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INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS: FROM MODERNISM TO POST-POSTMODERN AGE*

Abstract. *This article uses the Russian film festival movement to analyze the evolution of film festivals from their beginnings to the internet age, focusing on how scientific and technological transformations in the audiovisual sphere influenced the social context of information circulation and cinematic*

* **Editors' note.** The text is an English version of an article prepared on the basis of the self-named report, which was presented at the International Scientific Conference *"Art History in the Context of Other Sciences in Modern World: Parallels and Interactions"*, held in Moscow on April 19–25, 2019. The article was included in the collection of works which is currently being prepared for publication based on the materials of the above mentioned event.

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creativity. The article first shows how film festivals came to depend on the internet and the use of digital gadgets in various cultural and demographic communities, including spontaneous teenage associations (so-called “youth cultures”), various professional groups, and the elderly. The article then considers the Soviet and postsoviet Russian film festival movement in the context of global shift from modernism through postmodernism to post-postmodernism. The Russian festival movement is flourishing: more and more festivals appear every day. Administrative difficulties predominate. Unofficial censorship inspires widespread fear and caution. The article proposes a parallel cine-club distribution system that would be exempt from the commercial and censorship restrictions currently applied to films in general distribution. It also considers why festivals spring up and why they disappear. Festivals are needed; otherwise citizens would not organize them. They may be organized for various reasons: to celebrate local functionaries; to celebrate art; or for other reasons. The article reveals the contradictions in the financing of particular festivals, and explains why some festivals receive government funding and others do not. Apart from federal funding, there are municipal funds, and informal relationships can bring private funding as well. The article then closely analyzes the Moscow International Film Festival, unique in that it combines two different “festivals”. From the one hand, it is a traditional showcase with three competitive programs (feature films, documentaries, and short films). On the other hand, it is an open “festival of festivals” that demonstrates films, shown and awarded at other festivals, hors concours. This section is particularly important because very few of these films can break into the general circulation in Russia.

Keywords: cinema, film festivals, censorship, funding for cultural programs, film history, digital technologies, modernism, postmodernism, post-postmodernism

This article is devoted to the analysis of the evolution of the film festival movement from its inception in the era of classical modernism right up to the prospects of its development in modern conditions, with permanent scientific and technical transformations of the audiovisual sphere and the accompanying social and cultural changes in the creation, distribution and perception of audiovisual information and screen works. Many provisions of this material are based on my personal long-

term experience of participating in the film club and festival movement, including in the capacity of the program director at the Moscow International Film Festival over the last two decades. Particular attention is paid to the festival movement in Russia in the context of the global shift from postmodernism to post-postmodernism. We will not go into details of the ongoing controversy over the chronology of fundamental changes in the culture of the 20th–21st centuries and the discord of terms proposed to designate the current era as following the post-modern turn of the centuries and millennia. Our tasks are much more specific and they relate, first of all, to festivals as a necessary part of the film processes, both national and international.

International film festivals originated in the 1930s, before the outbreak of the World War II. In the world culture, this was still a period of classical modernism, which clashed the artistic avant-garde with the growing mass culture, and the formation and development of the latter was directly influenced by cinema. In fact, film festivals emerged from the often unconscious desire to bridge these opposing elements, to identify high-quality works in the stream of commercial products. The postmodern stage, ending in the 21st century, abolished hierarchies and introduced artistic sophistication and the context of pop culture, until the market economy prevailed and box-office success became the main and almost the only criterion for assessing the quality of screen works. Post-postmodernism has returned relevance to the issues of the structure and heterogeneity of the film process in different cultural communities and their interaction in the film festival movement. A significant role here is played by the emergence of the Internet and all kinds of gadgets that become carriers of films of a new generation.

Mikhail Epstein, a researcher of the prospects of humanitaristics, discoursed on the correlation of parting from the past and anticipating the future, of the principles of post- (and post-post) and proto- in our lives (including, as we might add, our festival lives) and in our consciousness. He said, “Now, in the early twenty-first century, we are witnessing a major shift in cultural attitudes... We live not so much *after* (modernity, structuralism,

or Communism), as in the very beginning of a new epoch whose features must now be more positively defined in terms of “proto-” rather than “post-”: *proto-global, proto-informational, proto-virtual...* [1, p. 23].

On the one hand, it is on the World Wide Web where various cultural communities are structured, and the borders of such communities do not always coincide with the demographic layers and social stratification: they may be anything, from spontaneous adolescent associations (the so-called “youth subcultures”) through various kinds of professional communities and problems of the third and fourth ages, of the elderly. The mastery of gadgets here often becomes a new demarcation line. On the other hand, the multiplication of various platforms for displaying screen products, gradually eroding the traditional forms of television broadcasting, contributes to the growth of its diversity. In this context festivals become a mechanism for its exit from the network into the “non-virtual” (or proto-virtual) reality.

HISTORY AND MODERNITY

The first international festival was in Venice (1932), and it was no coincidence that it appeared in the context of the totalitarian regime of Mussolini: it reflected the desire to approve independent criteria for assessing the quality of screen works and to make these criteria mandatory and unshakable. The Venice Film Festival has demonstrated sustainability in the changing socio-cultural circumstances and gained its reputation as the most aesthetic of the main film screenings in the world. But more importantly, starting from the pre-war decade, the desire to establish a different value system as opposed to the Venice Film Festival (Mostra Internazionale d’Arte Cinematografica), not only in cultural politics and in various classical arts, but also in the very mass form of creativity and entertainment, has become the incentive for the emergence of new festivals. Stefano Pisu, Italian researcher, dedicated a study to how cultural diplomacy and ideological struggle interact on the example of participation of the Soviet cinema, and after the World War II—of the cinema of the

Eastern bloc countries at the Venice Festival [2, pp. 51–63]. In particular, he imputes the appearance of the Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF)—the first Venice’s competitor—to the ideological confrontation.

The history of the Moscow film festival was not as easy as that of its Venice “older brother”. For the first time it was held in 1935 under the auspices of Stalin himself. The chairman of the jury at that time was the head of Soviet cinematography, the long-standing Bolshevik Boris Shumyatsky. Among the jury members were such giants as Sergey Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin and Alexander Dovzhenko. Since Shumyatsky was repressed and executed in 1938, for a long time it was believed that Eisenstein was the chairman of the jury, especially taking into account that he was the one who announced the decisions of the festival jury from the stage. This version could be found in various sources, including the website of the Moscow International Film Festival, until the Pravda newspaper for 1935 was declassified, and the original of the jury’s decision was re-published [3, pp. 33–35]. The top award was given to the products of the Lenfilm studio (now experiencing a series of crisis shocks), including the legendary *Чапаев* by brothers Vasilyev. The festival gathered all the finest creators of Soviet cinema, and many foreign guests attended the event. One of the prizes was awarded to the works of Walt Disney, the king of animation. The company bearing his name not only survived to our days, but became the largest Hollywood monopoly after the merger with the 20th Century Studios (formerly the 20th Century Fox).

However, the Moscow festival did not have a direct continuation. Apparently, from the ideological point of view its success seemed too risky, and the death of Shumyatsky is a vivid proof of this. Against the total crackdown, primarily on ideological and political issues, proletarian internationalism was replaced by isolation, including cultural isolation, which turned into the idea of creating a “Soviet Hollywood” that would not need international festivals. In the current socio-cultural context, repeating the situation of the 1930s to some extent, we observe the opposite process when the number of film festivals increases not only in the world, but also in Russia. In our opinion, it results from the specificity of

both post-postmodernism and proto-globalization—the interpenetration of global and local principles in culture.

As for the Moscow IFF itself, it was revived only during the thaw in the late 1950s due to the changing political climate in the country. It was then when its specificity took shape. The peculiarity of the Moscow International Film Festival to this day is that it, as we may say, combines two different festivals. On the one hand, it is a traditional show with three competitive programs (feature films, documentary and short films) and retrospectives. On the other hand, the Moscow International Film Festival is a kind of a “festival of festivals”. That is, the films, which were presented and awarded at other festivals, are demonstrated within its official program hors concours. Usually such works are extremely difficult to be promoted: as a rule, many of them will never get on the screens of our commercial cinemas. The only difference is that in Soviet times commercial western films were outcast, and in the post-Soviet era—exploratory experimental works.

The next festival that emerged as a response to Venice was in Cannes. It was planned to start in 1939, but the war intervened. To this day the festival’s history is closely connected with the festival movement as a whole, although its beginning was very modest. In 1947, the organizers faced a shortage of money to conduct it for the second time, but then things went smoothly. “The major changes in festival policy came after 1968, with Cannes once more the focal point,” says Thomas Elsaesser, Dutch festival network researcher, “when Truffaut and Godard took their protest against the dismissal of Henri Langlois as head of the French Cinemathèque... effectively forcing it [the festival] to close. While Paris was in the throes of the May events [meaning the so-called student protests—K.R.], Cannes with its foreign visitors was also shut down, and in the years that followed, sweeping changes were made by adding more sections for first-time filmmakers, the directors’ fortnight as well as other showcase sidebars... But the crucial change came in 1972, when it was decreed, again at Cannes, that henceforth the festival director had the ultimate responsibility for selecting the official entries, and not

the national committees” [4, p. 90]. This decision, supported by other festivals, was not least caused by the scandal with the screening in Cannes of Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Andrei Rublev*, which was banned in the USSR, but sold to France. The film could not be included in the contest, since it was not officially submitted by the country of production.

Already in its first year (1946), the Cannes Festival was not alone—in Central Europe, in the Czech Republic, a new festival opened, which would soon be settled in the spa town of Karlovy Vary. Its history has also been a subject of many researches. The latest work appeared relatively recently and was dedicated to its very first decade [5], when it was the only film festival for the so-called people’s democracies or socialist countries (later referred to as the bloc). Since 1959, during the socialist period in the history of the Eastern and Central Europe (and eventually Eurasia), subject to the dictate of the USSR, the Moscow and Karlovy Vary festivals were held in turns once every two years to avoid interference with each other. Moscow hosted its festival on odd years, and Czechoslovakia—on even years.

The International Film Festival held annually since 1951 in the West Berlin, in the capitalist enclave on the territory of the socialist German Democratic Republic, completed the period of the festival movement formation. The Berlin Film Festival was conceived and for many years, until the fall of the Berlin Wall, served as a kind of a bridge between the cultures of East and West Europe; a bridge that was regularly roiled by political cataclysms and contradictions. Only a short time ago it was discovered that its founder and first director Alfred Bauer, respected by all until very recently, was a true Nazi who kept his past a secret after the war [6].

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist system as a whole contributed to the shift of the political axis of cultural and other conflicts to religious grounds, and the center of this process drifted to the Middle East, where film festivals began to multiply and replenish immediately. At the same time, just in line with the post-postmodern principles, the official programs of most major festivals, starting with Venice, Moscow and Cannes, not to mention the Berlinale, began to include premieres of

commercial hits. For instance, in 2019, the jury of the Venice Film Festival took the liberty of giving its highest prize, the Golden Lion, to an icon of the mass culture, the Hollywood *Joker*; and in the same year, *Avengers: Endgame*, a final film based on the popular comic book series, was shown (hors concours) at the Moscow Festival.

At the same time, the main sensation of 2019, and not only in Moscow, was the painstaking reconstruction of the first full-length film, Dziga Vertov's *Anniversary of the Revolution*, restored by N. Izvolov. The reel has long disappeared from circulation, since one of the central figures of the 1918 chronicle was Leon Trotsky, enemy of the people, now triumphantly marching on the screens of Russia and the world. In other words, the idea of bridging the extremes of the film process has survived to the present day: on the one hand, there is D. Vertov and classics, and on the other hand, there are *Avengers* and transnational Hollywood.

In her book, *From European Geopolitics to Global Cinephilia*, Marijke de Valck suggests three stages of the festival movement. We have already mentioned the first one: from the emergence of the Venice Film Festival to the turning point in the late 60s and early 70s. In this phase, national cinematographs were crucial both as initiators of festivals and as monopolists in the selection and presentation of their films in competitive and other official programs. "The second phase," says the researcher, "is characterized by independently organized festivals that operate both as protectors of the cinematic art and as facilitators of the film industries. This phase ends in the course of the 1980s when the global spread of film festivals and the creation of the international film festival circuit ushers in a third period, during which the festival phenomenon is sweepingly professionalized and institutionalized" [7, pp. 19–20].

Although this periodization is not indisputable, it corresponds to some extent with the transformations of the film process, where the ties between art and commerce, the mainstream and the arthouse were broken at the end of the last century. In cinemas, special effects and technical innovations win, whether in 3D or IMAX. Eisenstein's idea of "montage of attractions" enjoys almost unchallenged dominance in large

movie theaters around the world. At the same time, blockbusters are rarely presented at festivals; if they do, however, they become key items in the program. That is, without bridging festivals of a new type—network-oriented, focused on globalization and professionalization—there would be an abyss between the two sides of the film process.

WHO, HOW AND WHY HOLDS FILM FESTIVALS?

The festival movement is developing; the number of festivals is increasing. In the sense, in which we consider the art criticism, the question arises: who makes the festivals? In our opinion, *three factors are necessary for a successful festival*. The *first one* is stable financial support at the state federal (and/or regional) level and international level (funds and programs of the Council of Europe or the European Union) or from private capitals (obtained, as a rule, through charitable foundations and programs). Most often, these sources are combined. In this context, we can see the reasons why film festivals emerge and disappear. Apparently, festivals appear because people need them. But the reasons for their emergence may be different: for the development of international relations, for the promotion of a particular national cinematography, for the approval of a certain system of criteria for evaluating films, for the glory of the local authorities, for the glory of art, or for any other reason. The contradictions that arise here reveal the difficulties and paradoxes of the existence of individual festivals, as well as the debates about why this or that festival was given state, municipal or private money, and the other one failed.

The second factor is a team of professional managers providing the festival infrastructure and its functioning. There can be a variety of scales: from the directorate of a particular cinema or cultural center to giants like Cannes or Toronto. At the same time, hundreds of people and even larger number of volunteers can work during the festival, and in between there might still be a small team, and the quality of their work is crucial. So many good intentions ended in nothing due to the lack of or incompetence of

personnel, especially in countries where traditions of serving large cultural and artistic events have not been formed because of historical and cultural features.

The third and the most important factor is the compilers and curators of the programs. Every festival needs at least one movie fan (in the Western tradition—a cinephile) that knows and loves cinema. As for the rest members, a variety of more or less successful options is possible. One of the most common misconceptions in this regard is the desire to invite well-known journalists to form a team of selectors. Sometimes a festival directorate needs popular critics writing about cinema not in order to make a good program, but to protect themselves from inevitable attacks in the press—people tend to avoid blaming those on their side. But true connoisseurs of cinema are by far not always journalists. The latter, by virtue of their profession, often focus on self-promotion to the detriment of the festival as a whole. That is why the largest festivals have specialists organizing work with the press, but they are relatively rarely involved in film programs. Selectors and especially program managers have different professional specifics. Here we can find Marco Müller, a cosmopolitan, sinologist, ethnologist and anthropologist, primarily known to the world as the creator and/or organizer, curator and leader of many famous film festivals (including Torino, Locarno, Venice, and more recently—several festivals in China, including the new one, Pingyao Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon, established by him and the director Jia Zhangke). He began to systematically appear in periodicals only after he made a name for himself at film festivals, but remains primarily a producer and organizer, and, of course, a cinephile. After the already mentioned Nazi functionary, Moritz de Hadeln was directing Berlinale for 22 years. He was born in London and eventually settled in Switzerland. His father, Detlev Freicherr von Hadeln, was an art historian and publisher in Florence, and his mother, Romanian, was an artist and sculptor. He began as a photographer and documentary director, until he became the director of the famous documentary film festival in Nyon, Switzerland; before Berlin, he directed the Locarno festival, and later headed the Venice festival for two years. Thierry

Frémaux, program director of the Cannes festival, officially continues to work as director of the Institut Lumière in Lyon, the hometown of the filmmakers. I myself am writing these lines not as a journalist (although I acted as one as well), but as a culturologist—researcher and program director of the Moscow IFF.

All of the above mentioned persons are not originally journalists; they came out of practical cinematic or academic and scientific circles, although in their official capacity they owe a duty to appear in print. However, there are exceptions among the directors of large festivals. The most striking is the Frenchman Gilles Jacob. As a well-known journalist, he began working at the Cannes Film Festival and eventually became first the general delegate (as a matter of fact, the program director) and then the president of the festival. In the last year of his tenure, I was lucky enough to get a big interview from him, which was later fully reproduced in the book *My Festivals*. He then defined his tasks as follows: “In general, over time, the festival gained independence and authority and began to select films itself. At the same time, Maurice Bessie [Jacob’s predecessor as a general delegate—K.R.] had some kind of problems with the filmmakers. I will not give rumors and gossip, but in 1977 he was forced to resign, and then I appeared as a compromise, as a film critic and cinephile who can find high-quality films, and not just Hollywood super-productions. On the other hand, I worked in the film industry, which allowed me to properly organize and position the festival. I saw my task in combining the discovery of new names with showing films by prominent directors. Hence the creation of the Golden Camera award for the best debut, launch of the *Un certain regard* program, and later the *Cinéfondation* for the competition of student films and the preparation of new projects, etc. On the other hand, it was important to make the festival self-sufficient. While we have managed to gain independence in the selection of films, the political and especially financial independence is far from being achieved: 90 percent of our budget was money from budgets of various levels—from state to local” [8, pp. 183–184]. Jacob then agreed with me that political ranking and artistic ranking do not always coincide. Critics often fail to accept

decisions of the international jury, consisting of famous filmmakers, primarily actors and directors.

In the process of composing the artistic programs, we are talking about the idea of why a festival is being done, and about attracting the attention of viewers and the public to new phenomena in the cinema, which phenomena should ideally become sensational. It requires special qualities and abilities. Special attention is needed in cases when creative, commercial and political interests interact and clash in the framework of a festival. This triumvirate principle is most clearly traced on the example of the Cannes Film Festival, where the president has political and representational responsibilities, the program is compiled by the general delegate (having functions similar to those of a program director) and his or her team, and finances are supervised by the general secretary, whose name, as a rule, does not appear in the media space at all.

In an effort to avoid internal contradictions, at a number of festivals these key functions are combined in one person, whether Müller or de Hadeln. As a rule, such decisions are made for a particular major figure in the festival movement and culture. With his or her departure, the situation may change. For example, after Moritz de Hadeln, the Berlin festival was headed by Dieter Kosslik, a producer (having nothing to do with journalism at all) who was not without reason accused of predominantly focusing on the commercial mainstream. After him, the leadership functions were divided between Mariette Rissenbeek, the former head of the “German Films”, an organization promoting German films abroad, and Italian Carlo Chatrion, a program curator invited from Locarno, who started his career as a journalist, just like Gilles Jacob. All in all, the Berlinale holds a specific place among other large festivals due to the interweaving of interests: political, commercial, career and artistic. Critic Andrei Plakhov, the veteran of the festival movement, examined these problems from his subjective point of view in an interesting and convincing way in his book *My Berlinale*, which was published in Berlin [9].

In the recent decades, festivals devoted to “old” films have appeared; the restoration and reconstruction of both classical and half-forgotten

films, which over time have acquired a high cultural status, have come into fashion. The first of them—The Silent Film Festival—is being held in the Italian city of Pordenone since 1981 (at intervals). At such festivals, the role of cineasts—archivists is rather significant. In compiling the festival artistic program, academic science came to the fore instead of criticism, focusing on the current film process. Within the framework of traditional festivals, retrospective screening and restored copies of old films began to play an increasing role. The White Pillars festival of archival cinema, launched at the very end of the last century by Vladimir Malyshev (then director of the Gosfilmofond of Russia) and the recently deceased chief archivist Vladimir Dmitriev, gained considerable fame [10]. In parallel, Dmitriev was a member of the selection committee of the Moscow IFF, where he encouraged the organization of fundamental retrospectives as opposed to current and transient critical sensations. Anyone who was interested in fundamental cinematology would prefer old films over new ones in the program. From this point of view, international film festivals are a kind of launching ground for testing various strategies, methods for program construction, forms of interaction with the audience, filmmakers, directors, etc. Different concepts of the development of culture, in particular, its visual wing, are challenged, which becomes more and more important as technologies conquer more and more territories, including in culture.

PARADOXES OF THE FESTIVAL MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA

In the post-Soviet period, prospects for expanding the festival movement in the territory of the former USSR, primarily in Russia, opened up, as I write in more detail in the article “The role of film festivals in the development of screen culture in Russia” [11, pp. 251–255]. Here I bring up this issue theoretically and within the international context. Despite being unsettled by the new situation, the Moscow International Film Festival, nevertheless, retained its position as the only Russian film

festival with the A class accreditation (this category includes the major non-specialized competition festivals of a particular large film-producing country) according to the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF), although it has numerous competitors. And instead of the now-defunct All-Union Film Festival there are various general open and specialized Russian film shows related to specific regions and types of cinema. As a result, complex questions arose of regulating the festival movement both “from above”, first by the Goskino, and then by the Ministry of Culture, and “from below”, by means of self-regulation. In this regard, the idea was put forward of creating a single platform or guild for all Russian film festivals. There are examples of such associations in the world. Let us name, for instance, the European Festival Association or the Belt and Road Film Festival Alliance, created on the initiative of the People’s Republic of China. As a matter of fact, many researchers declare network organization as the leading principle of the modern festival movement: “...the international film festival must be seen as a network (with nodes, flows and exchanges) if its importance is to be grasped”, says, for example, Elsaesser [4, p. 84].

In Russia, the project of a unified festival platform faced a number of challenges, since all festivals compete with each other. Finding a balance between teamwork and competition is not easy. The largest apple of discord is still a competition for government funding at the federal level, without which many film shows cannot survive. In this regard, it should be noted that in the world, primarily in the USA, there are some large festivals that exist without financial support from the government. But in Russia everything is heavily centralized, so everyone relies on federal, regional or at least municipal support. As you might know, we have the largest number of billionaires per capita in the world. So far, cinema rarely falls within their sphere of interests, but perhaps there are some reserves here. And, of course, there are possibilities for self-realization: a strong film club can arrange its festival with minimal municipal support. However, if you intend to make a glaring expensive show, then, of course, you need big investments. An unattainable ideal here is the St. Petersburg festival,

which was organized by V. Matvienko before her leaving from the post of governor of our northern capital. This festival then disappeared and was reborn with huge efforts on a different basis, thanks in no small part to director Aleksei Uchitel.

We are good at one-time events, but for the festival movement consistency is crucial—in order to grant a festival a long life. As a rule, at the first festival, everyone gives all they have, sometimes it is held for the second time, and by the third time everyone is exhausted. But a good festival gains its strength gradually: the first one is not very broad, the second one is a little broader, the third one—even better, as it was, for example, in Cannes. By the tenth year, it becomes clear that the festival has taken its place, that there are people behind it—not some specific people who might leave, and the festival would vanish without them; but influential communities that are interested in the festival and are ready to support it.

Among Russian officials and filmmakers, the illusion is widespread that festivals can be profitable. It originates from the experience of the Moscow IFF of the Soviet time: at that time, in violation of the existing norms of the festival movement, films were displayed dozens of times not only at different venues, even at the stadiums, but also in different parts of the USSR. Then, indeed, even the direct revenues of the festival were higher than the considerable costs for its organization. Foreign partners turned a blind eye to these violations, as they sought to conquer a huge new market by all means. When the new Russia joined the international conventions on the protection of copyright and related rights, this conquest was ultimately accomplished, primarily by Hollywood, and the profitability of the MIFF melted, giving way to budget financing.

A common festival cannot get profit from selling tickets alone, the expenses are always higher. However there are some forms of scam, when phantoms of large festivals appear to earn by collecting fees for submitting films for selection. There was (and maybe still is) such a phantom of the Moscow IFF. The domain extension of its website differs from that of the real festival: moscowfilmfestival.com instead of moscowfilmfestival.ru. The phantom festival lasted for only a day within several sessions at a

Moscow cinema. It means that its expenses were vanishingly small, and its revenues totaled to the sum of fees collected from the companies that mistakenly believed that they were applying for a real A-class Moscow festival. But there are also other forms of parasitism on the popularity of the film festivals.

As for the payback, there are no festivals existing only at the expense of tickets sold. Festivals can be funded partly from their own, partly from the municipal, and partly from the attracted money. For example, there is a very good small festival in a town of Telluride, Colorado, to which Jeffrey Ruoff devoted his book [12]. It has almost no state support. It is a very exquisite four-day festival with a budget of approximately two million dollars. One million is gathered through the ticket sale and another one comes from sponsorship. Sometimes screening of a particular film or visit of a particular delegation is sponsored separately. This is announced in the program: visit of such and such guests or such and such screening was made possible thanks to that and that sponsors.

This is not the case in Russia: sponsorship is usually possible for the festival as a whole, but not for its specific part. For example, Georgy Molodtsov tried more than once to get approval to attract his own sponsors for his VR program, at least in the part of obtaining some expensive equipment. The solution to this seemingly simple task though was complicated by the specific conditions of more general sponsorship agreements. Western world has a more differentiated approach. Everything is strictly regulated, but at the same time there is a certain freedom of movement. Robert Redford used this freedom when establishing his independent film festival Sundance (nicknamed after his cinematic character, Sundance Kid). Over time, the festival grew into one of the main platforms for the works by young filmmakers not only in the USA, but also in the world. Today it is not a national, but an international festival, and, as Daniel Dayan rightly noted, it was based on a social program to support creativity of young people [13, pp. 43–52].

In Europe, many festivals are made involving European money—as part of the programs of the European Union. In Russia the main source of

funding is regional and municipal money with some complement from the federal budget. But our economic structure, when money first goes to the federal center, and then only part of it returns to the regions, limits the possibilities of the latter.

As for the Moscow Film Festival, *three cultures coexist within its framework*. The *first* is the state cultural policy that has changed several times over the past half century, influencing the ideological orientation of the festival and its capabilities depending on the international situation. The *second* is the culture of the “new Russians” that emerged on the basis of the market economy, which primarily focuses on the festival as an entertainment and celebration, meetings with stars and sponsor parties. And the *third* one, the main one for me, since it unites all the festivals of the world—the cinematic culture itself, which determines the content of the festival program.

Since the Soviet times the MIFF functions as the “festival of festivals”. In the past, due to censorship, it was difficult and almost impossible to watch commercial western films, and Hollywood blockbusters in the first place. Now, however, it is difficult and almost impossible to see high-quality feature, non-fiction and animated films in cinemas. Now blockbusters are everywhere, while experimental films, whose authors are in a state of artistic search, have less and less space left at the box office.

In the post-Soviet period, the MIFF changed the nature of its audience to a certain extent without changing its formula. People filled up stadiums to watch Hollywood blockbusters in the USSR; and in subsequent years experimental films would attract viewers into small halls of the Oktyabr movie center, the Documentary Cinema Center, the Pioneer and Garage summer venues and several other municipal cinemas. The audience has reduced due to the fact that prices have risen not only for cinema tickets, but also for railway and air transportation—travelling to the festival in Moscow has become too expensive. Previously, hundreds of people from all over the country took their leaves to come to the Moscow International Film Festival, and now only few are able to afford it. Among the other class A festivals, MIFF is distinguished for its principles and conditions for

selecting films. First of all, the selectors focus on the best works of domestic cinematography, which have difficulty making it to large international festivals. Priority is often given to cinematographies of the former Soviet republics—the so-called Eurasian cinematography. My colleagues are more active in looking for new regional film schools than representatives of other festivals. On the other hand now almost everyone is beginning to do this, except, perhaps, the largest shows.

As a result, MIFF often discovers talents. For example, Ruben Östlund, winner of the Palme d'Or of the 70th Cannes Film Festival, participated in the MIFF 2005 main competition with his first big film. It was in Moscow where the international or Russian premieres of the first or second films of Asghar Farhadi, Kim Ki-duk, Wang Quan'an took place. Among domestic filmmakers, Boris Khlebnikov and Alexei Popogrebsky can be named (the premiere of their *Koktebel* took place at the Moscow International Film Festival), as well as the author of *Dust* and *Chapiteau-show*, Sergey Loban. In general, quite a few new names of Russian filmmakers appear at the Moscow Film Festival. Sometimes the talent is discovered, but the further fate of the director turns out to be less fortunate than it seemed. For example, this happened to Jang Joon-hwan, director of *Save the Green Planet*. The film was a great success—it was expected that the director would have a great future, but something must have gone wrong for him. The festival organizers often face a choice: whether to take not very successful films by large directors, which large festivals have refused for various reasons, or, alternatively, to look for young talents that have not been noticed by Western selectors yet. The second way is more productive, of course.

The situation is different with out-of-competition screenings. As a rule, these are films which have already been shown at other festivals, so they are premieres for Russia. For instance, the MIFF 2019 program included the scandalously famous film *Human, Space, Time and Human* by the jury chairman Kim Ki-duk, presented in Berlin, with shocking scenes of sex and violence. I assumed I could show it after a conversation with the director on the Rossiya-Kultura channel in the “Kul't kino” cycle [“Cinema Cult” with

Kirill Razlogov]; but after watching it I realized that it was hardly possible and replaced it with the classic *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring*.

There is a high culture in another shock film of this festival, presented in Moscow after the Sundance and Berlinale festivals—the Brazilian parable *Divine Love* by director and artist Gabriel Mascaro. It offers a new version of the birth of the son of God in a new era and in a new environment. The new Mother of God is an office clerk, and the Immaculate Conception comes as a complete surprise to her—after all, she is married and, among other things, provides sex services to revive the male principle. She discovers that she is finally pregnant and checks all her partners for paternity, starting with her husband. After realizing that none of them is a father, she believes that this is the son of God. The film ends with the baby's birth, and as it turns out in the finale, he was the narrator. It was he who told us about his mother and how she had come to that.

It is within this range where something called “the festival in the postmodern world” is revealed, when the interaction and mixing of all genres, directions and trends are clearly traced. A vivid example is Ilya Khrzhanovsky's project *Dau*, a live reconstruction and installation, including more than ten films. Different versions of this post-postmodern project were presented in Berlin and London, and the most complete one—in Paris, but not in Moscow yet. This leaves in abeyance the question why, in order to see the work of a Russian artist, Russian people have to go to Paris and London? However, each festival, just like other media, has its boundaries.

CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

The festival movement is developing rapidly and, as it seems at first glance, haphazardly: there are more and more festivals, and they are quite different. Among the “big” international festivals, there is an unspoken hierarchy that does not always coincide with the FIAPF classification. For example, a non-competitive festival in Toronto is often put in second place after Cannes. Its importance is explained by the fact that it is considered

a kind of pass to the American film market, so huge and almost closed to non-English products. The festival in Rotterdam holds a specialized competition for the directors' first and second full-length films; but in terms of attracting films it successfully competes with the "second echelon" of class A festivals, which (after Cannes, Venice and Berlin) include Moscow, San Sebastian, Locarno and Karlovy Vary. Earlier I included Montreal (Canada) in this list of festivals, but in the recent years it has been in a deep crisis: the Montreal festival is dependent on the authority of one person—its founder, the famous Serge Losique, who, at an advanced age, lost all of the state and a significant part of sponsorship support.

The place of a festival in the hierarchy is determined empirically, depending on which one is preferred by the copyright holders in case of parallel applications from several festivals. The strongest festival wins. All festivals, as a rule, lose to Cannes, Venice and Berlin, but in the second echelon the struggle is head-to-head. Preferences are defined by cultural traditions. With films of the newly independent states of Central Asia, Kazakhstan and Armenia, Moscow usually has priority. Ukraine and Georgia, as well as countries of Central and Eastern Europe often prefer Karlovy Vary, and the Spanish-speaking territories of Europe and Latin America favour San Sebastian.

In terms of theory, one of the most famous researchers of the festival movement, Cindy Hing-Yuk Wong, Chinese working in the USA, distinguishes four main structural components of the festivals that allow answering the following questions:

What is cinema knowledge?

Who controls it?

How does it change over time?

In her book, *Film Festivals: Culture, People, and Power on the Global Screen*, she writes: "First, festivals showcase a complex world of films, international, historical, and especially contemporary..."

Second, film festivals actively cultivate new talents and works from all over the world through their scouting and selection, their film funds, and programs to train emerging filmmakers on a global scale...

Third, festivals intersect with other discourses and institutions in the wider construction of film as a field of knowledge... [14, p. 15].

Finally, all these roles raise important questions of who defines what is good for whom and how, where art and value are never defined by undisputed or neutral criteria" [14, pp. 14–15].

As a result, in parallel with the crisis of large festivals due to the multiplication of platforms for watching films on the Internet, a kind of inflation of festival life arises in the context of post-postmodernism. According to Nick Roddick, today cinema meets us not at a movie theater, but at a nearest server [15, pp. 159–167]. This gives rise to issues that Gilles Jacob was well aware of: "For me it is quite a question. On the one hand, one can only dream of demonstrating the best films simultaneously all over the world instead of concentrating them in one place. No need to go anywhere; journalists would be able to work from their apartments and houses. Instead of seeing only the foam of the event—because the stars, the red carpet, photographs, press conferences are just foam—people could watch the films. Why are reports from the Olympic Games so interesting? Because we see the very competitions; and here there is only foam. Some may say, of course, that films are of little interest to the mass audience; they just need to see Sharon Stone on the Cannes stairs for a moment. On the other hand, this eliminates the exclusivity of the event itself; there is a threat of a festival outburst, when even journalists do not have to go anywhere. But in this sense, I'm not afraid for Cannes. There must be one place in the world where you can watch a movie on a very large screen with excellent quality of both sound and picture, where 2400 people would gather for the solemn mass and then go to spread their faith around the world. In fact, the Cannes ritual is very religious: a gathering of believers, climbing stairs to heaven, Palme d'Or, various kinds of ceremonies... It was not by chance that Malraux insisted that the 21st century would be religious or not be at all. We find ourselves if not in a completely religious realm, then at least in a mythological one. And this will be so, since the festival will remain the best springboard for promoting the film" [8, p. 191]. I think it wouldn't be wrong to say that the organizers

of each festival would agree. And this leaves open the question posed by Mikhail Epshtein: in which cinema world do we live, post- or proto-festival? Can a festival come to our server, just like it comes now—as a pale shadow of a real event—to our TV screens? After all, festivals (and our image of them) are changing along with cinema and culture. Therefore, they have quite a realistic future.

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