From the Cinema '*Dekorator*' to the Cinema '*Arkhitektor*': Set Design, Medium Specificity and Technology in Russian Cinema of the Silent Era

Eleanor Rees

This article traces how understandings about the role of the cinema set designer—referred to in Russian as the *khudozhnik* (artist)—evolved across the 1910s and the 1920s in relation to broader artistic debates of the period. Drawing on archival material and articles published in the contemporary Russian and Soviet cinema press, it examines the changes in the cinema *khudozhnik*'s professional title and what these shifts in terminology reveal about differing conceptions of the scope and nature of the set designer's role. The debate about the cinema *khudozhnik* related not only to the division of responsibilities among film-makers as the nascent Russian cinema industry developed and working practices became standardized. It was also connected to film-makers' growing appreciation of cinema's expressive potential as an art form and to how the emergent practice of cinema set design related to other creative disciplines, such as painting, the decorative arts, architecture and, from the 1920s, production art. Moreover, during the Soviet 1920s questions about the cinema *khudozhnik*'s role became associated with broader concerns about what it meant to be a creative practitioner working in a collaborative context and to the value ascribed to such qualities as technological expertise and versatility in early-Soviet ideology.

Keywords: architect-designer—set designer—Constructivism—Russia—production process—technology.

Introduction

In 1927, the same year in which he worked on the set design for Lev Kuleshov's film *Your Acquaintance* (Vasha znakomaia), the Russian Constructivist artist Aleksandr Rodchenko published an article in the journal *Soviet cinema* (Sovetskoe kino) with the title 'The *Khudozhnik* and the Material Environment in Fiction Film'.[1] In this article, Rodchenko declared that in cinema the role of the *khudozhnik*—the Russian term for 'artist', which was and still is used to refer to what in English is variously termed the set designer, art director or production artist or designer—must not be reduced to that of a mere 'dekorator', a technical craftsman who creates ornamental scenery following the orders of the director.[2] Rather, Rodchenko claimed, the *khudozhnik* is responsible for devising a series of material environments in which the characters of the film will live; consequently, he must be involved in all aspects of film production, including composing and lighting scenes, positioning actors, as well as overseeing costumes, props and artificial scenery.

Rodchenko was not alone in his awareness of the *khudozhnik*'s significance in film production. During the 1910s and the 1920s, a number of critics and film-makers wrote articles addressing the *khudozhnik*'s role in cinema. This debate about the cinema *khudozhnik*'s role was in many ways characteristic of the period, which was marked

by intense artistic self-theorization; as historians of Russian art have noted, creative practicioners began to explore the relationship between different art forms, the creative possibilities of non-traditional artistic media and, particularly following the 1917 Revolution, the social responsibility of artists.[3] However, while scholars have explored how artists, prompted by these concerns, became involved in the fields of theatre, ceramic and textile design, as well as production art, there has been relatively little research on cinema set design.[4] As Emma Widdis notes, 'early Soviet cinematic set design has received particularly scant attention' in scholarship, and she identifies the *khudozhnik* as a 'forgotten figure'.[5] While scholars of Russian cinema, including Iurii Tsiv´ian, Rachel Morley, Widdis and Anna Kovalova, have highlighted the innovative ways in which film-makers used design in early Russian and Soviet cinema to heighten the expressive potential of films and to convey symbolic and ideological meaning, there has been little research on the figure of the *khudozhnik* and how their role in the film-making collective was perceived.[6] This is largely consistent with scholarship on design in other national cinemas, which tends to focus on either set aesthetics or production practices, rather than the evolving nature and varying professional nomenclature, training and affiliations of the individuals involved with the design of sets and what today is often referred to as art direction or production design.[7] As Lucy Fischer notes in relation to the U.S. film industry, the terms used to refer to these individuals, such as 'set designer', 'art director' or 'production designer', have been up for debate throughout cinema history, and are complex and confusing in that they encompass a range of tasks pertaining to the visual look of a film, while also reflecting different conceptions of the profession, as a trade, a craft and a creative art.[8]

Drawing on archival document and articles published in the contemporary Russian and Soviet cinema press, this article traces how understandings about the *khudozhnik*'s role in fiction cinema evolved across the 1910s and the 1920s in relation to broader artistic debates of the period. Much of this material has not been explored before, and reveals insights about the *khudozhnik*'s work on films that were noted at the time of their production for their set design. In particular, this article focuses on the various professional titles used to refer to the cinema *khudozhnik*—from *khudozhnik-zhivopisets* (artist-painter) and *khudozhnik-dekorator* (artist-decorator) to *khudozhnik-konstruktor* (artist-constructor) and *khudozhnik-arkhitektor* (artist-architect)—and considers what these titles reveal about differing conceptions of the scope and nature of the role. The debate about the cinema *khudozhnik* related not only to the division of professional responsibilities among film-makers as the nascent Russian cinema industry developed and working practices became standardized. It was also connected to film-makers' growing appreciation of cinema's expressive potential as an art form and how the emergent practice of cinema set design related to other creative disciplines, such as painting, the decorative arts, architecture and, from the 1920s, production art, which promoted the manufacture of everyday objects and the rationalization of design practices. Moreover, during the Soviet 1920s questions about the *khudozhnik*'s role became associated with broader concerns about what it meant to be a creative practitioner working in a collaborative context and with the value ascribed to such qualities as technological expertise and versatility in early-Soviet ideology.

The *khudozhnik-zhivopisets* (artist-painter): late-imperial cinema and fine art films

During the earliest years of the Russian fiction-film industry, in the late 1900s and early 1910s, film-makers used set design as part of a strategy to increase the cultural

standing of cinema by associating it with a fine arts tradition. They borrowed terms from the fine arts lexicon to describe film aesthetics, including *kartina* (picture) to refer to a film and *rembrandtizm* to describe a lighting approach based on strong contrasts of light and shadow. Most significant in this respect was the choice of the term *khudozhnik* (artist) as the professional title for cinema set designers, as opposed to other designations such as *dekorator* (decorator), *oformitel´* (scenery dresser) or *remeslennik* (craftsman). Directly translatable as 'artist' and typically used in relation to a fine art practitioner, the term *khudozhnik* carried connotations of individual self-expression, creative autonomy and artistic excellence. Its use reflected the fact that many of the individuals whom producers first recruited to create scenery for cinema had trained in art academies and colleges, actively participated in exhibitions and maintained professional links with artistic associations.[9] This contrasts with the backgrounds of the first generation of directors and camera operators, who did not generally have formal artistic training, but came to cinema from the commercial and entertainment spheres of theatre, still photography or actuality film-making.[10]

Producers also associated cinema with the fine arts through their publicity materials, which advertised that the visual designs of films were based on the works of eminent Russian artists, notably those associated with a Realist style of painting. For one of the Aleksandr Khanzhonkov studio's first fiction films, *A Sixteenth-Century Russian Wedding* (Russkaia svad´ba XVI stoletiia, 1908), cinema press advertisements stated that the designs of the *khudozhnik* V. Fester were derived from the historical paintings of Konstantin Makovskii, one of the leading members of The Wanderers (Peredvizhniki) association of Realist painting, which dominated artistic culture during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Russia.[11] This strategy continued to be used throughout the 1910s. Publicity material for the joint Khanzhonkov and Pathé studio's *The Year 1812* (1812 God, 1912) noted that Fester and Czesław Sabiński had created their designs 'according to the sketches' (*po risunkam*) of Vasilii Vereshchagin's celebrated painting cycle of the 1812 Patriotic War against Napoleon.[12] At the same time as the film's release, the cycle was on display at the Imperial History Museum in Moscow as part of an exhibition to mark the war's centenary.[13] Contemporary critics noted similarities between Vereshchagin's compositions and certain scenes in the film.[14] Evgenii Bauer's designs for Aleksandr Drankov and Aleksei Taldykin's *The Tercentenary of the Rule of the House of Romanov* (Trekhsotletie tsarstvovaniia doma Romanovykh, 1913) were similarly promoted as being based on works by Makovskii, Viktor Vasnetsov and Ivan Bilibin.[15] The fact that film-makers chose to associate the visual designs of films with the works of Russian painters in particular reflected their desires to affiliate cinema with a national artistic tradition. This related to their larger ambition to rival the popularity of foreign imported and produced films through creating a distinctively national cinema, which employed native actors and creative personnel, depicted traditional Russian subjects, and used settings that were recognisably Russian.[16]

The association of cinema design with painting was not merely a publicity strategy, however. It also revealed critics' and film-makers' understanding that cinema shared certain aesthetic and ontological features with painting. Several critics and film-makers remarked on these shared properties. In a 1915 article in the journal *Cinema herald* (Vestnik kinematografii), the poet Sergei Gorodetskii even coined a new term for cinema: '*zhiznopis*'—an amalgam of the Russian words for painting (*zhivopis´*) and for life (*zhizn´*)—to reflect its similarity to painting and its roots in contemporary reality.[17] Reflecting on his work designing sets in the mid-1910s, Vladimir Egorov—in an unpublished article, entitled '*Khudozhnik* of the Theatre Stage and *Khudozhnik* of the Film Frame ... What's the difference?'—explained how his practice as a cinema *khudozhnik*

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differed from his work in the theatre and related more closely to painting.[18] With the help of set diagrams for films such as *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* (Portret Doriana Greia, 1915), Egorov detailed how he designed scenery that took into account the different positions of the camera and the various angles from which the set would be filmed [**Fig. 1**].[19] Egorov compared these diagrams with those showing how theatre designers had previously approached the mise-en-scène, so as to emphasize the differences between cinematic and theatrical models of space and framing [**Fig. 2**]. He also illustrated his article with examples of paintings, demonstrating how cinema *khudozhniki* borrowed certain compositions and perceived cinematic space in similar terms to pictorial space.[20] Critics writing in the contemporary cinema press also compared the work of certain film-makers to painters. In an article dedicated to Bauer, who worked on many of his films as both the director and *khudozhnik* in charge of the overall visual look, Valentin Turkin stated that: 'in film [Bauer] worked as a *khudozhnik* does, not as a *khudozhnik-dekorator* (artist-decorator), but as a *khudozhnik-zhivopisets* (artist-painter), creating film frames following the laws of the pictorial arts and observing trends in spatial composition and the rhythm of movement, lines, surfaces and masses [...].This similarity of the screen to the painted canvas is crucial for Bauer's talent'.[21]

The identification of cinema set design with painting supports Tsiv´ian's argument that early Russian film-makers, in their ambitions to establish cinema as a legitimate art form, often dissociated it from the theatre and affiliated it instead with the fine arts, borrowing methods with antecedents in painting, such as foreground silhouetting and shooting into mirrors.[22] For Tsiv´ian, 'cinematic imitations or borrowings from high art' should not be viewed as derivative; rather, they represented highly innovative attempts on the part of film-makers to explore cinema's nature as a visual medium. He stresses that for film-makers of the 1910s, 'being true to cinema's nature as a medium' did not necessarily entail being distinct from the other arts.[23] This, he claims, contrasts with film-makers working in the 1920s, who understood what it meant to be 'true to cinema' on different terms.[24]

From the *kino-dekorator* (cinema-decorator) to the *kino-konstruktor* (cinema-constructor): medium specificity and a distinctively Soviet approach to set design

The debate about cinema set design and its relation to other creative practices continued throughout the 1910s and into the 1920s, with the late 1910s in particular witnessing a heightened interest in these issues. From 1918, the weekly journal *Cinema Gazette* (Kino-gazeta) began to include a regular feature on individual *khudozhniki*, with articles on Aleksei Utkin, Aleksandr Loshakov, Kuleshov and Egorov.[25] Additionally, in 1917 the cinema press published the first statements by film-makers on set design as a creative practice. That year, Kuleshov, who was then working as a *khudozhnik* under Bauer at the Khanzhonkov studio, contributed two articles to the journal *Cinema Herald*, in which he outlined his approach to set design, emphasizing that *khudozhniki* must develop techniques that are specific to cinema.[26] Lamenting that hitherto *khudozhniki* had failed to renounce the approach of painters and theatre designers, he declared that they must instead work with those features characteristic of cinema—light, real objects and the sequential development of frames, a technique which would become known as montage—in ways that would heighten cinema's expressive potential. Thus he stressed that the *khudozhnik*'s role in cinema was not confined to designing artificial scenery; instead, they were responsible for a range of tasks

Fig. 1. V. Egorov, 'Khudozhnik of the Theatre Stage and Khudozhnik of the Film Frame... What's the difference?' (Khudozhnik stseny teatra i khudozhnik kadra kino... Kakaia raznitsa?) [unpublished]. Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI). f. 2710, op. 1, khr. ed. 59, 8.

relating to the visual aspects of films, including lighting and framing scenes, arranging actors, advising on acting techniques and directing the sequencing of scenes. Kuleshov was describing what was increasingly becoming referred to in the U.S. film industry as the 'art director', who was trained in cinema lighting and camera angles and, in collaboration with the director, was responsible for the overall visual look of film, in comparison to the set designer, who was responsible for making blueprints of sets from the design of others.[27]

Kuleshov identified two approaches to composing scenery: the first, employed by film-makers such as Bauer, involved using large architectural structures, with many planes

and recesses, to recreate a sense of deep illusionistic space on screen, mimicking the way that artists since the Renaissance had sought to achieve perspective in painting; the second, however, was based on simplifying sets through placing objects with strong symbolic associations in the foreground and darkening the background or replacing it with black velvet.[28] For Kuleshov, both approaches had their shortcomings: while the 'Bauer method' required considerable time, space and money to realize, simplified sets could be shot from only one viewpoint. Ultimately, however, he promoted the use of simplified sets as more 'cinematic', both from an aesthetic and technical viewpoint for using light and objects as the basis for creating expressive compositions and for being quick to assemble, responding to cinema's need for expediency.[29]

The concern for medium specificity was characteristic not only of discussions about cinema, but also of artistic discourses more broadly. Since the mid-1910s, formalist groups such as the Saint Petersburg Society for the Study of Poetic Language (Obshchestvo izucheniia poeticheskogo iazyka, OPOIaZ) and the Moscow Linguistic Circle (Moskovskii lingvisticheskii kruzhok, MLK) had demanded that creative practitioners working in all artistic fields should exploit the distinctive expressive features of art forms, including the sound of words and the *faktura* (texture) of paint.[30] Indeed, the concept of '*faktura*' acquired increasing significance in artistic discussions as a means to describe the way in which materials had been worked to heighten the
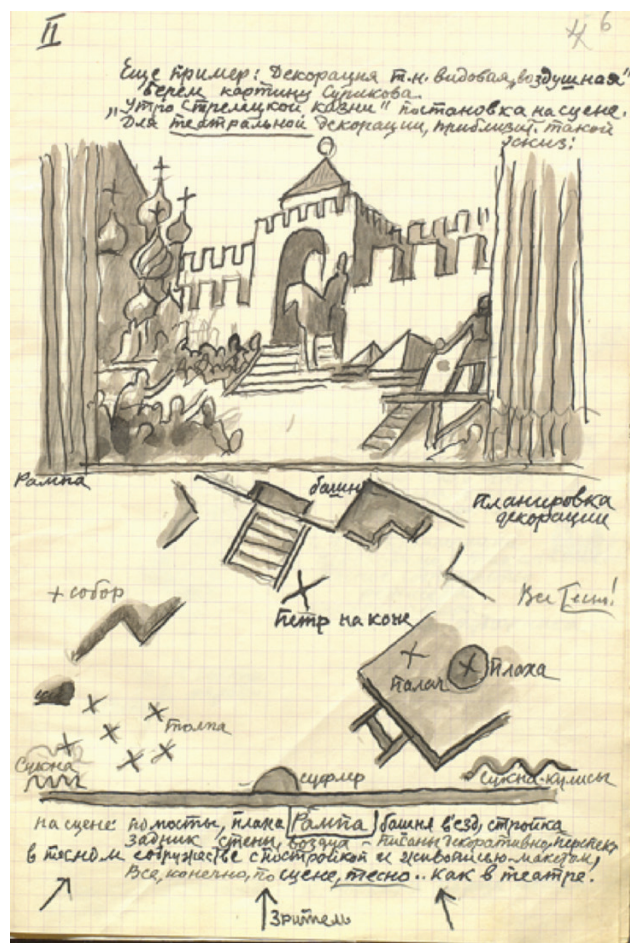
Fig. 2. V. Egorov, 'Khudozhnik of the Theatre Stage and Khudozhnik of the Film Frame... What's the difference?' (Khudozhnik stseny teatra i khudozhnik kadra kino... Kakaia raznitsa?) [unpublished]. Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI). f. 2710, op. 1, khr. ed. 59, 6.

distinctive expressive qualities of particular artistic media.[31] The interest in ontological questions about the nature of different artistic media continued into the 1920s. In 1919, the Institute of Artistic Culture (Institut khudozhestvennoi kul'tury, INKhUK) was founded as a state-funded interdisciplinary group with the aim of conducting research into the specific properties of various art forms.[32] Constructivist practitioners and theorists dominated the early teachings of INKhUK and conducted numerous formal experiments on what they identified as art's essential materials: form, space, light and *faktura.*

Although the study of cinema was not included in INKhUK's programme, a number of film-makers working in the early 1920s shared the institute's interest in exploring questions about medium specificity in their writings and cinema experiments. Kuleshov, for example, continued to advance in his theoretical writings an approach to set design that would exploit cinema's unique features as an artistic medium.[33] In his 1918 article *The Art of Light Creation* (Iskusstvo svetotvorchestva), he identified the flatness of the film screen as an expressive feature that was characteristic of cinema.[34] Departing from his earlier articles, he explicitly rejected the 'Bauer method' of using set design to create the impression of deep illusionistic space, and urged *khudozhniki* to develop techniques that would draw attention to the flatness of the frame: 'the ideal shots are those that look like the flat primitive paintings on an antique vase'.[35] In particular, he suggested that *khudozhniki* use the contours of the actors' bodies and the sequencing

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of frames to create expressive compositions, describing montage in films as similar in effect to 'harmonious colour compositions in painting'.[36]

Having recently entered cinema as a *khudozhnik* after working as a theatre designer, the young Sergei Iutkevich also advocated a design method that he felt was specific to cinema. In an article published in *Soviet Screen* (Sovetskii ekran) in 1925 and entitled 'Decoration with Light', Iutkevich proposed that *khudozhniki* should follow an approach to design that he termed '*kino-konstruktivizm*' (cinema-Constructivism).[37] For Iutkevich, this involved working with cinema's genuine materials: light, space and the *faktura* of real objects. He contrasted the approach of the *kino-konstruktor* (cinema-constructor) with that of a *dekorator*, which he used as a pejorative term to describe individuals concerned only with styling artificial sets in various aesthetic trends. In this respect, he denounced both foreign films, such as Marcel L'Herbier's *The Inhuman Woman* (L'Inhumaine, 1924), and Soviet productions, such as the Mezhrabpom-rus´ studio's *Aelita* (1924), directed by Iakov Protazanov and with sets designed by Sergei Kozlovskii and Viktor Simov. According to Iutkevich, the *khudozhniki* in these films had reduced Constructivism to a fashionable style by designing scenery in abstract, geometric forms, rather than using it as an approach for working with light, shadow and space to create novel visual effects.[38] By contrast, Iutkevich singled out Sergei Eizenshtein's *Strike* (Stachka), made the same year as *Aelita* and released in 1925, as an exemplary model for the *kino-konstruktor* to follow, praising the way in which the *khudozhnik* Vasilii Rakhal´s used lighting techniques and camera optics to create the impression of form and space on screen.[39]

For Iutkevich, *kino-konstruktivizm* represented an approach to set design that was not only specifically cinematic, but also specifically Soviet. The spartan sets in *Strike* departed from what was considered an excess of props used in Hollywood films, such as *Intolerance* (1916) and *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), and in pre-revolutionary films, particularly those produced by Bauer for the Khanzhonkov studio. With its concern for the expressive potential of real objects and architecture, *Strike* also differed from the 'cardboard Expressionism' of foreign cinema which, for Iutkevich, was exemplified by Robert Wiene's Weimar films, *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Das Cabinet des Dr Caligari, 1920) and *Raskolnikov* (1923).[40] According to Iutkevich, austere sets embodied the principles of economy and rationalization that were the cornerstones of early-Soviet ideology.

Iutkevich was not alone in identifying the use of spartan sets in such films as *Strike* as a distinctively Soviet approach to cinema design.[41] In an article also published in 1925 in *Soviet screen*, an anonymous critic denounced the sets in both *Aelita* and *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* for their 'deceptive' quality.[42] The critic argued that the abundance of false effects in these films demonstrated artistic hubris on the part of the *khudozhnik*. As Iutkevich had done, the critic also praised the stark scenery in *Strike* for its 'decorative freshness' and 'truthfulness', claiming that the *khudozhnik*'s intervention was almost imperceptible.[43] That same year, the director Vsevolod Pudovkin, in his article 'On the *Khudozhnik* in Cinema', also declared that in Soviet cinema the task of the true *khudozhnik* was to create austere décor that did not distract the eye.[44] For Pudovkin, this contrasted with the way in which *khudozhniki* in Hollywood and late-Imperial cinemas crowded their sets with a chaos of things, which overwhelmed viewers.[45]

Striving to put into practice his theories about achieving an economical approach to set design, in 1927 Kuleshov made *Your Acquaintance* (Vasha znakomaia), also known as *The Female Journalist* (Zhurnalistka), which he later described as 'a formal experiment'
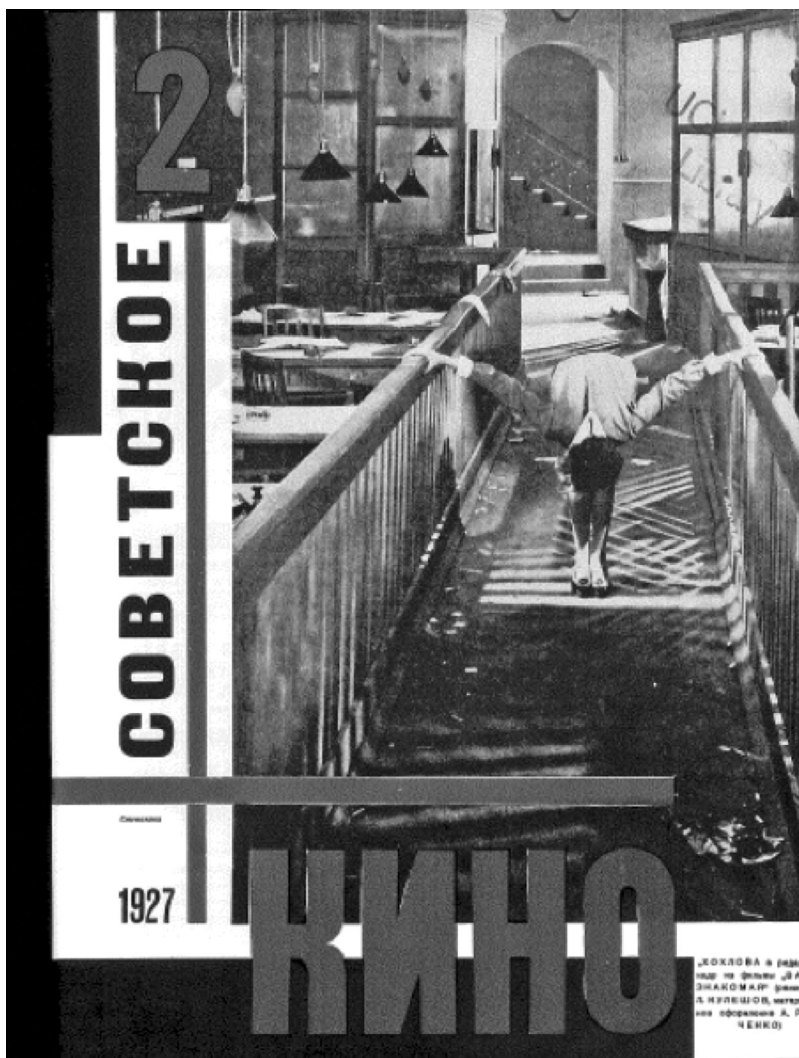
Fig. 3. Still from Your Acquaintance (Vasha znakomaia, 1927). Published as the front cover of Sovetskoe kino, no. 2 (1927).

in achieving maximum simplicity in set design [**Fig. 3**].[46] For this Sovkino studio production, Kuleshov worked as the director, while Rakhal´s and Rodchenko took on the role of *khudozhniki*. Together they developed a number of design techniques, including constructing sets with different planes and recesses to ensure numerous angles of vision for the camera, using open-lath structures to create striking patterns of shadow and light and applying varnishes to enhance the *faktura* and light-reflective quality of different materials.

Reflecting on his work for the film in his article 'The *Khudozhnik* and the Material Environment in Fiction Film', Rodchenko described how he ensured maximum economy in set design through including only objects that have a precise purpose.[47] He explained that by reducing cinema scenery to just those characteristic objects, which exemplified either a quality of a particular character or a feature of a certain space, *khudozhniki* would be able to engage viewers' full attention, rather than leaving them to search unaided to find meaning. He gave as examples of the characteristic objects used in *Your Acquaintance* the multi-functional writing desk in the study of the Soviet media reporter and the glass elephant statuette in the room of the carefree female journalist

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who indulges in consumerist desires and pursues a love affair with the bourgeois newspaper editor.[48] According to Rodchenko, the most important thing for the *khudozhnik* is to find the characteristic object and 'to display it from a new point of view in a way that has never been seen before'.[49] The photographs that he used to illustrate the article demonstrate this argument, presenting the steel girders and glass walls of the Sovkino studio taken from unusual angles to defamiliarize the space [**Fig. 4**]. For Rodchenko, the *khudozhnik*'s task, therefore, related primarily to the question of visual perception and audience engagement. It was in this sense that the *khudozhnik*'s role departed from that of a *dekorator*, whose responsibility was limited to designing scenery in a range of conventional styles.[50]

The *kino-arkhitektor* (cinema-architect): versatility, technology and collaboration

During the mid- to late 1920s, Soviet critics and film-makers began to stress the importance of economy not only as an aesthetic principle, but also as a production method. From 1924, a number of articles were published in the cinema press which addressed the responsibilities of the *khudozhnik*, focusing on practical concerns about their function in the production process rather than on questions about cinema aesthetics.[51] A key interlocutor in these discussions was Sergei Kozlovskii, the head of the design department at the Mezhrabpom-rus´ studio (known from 1928 as Mezhrabpom-fil´m). In 1925, he wrote one of the first articles outlining the *khudozhnik*'s duties under the title 'Film Studio Technology'.[52] In this article, Kozlovskii declared that:

> Above all else, we demand from the *khudozhnik* versatility. [The *khudozhnik*] is an architect, a painter and an applied artist. He must know almost all crafts. He must know no worse than the camera operator lighting techniques, methods of camera operation (in particular optical properties). No worse than the director, he must know the styles of the different historical eras that films seek to show.[53]

Kozlovskii reiterated this statement with minor modifications on three further occasions in his writings on cinema within the next five years, demonstrating the importance that he ascribed to the quality of versatility (*raznostoronnost´*) in *khudozhniki*.[54] This emphasis on the *khudozhnik*'s role as a versatile 'multi-tasker' who possessef a range of artistic skills and technical knowledge about lighting techniques and camera optics, as well as set construction, can be found in many articles about set design published in the mid- to late 1920s.[55] From the earliest years of the Russian cinema industry, shortages in personnel, scarce finances and limitations in technological resources required *khudozhniki* to be flexible. In the early Soviet era, however, versatility was not merely a practical necessity. It also held ideological value in so far as it was associated with ideas of economy and collective creation.

In addition to versatility, Kozlovskii stressed the importance of technological expertise. He argued that the *khudozhnik* must use his creative skills to innovate methods of rationalizing studio film-making in order to support the growth of Soviet film production, which had only begun to gather pace in the early 1920s following the industry's nationalization in 1919 and the disruption of the Civil War years (1919–1921).[56] Drawing on their diverse artistic experience to work with the studio's many technical and craft workshops, the *khudozhnik*, Kozlovskii claimed, functioned as the coordinator of the entire production process. Moreover, as a member of the main film-making unit, which also included the director, the camera operator and

the scenarist and which was responsible for the creative ideas behind a film, the *khudozhnik* acted as a bridge between the technical and artistic sides of film-making. In this sense, Kozlovskii declared, 'the *kino-khudozhnik* is in essence more truly a *kino-arkhitektor* (cinema-architect)'.[57] For Kozlovskii, cinema set design was similar to architecture in that it drew on a wide range of artistic knowledge, while also required technological expertise.

Fig. 4. A. Rodchenko, 'The Khudozhnik and the Material Environment in Fiction Film' (Khudozhnik i material'naia sreda v igrovom fil'me), Sovetskoe kino, no. 5–6 (1927): 14.

The conceptualization of set design as an architectural practice was reiterated throughout the late 1920s.[58] In 1928, when the union of *khudozhniki* issued the first resolution on their working rights, they even chose as a professional title '*khudozhnik-arkhitektor*'.[59] The union stressed the importance of the *khudozhnik-arkhitektor*'s role in overseeing film production and stated that their main responsibility was to innovate technology that would reduce the cost and production time involved in location and studio film-making. They emphasized, however, the point that the *khudozhnik-arkhitektor* was by no means a technical labourer; rather, he was a 'functional coordinator' who worked in close collaboration with the other members of the film collective.[60] In 1930, Kozlovskii, together with the critic Nikolai Kolin, similarly published the first professional manual on cinema set design under the title *Khudozhnik-arkhitektor in Cinema*.[61] As the cover image depicting a working studio indicates, the manual directly located the work of the *khudozhnik-arkhitketor* in the production side of studio filming [**Fig. 5**]. In the manual, Kozlovskii and Kolin defined architecture in cinema as the rational construction of sets with a concern for how they would produce light effects, create a sense of perspective on screen and accommodate various camera angles.[62] For the authors, therefore, the aesthetic function of sets was still significant. Indeed, they stated that the decorative element of set design was important, but that it was now no longer the primary concern of the *khudozhnik-arkhitektor*, who must devote their time to developing new methods in rationalizing film production. Kozlovskii and Kolin outlined the various ways in which *khudozhniki* at the Mezhrabpomfil´m studio had already improved production. In addition to introducing organizational systems, such as an inventory of the set elements stored in the studio and a photographic archive of potential locations for outdoor filming, they had innovated set technology by developing standardized paints and special clamps to reduce the wear and tear on set parts and by making improvements to the *fundus*—a system developed in the early 1910s and comprising modular set components, such as windows, doors and walls, that could be combined into various configurations.[63]

Kozlovskii's efforts in improving set production did not go unnoticed. In an article published in 1928 in the journal *Novyi lef,* the Constructivist artist Varvara Stepanova praised Kozlovskii's work on developing set technology and contrasted his design approach to that of other *khudozhniki*, in particular Egorov, whom she denounced as 'flippant' and concerned only with creating stylized interiors.[64] Moreover, in a 1927 edition of *Sovetskoe kino*, Rodchenko dedicated an article to Kozlovskii's achievements in rationalizing film production, titling it 'M-R. 80X100. S-Zh', which referred to the code that Kozlovskii had developed at the Mezhrabpom-rus´ studio for labelling *fundus* parts.[65] Rodchenko denounced the way in which certain Soviet studios, such as Sovkino, were organized into individual workshops without any coordination. He even compared Sovkino to a theatre, characterized by 'narcissism', false ideas of genius, and outmoded forms of 'handcraftsmanship' (*kustarshchina*).[66] By contrast, at the Mezhrabpom-rus´ studio Kozlovskii had introduced organization and economy through adopting the *fundus* system. Rodchenko claimed that Kozlovskii's working practice differed from that of the typical 'self-sufficient *khudozhnik*', and described him as 'a factory engineer, a true factory *konstruktor*', recalling the rhetoric used by production art theorists and practitioners to endorse collaboration between artists and industry.[67]

Other articles published in the mid- to late 1920s celebrated the *fundus* as a major advance in film-making technology.[68] Photographs of the system also occupied full- and half-page spreads in journals. Rather than representing the *fundus* in its constructed and decorated form ready to be filmed, these images emphasized its nature as a production system, showing it as a series of modular components made

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Fig. 5. Kolin and S. Kozlovskii, The Artist-Architect in Cinema (Khudozhnik-arkhitektor v kino), Moscow: Teakinopechat, 1930.

from bare plywood sheets. In photographs such as those used to illustrate the 1927 article 'Cinema *Khudozhnik*: Conversation with S. M. Kozlovskii, Inventor of the *Fundus* System', the way in which the sheets are arranged into various geometric configurations distinctly recalls the non-objective paintings and sculptures made by Constructivist artists in the late 1910s and early 1920s [**Fig. 6**].[69] Kozlovskii also valorized the *fundus* in his work for the Mezhrabpom-rus´ studio's *The Cigarette Seller from Mossel´prom* (Papirosnitsa ot Mossel´proma, 1924), which is, among other things, a satire on the persistence of pre-revolutionary trends in Soviet film-making. In several of the scenes which take place in the film studio, the undecorated *fundus*
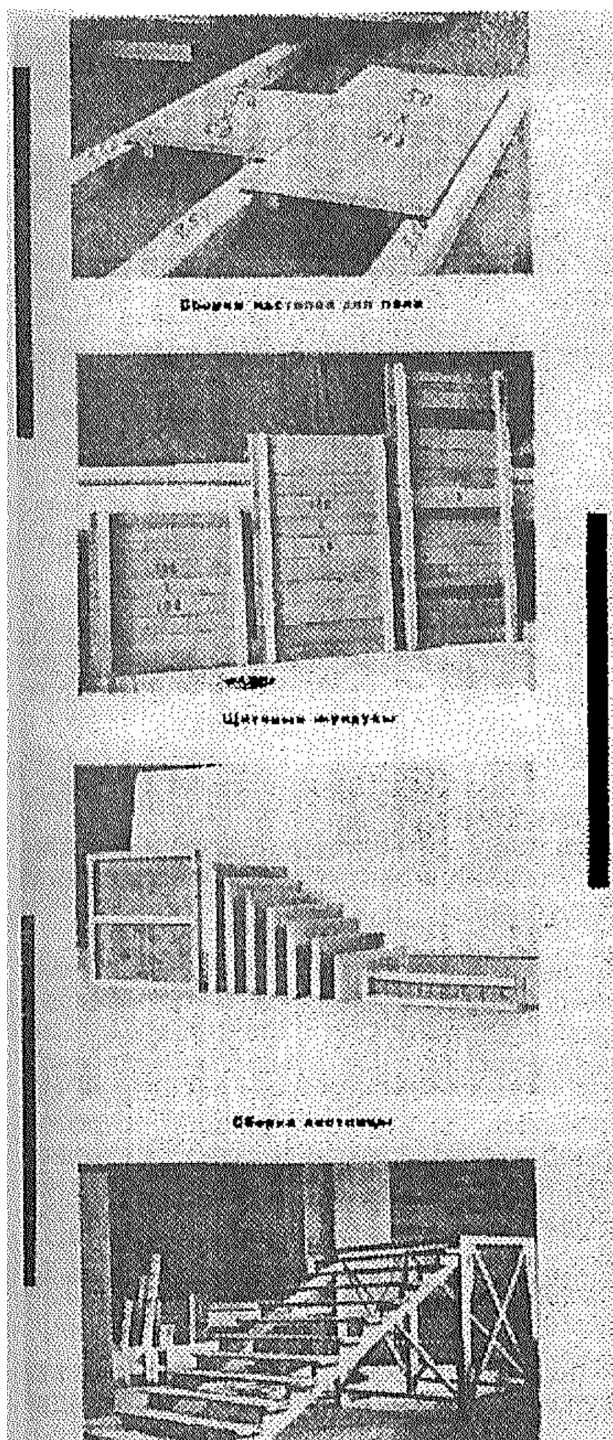
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boards occupy a prominent position, providing a contrast to the ornately carved furniture of the studio producer's office and thereby establishing a comparison between the film management's interest in commercial profit and the film-makers' concern for economical production.

The interest in production systems, such as the *fundus*, and the emphasis on the need for cinema *khudozhniki* to rationalize the design process correlates with Soviet production art discourses of the early to mid-1920s. In her study of Soviet Constructivism, Maria Gough identifies the existence of both an object-oriented and a process-oriented trajectory among production artists and theorists.[70] Adherents of both trajectories rejected the self-reflexive theorizing and abstract experiments of INKhUK artists of the early 1920s, preferring to pursue 'real practical work in production'.[71] However, while the object-oriented faction called for artists to collaborate with industry to mass produce new, everyday things that would encourage Soviet citizens to adopt a lifestyle based on socialist principles, the process-oriented faction urged artists to direct their energies towards innovating production methods. In his 1923 tract *From the Easel to the Machine*, the theorist Nikolai Tarabukin argued that artists must devote their time not to producing new objects, whether utilitarian or non-utilitarian; rather, they must improve production systems so that they would function with maximum efficiency.[72] For the production artist, Tarabukin declared, 'the process of production itself [...] is the goal of his activity'.[73] Moreover, he emphasized the importance of forming genuine collaborative partnerships between personnel from the spheres of art and industry. For Tarabukin, therefore, individuals were also components of the production network, and the relationships between them needed to be strengthened and optimized.[74] He rejected the idea that creative practitioners would operate remotely, using their specialist skills to improve production without becoming involved in factory life and without gaining a genuine understanding of how technology would serve the societal aims of the collective.

This concern for genuine collaboration between creatives and industry is evident in the work of the architect Andrei Burov for *The Old and the New* (Staroe i novoe, 1929), originally titled *The General Line* (General´naia liniia). In 1927, Burov, an associate of the Constructivist-leaning Organization of Contemporary Architects (Ob´´edinenie sovremennykh arkhitektorov, OSA), accepted the Sovkino studio's invitation to work with Vasilii Kovrigin and Rakhal´s on the sets for Sergei Eizenshtein's and Grigorii Aleksandrov's fiction film about the mechanization and collectivization of agriculture in Russia following the Revolution.[75] For the film, Burov created a full-scale prototype of a collective dairy farm in a modernist style, with rectilinear

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forms and plain white walls, stripped of ornament and pierced by horizontal bands of windows, closely resembling the buildings of Le Corbusier [**Fig. 7**].[76] Besides modernizing the farm's traditional facade, Burov innovated mechanized methods for food production and rational solutions for storing grain and housing livestock. In an unpublished article written in 1929 and entitled 'Architecture and Cinema', Burov stated that he approached his work on the film not as a '*dekorator*', but as an '*arkhitektor*'.[77] According to Burov, he set out not merely to modernize agricultural architecture; rather, his main goal was to demonstrate how methods of rationalizing production could improve the agricultural industry. Burov envisaged his set functioning as a working dairy farm which would continue to be used after filming had finished and which would provide a model for future agricultural infrastructure.

In addition to Burov and his architectural expertise, Sovkino engaged a number of specialists to work on *The Old and the New*. Agricultural consultants drew on the latest research about farming techniques and equipment. The film-makers also immersed themselves in agricultural research, conducting interviews at agricultural institutes and using specialist sources such as Oleg Davydov's *Maklochane* (1926), which traces the growth of Soviet collective dairy farms;[78] they also collected press reports about advances in farming equipment, such as the cream separator machine, which in the film became the key agent and symbol of economic prosperity and social reform for the villagers.[79] Moreover, they undertook reconnaissance expeditions to rural communities and cooperatives situated in the Moscow district to observe the villagers' way of life.[80]

The use of agricultural and architectural experts on *The Old and the New* received considerable attention in the contemporary cinema press.[81] In two articles published in 1928 and 1929, both entitled 'Life as it Ought to Be', the architectural critic Nikolai Lukhmanov singled out *The Old and the New* among Soviet fiction films for providing practical solutions for improving present-day agricultural production.[82] In his more extensive 1929 article, Lukhmanov focused on the collaboration between different spheres of industry: cinema, architecture and

Fig. 7. Architecture of the film The General Line. A Sovkino Production of S. M. Eizenshtein. Architecture by A. K. Burov' (Arkhitekturnye kadry kino-kartiny 'General´naia linia' Sovkino v postanovke S. M. Eizenshteina. Arkhitektura A. K. Burova), Sovremennaia arkhitektura, no. 5–6 (1926): 136–37.

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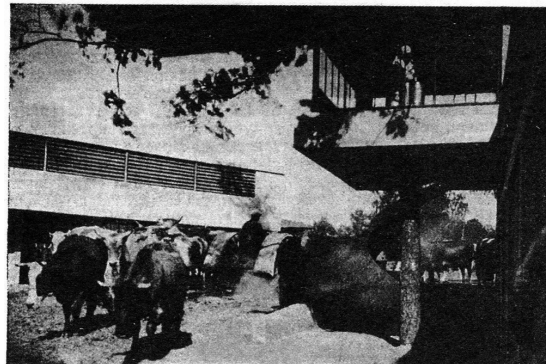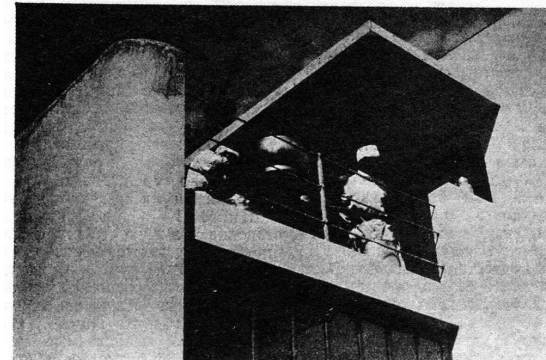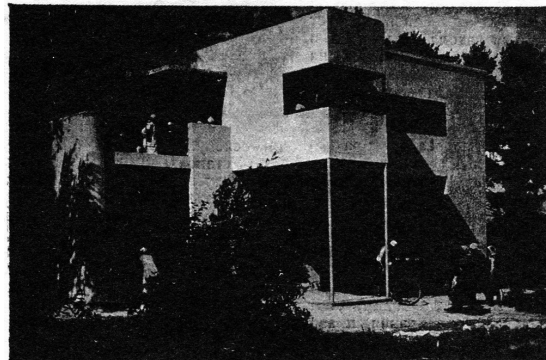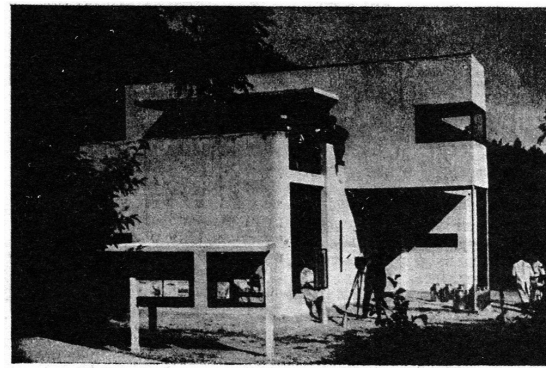
agriculture. In his view, 'the formation in cinema of new production teams to serve the current tasks of industrial construction and the cultural revolution would inevitably lead both to the improvement of films and to a new cadre of *kino-proizvodstvenniki* (cinema-productivists)'.[83] For Lukhmanov, this cadre of *kino-proizvodstvenniki*, with their specialism in different spheres of industry, would work to find solutions to current problems in the realm of production. Their engagement on films, as demonstrated with *The Old and the New*, would lead to a new model of an authentically Soviet form of culture.

Conclusion

As Soviet film-makers embarked upon a new era of sound cinema in the 1930s and faced increasing pressure to create films that corresponded to Socialist Realist principles, the search for an appropriate form of Soviet set design remained a topic of concern. Critics continued to promote the need to improve technical competency and reform production processes so as to establish a Soviet cinema that was superior to Hollywood and European cinemas on technological grounds. However, the spartan interiors of the 1920s, with their concern for precision of detail, were increasingly rejected for not capturing the scale of Soviet heroism in line with a new Socialist Realist emphasis on monumentalism.[84] The fight for the *khudozhnik*'s role in cinema also continued. In an article published in 1936 in the journal *The Art of Cinema* (Iskusstvo kino), the *khudozhnik* Vladimir Kaplunovskii noted that cinema audiences and even film-makers still asked the questions: 'who is the *kino-khudozhnik,* what are his responsibilities, and what is his place in cinema?'.[85] He claimed that the various professional titles—*kino-arkhitketor*, *kino-oformitel'*, *kino-zhivopisets* and *kino-dekorator*—had only added to the confusion. The fact that Kaplunovskii's article appeared alongside those dedicated to the increased importance of the scenarist and the composer in Soviet cinema suggests a certain anxiety about the erosion of the *khudozhnik*'s creative rights with the advent of sound technology. Throughout the 1930s, *khudozhniki* continued to lament the fact that they were still not fully recognized for their distinctive contribution to cinema.[86] In a 1938 article, Nikolai Suvorov stated that 'questions about the artistic culture of cinema are still far from resolved. It is even not clear what role the *khudozhnik* plays in film production. But we hope that art historians will pay attention to this 'unknown' but very important participant in the film-making process'.[87]

In tracing evolving perceptions of the *khudozhnik*'s role in cinema, this article has highlighted the importance of certain individuals—Egorov, Kuleshov, Kozlovskii, Iutkevich and Rodchenko—as theorists of early cinema set design who shaped discourses about the practice in the 1910s and 1920s. The debate about the *khudozhnik* was closely related to a number of issues pertinent to Russian and Soviet film-making in the silent era. Initially during the 1910s and early 1920s, it was connected with ontological concerns about cinema's nature as an artistic medium and its relationship to other art forms. In the 1910s, in their search for a true cinematic art, many *khudozhniki* associated cinema design with the fine arts to demonstrate the ways in which cinema differed from the theatre and to explore the medium's expressive potential. In the 1920s, however, *khudozhniki* rejected the use of painterly as well as theatrical methods and strove to develop a language that was, in their view, unique to cinema. From the mid-1920s, film-makers began to search for a new artistic language that was not only specifically cinematic, but also specifically Soviet. Critics and film-makers began to focus much more on issues relating to economizing and

rationalizing the production process, reflecting the Soviet state's broader economic and social imperatives. They increasingly emphasized that the *khudozhnik*'s significance did not lie solely in his creative vision. He was also valued for his technological expertise to innovate rational solutions that would improve the design process. The effective *khudozhnik* was expected to be a versatile 'multi-tasker' and able to work with a number of practitioners from different spheres. The emphasis that film-makers placed on technological expertise, versatility and collaboration raises questions about how we value creative input in collaborative projects such as cinema; it highlights that, besides individual creativity, film-makers appreciated a myriad of qualities relating to the more practical side of film production.

Eleanor Rees
Email: e.k.rees@gmail.com

Eleanor Rees received her PhD in 2020 from University College London (UCL), where she wrote her thesis on the role of set designers in late Imperial and early Soviet cinema. Her research has been funded by the Wolfson Foundation, the Design History Society (DHS) and UCL's School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES). Her book *Designing Russian Cinema: The Artist and the Material Environment in Russian Silent Film, 1907–1932* is forthcoming with Bloomsbury Academic.

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Notes

1 Aleksandr Rodchenko, 'Khudozhnik i material'naia sreda v igrovom fil'me', *Sovetskoe kino* no. 5–6 (1927): 14–15. This article follows the Library of Congress system of transliteration from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet. All translations from Russian to English are my own, unless otherwise specified.

2 Rodchenko. 14.

3 On artistic debates of the 1910s, see Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (London and New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983); J. Bowlt and O. Matich, eds, *Laboratory of Dreams: The Russian Avant-Garde and Cultural Experiment*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996; and Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

4 The most comprehensive account of cinema set design in the 1910s and 1920s is given by Gennedii Miasnikov in his multi-volume study *Ocherki istorii russkogo i sovetskogo kinodekoratsionnogo iskusstva, 1908–1917* (Moscow: VGIK, 1973) and *Ocherki istorii sovetskogo kinodekoratsionnogo iskusstva, 1918–1930* (Moscow: VGIK, 1975).

5 Emma Widdis, *Socialist Senses: Film, Feeling, and the Soviet Subject, 1917–1940* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2017), 51.

6 Yuri Tsivian, 'Portraits, Mirrors, Death: On Some Decadent Clichés in Early Russian Films', *Iris* 14–15 (1992): 67–83, his *Early Cinema in Russia and its Cultural Reception*, ed. Richard Taylor, trans. Alan Bodger. London and New York: Routledge, 1994; and his '"Two 'Stylists" of the Teens: Franz Hofer and Yevgenii Bauer' in Thomas Elsaesser and Michael Wedel eds, *A Second Life: German Cinema's First*

Decades (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), 264–76; Rachel Morley, 'Gender Relations in the Films of Evgenii Bauer', *Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no.1 (2003): 32–69 and her *Performing Femininity: Woman as Performer in Early Russian Cinema*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2017; Emma Widdis, 'Faktura: Depth and Surface in Early Soviet Set Design', *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* vol. 3, no. 1 (2009): 5–32 and her *Socialist Senses*; Anna Kovalova, 'The Picture of Dorian Gray painted by Meyerhold', *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 13, no. 1 (2019): 59–90.

7   See, for example, Charles Affron and Mira Jona Affron, *Sets in Motion: Art Direction and Film Narrative*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995; Juan Antonio Ramirez, *Architecture for the Screen: A Critical Study of Set Design in Hollywood's Golden Age*. London: Jefferson N. C., 2004; Thomas Bergfelder, Sue Harris and Sarh Street, *Film Architecture and the Transnational Imagination: Set Design in 1930s European Cinema*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007; Ben McCann, *Ripping Open the Set: French Film Design, 1930–1939l,* Bern: Peter Lang, 2013; Lucy Fischer, ed., *Art Direction and Production Design*, London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2015.

8   Fischer. ed., *Art Direction and Production Design*, 2–3.

9   For biographies of the major *khudozhniki* working in this period, see Miasnikov, *Ocherki istorii sovetskogo kinodekoratsionnogo iskusstva, 1918–1930*, 78–98.

10 Denise J. Youngblood notes that early Russian film directors had previously worked as actors and directors in the theatre. See D. J. Youngblood, *The Magic Mirror: Moviemaking in Russia, 1908–1918* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 53–56. According to Philip Cavendish, the majority of first-generation camera operators had worked as professional still photographers and actuality makers. See P. Cavendish, 'The Hand that Turns the Handle: Camera Operators and the Poetics of the Camera in Pre-Revolutionary Russian Film', *Slavonic and East European Review* 82, no. 2 (2004): 201–45 (207). The background of Russian *khudozhniki* also contrasts with that of German set designers working in cinema from the 1920s, most of whom did not undertake professional artistic training and had tenuous links with artistic communities or movements. See Bergfelder, Harris and Street, *Film Architecture and the Transnational Imagination*, 35.

11 See *Sine-fono* no. 14 (1909): 10. This is also noted in the commentary on the film in V. Ivanova, V. Myl′nikova, S. Skovorodnikova, Yuri Tsiv′ian and R. Iangirov, eds, *Velikii kinemo: Katalog sokhranivshikhsia igrovykh fil′mov Rossii 1908–1919* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2002), 16–18 (16).

12 Aleksandr Alekseevich Khanzhonkov, *Pervye gody russkoi kinematografii* [1937] (Moscow: Liteo, 2016), 62–63.

13 Andrej K. Lebedev, ed., *Vasilii Vereshchagin: Zhizn′ i tvorchestvo* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1958), 420.

14 Anon., *Russkoe slovo* no. 176 (1912): 4 and Anon., *Vestnik kinematografii* no. 40 (1912): 18.

15 *Zhivoi ekran*, no. 12 (1913): 1.

16 For discussion of the success of foreign imported and produced films in Russia and their influence on the development of a native cinema industry, see Richard Abel, 'Pathé's Stake in Early Russian Cinema', *Griffithiania* no. 38–39 (1990): 243–47.

17 Sergei Gorodetskii, 'Zhiznopis', *Vestnik kinematografii* no. 2 (1915): 3–4 (4).

18 Vladimir Egorov, 'Khudozhnik oformleniia teatral′noi stseny i khudozhnik kino kartin... kakaia raznitsa?'[unpublished]. Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI). f. 2710, op. 1, khr. ed. 59, 1–13 and 39–45.

19 Egerov, 4–12.

20 Egerov, 3.

21 Valentin Turkin, 'E. Bauer i russkaia kinematografiia', *Kino-gazeta* no. 31 (1918): 2–5 (2).

22 Tsivian, 'Two 'Stylists' of the Teens: Franz Hofer and Yevgenii Bauer': 264–76.

23 Tsivian, 265.

24 Tsivian, 275–76.

25 See 'Khudozhniki kino: Aleksei Utkin', *Kino-gazeta* no. 26 (1918): 11; 'Khudozhniki kino: Aleksandr Loshakov', *Kino-gazeta* no. 29 (1918): 7; 'Khudozhniki kino: Lev Kuleshov', *Kino-gazeta* no. 31 (1918): 9; 'Khudozhniki kino: Vladimir Egorov', *Kino-gazeta* no. 34 (1918): 3.

26 Lev Kuleshov, 'O zadachakh khudozhnika v kinematografe' [1917] and 'Zadachi khudozhnika v kinematografe' [1917] in his *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1987–1988), 57–60.

27 For discussion of the role and responsibilities of the art director in the US film industry, see Fischer ed., *Art Direction and Production Design*. Fischer notes that, although it was not until the 1930s that the term 'art director' gained wide currency in the U. S. film industry, its origins can be traced back to 1916.

28 For further discussion of how Kuleshov perceived cinematic space, see Widdis, '*Faktura*', 5–32.

29 Kuleshov, 'O zadachakh khudozhnika v kinematografe' [1917], 58.

30 See Gough, *The Artist as Producer*, 31–38.

31 For discussion of the significance of *faktura* as an artistic concept, see Maria Gough, 'Faktura: The Making of the Russian Avant-Garde', *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* vol. 36 (1999): 32–59.

32 For discussion of INKhUK, see Gough, *The Artist as Producer*, 6–7.

33 See, for example, L. Kuleshov, 'Khudozhnik v kino' [1920] in his *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, vol. 1, 104–105; *Znamia kino* [1920] in his *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, vol. 1, 63–87; and 'O dekoratsii', *Iskusstvo kino* [1929] in his *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, vol. 1, 183–90.

34 L. Kuleshov, 'Iskusstvo svetotvorchestva', *Kino* no. 12 (1918): 1–2. The term 'svetotvorchestva' is directly translated as 'light creation', but was also one of the terms used for cinema in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century.

35 Kuleshov, 2.

36 Kuleshov, 2.

37 Sergei Iutkevich, 'Dekoriruem svetom' [1925] in his *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1990), 304–5.

38 Iutkevich, 304.

39 Iutkevich, 304.

40 Iutkevich, 304. Other German Expressionist films denounced by critics include F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Faust* (1926).

41 See, for example, V. Aden, 'Kino-khudozhnik na zapade i v SSSR', *Kino-zhurnal ARK* no. 3 (1926): 16–18 and K. Gazdenko, 'Sovetskii byt na sovetskom ekrane', *Kinofront* no. 1 (1927): 9.

42 Bl. F., 'Rol′ kino-khudozhnika v kino-proizvodstve', *Sovetskii ekran* no. 10 (1925): 72.

43 Examples of other Soviet films which critics praised for their stark sets include *Mother* (Mat′, 1926) and *The End of St. Petersburg* (Konets Sankt-Peterburga, 1927), both of which Sergei Kozlovskii worked on as the *khudozhnik*.

44 Vsevolod Pudovkin, 'O khudozhnike v kino' [1925] in his *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975), 117–118.

45 Pudovkin, 118.

46 Kuleshov, 'O dekoratsii', 188. Although Kuleshov later identified *Your Acquaintance* as the first time that maximum economy was achieved in set design, his work to create sparse sets is apparent in earlier films, such as *The Alarm* (Nabat, 1917) and *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (Neobychainye prikliucheniia mister Vesta v strane Bolshevikov, 1924).

47 Rodchenko, 'Khudozhnik i material′naia sreda v igrovom fil′me', 14.

48 Rodchenko, 14. Neither of the scenes showing the Soviet reporter's office or the female journalist's room survive.

49 Rodchenko, 15.

50 As with Kuleshov, Rodchenko's distinction between the role of the '*khudozhnik*' and that of the '*dekorator*' is similar to the distinction in the US film industry during this period of the role of the 'art director' and that of the 'set designer'.

51 See, for example, Bl. F, 'Rol′ kino-khudozhnika v kino proizvodstve'; Dmitrii Kolupaev, 'O dekoratsiiakh', *Kino-zhurnal ARK* no. 2 (1925): 34; Isaak Makhlis, 'Rol′ khudozhnika v kino', *Kino-zhurnal ARK* no. 11–12 (1925): 15–16; Sergei Kozlovskii, 'Prava i obiazannosti kino-khudozhnika', *Kino-zhurnal ARK* no. 11–12 (1925): 16–17; Aden, 'Kino-khudozhnik na zapade i v SSSR'; and D. Kolupaev, 'Khudozhnik v kino-proizvodstve', *Kino-zhurnal ARK* no. 2 (1926): 18.

52 S. Kozlovskii, 'Tekhnika kinoatel′e', *Kino i kul′tura* no. 5 (1925): 57–59.

53 Kozlovskii, 57.

54 See S. Kozlvoskii, 'Prava i obiazannosti kino-khudozhnika'; his 'Sistema fundusov v kino-dekoratsiiakh', *Kino front* no. 4 (1928): 4–5; and Nikolai M. Kolin and Sergei Kozlovskii, 'Khudozhnik-arkhitektor v kino' [1930], *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* no. 99 (2009): 378–422 (395).

55 See Bl. F, 'Rol′ kino-khudozhnika v kino proizvodstve'; Kolupaev, 'O dekoratsiiakh'; Makhlis, 'Rol′ khudozhnika v kino'; and Kolupaev, 'Khudozhnik v kino-proizvodstve'.

56 Kozlovskii, 'Tekhnika kinoatel′e', 58.

57 Kozlovskii, 59.

58 In Germany, from the mid-1920s onwards, there also arose a debate as to whether cinema set design should be approached as a 'painterly' or an 'architectural' practice. However, the understanding of the distinction between these two approaches departed notably from that in Russia. As Bergfelder, Harris and Street note, supporters of the 'painterly' tendency, such as Walter Reimann, argued that cinema set design should be based on experimenting with light, modelling of space and editing techniques to create more 'cinematic' effects. On the other hand, advocates of the 'architectural' tendency adhered to principles of set design derived from the theatre. See Bergfelder, Harris and Street, *Film Architecture and the Transnational Imagination*, 46–56. For Sabine Hake, film architects remained true to their training in the theatre, constructing sets that followed the static order of

Rakhal′s similarly included a glass elephant figurine in *Bed and Sofa* (Tret′ia Meschanskaia), on which he also worked as the *khudozhnik* in 1927, using it to decorate the dressing table of the female protagonist Liuda, who indulges in activities that do not conform to the new Soviet way of life.

the proscenium stage. See S. Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001), 52.

59 'Rezoliutsiia sektsii khudozhnikov arkhitektorov', *Kinofront* no. 2 (1928): 12–13.

60 'Rezoliutsiia sektsii khudozhnikov arkhitektorov', 13.

61 Kolin and Kozlovskii, *Khudozhnik-arkhitektor v kino*, 378–422.

62 Kolin and Kozlovskii, 385–86.

63 For discussion of the origins of the *fundus*, see Ch. Sabinski [Czesław Sabiński], 'Iz zapisok starogo kinomastera', *Iskusstvo kino* no. 5 (1936): 60–63 and Boris Mikhin, 'Rozhdenie fundusa' [date unknown], *Iz istorii kino* vol. 9 (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1965), 148–54.

64 Varvara Stepanova, *Novyi lef* [1928], *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* no. 32–35 (1997): 22.

65 A. Rodchenko, 'M-R. 80X100. S-Zh', *Sovetskoe kino* no. 8–9 (1927): 19.

66 Rodchenko, 'M-R. 80X100. S-Zh', 19.

67 Rodchenko, 19.

68 See, for example, Kolupaev, 'O dekoratsiiakh'; Genri, 'Kartonnyi domik (na fabrike 'Mezhrabpom-Rus´')' *Sovetskii ekran* no. 8 (1928): 56; A. Anostschenko, 'Metodika kinooformleniia', *Kino i kul'tura* no. 5 (1929): 21–24; G. Kedrov, 'Put´ dekoratsii', *Sovetskii ekran* no. 29 (1929): 5; and Georgi Baizengerts, 'Kino-arkhitektura segodnia i zavtra', *Kino i kul'tura* no. 3 (1929): 6.

69 Anon., 'Khudozhnik v kino. Beseda s khudozhnikom S. M. Kozlovskim, avtorom fundusnoi sistemy dekoratsii', *Sovetskoe kino* no. 8–9 (1927): 18–19.

70 Gough, *The Artist as Producer, 121–50.*

71 Osip Brik cited in Gough, 101.

72 NIKOLAI Tarabukin, *Ot tol'berta k mashine*. Moscow: Rabotnik prosveshcheniia, 1923. In a series of lectures, published in *Lef*, the production theorist Boris Kushner also argued that artists must direct their attention to improving production systems. See B. Kushner, 'Organizatory proizvodstva', *Lef* no. 3 (1923): 97–103.

73 Tarabukin, *Ot tol'berta k mashine*, 33

74 Tarabukin, 32.

75 For discussion of how the film-makers' conception for the film evolved, see Noël Carroll, 'Cinema Nation Building: Eisenstein's *The Old and the New*' in his *Engaging the Moving Image* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press,

2003), 303–22 and P. Cavendish, *The Men with the Movie Camera: The Poetics of Visual Style in Avant-Garde Cinema of the 1920s* (London: Berghahn Books, 2013), 104–14.

76 Burov was a close associate of Le Corbusier, whom he met in Paris. When Le Corbusier visited the Soviet Union in 1928, Burov acted as his translator. See S. O. Khan-Magomedov, *Andrei Burov* (Moscow: Russkii avangard, 2009), 45–56. For images of Burov's collective dairy farm, see 'Arkhitekturnye kadry kino-kartiny 'General´naia linia' Sovkino v postanovke S. M. Eizenshteina. Arkhitektura A. K. Burova', *Sovremennaia arkhitektura* no. 5–6 (1926): 136–37.

77 Andrei Burov, 'Arkhitektura i kino' [unpublished, 1929]. RGALI. f. 1925, op. 1, khr. ed. 1862.

78 Anne Nesbet, *Savage Junctures: Sergei Eisenstein and the Shape of Thinking* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 99.

79 'General´naia liniia (beseda s S. M. Eizenshteinom)', *Kinofront* no. 4 (1927): 29–30.

80 'General´naia liniia (beseda s S. M. Eizenshteinom)', 29–30.

81 See Ravich, 'General´naia liniia bez kovychek', *Sovetskii ekran*, no. 6 (1929): 1 and 'General´naia liniia (beseda s S. M. Eizenshteinom)', 29–30.

82 Nikolai Lukhmanov, 'Zhizn´ kak ona dolzhna byt´', *Sovetskii ekran* no. 15 (1928): 6 and 'Zhizn´ kak ona dolzhna byt´', *Kino i kul'tura* no. 1 (1929): 29–37. Lukhmanov also argued that the non-fiction *kul'turfil'm How You Live* (Kak ty zhivesh´, 1927) [non-extant] was exemplary for representing a rational solution to questions of domestic life.

83 'Zhizn´ kak ona dolzhna byt´', *Kino i kul'tura* no. 1 (1929), 37.

84 See, for example, Vsevolod Vishnevskii, 'Protiv kamernoi kinematografii', *Kino* no. 20 (April 29, 1937): 2.

85 Vladimir Kaplunovskii, 'Khudozhnik v kino', *Iskusstvo kino* no. 1 (1936): 38–39.

86 See, for example, Mikhail Levin, 'Khudozhnik v kinoatel´e', *Sovetskoe kino* no. 11 (1935): 44–49; Natan Al´tman, 'Khudozhnik v kino', *Iskusstvo kino* no. 3 (1936): 22; Boris Dubrovskii-Eshke, 'Voprosy dekoratsionnoi tekhniki', *Iskusstvo kino* no. 6 (1937): 60–64; and S. Iutkevich, 'Rezhisser i khudozhnik v kino', *Iskusstvo kino* no. 7 (1939): 14–21.

87 Nikolai Suvorov, 'Khudozhnik v kino' [1938], *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* no. 99 (2009): 301–3 (303).