

ANOTHER FESTIVAL OF SOVIET FILMS

Arranged by Australia-Soviet House, six Soviet films of international repute will be screened at the Union Theatre on February 25, 26, 27 and 28.

The program, which will be representative of the wide range and variety of the Soviet cinema, will include *The Great Turning Point*, Cannes International Festival prize-winner, a musical film and two famous films of natural life.

Here are brief previews of some of the films to be screened:—

The Great Turning Point
WINNER of a Stalin Prize and the principal prize at the International Film Festival at Cannes in 1946, *The Great Turning-Point* has a large historic theme—it portrays the victory at Stalingrad; the triumph of purposeful and organised human will-power, strong enough to turn the wheel of history. This is a war film but not a battle film.

The producer, Ermier, and the author of the script, Chirskov, writing about their film, said: "Stalingrad represented not only the triumph of staunchness, endurance and iron courage. It was primarily a victory of human thought and will-power over what seemed the fatal powers of unfavorable circumstances, over an enemy vastly superior in men and machines, over the most exact calculations of the German generals who claimed a precision second to none in the world. Against the background of these events we saw, in clear outline, the figures of the men who controlled the events. In the course of the war there came to the forefront a galaxy of able and skilled generals—the prototypes of the heroes of our film."

Although the real names of the participants are not given and the city itself is not named, this film is a dramatic portrayal of actual happenings and of the men who organised that decisive victory to which we owe our own survival.

★

Adventure in Bokhara

THIS film centres round the picturesque personality of Naaredin, folk hero of the 14th century, when he was known from Damascus to Tashkent as the courageous and witty spokesman of the poor. This film, made in the Uzbek Studio at Tashkent, is suggestive of the colorful folk traditions existing in those formerly isolated oriental regions of the USSR which, up to 30 years ago, had changed very little through the centuries and which knew very little of modern institutions—let alone producing their own films.

The fabulous city of Bokhara in which the film is set is still a place of romantic interest to the USSR. Nowadays a modern centre of the Uzbek Republic, its history goes back 3000 years.

Its mosques and minarets, its ancient defence wall and its once-dreaded "tower of death" provide a spectacular setting for the story of Naaredin, called the Robin Hood of the Orient, who, as the courageous and witty spokesman of the poor, defies the ruler of the eastern world.

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Vigor of Life

VIGOR of Life won a Stalin Prize for its producer, Zguridi, who began to make his reputation with films

on popular scientific themes, such as life in the depths of the sea. His film, *Sands of Middle Asia*, was awarded a Stalin Prize. Zguridi said:

"This magnificent film of wild life in the Russian forest is a fitting counterpart to the splendidly executed *"Sands of Middle Asia."*

★

White Fang

IN *White Fang*, we recognise the same producer's artistry and patience in the filming of wild animals in their natural surroundings. This is not a documentary. It is a screen adaptation of a literary work of art—Jack London's famous story of a wolf-cub. As in Zguridi's other films, there are fascinating sequences in which the mystery of the forest is unfolded in a series of dramatic episodes enacted by wolves, wolf-cubs and a family of sables. The drama of the film is heightened by a definite sequency in plot, the interest being centred throughout on the development of the chief personage—White Fang himself.

★

Cherevichki

CHEREVICHKI (the Little Slippers) is the screen version of a Chaikovsky opera, which was based on the story "Christmas Eve," by the famous writer Gogol. Gogol drew on Ukrainian folk-lore for his story of Cossacks, a village beauty, the devil and the blacksmith who outwits him. It is full of the robust humor of the Ukrainian peasantry. The liveliness and vitality of the actors and the beauty of their singing make this a most enjoyable film.

★

Sukhe-Bator

SUKHE-BATOR, which will be shown for the first time in Australia, is a powerful picture dealing with recent Mongolian history and the remarkable figure of the popular leader who led his country's struggle against foreign repression and became the first head of the Mongolian People's Republic. This little-known Republic bordering on the USSR has a long history. The country's life—its past, its natural and human resources and the new opportunities opening up for its people—were the subject of the Soviet film *Mongolia* that was shown here recently.

The stirring times when Sukhe-Bator led his people forward to a new way of life are portrayed in this new film.

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INQUIRIES about these films and reservations for all screenings can be made at Australia-Soviet House, 336 Flinders Lane (MB 2331). No tickets will be available at the theatre.

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