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Russia's Film Foundation Doesn't Want Greenaway to Show Eisenstein Was Gay in Biopic

By The Moscow Times

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Sergei Eisenstein

Russia's state film foundation has refused to participate in British director Peter Greenaway's biographical film about Sergei Eisenstein unless references to the famed director's homosexuality are removed.

Nikolai Borodachyov, director of Russia's Gosfilmofond, or State Film Foundation, told newspaper Izvestia that his organization would not take part in the project unless details about Eisenstein's "nontraditional sexual orientation" were edited out of the screenplay.

"I don't want to talk about it [homosexuality], but this theme in the script doesn't suit us," Borodachyov was cited as saying, adding that the script should "first and foremost suit our viewers."

"[Greenaway], in turn, insists that this aspect of Eisenstein's life is important for the film," Borodachyov said.

Gosfilmofond had agreed to provide materials from the Soviet archives for use in the project, Izvestia reported.

Although Borodachyov did not cite any legal reasons for the decision, Russian lawmakers in 2013 criminalized portraying homosexuality — or "homosexual propaganda," as the law phrased it — to minors.

Greenaway's film, titled "The Eisenstein Handshakes," is set to begin shooting in Switzerland this year for release in 2016, according to online film database IMDB.com.

The film will be Greenaway's second focusing on moments in the life of the influential Russian director, with the first, "Eisenstein in Guanajuato," set to premiere at the Berlin Film Festival in February.

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