The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow TV and Film: The Olympics, Leviathan and More

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August 08, 2016



Leviathan/Facebook

Whether it's fun family film, an internationally acclaimed award-winner or something a little bit silly you're after, there's plenty of lively and insightful viewing to get stuck into over the coming days. Settle down on the couch, grab the remote and enjoy our picks for the week ahead.

If you've been living under a rock for the past few days you may have missed the start of this summer's Olympic Games in Rio. Live and summary coverage of the games will be carried through August 21 by Channel 1, Rossiya 1 and the sports channel Match!

A week of great film kicks off tonight with **Jolly Fellows**, the USSR's first cinematic musical comedy. Directed by Grigory Aleksandrov, the film features Soviet vacationers, various alcohol-assisted shenanigans, people running around in their underwear and a great deal

of outright silliness. To the enormous relief of its worried filmmakers, «Fellows» came through its studio and Kremlin screenings unscathed. Stalin reportedly sat through the film in silence, then announced over the credits, «It's a light, happy picture. I feel like I've been on vacation.» With its inspired wackiness, this film is the perfect escape from the stifling heat of your Moscow apartment.

Jolly Fellows "Veseliye rebyata". Semya, Monday at 10:00 p.m and Tuesday at 3.15 a.m.

The Grandad Heist — a fun for the whole family classic — comes to screens on Tuesday. Directed by "people's director" Eldar Ryazanov, this memorable caper charts a nice-guy cop (Yury Nikulin) in Lviv who is forced into retirement by his comically accident-prone boss (Georgii Burkov). The solution is to fake the crime of the century — steal a Rembrandt from the local museum — and have Nikulin miraculously solve it to the thunderous acclaim of the whole city, ensuring the hero's place on the force. But as you may have imagined, all does not go according to plan. Tune in for plenty of laughs and a very lovely looking Lviv. The film sold 31 million tickets for a reason.

The Grandad Heist "Stariki-razboiniki". Dom Kino, Tuesday at 8:45 p.m.

Tune in on Wednesday afternoon for the perfect midweek popcorn adventure **At Home Among Strangers, A Stranger Among His Own**. It has all the makings of a traditional Western: sun-drenched open spaces, desperadoes with guns on horseback, a great train robbery, missing gold and the age old good guys vs. bad guys plot. What's not to like? Which is what Leonid Brezhnev allegedly asked after a screening of the film, indicating that he liked it a lot. "At Home" was the first feature directed by Nikita Mikhalkov and despite occasional editing and continuity lapses, it should definitely feature on your must see Russian film list.

At Home Among Strangers, A Stranger Among His Own "Svoi sredi chuzhikh, chyzhoi sredi svoikh". Dom Kino, Wednesday at 2:35 p.m.

Despite ruffling a fair few feathers in its native country, **Leviathan** received extravagant praise at Cannes and elsewhere when it was released in 2014. Directed by Andrei Zvyagintsev from a script co-written with Oleg Negin, the film uses spare but brilliant dialogue delivered by a seamless ensemble. You could say this movie is a classic little-man-fights-city hall melodrama and you wouldn't be wrong, but «Leviathan» is both larger and more narrowly revealing than that: larger in the sense that it appeals to universal notions of justice and decency, yet narrower in that the forms of corruption it deals with are peculiar to their Russian environment.

Leviathan. Nashe Novoye Kino, Friday at 1:30 a.m.

The week wraps up with **The Garage**, a defining satirical comedy from the late Brezhnev era. The story involves a museum workers' collective forced by highway reconstruction to exclude four members from the communal parking garage they're building. The question is which four. Tensions mount as a variegated parade of fine, upstanding Soviet citizens — played by a marvelous ensemble cast including Andrei Myagkov, Liya Akhedzhakova and Georgii Burkov — attempt to handle the conundrum. Based on the true story of the now-infamous Mosfilm studio lot bypass, this is a deeply, touchingly anti-Soviet film that captures much of what was wrong with the deep stagnation of the society it reflects. It's a reminder of how

funny — and daring — a visibly failing system could be.

The Garage "Garazh". Dom Kino, Friday at 10:25 p.m.

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