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Russian Spy Chief Unveils Monument to Iconic Soviet TV Series

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The “Seventeen Moments of Spring” monument in Moscow. **Anastasia Avramchik / TASS**

Russia’s Foreign Intelligence Service chief Sergei Naryshkin and Culture Minister Olga Lyubimova on Thursday unveiled a monument in Moscow honoring the creators of the iconic Soviet television series “Seventeen Moments of Spring.”

The sculpture depicts the show’s screenwriter, Yulian Semyonov, seated a short distance from its director, Tatiana Lioznova, and actor Vyacheslav Tikhonov, who portrayed the series’ protagonist, the Soviet intelligence officer Max Otto von Stirlitz.

“This series has not only become part of the gold standard of Russian cinema, but also an inseparable part of our national identity,” Naryshkin said at the ceremony, according to the state-run news agency TASS.

“The characters, quotes and melodies of ‘Seventeen Moments of Spring’ are deeply embedded in our cultural code,” he added.

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The unveiling coincided with the 110th anniversary of the Gorky Film Studio and the 105th anniversary of the founding of the Foreign Intelligence Service. The monument was created by sculptor Andrei Kovalchuk.

Naryshkin described "Seventeen Moments of Spring," which first aired in 1973, as a "true, unique and unparalleled cinematic masterpiece," adding: "We owe [its creators] our deepest respect and gratitude for this remarkable work."

The 12-part series follows the exploits of the fictional Soviet spy Stirlitz, a mole operating inside Nazi Germany's SS during the final weeks of World War II.

When it first aired, the program quickly became a national phenomenon, with its suspenseful narrative, familiar characters and aura of authenticity securing its enduring popularity on Russian television.

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