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Director and Screenwriter Viktor Merezhko Dies at Age 84

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Valery Sharifulin / TASS

Viktor Merezhko, an award-winning Russian screenwriter, filmmaker, playwright, actor, writer, and television presenter died on Sunday at the age of 84. The cause of death was complications due to the coronavirus.

Merezhko was born in Rostov and graduated from the prestigious Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) in 1968. Even before graduating VGIK Merezhko's screenplays were being made into movies: director Leonid Millionshchikov made the short films "Zarechenskie Grooms" (1967); "Who Will Die Today" (1967); and "Blind Rain" (1968) from the young writer's scripts.

Considered a master of dialog, Merezhko wrote scripts for more than 50 films including "Hello and Goodbye"; "If You're Leaving, Go"; "A Lonely Woman Wants to Meet"; and "Flying in a Dream and in Reality," which received a U.S.S.R. state prize in 1987.

Interested in the moral problems of modern society, Merezhko wrote screenplays about the

relationships of characters and social conflicts.

Merezhko’s work was not limited to writing for the silver screen. He created countless scripts for TV series and cartoons, starred as an actor in several films, hosted the popular TV program “My Cinema” and authored over 15 plays which still grace the Russian stage today. For several years he was Secretary of the Union of Cinematographers of the Russian Federation.

The prolific screenwriter and director received countless awards throughout his life, including the honorary title of People's Artist of the Russian Federation in 2014.

Merezhko will be buried in Troekurovsky Cemetery next to his wife, who died in 1997.

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