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Center for Soviét

809 South Forest Street Carbondale, Illinois 62901, U.S.A.

WINTER/SPRING 1979

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NO. 23

#### FUTURE OF THE CENTER

On June 30, Herbert Marshall becomes Professor Emeritus and retires as a full-time faculty member of SIUC, but he will continue as Director of the Center for Soviet and East European Studies in the Performing Arts. This will now be housed at 809 South Forest Street on the SIUC campus in Carbondale, Illinois 62901, from June 30 until further notice. Active negotiations are being pursued for further funding and for full-scale continuation of the Center here or elsewhere. Everyone on our mailing list will be kept informed. All suggestions welcomed! Meanwhile, the Center will continue on a limited basis, as major funding by SIUC will cease.

Professor Marshall will now be available for visiting lectureships from June 30, 1979, on. Following are some of the pro-

posed seminar topics:

1. THE HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE SOVIET THEATRE with personal reminiscences of its greatest directors and actors: Stanislavsky (Moscow Art Theatre), Meyerhold (Meyerhold Theatres), Tairov (Kamerny Th.), Vakhtangov (Vakhtangov Th.), Okhlopkov (Realistic and Mayakovsky Theatres), Mikhoels (Moscow Yiddish Th.), Cherkassov (Leningrad Drama Th.), Livanov (Moscow Art Th.).

Illustrated with slides, film-strips, and records.

Text: Pictorial History of the Russian Theatre by H. Marshall, Crown, 1978.

2. THE HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE SOVIET CINEMA with personal reminiscences of its greatest directors: Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Kuleshov, Dovzhenko, Dziga Vertov, Paradjanov and Tarkovsky. Illustrated with film clips and slides.

To be accompanied with special showings of a selection of the greatest Soviet films (classic and modern).

Text: Battleship Potemkin by H. Marshall. Paperback, Avon, NY, 1979.

Kino, by J. Leyda. Paperback, Harcourt Brace. 3. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SERGEI EISEN-STEIN with personal reminiscences of his classes, lectures, and productions.

Accompanied by showing of all his films.

Text: Lessons with Eisenstein by Nizhny. Tr. I. Montagu and J. Leyda.

Film Sense, Film Form and Film Essays by S. Eisenstein. Tr. J. Leyda.

Autobiography by S. Eisenstein. Tr. H. Marshall and T. Wraight, 1979.

Montage by S. Eisenstein. Tr. H. Marshall and R. Reeder. Harcourt Brace, 1980.

4. THE STANISLAVSKY METHOD OF DIRECTION (as distinct from his method of acting) with practical examples, during the seminar, of the METHOD of directing a chosen play; concentrating on the preparatory work of the Director up to the work on stage.

Text: The Producer Prepares by H. Marshall (as yet unpublished).

Stanislavsky's works.

THE HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SOVIET POETRY with personal reminiscences of its leading poets:

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Pasternak, Asayev, Akhmatova, Okudjava, Akhmadulina, Yevtushenko, Bokov, Voznesensky, Lukonin, Rylsky, Abashidze, Halkin, Utkin, etc. With readings of the original (some by the poets themselves) and in the translations of H. Marshall and others.

Text: Mayakovsky by H. Marshall. Dobson, UK, 1978 (reprint); Hill & Wang, NY.

Yevtushenko. Tr. H. Marshall. Dutton, NY.

Fifty Years of Soviet Poetry (anthology). Tr. H. Marshall (unpub.).

Voznesensky. Tr. H. Marshall. Paperback, Hill &

Wang, NY...

6. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TRANSLATING POETRY with examples from Russian and other languages and a comparative study of translations. Participation by the students with their own translations.

All enquiries should go to Professor Herbert Marshall at 809 South Forest Street, Carbondale, IL 62901. Telephone 453-5174 or 549-4569.

### DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF **DENNIS DOBSON**

As this Bulletin was being prepared, my life-long friend, my English publisher and editor, Dennis Dobson, died. He died suddenly on his way back from the famous Frankfurt International Book Fair, where he was proudly presenting his latest books. And he could not have wished for a better exit.

My wife, Fredda Brilliant, and I have known and loved Dennis since we first met him at the very beginning of his publishing activities, just after the war. Another dear friend, the famous creator of Photo-Montage, Johnny Heartfield, at my suggestion, had been commissioned by Dennis to design for him, and I was invited to be editor of a new series, The International Library of Cinema and Theatre, under which rubric we published over twenty outstanding books by famous authors such as Eisenstein, Bela Balasz, S. Kracauer, etc.

We were planning also the publication of the Selected Works of Sergei Eisenstein, Volume I being his Autobiography, Volume II, Montage, and Volume III, Non-Indifferent Nature—all now completely translated by myself and a collab-

However, the Autobiography has been considerably delayed. The difficulties of its birth were due to the unbounded conscientiousness of Dennis and his wife, Margaret, who insisted on tracking down the final source and proper spelling of any and every name, quotation, or footnote. They would not let a book be published until they were satisfied they had exhausted the corrections. This resulted in my magnum opus Mayakovsky being one of the most beautiful books they published. And the Autobiography is another example of Dennis' painstaking supervision, ably and as painstakingly assisted by his wife Margaret, his indefatigable partner in business and in their home of seven children.

To write about such an unusual human being as Dennis is very difficult at such a time, but the obituary in the London *Times* on October 27, 1978, was a brilliant summing up of this unique human being.

### THE SELECTED WORKS OF SERGEI EISENSTEIN

Volume I, the Autobiography of Eisenstein, translated by Herbert Marshall and Tony Wraight, will be published at the end of 1979 by Dennis Dobson Ltd.

Volume II, Montage, translated by Herbert Marshall and Roberta Reeder, will be published shortly by Harcourt Brace Iovanovich

Volume III, Non-Indifferent Nature, by the same translators, is now completed and with the publishers.

### **PIRASMANI**

# (The "primitive" painter of Georgia) by Bulat Okudjava, authorized translation by Herbert Marshall

I translate this specially for Bulat, commemorating and welcoming his first visit to the United States. He was a guest of Professor Helen Weill, Chairman of the Slavic Department of the University of California at Irvine, who had been persistently working for years to achieve this end.

Pirosmani is now recognized as one of the great artists of Georgia who died in poverty. A magnificent film has been produced about him by Shengalaya at the Tbilisi Film Studios.

### To Nikolai Grityuk

What is it happens, tell me, when we are dreaming dreams, and the artist Pirosmani comes out of the wall it seems,

out of those primitive frames, from all sorts of rustling moods, and tries to sell his paintings just for a morsel of food.

Knobbly skinny his knees, his glance apprehensive, but sleek fat deer peep out of his paintings pensive.

Marguerita the beautiful on luscious grass lies stark, see her bare breasts bountiful quiver with a birth-mark.

# CENTER FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

Herbert Marshall, FRSA, Director

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Dr. Byron Raizis

See how the earth's exulting, dances and sings elate, Pirosmani paints her portrait, Marguerita patiently waits.

He loved life unstintingly, as is plain to view.... but on all the earth for him not one bowl of soup.

## RUSSIAN ORIGINAL

# ПЕСЕНКА О ХУДОЖНИКЕ ПИРОСМАНИ

Николаю Грицюку

Что происходит с нами, когда мы смотрим сны? Художник Пиросмани выходит из стены,

из рамок примитивных, из всякой суеты и продает картины за порцию еды.

Худы его колени и насторожен взгляд, но сытые олени с картин его глядят,

красотка Маргарита в траве густой лежит, а грудь ее открыта — там родинка дрожит.

И вся земля ликует, пирует и поет, и он ее рисует и Маргариту ждет.

Он жизнь любил не скупо, как видно по всему... Но не хватило супа на всей земле ему.

# TARAS SHEVCHENKO (1814-1861)

The Ukrainian Cultural Centre of Ottawa, Canada, will publish Herbert Marshall's translations of this Ukrainian bard under the editorship of Senator Paul Yuzyk. It will consist of twenty-four poems from his famous Kobzar together with illustrations of the poet's own paintings and drawings. It is not generally realized that Shevchenko was as great a painter as he was a poet. This was, however, made visible by Fredda Brilliant in her monumental statute of Taras Shevchenko, now in the Shevchenko Museum in Kiev, Ukraine. Here he is shown in a painter's smock at work at his easel at the same time as he composes a poem.

This publication was originally commissioned when Marshall was a guest lecturer at Ottawa University by Professor Constantine Bida as then editor-in-chief of the series of

Ukrainian Classics. But, alas, Constantine died suddenly in March, 1979. This book will be dedicated to his memory as a passionate protagonist of Ukrainian art and culture and particularly its literature and poetry. At his funeral, Senator Yuzyk gave the eulogy and read one of Shevchenko's last poems translated by Marshall as a tribute to Constantine Bida. There could not be a more appropriate poem. Here it is:

Surely the time has come, my friend, poor neighbour of mine, now to end our versifying of useless verse and instead our wagon-hearse for that last long ride prepare to that world, friend, to God repair; to that rest be our own wagoners. With age we're worn, with labour tired, a little wisdom we've acquired, Let it suffice! Now sleep will do, let's to our home return and rest . . . A happy home, if you but knew! . . .

Oh do not go, oh let us stay, it's too early, friend, too early—let us walk, and let us wait and at this world's wonder gaze. Oh let us wonder still, my fate . . . See how vast and wide it is, how high it soars, how glad it is, how clear and oh how deep it is . . . We'll walk together still, my star . . . and climb up that high mountain far, take our rest, and by that time your sister-stars will high have climbed, those ageless ones, and through the skies will glide with shining eyes . . . .

Oh wait a little, sister, wait, holy wife of mine and mate! Then we, with lips unsullied, our prayers to God will make, then quietly, unhurried, that last long ride we'll take . . . Over Lethe's turbid waters black and bottomless with your sacred glory bless me, dear friend, bless.

14th February, 1861. St. Petersburg.

#### UKRAINIAN ORIGINAL.

Чи не покинуть нам, небого, Моя сусідонько убога, Вірші нікчемні віршувать, Та заходиться риштувать Вози в далекую дорогу, На той світ, друже мій, до бога, Почимчикуем спочивать. Втомилися і підтоптались, I розуму таки набрались, То й буде з нас! — ходімо спать. Ходімо в хату спочивать... Весела хата, щоб ти знала!.. Ой не йдімо, не ходімо, Рано, друже, рано -Походимо, посидимо --На сей світ поглянем...

Поглянемо, моя доле... Бач, який широкий, Та високий та веселий, Ясний та глибокий... Походимо ж, моя зоре... Зійдемо на гору, Спочинемо, а тим часом Твої сестри-зорі, Безвічнії, попід небом Попливуть, засяють.-Підождемо ж, моя сестро, Дружино святая! Та нескверними устами Помолимось богу. Та й оушимо тихесенько В далеку дорогу --Над Летою бездонною Та каламутною. Благослови мене, друже, Славою святою,

14 февраля.

### SOLOMON MIKHOELS (1890-1948)

Herbert Marshall is completing a new book on the history of the Moscow State Jewish Theatre, which began under the artistic directorship of Alexander Granovsky (1917–1928) and then continued under the great actor Solomon Mikhoels (1929–1948) until its liquidation under Stalin in 1949. Mikhoels was assassinated on the personal orders of Stalin, as his (Stalin's) daughter Svetlana Alleluyeva has testified. This was followed by a virtual pogrom of the Soviet Yiddish intelligentsia in 1952.

Marshall was an "assistant-practicant" sent to the Moscow State Jewish Theatre by his teacher Eisenstein in 1935, while still his student at the All Union State Institute of Cinematography. Here he met Mikhoels and Zuskin and saw rehearsals of his masterpiece King Lear. Mikhoels as Lear and Zuskin as the Clown created unsurpassed characterizations in this production. Marshall was interpreter in 1935 for the great English theatre artist Gordon Craig when Craig witnessed this production and cried out: "This is the most ironic moment of my life! I have seen in Russia, produced in the Yiddish language, the most wonderful production of Lear it has been my privilege to witness."

Here is a translation of an extraordinary poem commemorating that same production.

### A PURPLE DAY

by Ovsei Driz\*
Translated by Herbert Marshall
In Memory of Solomon Mikhoels

Purple was the day,
Skies clouded—
fishlike crowding.
Somewhere sounded
motor-cars, tramways.
But here, on Malaya Bronnaya Street,\*\*
reigned a silence profound.
And a strange procession appears of clowns,
yellow-crimson-green,
in the silence
making their way.

The day was downcast and blear. The clowns bore on their shoulders the body of King Lear.

They made their way cautiously as if on a cliff-edge climbing, clowns magnificent in their clumsiness triumphant. For him the silence sobbed Only jesters' bells throbbed, jangling, on the clowns' motley dangling:
Jingling-jangling,
Jingling-jangling,

Purple was the day.
The sky swam
like a great fish.
No trumpets howled
and no flutes wailed.
Only jesters' bells were sobbing,
throbbing:
jingling-jangling,
jingling-jangling....

Day like night passed. Torment anguished the comics' masks! Look, up above moves a grey fiddler on the roof. .... Skyward flared a blue flame of hair! And the violin singsa fish of gold there. Weep, gold-fish, weep over the face of the kingsecrets of secrets keep . . . That old fiddler on the roof was great Einstein himself. But the clowns did not hear. The clowns bore on their shoulders the body of King Lear.

And purple was the day. Downcast and blear.

1947

\* In The Fourth String. Publ. Khudozhestvennaya Literatura m. 1975. pp. 176-79.

\*\* Where the State Jewish Theatre was situated. Now it is the Moscow Dramatic Theatre. There is no plaque or commemoration of its original use.

### RUSSIAN ORIGINAL.

Фиолетовыя день

Памяти Миховися

День был фиолетовый, Облачное небо — Рыбья чешуя. Где-то шумели
Трамван, машины.
А здесь, на Маной Бронной,
Стояла типпна.
И процессией странной
Женто-красно-зеленой
В типпно
Шли шуты.
Было хмуро и сыро.

Шуты несли На своих плечах Прах Короля Лира.

Шли осторожно,
Как по краю пропасти,
В споей торжественной полености
Великоленные шуты.
Молчанием его оплакивали.
Лишь позвякивали
Еубенчики,
Нашитые
На шутовские колпаки:
Дзипь-дзинь,
Дзинь-дзинь...

День был Фиолетовый. Плымо небо, Как большая рыба. Не рыдали трубы И то взризгивали флейты.

Лишь бубенчики илакали, Звякали: Дзипь-дзинь, Дзипь-дзинь...

Донь был как ночь. Исказила мука Маску комика! Глядите, там на крыше домика Появился седой скрипач. ...И взвилось Синее пламя волос! И запела скрипка -Золотал рыбка! Плачь, рыбка, плачь Над лицом короля — тайной тайн... Этот старый скрипач Был великий Эйнштейн. Но шуты не ведали этого. Шуты Несли На своих Плечах Прах Короля Лира.

А день был фиолетовый. Было сыро.

### PAUL ROBESON-AFTERMATH IV

(see Bulletins 17, 18, 19, and 20)

### Further Evidence of PAUL ROBESON's Awareness of the Stalinist Terror

People all over the world, including Paul, were puzzled and appalled at the sudden complete disappearance of all the leading Soviet Jewish personalities from Soviet life in 1949. This was coupled with a slanderous campaign against Jews under the euphemism of "cosmopolitanism." Of this, Roy Medvedev, in his monumental history of Stalinism, Let History Judge<sup>1</sup>, says: "This anti-Semitic campaign, which recalled the pogroms, aroused sharp protests abroad and disturbed the friends of the Soviet Union. Two leaders of the World Peace Council, Frederic Joliot-Curie and Paul Robeson, were reported to have flown to Moscow to meet with Stalin, but he refused to see them."

In his poem in memory of Mikhoel's death, Perets Markish, the Soviet Yiddish poet, compared him to the famous Jewish zaddik (wise man, seer), Rabbi Izokh ben Sarah from Berdichev, and it was a Kaddish in his memory that I translated for Paul to sing. Here it is:

I, Levi Yitzhak ben Sarah from Berdichev, come to Thee with a holy brief for Thy people Israel. For what hast Thou against Thy people Israel? And why hast Thou oppressed so Thy people Israel? For no matter what happens: it is sorrow to the Sons of Israel.

Almighty God! How many peoples on this earth? Babylonians, Persians, Romans.

The Germans: what say they? Our king is above all kings. The English: what say they? Our kingdom is above all kingdoms.

Rut I, Levi Yitzhak ben Sarah from Berdichev, say: "Praised be the Lord! Praised be his name for evermore!" Yiskadal ve Iskadash! . . . .

And I, Levi Yitzhak ben Sarah from Berdichev, now say: "Let me not move from this place!
Let me not budge from this spot!
And let there be an *end* to all our suffering and pain!
Praised be the Lord! Praised be His Name for Evermore!
Iskadal ve Iskadash!"

And there is also an account of Paul Robeson, in Stalin days, singing Yiddish songs at a formal meeting of the Moscow Union of Writers to honour the famous Yiddish author Sholom Aleikhem, despite attempts to censor him. And another piece of evidence comes from Jack Kroll.<sup>2</sup> "In 1949 Robeson gave a concert in Warsaw. The Communist regime asked him not to sing any songs in Yiddish (one of the many languages he knew). Robeson ignored the ban and too sang in Yiddish, Polish and Russian just to make sure all the assembled officials from the Soviet bloc understood everything. That was the real Paul Robeson..."

It seems that this is the one Yiddish writer who is "kosher" with the CPSU. His works were amongst the first to be republished after the years of the Stalin terror, and his anniversary is the one date that can be celebrated by anyone without fear of being called Zionists or pro-Israeli seditionists. And many significant poems and writings have used his name for another purpose.

Mikhoels was a dear friend of Paul Robeson, and when Paul sang *The Kaddish of Rabbin Ben Sarah*—he had in mind Mikhoels.

These are but other confirmations of the fact that Paul got into trouble with the Stalinist authorities for singing his

Yiddish songs. And then later he was to learn the truth of what happened to all his dear Jewish comrades—Mikhoels and Feffer. This was perhaps the last straw that broke the great camel's back.

A human being so sensitive as Paul could not but react with horror and dismay at the truth of the Satlinist regime of terror, not only against many of his dearest Soviet friends, like Mikhoels, but to millions of those Soviet citizens who loved him so much.

More and more evidence emerges to show that Paul, like all of us, was eventually not only aware of the truth but was profoundly shaken, to the depths of his being, at being so deceived and self-deceived over the ideals we all had worked and struggled and sacrificed for. But we too were equally guilty for compounding the cover-up and helping to perpetuate a Potemkin village of such proportions about the true nature of Communist Party Society.

And the realization of this is what broke Paul's mighty spirit—and he never wanted to confront the outside world again.

Further evidence of the nature of Paul Robeson Junior's political campaign was the boycott he had been trying to organize against the black actor Jimmy Earl Jones's one-man Presentation of Paul Robeson. In reply to Paulie's accusation that he had "distorted" Robeson, the producer, Don Gregory, said inter alia, that "both he and the playwrite had been repeatedly denied access to source material in the Robeson archives." Paulie denied this, but nevertheless admitted "he doesn't collaborate with anyone."

Here he and his politically motivated collaborators, in particular Lloyd Brown, are continuing this kind of "coverup" over the truth of Paul's later years. And the producer Gregory also now realizes this, for he said, "If they don't like it artistically, that's okay. But they're talking politically." And the Reporter-Commentator, Carl Stokes, on WNBZ's NEWS CENTER 4 (Chicago), revealed that most of the signers of the articles of the Robeson Junior protest against Jimmy Earl Jones's performance "did not see the play before lending their names to the letter of protest."

That is typical of the kind of cover-up I have been pointing out in my previous articles. (See my Bulletins No. 17, 18, 19, and 20.)

However, the other side of the coin is the disgraceful behavior of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce which recently rejected a request from the Screen Actors' Guild that a star be dedicated to Paul Robeson. When Los Angeles' Mayor Tom Bradley and others protested, the Chamber said "politics has nothing to do with it—that Robeson just wasn't a big star." "How many pictures did he make?" said a Chamber spokesman! "He was not sufficiently famous."!!!

As Paul's director, I protest emphatically at this insult to his memory. If ever there was a universally famous artist, it was Paul Robeson. He could and did fill football stadiums throughout the world. Tens of thousands would come just to hear him sing. He made eleven films, including the world-famous *Showboat*, with the even more famous song "Old Man River"; this quite apart from his plays and concerts.

The Chamber of Commerce must be brought into the twentieth century of civil rights and human justice.

As this goes to press (belatedly), I learn that justice has at last been done and Paul Robeson is given his rightful place in the history of American cinema.

### Herbert Marshall

- 1. Published by Knopf, NY., 1971.
- As reported in The Washington Post, Dec. 7, 1978, among others.

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