

Campus Cinema

Now this is diversity. Ann Arbor will share in the benefits of *glasnost* Saturday with a Retrospective of Soviet Underground Cinema at the Michigan Theater. A group of five Soviet filmmakers and scholars will be in Ann Arbor for 10 days to establish ties with the community and present six short films, two of which have never been seen in America. The event offers a rare opportunity to encounter people and art from a world unknown to most of us.

"Parallel" or underground Soviet films are produced outside of the government-controlled studio system and are consequently produced with smaller budgets and inferior equip-

ment. The films are also ironic and inventive.

Among the leading filmmakers of the parallel cinema are the Moscow brothers Gleb and Igor Aleinikov; Igor is part of the delegation to Ann Arbor. One of their films which will be appearing, *Tractors*, is a hilarious spoof on Stalinist propaganda films which praised industry and its symbol, the tractor. While riding a tractor, the narrator relates, "My flesh creeps... a tremor of delight penetrates me... there's only me and the tractor." He also notes the "extraordinary sexual power" of tractor drivers.

Other parallel films, such as *War and Peace* by Vladimir Zakharov

and *Waiting for deBil* by the Aleinikovs, are more experimental. With its disturbing images, industrial noise/music, and a vaguely discernable plot, *Waiting for deBil* is not only reminiscent of David Lynch's *Eraserhead*, but also of the type of experimental film seen every year at the Ann Arbor Film Festival (one of the co-sponsors of the event). Next week, in fact, the Aleinikovs and Pyotr Pospelov will become the first Soviet filmmakers to ever enter the Film Fest.

"In spite of the vast separation of space, how much we truly share with these people and these artists is exciting and inspiring," says Ira Konigsberg, chair of the Film/Video

department, the other co-sponsor. "[The event] offers an opportunity to see film as a medium of personal expression and individual creativity. These films are not meant to fit preconceived modes of presentation, but are meant as immediate expressions of individual conscience which break down the cultural walls."

You can break the walls 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the Michigan Theater, when the six films will be shown. The Soviet delegation will also appear Tuesday at 4 p.m. in the Trueblood Theater in the Frieze Building for a talk on parallel cinema and an informal discussion.

— Michael John Wilson