

ACCLAIMED AND AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARIES FOR

Russian & Eastern European Studies



MAIDAN

Directed by Sergei Loznitsa

2014, 131 minutes

Purchase: \$395 **\$355.50** | Classroom Rental: \$125

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Sergei Loznitsa, *Maidan* chronicles the civil uprising that toppled the government of Ukrainian president Victor Yanukovich and has since developed into an international crisis between Russia and the West. *Maidan* is a record of a momentous historical event and an extraordinary study of the popular uprising as a social, cultural and philosophical phenomenon.

Beginning in November 2013, when hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens gathered in Kiev's Independence Square (Maidan) to protest Yanukovich's refusal to establish closer ties with the West, Loznitsa and his cameraman were there, capturing the peaceful rallies, demonstrations, speeches and songs. In January 2014, following an ultimatum from the government to disperse, riot police stormed the square. *Maidan* captures the bloody street battles that erupted, the fires that raged throughout the night, and the make-shift funerals for the dead.

Eschewing the conventions of traditional talking heads documentaries, *Maidan* plunges the viewer into the middle of this revolution for a startling and immediate portrait of an awakening nation, rediscovering its identity.



"A vital and urgent film."

—*The Guardian*

"An impressive, bold treatment of a complex subject. One of the few documentaries about a recent revolution that won't feel dated in five years."

—*Variety*

Critics' Pick. "Easily the most rigorous, vital, and powerful movie of 2014. *Maidan* is a testament to the human experience of resistance."

—*Village Voice*

"This is monumental filmmaking—part document, part cinematic Guernica that takes a historical moment and shows the great ambiguities of political upheaval and the fundamental tensions between idealism and reality at the heart of all movements."

—*Sight & Sound*

"Starkly beautiful. Succeeds in chronicling a remarkable historical moment and delivering an emotional wallop."

—*Cinema Scope*

"Harkens back to the heroic, journalistic roots of documentary-making and yet feels ineffably modern and formally daring."

—*Hollywood Reporter*

Also by Sergei Loznitsa:

RUSSIA IN TRANSITION Series

2006, four DVDs, varying running times

Purchase of complete set: \$599 **\$539.10**

✔ **"Highly recommended. A masterpiece! A brilliant and evocative look at how Russian life is changing."** —*Educational Media Reviews Online*

"These works of documentary art, either individually or as a set, would be most useful in classes on Soviet and Russian film or cinema history and theory." —*Slavic Review*

Vol. 1: **FACTORY**

30 minutes

A meticulous study of a steel and clay factory in the Urals, *Factory* takes the viewer on a visually mesmerizing tour through the belly of an old Soviet industrial plant.

Vol. 2: **PORTRAIT**

28 minutes

A meditation on old and new Russia, *Portrait* captures a people, and a world, that is quickly vanishing.

Vol. 3: **THE SETTLEMENT**

79 minutes

A visually arresting documentary about a community in the Russian countryside, *The Settlement* introduces us to a rural settlement where the residents, seemingly involved in farm work, are in fact patients of a nearby hospital.

Vol. 4: **THE TRAIN STATION**

24 minutes

One of Loznitsa's most haunting films and most pointed social critiques, *The Train Station* is set inside an isolated train depot.





Dear Max,
What does a diplomat
for a country that isn't recognized
do when he comes to the office
in the morning?



LETTERS TO MAX

Directed by Eric Baudelaire
2013, 103 minutes
Purchase: \$350 **\$315** | Classroom Rental: \$125

A small state by the Black Sea, Abkhazia is an independent country depending on who you ask. It seceded from Georgia after the 1992-1993 civil war (which saw

Russian troops assisting its efforts, much like they did in South Ossetia, and more recently in the Crimea). But it was never recognized by the United Nations or by most of the world's countries. Only Russia, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Nauru have done so.

In *Letters to Max*, acclaimed artist and director Eric Baudelaire, sets in motion a fascinating discussion with Max, former Minister of Foreign Affairs for Abkhazia,

through a series of short letters. A remarkably forthright, poetic and insightful conversation about an isolated conflict that has come to be viewed less of an anomaly, and more of a precursor in this post-cold war landscape, particularly in Ukraine.

"An illuminating snapshot of a land that has been largely off the world's radar since the end of the civil war with Georgia in 1993."

—The Hollywood Reporter



LOST COLONY

Directed by Astrid Bussink
2008, 72 minutes
Purchase: \$310 **\$279** | Classroom Rental: \$125

The recent history of Abkhazia is told through the story of a once-renowned scientific institute struggling to survive after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. *Lost Colony* follows the desperate restoration attempts by the staff who regard the institute as a symbol of the decay in their country.

✓ **"Highly Recommended. A fascinating window into post-Soviet history."**

—Educational Media Reviews Online

★★★★ **"A touching reminder of the impact that even 'small' conflicts can have on human beings—as well other species—this is recommended."**

—Video Librarian



IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS

Directed by Alexander Gutman
2006, 52 minutes
Purchase: \$310 **\$279** | Classroom Rental: \$125

A beautiful and poetic film about the last remaining Jews in Birobidzhan, the world's first Jewish autonomous region, established in a distant corner of Siberia in the 1920s. A poignant documentary, *In Search of Happiness* mixes fascinating archival footage and old Soviet newsreels, with bucolic images of village life to reveal the strange history of the Jewish Autonomous Region, which even today remains a strong symbol of Jewish faith.

✓ **"Highly Recommended! This gem of a production gives the audience a slice of life view of some of the last residents in Birobidzhan."**

—Educational Media Reviews Online



IN MEMORIAM: ALEXANDER LITVINENKO

Directed by Jos de Putter and Masha Novikova
2007, 55 minutes
Purchase: \$325 **\$292.50** | Classroom Rental: \$85

A meticulous account of the life and final days of ex-FSB agent Alexander Litvinenko, who died of radiation poisoning in November 2006. Composed of Litvinenko's confessions, alongside interviews with Anna Politkovskaya, Chechen President in exile, Akhmed Zakayev, Soviet-dissident Vladimir Bukovski, film director Andrej Nekrasov (*Disbelief*), Litvinenko's father, Walter, and wife, Maria, as well as extensive newsreel footage (including extraordinarily revealing video of President Putin), this arresting documentary boldly chronicles one man's tragic disillusionment with his country.

"A darkly informative portrait of post-Soviet Russia under Putin."—Cineaste

"Recommended. Of interest to students of modern Russian history and politics."

—Educational Media Reviews Online



ORANGE REVOLUTION

Directed by Steve York
2007, 92 minutes

Purchase: \$210 **\$189** | Classroom Rental: \$125

Assembled from over 300 hours of original footage and archival materials, featuring penetrating interviews with key players, this acclaimed documentary is an in-depth look at Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution.

✔ **"Highly Recommended. Of interest to students of modern Eastern European history and Political Science."** —*Educational Media Reviews Online*

"A fascinating look at grassroots democracy in action. Recommended."—*Chicago Reader*

"The most convincing film to date about the legendary events of the Ukrainian civic resistance."
—*Kino-Kolo, Ukraine's premier film magazine*



CIVIL STATUS

Directed by Alina Rudnitskaya
2006, 29 minutes

Purchase: \$210 **\$189** | Classroom Rental: \$65

An observational documentary about the sometimes bizarre, sometimes absurd daily happenings at a civil registry office in St. Petersburg, where people from all walks of life come to record the most significant events in their lives. *Civil Status* opens a unique window on contemporary Russian society.

✔ **"Highly Recommended. An essential tool to understanding Eastern European culture."**
—*Educational Media Reviews Online*



17 AUGUST

Directed by Alexander Gutman
2009, 63 minutes

Purchase: \$310 **\$279** | Classroom Rental: \$125

On a small island in central Russia, inside a former monastery converted into a high security prison, inmate Boris Bezotechestvo is serving a life sentence

in solitary confinement. This startling documentary chronicles one day in his life, advancing a complex and troubling assessment of crime and punishment.

"A revelation for every one of its sixty-three minutes." —*Cineaste*

✔ **"Highly Recommended. A strange and haunting documentary sure to stimulate interesting discussions."** —*Educational Media Reviews Online*



THE ANGELMAKERS

Directed by Astrid Bussink
2005, 34 minutes

Purchase: \$210 **\$189** | Classroom Rental: \$65

The Angelmakers is an observational portrait of the sleepy village of Nagyrev in rural Hungary. We meet its inhabitants, who share with us their daily life as well as their memories of the village's tainted past. We gradually come to understand the extent of the "arsenic murders" which took place in 1929, when

a large group of women were held responsible for poisoning their husbands with the so-called "flypaper" method. An intriguing web of stories unfolds through the characters' memories which recapture old but ever-lasting tales of life, death and the struggle between the sexes.

✔ **"A rich classroom resource for discussion. Highly recommended for Eastern European studies, women's and gender issues, marriage, domestic violence, patriarchy, and women's empowerment."**

—*Educational Media Reviews Online*

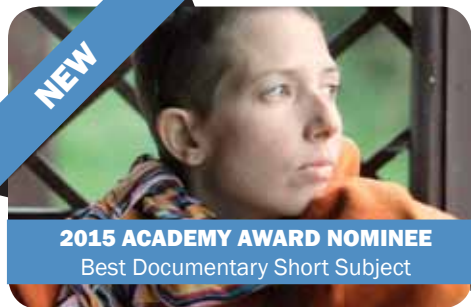
DISGRACED MONUMENTS

Directed by Mark Lewis and Laura Mulvey
1993, 48 minutes

Purchase: \$310 **\$279** | Classroom Rental: \$125

In 1918, just a year after the Russian Revolution, Lenin issued a government resolution providing for the erection of monuments honoring revolutionary

thinkers such as Marx and Engels, as well as writers, philosophers, scientists and artists. Lenin's plan also prescribed the removal from the squares and streets of all monuments depicting the Tsars and their servants. Using rare archival footage and interviews with sculptors, art historians, and gallery and museum directors, *Disgraced Monuments* examines the fate of Soviet-era monuments under successive regimes in the former Soviet Union.



NEW

2015 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE
Best Documentary Short Subject

JOANNA

Directed by Aneta Kopacz
2013, 40 minutes
Purchase: \$350 **\$315** | Classroom Rental: \$125

Joanna is a tender and heartbreaking portrait of a young wife and mother facing terminal cancer who, wishing to leave something behind for her eight-year-old son, started writing an online journal that has

resonated with millions of devoted readers in Poland. A Wajda Studio production beautifully filmed by renowned cinematographer Lukasz Zal (nominated Academy Award Winner for *Ida*), *Joanna* is a remarkable one-of-a-kind film, a story about the importance of family and close relationships, about love and thoughtfulness, and the need to treasure every moment in our lives.

“Joanna is an absolutely exceptional character in Polish cinema.” —*Andrzej Wajda*

SOKUROV: EARLY MASTERWORKS

NEW

3 DVDs
2013, 250 minutes
Purchase: \$195 **\$175.50**

A deluxe collector's set featuring three early masterworks by visionary Russian filmmaker Alexander Sokurov (*Russian Ark*, *Alexandra*) in newly translated and restored director's cuts: *Whispering Pages* (70 min), a brooding, beautiful film inspired by nineteenth-century Russian literature, primarily Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment"; *Stone* (79 min), a mysterious fable about a young night watchman's encounter with the ghost of Chekhov; and *Save and Protect* (133 min), a visually sumptuous adaptation of Flaubert's "Madame Bovary."

“A three-disc wonder.” —*Cinema Scope*



ALEXANDRA

Directed by Alexander Sokurov
2008, 91 minutes
Purchase: \$195 **\$175.50**

An elderly woman (played by Russian opera legend Galina Vishnevskaya) has to come to see her beloved grandson, a young army officer stationed at a military base in Chechnya. Under the watchful eyes of the young soldiers, she becomes acquainted with the routines of military life and makes a revealing trip into the outlying countryside. Without a single shot fired, *Alexandra* powerfully depicts the toll the Chechen war has taken on the lives of both the Russian and Chechen people.

“An enthralling story. Sokurov evokes a history of a people at war with others and with their own national identity.” —*The New York Times*



SONIA

Directed by Lucy Kostelanetz
2007, 96 minutes
Purchase: \$310 **\$279** | Classroom Rental: \$125

A magical portrait of Russia's revolutionary artistic avant-garde—Mayakovsky, Voloshin, Blok, Malevich, Tatlin—through the life of Sonia Dymshitz-Tolstaya, an impassioned artist whose life reflected the social upheavals of her time. She was one of the few Jewish women who became part of this inner circle.

“A magnificent documentary! The film doesn't just tell the story of one artist; it tells the story of a country.” —*The Russian Forward*

“A fascinating life story.”
—*Novoye Russkoye Slovo (New Russian Word)*

THE WOMAN WITH THE FIVE ELEPHANTS

Directed by Vadim Jendreyko
2010, 94 minutes
Purchase: \$195 **\$175.50** | Classroom Rental: \$95

Winner of multiple awards, *The Woman with the Five Elephants* unravels the mystery behind the life and work of the world's greatest translator of Russian literature. A poetic, precise and revelatory investigation into language, meaning, and the tides of history.

★★★★ **“Highly Recommended. An entrancing documentary that celebrates the power of language and literature.”** —*Video Librarian*

✓ **“Highly Recommended.”**
—*Educational Media Reviews Online*

“A meditation on the nature of translation, a biography of a remarkable life, and an artistic achievement in its own right.” —*Library Journal*

THE DESERT OF FORBIDDEN ART

Directed by Amanda Pope and Tchavdar Georgiev
2010, 80 minutes
Purchase: \$310 **\$279** | Classroom Rental: \$125

The incredible story of how a treasure trove of banned Soviet art worth millions of dollars was found in the desert of Uzbekistan develops into a larger exploration of how art survives in times of oppression. A fascinating documentary about a group of visionary artists and one man who risked his life to rescue their work.

“A gorgeous documentary.” —*The New York Times*

“The filmmakers present touching biographies in alternation with the stunning scenery of the desert, the powerful artworks, and pictures from this provincial museum.” —*Slavic Review*

✓ **“Highly Recommended.”**
—*Educational Media Reviews Online*

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