

Silent Soviet Comedy Gets New Music Show

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A poster for Boris Barnet's 1928 comic gem, 'The House on Trubnaya.'

A 1920s Soviet silent film classic, "The House on Trubnaya," by Boris Barnet, a raucous slapstick comedy, will be shown Tuesday, with live music specially written for the film.

Barnet, who worked as a soldier, boxer, and acrobat before finding his way to filmmaking, had an eclectic, often brilliant career and "The House on Trubnaya," which gives a glimpse of life on Moscow streets in 1928, is considered his masterpiece.

The film follows young peasant girl who ends up in Moscow at the height of the NEP [New Economic Policy], when the Soviets loosened their hold on the economy and allowed capitalism to edge in.

Although technically supposed to have some didactic purpose, Barnet experiments in the film with everything from documentary-style realism to Hollywood-worthy artifice, and keeps

the action — and jokes — coming at a brisk pace.

The Russian Encyclopedia of Cinema in its listing for the film says that "despite the many decades that have passed, the film has lost none of its charm, lightness or humor."

The music for the show was composed at the Tromsø film festival last year and a quartet of Norwegian musicians will perform, one of seven showings of the film with the musicians that are taking place all over Russia.

"The House at Trubnaya." Sept. 9. At 7 p.m. Kosmos cinema. 109 Prospekt Mira. Metro. VDNKh. 495-687-4669. www.kosmoskino.ru.

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