

Document Citation

Title	Zerkalo
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Source	<i>Los Angeles International Film Exposition</i>
Date	1981 Apr 05
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Zerkalo (The mirror), Tarkovsky, Andrei, 1975

CONTEMPORARY CINEMA

5G 7:00 pm Sunday, April 5

USSR

1981 LA Filmex

ЗЕРКАЛО

(The Mirror)

1974. Color/Black & White.

1.66 format. 102 min.

In Russian with English subtitles

Producer: E. Waisberg/*Director-Screenwriter:* Andrei Tarkovsky/*Cinematographer:* Georgi Rerberg/*Editor:* L. Feginova/*Music:* Eduard Artemyev/*Principal Cast:* Margareta Terekhova, Philip Yankovsky, Oleg Yankovsky, Nikolai Grinko/*Production Company:* Mosfilm/*Print Source:* Sovexport

Tarkovsky's film is one of the masterworks of the 1970's, and one of the most lustrous achievements of the Russian cinema (yet is rarely seen outside the Soviet Union). It is autobiographical in form, and its director has called it "simple" ("We wanted to make a simple film which would signify only what was shown") without symbolism. This is both true and misleading. Even more than *Andrei Rublev* and *Solaris* (Filmex 72), it is a work of complexity, multi-layered, filled with hauntingly evocative and disturbing imagery, and passages of enormous power and impact.

The Mirror is a film about memory. The theme: the individual memories of the protagonist (Tarkovsky himself) contained within the wider collective memory of the society in which he was raised. There are dream sequences, flashbacks, and newsreel footage. The characters of wife and mother are interchangeable: the mother is sometimes played by Margarita Terekhova and sometimes by L. Tarkovskaya, the director's real mother. Tarkovsky's father reads his own poems on the soundtrack. This is not "simple" as we commonly used the word, but neither is the film hermetically sealed, an intellectual puzzle. *The Mirror* is an eloquent, hauntingly beautiful remembrance of things only recently past. —Richard Whitehall

