

Summary

Tarkovsky. Encyclopaedia

The book – a compendium of life and works of a Russian film director, Andrei Tarkovsky – is a monograph in the form of entries of various nature. The alphabetically arranged entries are preceded by a thematic index compiling entries in the following groups: Feature Films; Other Creative Works and Plans; On Film Art; Tarkovsky on Others, Others on Tarkovsky; Path of Life; Life Rules.

There are more than 200 entries on all feature films made by Tarkovsky, starting from his diploma film. The entries on particular films contain information on the idea for them, present the stages of work on the script, preparations for filming and the difficulties encountered by the director as he submitted proposals for his subsequent projects. The entries also present Tarkovsky's methods on the set, his work with the actors while shooting particular scenes and the contribution made by the director's collaborators. The author used the director's notes and comments, as well as the memories of the actors and film crew working with Tarkovsky; in the case of *Mirror*, the memories of Marina Tarkovska, the director's sister, were also used.

Separate entries are dedicated to a detailed analysis and interpretation of particular threads, scenes and film characters, the aesthetics and cultural contexts of the films, their subject and form, the visual and audio layers, the presentation of the inner world of the film characters. The author's interpretation of the films embeds them in the tradition of art, spirituality and anthropology. The book also shows the objections levelled against the films by film and Party authorities in the USSR and how Tarkovsky's films were perceived by film critics and viewers.

Nearly 30 entries are devoted to other creative works and Tarkovsky's plans. They discuss the theatrical production of *Hamlet* and the opera *Boris Godunov*, Tarkovsky's books, his documentary *Tempo di viaggio*, unrealized scripts, many ideas, projects and plans as well as his appearances in films, his work as an art director and his radio play.

A group of 20 entries explores Tarkovsky's understanding of film art, his statements and opinions on the cinema. For Tarkovsky, film was a tool which could lead to the spiritual transformation of the viewer. For the Russian director, a movie was a deed, cinematography was optical gnosis, a film haiku showing the complexity of the relationship between man and the world. The protagonist of Tarkovsky's films is a "weak man", modelled on Dostoyevsky's characters. The entries in this group also focus on the director's approach to technical issues connected with the film: colour, costumes, editing and sound. They describe Tarkovsky's ways of working with actors and his attitude to Stanislavsky's method, as well as his perception of auteur cinema and his stand on the commercial one.

More than 30 entries are devoted to Tarkovsky comments on other film directors and their works. Among them are the most outstanding film makers in the history of world cinema. The author explores the special relations Tarkovsky had with Sergei Parajanov and Ingmar Bergman. Other entries present opinions on Tarkovsky expressed by renowned directors and Tarkovsky's collaborators. They

■ Summary

also describe how Tarkovsky's films inspired other directors and how he was fascinated by outstanding works of film art, including the Polish Film School.

A group of more than 60 entries devoted to Tarkovsky's life presents his family, his father Arseniy Tarkovsky, as well as the places where he spent his childhood, war years and holidays; the entries also explore how Tarkovsky referred to this period in his film *Mirror*. The author describes Tarkovsky's school years, his additional music and painting lessons, and evokes the memories of Tarkovsky's sister and friends. He also recalls Tarkovsky's participation in a geological expedition, the entrance exam to a film school in Moscow, a script written at that time, his directing studies and short films. Surviving documents are discussed: Tarkovsky's *curriculum vitae* from 1954, his high school and higher education diplomas. The entries show Tarkovsky's subsequent fate: his decision to stay in the West and his efforts to enable his son to leave the USSR. Tarkovsky's letters to the secretaries of the Soviet Communist Party, the president of the USA and his father are quoted. The author refers to Tarkovsky's dreams described in his diary.

Nearly 20 entries are devoted to the most important rules concerning human life, which Tarkovsky talked about in his interviews and speeches. They include, among other things, the purpose of art and its relation to spiritual development, the meaning of faith, freedom, wealth, happiness and dignity, the responsibility that comes with talent and the discrepancy between human spirituality and the necessity to live in the material world, which Tarkovsky referred to as the "Tolstoy's complex".

The book ends with a timeline of life and works of Andrei Tarkovsky. It also includes the director's filmography and an extensive bibliography of Tarkovsky's publications, comments and interviews from the years 1959–2008, arranged in the chronological order, as well as the publications and archival materials used in the book.

For students, especially of film studies or film, this book is a proposal for analysis and interpretation of a film work. For people interested in history and cinema tradition it is a detailed presentation of one of the greatest masters. And for those interested in or studying Russian culture it is a supplement to their knowledge about it.

Tarkovsky. Encyclopedia is an invitation to an individual journey through Tarkovsky's artistic universe.

SEWERYN KUŚMIERCZYK – a filmologist and culturologist. Professor at the Faculty of Polish Studies, University of Warsaw. Head of the research group for the study of film. He is the founder of a scientific school of film studies that focuses on the original method of anthropological-morphological analysis of the film work. His research areas include auteur cinema, analysis and interpretation of the film work (with particular emphasis on the anthropological perspective), the history of Polish cinema, and cinematography.

Seweryn Kuśmierczyk is the author of the monographs: *The Feature Film as an Image of the Inner Experience of a Character* (*Zagubieni w drodze. Film fabularny jako obraz doświadczenia wewnętrznego*, 1999), *The Book of Films by Andrei Tarkovsky* (*Księga filmów Andrieja Tarkowskiego*, 2012), *The Hero's Journey in a Polish Feature Film* (*Wyprawa bohatera w polskim filmie fabularnym*, 2014), *Antoni Krauze. Feature Films, Documentaries* (*Antoni Krauze. Filmy fabularne, filmy dokumentalne*, 2021). He prepared a book *“My Every Film Was Different”. Talking to Witold Sobociński* (*“Każdy mój film był inny”. Rozmowy z Witoldem Sobocińskim*, 2022).

Together with Lidija Rezončnik he has written *Mojstrovine poljske književnosti in filma: “Faraon”, “Svatba”, “Mati Ivana Angelska”* (2021) and *Masterpieces of Polish Literature and Film. “Pharaoh”, “The Wedding”, “Mother Joan of the Angels”* (2023).

Originator and scientific editor of the series *Monographs of Masterpieces of Polish Cinema*.

Scientific editor of the monographs: *The Anthropology of a Character in Film* (*Antropologia postaci w dziele filmowym*, 2015), *“Pharaoh”: The Poetics of the Film* (*“Faraon”: Poetyka filmu*, 2016), *The Inner Experience of a Hero in Film* (*Doświadczenie wewnętrzne bohatera w dziele filmowym*, 2017), *“The Wedding”. A Film Mandala* (*“Wesele”: Filmowa mandala*, 2022) and editor of the book *“Pharaoh”. Talks About the Film* (*“Faraon”: Rozmowy o filmie*, 2017).

He is the translator and author of books by Andrei Tarkovsky: *The Tolstoy Complex* (*Kompleks Tołstoja*, 1989) and *Sculpting in Time* (*Czas utrwalony*, 1991 and 2007) as well as the first full international edition of Tarkovsky's *Diaries* and *Screenplays* (*Dzienniki* and *Scenariusze*, 1998).

He is the editor of Jerzy Wójcik's books: *The Labyrinth of Light* (*Labirynt światła*, 2006) and *Film Art* (*Sztuka filmowa*, 2017) and the creator of the online studies film project *Education of the Look* (*Edukacja Spojrzenia*).

Translated by Bożena Lesiuk