

"Rublev": Soviet's finest filmmaking

By Charlotte Rosenthal

On Friday, February 20th, you will have the opportunity to see one of the finest films to come out of the Soviet Union during the relatively liberal period following Stalin's demise.

"Andrei Rublev" concerns the relationship between art and society. Director Andrei Tarkovsky explores this theme mainly through the eyes of the title figure, Russia's greatest icon painter (c. 1360-1430). The historical episodes presented cover the second half of Rublev's life, a period when Russia was still subjected to Tartar rule.

By 1405 Rublev had become an assistant to the most famous icon-painter of the day, Theophanes the Greek. They worked together to decorate one of the churches in the Moscow Kremlin. Theophanes painted in the traditional severe and somber Byzantine style. Rublev broke away from this official, orthodox style, introducing innovations that softened and humanized his images.

Between 1411 and 1425, we have no specific information about Rublev's whereabouts or activities. He may have painted his great masterpiece, "The Trinity" icon, in 1425 to break this period of silence. He died in Moscow around 1430 in a monastery that still stands today.

In keeping with the theme of art and society, Tarkovsky shows us a number of artists and craftsmen. Besides the painters Rublev, and Theophanes, there are three irrepressible artists from the common folk, and it is from this

source, Tarkovsky suggests, that Rublev ultimately drew his strength. There is the peasant of the opening sequence, who tries to fly. There is the skomorokh (minstrel) whose satirical, bawdy ballads about the powers-that-be get him into trouble with ecclesiastical and state authorities. Finally, there is the young boy of the closing sequence who directs the casting of an enormous bell.

Andrei Rublev is Tarkovsky's second feature film. The first, "Ivan's Childhood" (1962), dealt with the ubiquitous and very acceptable Soviet theme of World War II, but in a unique way. Since Ivan won a number of awards in the West, Tarkovsky was invited to show Andrei Rublev (1966) at the Cannes Film Festival in 1967 and 1968, but Soviet officials refused the invitation. Finally it was shown in 1969, but out of regular competition and against the wishes of Soviet officials. It won the International Film Critics' Prize.

Official objections to the film centered on its religiosity and historical distortions. There is no doubt that through the figure of Rublev, Tarkovsky depicts a spiritual quest from an initial intellectual idealism to a deepened faith that receives its expression in an allusive, inspired art. Tarkovsky has taken great liberties with medieval Russian reality. But has done so consciously and deliberately: like Rublev's Tarkovsky's art is allusive and morally inspired. In his cinematic epic, Tarkovsky has tried to reach beyond the literal period pieces that Soviet historical films tend to be. He

has also taken liberties with the life of Rublev. He interprets the lack of information on the artist between 1411 and 1425 as a conscious decision to give up painting in the face of the continued barbarity and backwardness that he witnesses. Some art historians postulate that Rublev was painting during those years; others attri-

bute Rublev's silence to official hostility toward his innovative style. This latter aspect of Rublev's work may be the most important cause for official Soviet unease: Tarkovsky's Rublev is shown to be an innovative, independent artist, who worked according to the dictates of his own conscience rather than according to tradi-

tional dogma, represented by Theophanes. Yet as Rublev was recognized and rewarded in his lifetime, so has been Tarkovsky: in 1974 he was recognized as a "Merited Artistic Worker of the RSFSR."

Don't miss the rare chance to view, uncut, Tarkovsky's masterful film.



Okay, okay I was going to see "Andrei Rublev" at 8:15 p.m. on Friday, February 20, in Sternberger Auditorium anyway.

Guilford as a community?

"I'm very concerned about the number of students at Guilford who are not learning to take of themselves socially. The most important thing about being alive is relating to other people and this is probably one of the hardest things to learn." -Bobby Doolittle

"Why do the professors, who want us to be active citizens, keep assigning so much unnecessary work?" --Leslie Vloedman

"People don't see Guilford as a place where good things go on." --Jim Henniger

"It's disturbing that the students can't seem to be stimulated to learn. They are nice, they are polite, but they seem to have no motivation... it's like they are living on an island. There's a feeling of 'My God, what can I do next?'... there is something missing and I don't know what it is." --Claude Chauvigne

We (the faculty) don't act as role models to the students; we don't show them the value of working out things." --Bill Schmickle

"I would like to see more issues and activities that would unite the student body." --Bill Rogers

Are you frustrated? Upset? Concerned? Do you feel a communication gap between yourself and other members of the Guilford College Community?

We do. We are a group; we have no name. We are concerned about the lack of involvement, and the lack of communication at Guilford. We meet every Sunday evening at 5:30 in Dana Lounge, and we would like to communicate with you.

For this reason, we have taken the initiative and asked members of the community to

tell us how they feel about apathy, activities, on campus, and student-teacher relationships. These are quotations which we believe express the feelings of the community. Many students feel that the Guilford College community is so diversified that too much interest in one area will never occur; others feel that the students are lazy; some feel that the faculty does not take enough interest in the students. You are entitled to your own opinion, and we encourage you to express it with us on Sunday.

"It seems that teachers are taught to teach, but not to relate to people." --Laura Street

"It makes no difference to me if there are active student bodies at Guilford or not... If I wasn't so lazy I could get into more community-oriented activities." --Jim Lee

"Students don't give a damn about anything but their own group, and why should they?" --A Freshman

"I spent most of my time lecturing at dead students over the podium, trying to raise people from the dead." --Claude Shotts

"The main problem that I see as a whole is that the student body doesn't get together to do anything but eat, bitch about the food, bitch about the courses, and bitch about there's nothing to do." --Todd Breneman

"People are getting too caught up in their own little worlds. We're too far apart to grow. There's not enough sharing with each other." --Amy Bliven

"There isn't apathy on campus, you just have to make your own party." --Art Freund

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