



Russian-Military Historical Film Festival Cultivates



Former Culture Minister, Vladimir Medinsky.

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vladimir_Medinski_06120_Courcy.JPG, CC-BY-SA-4.0

OE Watch Commentary: Cultural media like cinema is a powerful tool for inspiring patriotism, and that may have been the goal behind the second international “Days of Military-Historical Film” Festival, which ran from 2-6 September in Moscow. It was held at the Victory Museum, an institution dedicated to the history of the Great Patriotic War (WW II). The primary focus of the festival was to emphasize the bravery and heroism of Red Army soldiers and the importance of Soviet participation in WW II, as well as the impact that the legacy of that war has had upon Russian culture in the decades since.

“We wanted as many people as possible to take part,” said Vladimir Medinsky, former Culture Minister and now an aide to President Putin and Chairman of the Russian Military Historical Society, during the festival’s opening ceremony. “I invite Muscovites and guests of the capital to the Victory Museum.” There were a variety of military history-themed attractions, including an art exhibit called “Chronical of War,” featuring paintings from Russia as well as Brazil, Israel, and the UK. There was also a performance called “Operetta at War” by students from the Russian Institute for Theater Arts, and a piano concert entitled “Songs of Victory Cinema.”

The main attraction, however, was the cinema itself, much of which centered on films made to capture the Russian experience of WW II. Directors and producers presented their films, such as “Old Warrior,” which depicts the grief of an aging veteran of WW I whose sons were lost in the Great Patriotic War. “Learning the Color of War” was also shown, a documentary about artists whose lives were disrupted and left in tatters by the war. The festival included the first showing a series of films called “Eternal Patriotic,” a synthesis of historical and archival documentation as well as soldier memoirs, which was produced by the Russian Ministry of Defense.

Perhaps more than any of the other films, “Eternal Patriotic” emphasizes the courage of Red Army soldiers and Heroes of the Soviet Union. The film was designed specifically to develop and cultivate a spirit of patriotism among Russian youth. Finally, the festival was dedicated to the actor Sergei Bondarchuk, and a major showcase was his film “They Fought for the Homeland,” which follows soldiers fighting bravely despite being horrified by the destruction of the war.

WW II holds an enormous place in the consciousness of Russian culture, and since 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the end of the war, there has been a great upsurge in commemoration. The Russian government has been avidly encouraging these memorials, promoting cultural media that will encourage the development and strengthening of patriotism and positive attitudes toward the military, especially among youth. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rodger)**

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Source: “Кинофорум военно-исторического кино открылся в Музее Победы [Film Forum of Military-Historical Cinema Opened at the Victory Museum],” *Izvestiya*, 3 September 2020. <https://iz.ru/1056491/2020-09-03/kinoforum-voenno-istoricheskogo-kino-otkrylsia-v-muzee-pobedy>

During the festival, which will last until September 6, Igor Ugolnikov, Igor Prokopenko, Leonid Yakubovich will present their films. The directors and producers of the films “Old Warrior”, “Happiness in an Envelope”, “Learning the Color of War” will present their films to the public. For the first time, the general public will be shown a cycle of films “Eternal Patriotic”, provided by the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation.

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Among the partners of the film forum in 2020: the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, the Moscow Government and others. The festival is supported by the Presidential Grants Fund.