MONTAGE METHOD

Eisenstein Fest Planned For WRC

By ROBERT WATSON
Thresher Reporter

Will Rice College is presenting a Sergei Eisenstein Festival the first two weeks of October. All showings will be at 8 pm in the commons.

The films will be shown on the following dates:


The films, all produced between 1925 and 1945, are shown in the order of their production. The technical resources change, with the introduction of talking, music, and color, but Eisenstein's artistic philosophy is essentially the same throughout.

Dialetic Films

Eisenstein attempted to make his films realistic, but he always insisted on the importance of editing. His method was that of montage. The main effect of the film comes not from the material alone, but from the manner in which different shots are juxtaposed to show the relation between them.

His films, like Marxist history, do not flow continuously, but are broken, frequently into thesis and anti-thesis. He was a student of psychology and tried to keep the audience's attention and emotions always under control.

Amateur Actors

Eisenstein, originally a theatre director, in his "revolt against the theatre," did away with the "subject-story" and instead often made the masses his hero. He later used what he called "Individuality within the collective," but even then seldom used professional actors.

Eisenstein was a careful student of the film, and wrote several books on his techniques. He had a careful sense of the temporal relations of scenes, and compared his work with music.

He also made extensive use of symbolism to achieve a variety of emotional effects. His cameraman, Edward Tisse, a Scandanavian, was a pioneer in the use of symbolic lighting.

Film Banned

'Strike,' produced in 1925, was supposed to be merely a documentary of a pre-revolutionary strike, but the juxtaposition of scenes, which Eisenstein is said to have learned from the Japanese "Kabuki" drama, moved audiences everywhere; so much so that it was banned in Britain and elsewhere. The film has been compared to The Waste Land in technique.

'Potemkin' also done in 1925, grew out of a section of a proposed larger work on the Revolution of 1905. The film is good propaganda, though an incomplete and often inaccurate show. The famous Odessa Steppe scene is notable both for its complex photography and for its use of temporal relations.

Heavy Symbolism

'October,' produced in 1928, is a documentary of the October Revolution. It makes use of subjective dramatization of ideas, of heavy symbolic juxtapositions. Eisenstein called it "the intellectual cinema." The party called it "formalism" and neither liked it nor understood it.

'The General Line' (Old and New) was produced in 1929. A story of the collectivization of agriculture, it was Eisenstein's first film to center around individuals. It was not well received in Russia.

'Alexander Nevsky,' his first sound film, is especially notable for the beauty of Prokofieff's score.

'Ivan the Terrible' was done in two parts—the first in 1944, the second in 1946. Eisenstein never made the third part of the series he had planned. This film is notable among his others for its use of trained actors and of occasional color scenes.