director in the research and translation of much of the material in this Bulletin. Currently Mrs. Renick is engaged in translating Dmitri Shestakov's booklet on Contemporary British Drama—a modern Soviet evaluation of great interest, as representing the outlook of younger Soviet generation.

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