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FOREWORD

Stephen M. Norris

Cinemasaurus is a treasure chest of a book, a compilation that assesses the state of Russian cinema today while helping to classify it usefully. Featuring the work of twelve young scholars—who will no doubt guide the field of Russian cinema for years to come—this volume allows us to learn about the ways recent Russian cinema has embraced new genres, dealt with the flotsam cast aside with the Soviet collapse, and attempted to redefine imperial and national ideas. These features alone make this volume stand out.

Yet the book offers even more. The incubator that hatched these essays—and one that continues to maintain exciting new growth in Russian cinema—is the Kinotavr Film Festival. Created in 1989, Kinotavr is the world's largest regional festival. More importantly, it has played a major part both in the revival of the Russian film industry after 1991 and in fostering a truly creative environment within this film world. The essays in *Cinemasaurus* therefore analyze what Kinotavr has done for contemporary Russian cinema. The films discussed in these chapters were also all reviewed in the online journal *KinoKultura*, which debuted in 2003 and has served as the most important English-language source for regular, insightful reviews of recent Russian films (all the scholars involved in the volume have contributed to it). *KinoKultura* has covered the Kinotavr festival in recent years, helping those of us who cannot make the annual trip to Sochi receive reports of what is happening within the Russian film industry. The remarkable Pittsburgh Russian Film Symposium, now more than two decades old, has also acted as an important venue where scholars, students, critics, and journalists engage in intense dialogue about Russian films (the contributors to this volume have all participated in this symposium too). These three entities—film festival, online journal, and film symposium—in a way have loosely categorized Russian cinema over the last thirty years, so it makes sense that *Cinemasaurus* also includes interviews with the festival organizer, the journal's editor, and the symposium's founder.

Cinemasaurus is a storehouse that will be used for years to come, both as a reminder of what defined Russian cinema at this moment in time and as a means to track future changes in Russian film.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First among the debts we wish to acknowledge for this volume is our gratitude to three extraordinary figures who brought about, sustained, and fostered Kinotavr: Sitora Alieva, Alexander Rodnyansky, and Mark Rudinstein. Their inspiration, determination, and patience offer a model of how to make a lasting contribution to one's home culture and to its place in the world.

Closer to home, we would like to thank our own institutions, the College of William and Mary and the University of Pittsburgh, for their financial and logistical support. At the College of William and Mary, we would like to thank Joseph J. Plumeri for his generous support of faculty research, the College of Arts and Sciences (in particular Kate Conley), the Reves Center for International Studies, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures (in particular Silvia Tandeciarz), and the Film and Media Studies Program for their continuous support. At the University of Pittsburgh, we would like to thank the Dean's Office of the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences (in particular, N. John Cooper and Kathleen Blee), the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Film and Media Studies Program, the University Center for International Studies (in particular, Larry Feick and Ariel Armony), as well as the staff at the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Center for their patience and generosity. We are grateful, too, for support from the Richard D. and Mary Jane Edwards Endowed Publication Fund (University of Pittsburgh), which provided key assistance in bringing this volume into shape at its final stages.

We would also like to thank our colleagues—more than 150 scholars, journalists, film critics, and programmers in both Russia and elsewhere (many of whose names appear in this volume)—with whom we have been in dialogue for several decades. In particular, we are grateful to colleagues who welcomed us in the halls of the late NII kinoiskusstva, an invaluable research hub that is sorely missed.

This volume has also greatly benefited from conversations with colleagues from the United States, United Kingdom, Austria, the Czech Republic, and Australia who attended the Russian Film Symposium over the course of the past twenty years. Without their ideas and insights, this volume would not have been possible. This list, of course, includes Birgit Beumers, Vladimir

Padunov, and the twelve contributors to this volume, as well as a dozen other younger scholars on whom we did not impose the burden of this work.

Our great thanks, too, to Carolyn Pouncy for her patience and flawless judgment, as well as to the staff of Academic Studies Press, in particular to Igor Nemirovsky. Finally, we thank our families: our absence and distraction are hardly compensated for by this volume, but we offer it as evidence of our commitment to hard work and to an utterly absorbing cultural terrain.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATIONS

We transliterate Russian-language materials using the Library of Congress system, except when an alternate spelling is either commonly used—for example, Sergei Eisenstein (instead of Sergei Eizenshtein)—or preferred—for example, Alexander Rodnyansky (instead of Aleksandr Rodnianskii). All translations from Russian into English are those of the contributors, unless otherwise noted.

CINEMASAURUS: INTRODUCTION

Nancy Condee, Alexander Prokhorov, and Elena Prokhorova

> There is one integral indicator of the state of Russian cinema after 1988: its absence from the screens of its own country.
>
> *—Daniil Dondurei, "Kinodelo," 1995*

During his curtailed lifetime (1947–2017), film sociologist Daniil Dondurei wrote some of the most trenchant analyses of Russian film in the contemporary period—"contemporary" to him, to us, and to the first readers of this volume. Dondurei's flat expository style—apparently lacking in affect—was designed to goad its reader, who might finally therefore react to the unbearable nature of the situation that he describes. Dondurei's (apparently) chilly tone was a key aspect of his analytic signature: in a voice so recognizably matter-of-fact, relentlessly descriptive, and drained of concern, he reveals no trace of the human who was in fact deeply tormented by the situation he was describing.

Imagine, by analogy, a United States in which—after 1988—we ourselves gradually disappeared from the screen: a year-by-year fading away of Hollywood melo-pageantry, Disney Studio cartoons, arthouse films, documentary, to a point where there were virtually no self-representations on the screens of our home country. By 1995—the year of Dondurei's essay—cinema production had already plummeted and its very existence was uncertain. And while such extreme conditions were in no way evident (yet) in Russia's 1988,[1] that year was nevertheless the moment at which (in retrospect) we can first notice the signs of water in the bulkheads, so to speak.

[1] Indeed, at the time, 1988 had seemed to be a promising year for cinema. Soveksportfil'm had left Cannes in 1987 with two million dollars in foreign sales (Fisher). Over the course of 1988, Soviet cinema received sixty major international awards ("State Group"). As of January 1988, the major studios' creative associations were permitted to retain profits (a function of the new self-financing system [*khozraschet*]); to lobby the government for direct support; to hire and fire workers; and to enjoy more creative independence from the studio (Faraday, 131). By 1988, for example, Mosfil'm Studio came to comprise eleven creative associations, led by such key figures as Iurii Arabov, Rolan Bykov, Karen Shakhnazarov, and Sergei Solov'ev. See brief descriptions of these creative associations in *Soviet Film*, no. 5 (1988): 8–9 and 12–17; for Lenfil'm, see *Soviet Film*, no. 8 (1988): 16–17. Later in the same year, the Law on Cooperatives (July 1988) permitted independent production companies, such as Andrei Razumovskii's Fora-Fil'm.

In a culture where exaggerated pathos can often be an everyday affair, Dondurei's cool analysis could not help but make the reader of 1995 respond in protest to such an impending cinematic death. Reading his work became in fact a kind of mithridatism—the voluntary ingestion of life's poison—incrementally, so as not to die from a sudden exposure to its lethal truths. One came to read Dondurei as a precautionary practice of survival. We begin this volume with a tribute to his memory.

Cinemasaurus: Structure and Historical Limits

Our story of contemporary Russian cinema begins in 1991, three years after Dondurei's 1988 alarm, with Vadim Abdrashitov's *Armavir* (Armavir, 1991), a film about a shipwreck. By 1991, cinema had taken on peculiar, even monstrous dimensions. Like an ocean liner raising its huge hull far above the water line just before it reaches the final stage of sinking, the film industry appeared to be growing when in fact it was collapsing: the normally steady late Soviet production rate of roughly 150 full-length feature films a year suddenly rose to 300 films in 1990, then fell to 213 films in 1991 (Segida, 76). By 1994, production had plummeted to sixty-eight full-length feature films, then further still, placing film production for the largest country in the world behind Sweden and Poland.

Then things got worse: in 1996, the nadir of post-Soviet Russian cinema, only thirty-four films reached completion (Segida and Zemlianukhin, *Fil'my Rossii* 2004, 245),[2] and a mere 28–30 percent of promised government production funding was actually provided (Franklin, 13). Yet 1996 was—ironically—the same year that the Law on Cinema was finally signed (after five years) by Boris Yeltsin,[3] providing among other things tax incentives and a daunting set of aspirational responsibilities—heritage conservation, database maintenance, education,

[2] Production figures vary from source to source, depending on how the parameters are defined (co-production contribution, release date, etc.). This figure from Segida's and Zemlianukhin's 2004 *Fil'my Rossii: Igrovoe kino/TV/video (1992–2003)* is updated from their earlier (2001) *Fil'my Rossii: Igrovoe kino (1995–2000)*. While this is the nadir of post-Soviet Russian cinema production, it is surpassed by the year 1951, when only nine completed films were released, the smallest number since 1918. Compare Segida and Zemlianukhin, comp., *Domashniaia sinemateka*, 6 (the compilers do not list Vera Stroeva's musical *Grand Concert* [Bol'shoi kontsert, 1951] or Sergei Gerasimov's *Country Doctor* [Sel'skii vrach, 1951]) and Kinoteatr.ru, https://www.kino-teatr.ru/kino/movie/sov/y1951/.

[3] See Federal Law. The bill was signed 22 August 1996.

infrastructure development, registration, licensing, promotion (Beumers, "Cinemarket," 976)—for implementation by the state cinema agency Roskomkino.[4]

It is at this historical moment—as the waters finished settling over *Armavir*—that our story seeks coherence around four key themes. Two of these themes—most evident in parts one and three—are geographically inflected. Part one concerns cinema that returns to, among other projects, the irresolvable challenges of empire and periphery, in particular the eastern periphery. In chapters by Olga Kim, Justin Wilmes, and Ellina Sattarova, existing geographic determinacies (or so they would seem to be) and the imaginative resistance to those empirical constraints are rendered more complex by the spectacular resurgence of a new, archaic empire in a blockbuster era.

Skipping ahead to part three, this shared geographic orientation takes a different turn, away from the metropole and eastern periphery to other sites. These include the problematic category of "heartland," that region within the empire where the discursive "folk" (*narod*) resides. This folk matters for reasons that extend far beyond the remit of this volume (or cinema, for that matter). Let us limit ourselves to the assertion—polemical for some, self-evident for others—that the substantial differences between "folk" and "nation" (as a post-1789 aspiration) sustain complex contradictions between Russia's overland empire and the discursive nation-state as a recent, constructed myth founded on the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. This distinction between "folk" and "nation"—a stubborn cultural failure of synonymity—highlights the debates between an imperial genesis story rooted, on the one hand, in birth, earth, and mother (to which Herderian tradition bears affinities); and a genesis story rooted in self-determination, revolt, and populist autonomy, on the other. While these debates are reducible neither to this rude dichotomy (the presumption, for example, that the imperial folk cannot enact the aspirations of nationhood) nor to a set of expressive homologies (e.g., "heartland" = "true Russia"), the difference between "folk" and "nation" animates many of the arguments contained in part three.

Related to this geographical preoccupation with heartland are two related questions that circulate in part three. Both concern the nature of marginality and a gaze turned westward. The first question (a painful contemporary question: "who is marginal to whom?") stages

[4] In 1996, Roskomkino was renamed—once again—Goskino, as it had been known from 1978 to its initial elimination in November 1991. See, for example, Razlogov, "Gosudarstvennyi," 100–101; and Beumers, "Cinemarket," 872–73.

a polemical inversion: what if Russia's western periphery demarcated that place where Russia became peripheral to a European Ukraine? This second question concerns the transformation of marginality from a geographic category to one grounded in identity debates, including those to which the hegemonic culture (both on the screen and in the offices of the Ministry of Culture) is averse. In chapters by Zhanna Budenkova, Tetyana Shlikhar, and Trevor Wilson, these three incompatible engagements with marginality—the heartland, the western periphery, and identity otherness—form the core concern of part three.

If geography has been the underlying preoccupation of parts one and three, then parts two and four concern the actors—literal and metaphorical—who inhabit this vast geography in time. These two parts offer a different cluster of arguments about agency, both government-sponsored and privatized. Agency brings a host of other considerations: generic visions of identity, body politics, legitimacy of violence, authorship, and entrepreneurial models of film production.

Part two participates in a debate that has enlivened both journalism and academic writing for all three of the decades under examination here. That debate concerns the point at which we become horrified not only at the bedlam that is laid out in hilarious proportions on the screen before us, but also at ourselves for having taken perverse delight in the fatal inevitability of bedlam. When does hilarity become horror? When does the fêted eccentricity of Russian screen behavior become an exercise in the Grotesque, a category with its own trans-European cultural traditions? The violence of contemporary Russian cinema is legendary, dominating discussions equally at Western film festivals, domestic press conferences, and the columns of an outraged nationalist press. Russian cinema's violence is sometimes understood to be the legacy of genocide and (by this logic) even a healthy search for equilibrium. As the topic of contemporary state violence becomes increasingly foreclosed, and violence accordingly becomes framed as a practice of private entrepreneurship, how do we understand each other as viewers—at times, mutually accusatory of complicity or political correctness? Chapters by Daria Ezerova, Robert Crane, and Denis Saltykov examine the elusive and protean limits of acceptable laughter, the utopian space of eccentricity, and the function of privatized violence in the social order.

Part four—to which we have assigned the enigmatic title of "The Ideological Occult"—looks to the figure of the revenant, the familiar element that returns to the screen, initially unrecognized or disavowed but deeply familiar and even comforting. This pattern is by no

means a matter of the return of Soviet times—as Olga Mukhortova argues, the re-visitor may be a reconfigured *auteur*, legendary from Soviet times but in fact a more ancient ancestor from Western film theory. Theodora Trimble poses important questions about visual representations of patrimony and celebrity culture. Unavoidably these visions of patriarchy raise questions of heteronormative masculinity and modes of its visual sustainability. Beach Gray explores the magic solution to all problems at once: the cinematic franchise, in which the benevolent state and its aspirational geography become one on New Year's television screens. The horrific revenant—just for one magic New Year's night—turns into its avuncular double in Timur Bekmambetov's *Elki* franchise. But the unsettling and—we would argue—occult question remains: when the 2018 viewers of Anton Megerdichev's *Going Vertical* (also known as *Three Seconds*) (Dvizhenie vverkh, 2017) rise and applaud a 1973 victory over the United States, what time and space does this audience inhabit?

Our volume concludes with two additional contributions. The first of these is a series of short interviews with key figures in the Russian cinema industry and with its Western interlocutors: Russia's most prominent media executive Alexander Rodnyansky; its leading festival programmer, Sitora Alieva; a key US entrepreneur, Paul Heth, who has been instrumental in Russia's transition to a post-Soviet exhibition system; and the two Western colleagues whose work (the journal *KinoKultura* and the Russian Film Symposium) has provided invaluable scaffolding for our ongoing engagement with contemporary Russian cinema.

A second closing contribution, Kino-Grafik, is an idiosyncratic timeline. To be sure, other, more comprehensive timelines exist and deserve scholarly attention.[5] Our Kino-Grafik combines an informational resource with an invitation to a conversation: for each year (without commentary), it provides five "unrelated" facts: the year's prizewinners in three distinct competitions (the Kinotavr Grand Prize, the Nika, and the nationalist Golden Eagle Awards);[6] a Word of the Year that appeared in mass circulation; and a significant political event. More a puzzle than a historian's aid, our Kino-Grafik is intended to open a portal: Why were such

[5] See Arkus, *Noveishaia*; Beumers, *History*, 260–91; Beumers, ed., *Companion*, 585–613; Dziewańska et al., 11–85; Fomin's four volumes of *Letopis'*; and Kudriavtsev, 467–92.

[6] The Nika Award, conferred by the Russian Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, was established in 1987 by actor-director Iulii Gusman. As Russia's most prestigious national film award, it is often contrasted with the Oscars (conferred by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences). At the domestic level, the Nika is contrasted with the Golden Eagle Award (National Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of Russia), established in 2002 by Nikita Mikhalkov and awarded in both cinema and television.

different cinemas recognized by Kinotavr, Nika, and Golden Eagle? Why did a particular word capture the public imagination? Where do politics figure in this (at times) rarefied world of cinema production? In the spirit of Daniil Dondurei, we aim to provoke the reader into providing the other half of our (as yet, intentionally incomplete) dialogue.

What Is a Cinemasaurus?

It is difficult to define a word that does not exist. Let us start instead by suggesting that the thesaurus is a text that groups words together in a very specific way, not by *fixed meaning*, but by *similarities of meaning*, in a cluster, constellation, or environment of sense. Unlike a dictionary, a thesaurus never tells us what something means; instead, it situates a given word in a spectrum, alongside kindred ideas, their juxtapositions serving as contrast as well as common filiation. In contrast to a dictionary, the thesaurus—to quote Peter Mark Roget (1779–1869), compiler of the best-known "thesaurary," as he sometimes called it—seeks to "find the word, or words, by which [an] idea may be most fitly and aptly expressed" (Kendall, 266). It is fitting that the archaic Scottish "thesaurary" (from Middle English) is closely related to "treasury," offering the reader a collection of things one values, and for which one holds oneself responsible to account.[7]

If the thesaurus is a treasury of words, constellated so as to highlight their similarities and differences, so this cinemasaurus is a constellation of film tendencies. If the word-based thesaurus is concerned with natural language, the cinemasaurus provides a secondary modeling system,[8] juxtaposing artistic texts so as to point up their shared and divergent habits

[7] See http://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/thesaurary. For background information, see Skretcowicz et al., comp., *Dictionary of the Scots Language* [Dictionar o the Scots Leid], an intercompilation of two historical dictionaries, *A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (twelve volumes: twelfth century to 1700) and *The Scottish National Dictionary* (ten volumes: 1700–2005).

[8] The reference here is to cyberneticist Vladimir Uspenskii, associated with the early years of semiotics, later developed by Juri Lotman (95–98). Here, we use the term with an awareness of Uspenskii's wry comment that "secondary modeling" (*vtorichnoe modelirovanie*) served primarily to hide the more contentious term "semiotics" at a time when the latter word met official opprobrium (e.g., the 19–26 December 1962 Symposium on the Structural Studies of Sign Systems at Moscow's Institute of Slavic and Balkan Studies). As Uspenskii (Grishakova and Salupere, 176) explained to Lotman, the term "secondary modeling systems" had several advantages: "(1) it sounded very scientific [*zvuchit ochen' nauchno*]; (2) was completely incomprehensible; (3) if really needed, it could be explained: primary modeling systems that model reality are natural languages,

of thought. It does not aspire to provide the meaning of Russia's contemporary films, but rather to cluster them around shared preoccupations: a cinemasaurus of similarities and contrasts.

There is, however, another association at least as relevant to the volume's title. Kinotavr is Russia's most successful film festival—and indeed the largest regional festival worldwide. "Kinotavr" is an odd word in any language, perhaps an extrapolation from the Minotaur (half human, half bull), who dwelt at the center of the Labyrinth;[9] or "centaur" (half human, half horse), who carried off Hippodamia on her wedding day; or bucentaur (half ox), onocentaur (half donkey), and on through the imaginary wildlife park. If this is correct, then "kinotavr" is "cinetaur": half human, half cinema, as if part of our bodies were transformed into a cinema object. Elusive as the mythical animal itself, Kinotavr has been the totem being around which Russian cinema of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has taken on enhanced cultural meaning.

Cinemasaurus, therefore, borrows from each of these—the thesaurus, the minotaur, and Kinotavr—all three sharing creative juxtaposition, unforeseen revelation, and the shock of the new.

What Is on Offer Here?

This volume has three aspirations. First, it offers a view of contemporary Russian cinema of the three decades as a collection of loosely related visual practices. The twelve chapters presented here aspire, on the one hand, to accept those practices on their own (individual and incompatible) terms—as a credible set of pageantries, anxieties, preoccupations, celebrations, self-parodies, panoramas, nightmares, reveries, carnivals, and other ranging concerns. On the other hand, the volume seeks to look for recurrences, patterns, or—to use a sacred term—

and all the rest that build upon them are secondary." See also Vladimir Uspenskii, 99–127; and Vladimir A. Uspenskii. Uspenskii recommended to Lotman that the latter adopt the term (see relevant documents in *Simpozium*; Vladimir Uspenskii, 99–127; and Zalizniak et al.).

9 A more local association bringing "Minotaur" into renewed circulation was Arkadii and Georgii Vainer's detective-adventure novel *Visit to the Minotaur* [Vizit k Minotavru, 1971], which first appeared in the journal *Searcher* [Iskatel'] in July 1971 (part 1) and January 1972 (part 2), in the Vainers' series "Investigator Tikhonov." The complete novel was published by Molodaia Gvardiia in 1972. In 1987—two years before the start of Mark Rudinshtein's 1989 effort to launch what would become Kinotavr—the novel was filmed as a television series with the same title, directed by El'dor Urazbaev (1940–2012).

observances that might resonate with each other across the thirty years of this historical tranche in which we have lived. When possible, the contributors situate their observations in the social context of the period, in hopes of teasing out additional moments of significance outside the cinematic text, while at the same time making no claim to writing a cultural history.

A second aspiration is the registering of work by young scholars who—with luck—will outlast us and for whom this volume is an introduction into a profession in rapid transition. This younger generation of scholars must work with rapidly changing regimes of production and consumption in transmedia storytelling, all of which call for fresh methodological approaches. Our younger colleagues also conduct their research across a minefield: have Cold War binaries returned to the analysis of cultural production, or are the similarities merely spectral, a familiar and comforting pattern that conceals radically changed rules of engagement?

Third, the volume is an in-kind contribution to work done over several decades by three key institutions that—with no intentional effort to work in synchrony—nevertheless are at the very center of cinema analysis. The three institutions—a major regional festival, a journal, an academic symposium—are vastly different in scale, economic heft, media visibility, and influence, but each has played a definitional role for US and UK scholars of Russian cinema. The three institutions have unintentionally become interdeterminative of how we understand Russian cinema of the present moment.

We would like to sketch each briefly in order to map out the ways in which—from Russia to the United Kingdom to the United States—this infrastructural triad has had a profound impact on how Anglophone (and not only Anglophone) scholars conceive of the cinema of Russia and its near neighbors.

Kino . . . tavr . . . *Kul'tura* . . . Sympozium

Whether in feudal pledge, academic analysis, or artistic style, "homage" signals a dedication to an earlier source that has had a profound and sustained effect on those who offer the homage. Ranging from arcane allusion to rank imitation, the homage may be explicit or may be barely visible, deeply embedded in the cultural expression itself. At the center of this triad is the Kinotavr Film Festival. And while Kinotavr's date of birth might be a topic of legalistic debate, the cinema community chooses 1989, four years before it was officially registered as "Kinotavr" (1993).

Twenty-five miles south of Moscow, Mark Rudinshtein lived in Podol'sk and ran Moscow Outskirts (Podmoskov'e), a modest show-business firm that booked concerts, film screenings, video rentals, and rock festivals. In 1989, Moscow Outskirts organized the Festival of Unbought Cinema (Festival' nekuplennogo kino), the beginnings of what came to be unofficially known (1990) as Kinotavr. This 1990 First Open Festival attracted some twenty "unbought" films, including Vitalii Kanevskii's (now classic) drama *Freeze, Die, Come to Life* (Zamri—umri—voskresni, 1989), with a jury headed by film journalist and scholar Elena Bokshitskaia.[10] By 1991, Kinotavr had moved to Sochi, where Mark Rudinshtein was soon joined in 1993 by actor Oleg Iankovskii as the festival's president.

A worthy history of Kinotavr would be a volume unto itself. Because our focus is closer to the present, we will skip ahead to 2005, when Kinotavr was transferred to Alexander Rodnyansky (chair, Board of Trustees) and Igor' Tolstunov (general producer), with a board that signaled it had come of age.[11] The festival survived the economic crisis of 2008, but the effects of that shock were considerable and may have contributed to Igor' Tolstunov's sale of his partnership to Alexander Rodnyansky in 2010 (Tolstunov). By that time, Alexander Rodnyansky had founded A.R. Films, which housed Non-Stop Production, the independent film distribution company Cinema without Frontiers (Kino bez granits), as well as Kinotavr, by then the world's largest and most successful regional festival.

Of the many strengths of the festival, perhaps the most remarkable has been the guiding hand of Sitora Alieva, the festival's program director who has demonstrated by example what it means to shape the contemporary film environment through a diversity of films in vertiginous juxtaposition.[12] Together with a dedicated Selection Committee keenly attuned to

[10] Elena Bokshitskaia, founder and editor-in-chief of the newspaper *House of Cinema* (Dom kino), went on to work as artistic director of Kinotavr during its first years in Sochi (1991–92). She was elected co-president (1992–94) of the Guild of Film Scholars and Film Critics, serving together with Miron Chernenko (1992–2004).

[11] The Kinotavr Board initially included Petr Aven (Alfa Bank), Oleg Deripaska (Russian Aluminum), Konstantin Ernst (Channel One Russia), Vitalii Ignatenko (ITAR-TASS), Mikhail Shvydkoi (Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography), and Aleksandr Tkachev (governor, Krasnodar Region). This is the moment when the festival's mascot of the three-legged "cinetaur" was replaced by the yellow and blue "sun-and-sea" logo. See Maslova.

[12] Let us take, for example, the year 2007, in which the fiercest competitors for the Grand Prize were Aleksei Popogrebskii's sunny *Simple Things* (Prostye veshchi, 2007) and Aleksei Balabanov's neo-noir *Cargo 200* (Gruz 200). Without adjudicating their artistic merits, one could safely say that these two films inhabit incompatible cinematic universes; the fact that the jury chose to award Popogrebskii the Grand Prize is a sociological fact

the differences among domestic, international, and festival exhibition practices,[13] Sitora Alieva has provided a fearless model of how to challenge the utterly incompatible expectations of the public, elite journal critics, and fickle juries, while providing viewers with remarkable films they would otherwise be unlikely to see.[14] In the words of one well-known colleague (Razlogov, "Kinotavr"),[15] whose professional loyalties cannot easily be reduced to the Kinotavr community:

> Kinotavr also confirms that a creative environment has emerged, not a homogenous one but a heterogeneous one. The festival's program of films clearly demonstrates the variety of directions in which the television company that organizes it is currently working. Honor and praise to Aleksandr Rodnianskii [*sic*], who screens films at his festival that are deeply alien to him as a media magnate. . . . In principle, Kinotavr has the potential . . . to close the gap between television magnates and film industry figures as they continue to participate in it.

A second addressee of the volume is the quarterly cinema journal *KinoKultura* and its founding editor, Birgit Beumers, who is an international scholar in her own right.[16] Here, though, she is framed as an initiator of two key cinema journals.[17] Launched in 2003, *KinoKultura* is the profession's leading periodical in new Russian cinema. It has been an international crossroads

worthy of sustained analysis (for which, see Razlogov, "Kinotavr," for example).

13 The frequent team for the Selection Committee includes Viktoriia Belopol'skaia (Kul'tura [Culture] television channel), Evgenii Gusiatinskii (critic, *Russian Reporter* [Russkii reporter]), Sergei Lavrent'ev (cinema historian), Irina Liubarskaia (critic, *Sources* [Itogi]), and Alena Solntseva (critic, *Moscow News* [Moskovskie novosti]).

14 Among the best Grand Prize films unlikely otherwise to reach viewers, for example, is Uzman Saparov's *Little Angel, Make Me Happy* (Angelochek, sdelai radost', 1994).

15 Kirill Razlogov has also been host of the television program *Cult Cinema* (Kul't kino) on the Russia-Kul'tura television channel; he is currently president of the Guild of Film Scholars and Critics of the Russian Federation. From 1989 to 2013, he was director of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research.

16 See the many citations and bibliographic references to Birgit Beumers's work in this volume.

17 Birgit Beumers's other major periodical initiative, *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, was launched in 2007, first at Intellect Books and then (from 2014 onward) at Taylor & Francis. The journal tends to focus on a broader historical range—prerevolutionary, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russian cinema—as well as the cinema industry, aesthetics, and ideology.