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The Image of a Child as a Young in the Cinema of the Soviet Thaw

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While adults destroy their dreams, children try to realize them. A child of the Thaw is not a helpless creature lost in the city; he is a personality who tries to find his place in the huge world. The child's image in the cinema has changed since the release of Tatiana Lukashevich's “The Foundling.” The main character of the movie “Splendid Days” can defend his rights without the help of children's services.

The generation gap is carefully analyzed in such Thaw movies as “Ivan's Childhood,” “Destiny of a Man,” “The Boy and the Dove,” “Welcome, or No Trespassing.” So, we can state that there was a big misunderstanding between children and adults.

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THEIMAGEOFACHILDASAYOUNGINTHECINEMAOFTHESOVIETTHAW

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The Image of a Child as a Young in the Cinema of the Soviet Thaw

Alena Ianushko

Introduction

The character of the Thaw cinema is a young person who was born at a time of great uncertainties. The Soviet Thaw is characterized by a new conflict, which is based on the misunderstanding between children and adults. The appearance of the Soviet juvenile cinema can be marked by the release of the movie "Broken shoes" by Margarita Barskaya. This genre was further explored during the period of the Thaw.

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The period of the thaw influenced all groups of young people. They had to face reality ("Walking the Streets of Moscow, Ilyich's Gate") and confront their teachers' dogmatism ("We'll Live Till Monday"). The same was true about children.

The development of a young character in the Thaw cinema can be analyzed by studying of the conflict between the child and society. Besides, it's necessary to empathize that the idea of a child's consciousness is an essential feature of the Thaw.

I. A Young Character

a) French and Soviet young characters

The movie characters created by directors embodied the manifest of freedom and humanity. The Thaw character acts as the voice of the director. Young characters took up a significant position in the cinema of the Thaw period. Being the embodiment of a new epoch, children and the youth have to conflict with the older generation.

The Soviet cinema of the 60s was given the name New Soviet Wave. In 1954 in the essay "A certain tendency of the French cinema," Francois Truffaut, a French movie director, expressed his perspective on the cinema. His ideas became the basis for French New Wave. Truffaut was the first man who spoke on this particular topic. Antoine Doinel's growing up story reveals the child's conflict with the adult world. The film "The 400 Blows"[1] is about Antoine Doinel, who can be considered an alter-ego of the director. The character, like the director himself, tries to communicate with his surroundings. However, he is misunderstood by the parents, who cannot see the reality outside their value system. The world has changed. So, the previous perception of reality also needs to be reformed.

The Soviet young movie character, like the character of the French New Wave, is a person who has the right to express his thoughts openly. The topic of existential crisis is well known to the young character in the cinema of the Thaw. The 20-year-old characters from Marlen Khutsiev's movie "Ilyich's Gate" and the 5-year-old boy from Georgiy Daneliya and Igor Talankin's "Splendid Days" feel lost. In the world of adults, young characters have to face misunderstanding and overcome it. By the way, the older generation cannot advise the younger and more conscious ones.

"The Mischief Makers" by Francois Truffaut depicts a gang of boys who examine the life and its social aspects. The characters walk in the streets and persecute two young lovers. Their secret plan of moving around the city can be explained by their curiosity and desire to be close to Bernadette, a young woman they are infatuated with. In the world of adults, the young characters gather in groups and develop their models of behavior. In Elem Klimov's comedy "Welcome, or No Trespassing," made in 1964, both the children and the camp counselors are against the rules of the head of the Pioneer Camp. They develop a secret plan of a theatrical procession. Thus, the appearance of like-minded groups can be viewed as a common trend for French and Soviet films of the 60s.

Young characters have to confront the adults' world. For example, Mikhail Kalik's movie "Man Follows the Sun" shows the conflict between a child and society. Most people don't treat a child as a personality.

The main character of Albert Lamorisse's fantasy featurette is a little boy. In the movie, you may see children walking across the town. French movie "The Red Balloon" follows the city adventures of the boy who carries a big red balloon. Adults believe that it is extremely indecent to bring a balloon to school, church,

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or on the tram. The hero has to leave the ball on the street. So, the boy has to leave it in the street. However, the red balloon is a fictitious character with a soul and emotions of its own. The ball follows the tram and then patiently waits for the boy. The adventurous story ends with a cluster balloon ride over the city. The boy becomes greater than the adults who close themselves off from the world. He is open to the world and hovers over it like a bird.

Andrei Konchalovsky's short film "The Boy and the Dove" brings up a similar theme. The flight of a bird symbolizes the highest degree of freedom. The young character realizes that the tethered pigeon feels caged up and sets the bird free.

Soviet and French children's movies of the 1960s have the same feature, which is the freedom of young characters and awareness in decision making. The young character of Louis Malle's movie "Zazie in the Metro" dreams about visiting the Paris metropolitan. Zazie tries every Metro station, but all are shut. So, she decides to explore Paris walking.

The young characters of the 1960s go outside from the closed space of their houses despite the prohibitions of adults. This "despite" encourages children to follow the sun and fly in the sky.

However, the young characters are confronted with changes in society. The situation in cities in the 60s is far from being perfect. We can state that time and values have changed. In Tatyana Lukashevich's movie "The Foundling," we see that everyone wants to use a girl, trying to claim his right to adopt her.

b) Archetypes of the Thaw period

Lidiya Alekseevna Zaytseva says about the appearance of new movie characters the following: "the joy of knowledge, the thirst for color transformation, the dizzy carelessness, the acceptance of everything that surrounds us- all these things made their way through everyday specifics in almost every modern work." [1]Young characters of the Thaw period explore life. The art of that time defined several metalanguage categories in which we can trace the connection between the concepts "HOME and ROAD." These two archetypes represent human origin and existential spatiality. The YOUNG HERO is a man of the Thaw, who forms a basic archetype in the mythologized structure.

In the movie "Splendid Days," released in 1960, the house symbolizes family values. Seryozha, the main character, faces a tragedy when his family moves to another city and leaves the boy alone in the old house. The home doesn't have the same power without the family. The family is the most precious thing for the character. A home is a place where the life of Seryozha starts. It is a place where his life guidelines and values are formed.

Andrei Tarkovsky's short movie "The Steamroller and the Violin" shows how the young characters go outside from the closed space of their houses. Going outside and crossing the yard is a real challenge for a seven-year-old boy. The character has to confront reality; he tries to avoid some other boys mocking him for playing the violin. When Sasha (Igor Fomchenko) becomes a friend of the driver of a steamroller, the city no longer seems hostile. Then his own home becomes a place of misunderstanding and lack of freedom. Sasha's mother does not let the boy go for a walk and makes him play the violin at home.

The archetype of the house symbolizes stability, whereas the concept of the road represents movement and development. Mikhail Kalik's movie "Man Follows the Sun" depicts a little boy who goes up to the roof and examines the sun's rays looking at them through the colored glass. The young character sets an unattainable goal to get the sun. The road to the sun is the road to his goals and dreams.

The young characters of the 1960s want to be free. However, their own home becomes a kind of cage for them. The children go outside to explore the world. The end of Francois Truffaut's movie "The 400 Blows" is about getting out of social boundaries. At the end of the movie, Antoine Doinel runs away to the sea. So, the open space of a world without borders is contrasted with the enclosed space of an observation center for troubled youths.

The sun's image in the movie "Man Follows the Sun" can be compared with the image of the sea. It's full of incomprehensible mysteries. The poetic image of the film "Man Follows the Sun" defines its stylistic coloring. We can see streets illuminated by the sun, roads glistening with rain, soap bubbles shimmering in the sun. The whole picture is shown from the subjective perspective of a child. The character of the movie "Man Follows the Sun" is a true man. The little boy has already formed an attitude towards the world of adults and realized his place in this world.

House roofs can be treated as a specific archetype in the cinema of the Thaw. Both the characters' adventures in "Man Follows the Sun" and "The Boy and the Dove" start on the roof of their house. At the end of Andrei Konchalovsky's film "The Boy and the Dove," the main character goes up on the roof. We see that the character's got older. He realizes that the caged bird can never feel free. So, the boy climbs onto the roof and sets the bird free.

II. Generational Conflict

a) I am 20 years old

The conflict of generation is a conflict not only between a child and an adult or a child and society, but

[1] Zaitseva L.A. Screen image of the Thaw period (the 60s): monograph. - M.; SPb.: Nestor-History, 2017.-p 5.

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it is also a conflict between parents and children. Marlen Khutsiev's film “Ilyich's Gate” (1964) begins with the symbolic episode. So, at first, we see three Red Guards walking around Moscow, then the period changes and, the audience meets three young men. The change of time visually indicated in the movie points to the main conflict of the Thaw, which is the conflict of generations.

Sergey Zhuravlyov (Valentin Popov), the main character of the movie, doesn’t have any goals and strong life guidelines as his life was previously broken by the war. The father who died in the war cannot pass on his life experience to the son. When Sergey asks the father’s help, he just gets a typical well-known phrase, "I am 21, and you are 23 years old". The portrait of the young lost generation in the cinema of the Thaw was highly criticized and censored. However, analyzing the young characters’ desire for freedom, we can see that the characters are not secure.

Marlen Khutsiev, Grigory Danelia, Mikhail Kalik tried to establish a dialogue between different generations, but the destructive force of the war ruined their plans. Mikhail Kalik’s drama “Goodbye, Boys,” tells about the future life of the soldiers who are called to the war. In the movie, we can hear the words from Bulat Okudzhava’s song: “And our boys had to part with their youthfulness. They grew up, of their day far ahead.” Inspired by poets of the sixties, the directors continue to develop the theme of freedom in their works. For example, in Khutsiev’s movies, young characters visit the poetry readings at the Polytechnic Museum to get answers to their questions.

The conflict of generations and the poetic theme are intertwined in the film "Man follows the sun." The boy's romantic desire to walk around the globe drives him to start on a journey. During his trip, he explores the world of adults. We hear the policeman’s sermonizing: “Today you follow the sun, tomorrow you will resell cinema movie tickets». However, the character doesn’t pay much attention to the silly words. He doesn’t give up and continues to follow his dream.

b) Adult Children

The main character of the movie "Man follows the sun" is a little boy who is getting older in front of the camera. This character perfectly realizes his ultimate goals. Traveling around the city, the child faces lots of life challengers. The character meets a lottery tickets seller, happy fathers near the maternity hospital, a girl with colorful balloons hurrying to, a motorcyclist performing a deadly stunt; a policeman who scolded the boy for being too independent, a girl watering sunflowers, and her boss, who ordered to rip out the flowers, a shoe polisher who lost his legs in the war; a boy who blows soap bubbles; people from funeral procession; goldfish in the city fountain. In one day, little Sandu (Nika Krimnus) gets acquainted with different aspects of life. By the way, the little Man successfully copes with different challenges. He shows wisdom in the conversation with the policeman, courage in the fight against the director of the park, and insistence in achieving his goal, which is to go around the globe and return home.

The young characters demonstrate independence not only during the traveling, but also in building their own House. In Marlen Khutsiev's film "Two Fyodors" (1958), little Fyodor (Kolya Chursin) helps the senior Fyodor (Vasily Shukshin) to rebuild their war-torn homes. Moreover, the child helps the man to recover and encourages him to live. The relationship between an adult and a little boy is not like a father-son relationship. Two Fyodors are equal, and they treat each other as brothers. The boy isn’t friendly with Natasha (Tamara Semina), who starts living in their home. The character feels like a small child who is not needed in the world of adults. The boy tries to take the same position as Natasha does. He decides to cut off the enemy's hair. However, this plan fails. The senior Fyodor scolds the boy for causing harm to other people. The missing child makes the adults change their attitude towards the child and create new tactics.

The main character of Georgy Danelia and Igor Talankin’s movie “Splendid Days” (1960) can be called a little rebel who does not agree with adults’ point of view. His mother treats him as a little child. However, the 5-year-old boy sees and understands everything. Korostylev (Sergey Bondarchuk), the boy’s foster father, treats Seryozha as an independent person with whom one can seriously discuss plans for the future and share serious thoughts.

The little boy runs after two teenagers who do not pay attention to him. The child shouts to them: “You know what? I have a heart.” Seryozha (Boris Barkhatov) demonstrates his position as he realizes his right to be treated by adults as equals. The world of adults in the film is presented through the eyes of the child. Thus, the audience gets the subjective image of the world, big trees, and tall people. The close-up of the 5-year-old boy’s face is replaced by the long shot of the endless field, where Seryozha is only a small lonely figure.

It seems that the sky touches the ground in Danelia’s movie. However, the sky is not so close; Seryozha has to stand on his toes to reach the sky. The little boy wants to become an adult. He proposes a toast during family dinner, climbs to the roof with the older children, and asks Lukyanych for a file to make an airplane. He criticizes Uncle Petya and says to him: "Uncle Petya, are you a fool?"

Seryozha feels like an adult; his behavior and thoughts show him as a strong personality. Korostylev encourages the boy to express himself. Discussing plans for the future, problems of education Korostylev always takes into account Seryozha's ideas. By buying a bicycle, Korostylev helps the boy to get respect from his peers.

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The whole movie is centered on the life of Seryozha. The main character looks at the collective farm from the top of the belfry, listens to the thoughts of adults about the future, and dreams of traveling by train.

In Danelia's film, an image of childhood is represented by a group of dreamers who seek adults' advice but become disappointed in old-fashioned value systems. Children don't have the right to speak their minds, as the parents have already created a "right" plan for children's future. Children are not treated seriously by adults. Seryozha asks people different questions but does not receive answers. Seryozha's mother (Irina Skobtseva) says: "Children mustn't criticize adults; they must respect them." The conservative society states that children should respect adults' actions, even if they are wrong. The young character of the Thaw fights for his right to be heard.

Seryozha is more impressed by seashell resonance than by Uncle Kostya's story about the long voyages. The tattoos on the body of the captain of the deep voyage make a greater impression on the children. The young characters wrongly take the tattoos as a symbol of freedom and adulthood. The children are ready to accept these improper values.

The Thaw period influenced reality. Everything in the world for children turned upside down and seemed so much better. Thus, in the very first episode of "Man Follows the Sun" we see the world upside down through the eyes of the main character. In this world happiness can be won in the lottery, children can be bribed with ice cream. The police amount the traveling to the sun to an administrative violation. However, the young characters continue on their way. They keep dreaming of reaching the sea and sky.

III. New Voice

a) Unlived childhood

Tatyana Lukashevich's movie "The Founding" (1939) tells a story about a girl walking around the city. Walking around the city on your own is not the main sign of adulthood. However, wandering around the city becomes an exciting adventure for 5-year-old Natasha (Veronika Lebedeva). She faces the adult world, where everyone wants to "take care" of the lost girl. The city was completely different before the war. It was bright, kind, and friendly. The children had parents; the parents had children.

The hairdresser in the movie "Man follows the Sun" says: "Now it makes no sense to remember what was before the war." Before the war, there were different football matches, the shoe shiner had legs, everyone had a childhood. The cinema of the Thaw presents a new image of war and the children of war.

The young character with the war-torn childhood is another theme of the Thaw cinema. In Andrei Tarkovsky's film "Ivan's Childhood" (1962), the childhood of 12-year-old Ivan Bondarev (Nikolai Burlyaev) is shown as an episode of dreams. The main character had to grow up early because he lost his mother and sister. The boy gets rid of childish naivety and infantilism. His actions are motivated by his hatred for the Nazis and the desire to avenge them. This builds the character of the young secret agent.

Little Ivan enjoys the sunlight, watches a flying white butterfly, laughs, but then we hear tense music, the light of the sun is replaced by a shadow, mother's smile dissolves. At this moment, the camera rapidly moves from the picture of the sky to the ground. Ivan wakes up. The plot of "Ivan's Childhood" is based on the previously mentioned archetypes of road and home. The road represents a path of the young characters, and the concept of home shows their ultimate goal. The half-ruined house shown in the last episode becomes the place where Ivan's memories of unlived childhood come to life. "I am my own master," Ivan says to adults who try to control his life. The moral teachings of adults push him to action. The young character is ready to break the ban and fight an enemy. So, he tries to prove his right to fight on an equal basis with adults. Andrei Tarkovsky shows the destructive war that disrupts the natural order of things.

Sergei Bondarchuk's film "Fate of a Man" also depicts a man whose life was destroyed by the war. However, the meeting of Andrei Sokolov (Sergei Bondarchuk) with Vanyushka (Pavel Polunin) becomes a sign of hope for a new life. The child who lost his family during the war starts to believe that childhood will return to him. "After all, one must live, one must somehow," Sokolov tells his son.

In Tarkovsky's movies, all positive images vanish as the war starts. The film begins with an idyllic picture of a forest lit by the sun. We see Ivan looking mischievously straight in the camera. The war will change him.

b) The slogan of freedom

The young characters go outside their houses, go up to roofs. These can be considered the start of freedom. In the film "Welcome or No Trespassing" (1964), Elem Klimov gives the young character the ability to fly.

Comrade Dynin (Yevgeniy Yevstigneyev), the head of the Pioneer Camp, represents remnants of Stalinism. He tries to protect children and camp counselors from the pernicious aspect of the Thaw movement. He believes that Kostya Inochkin (Vitya Kosykh) is a notorious criminal who violates the camp's rules and deserves punishment.

However, the expulsion of Inochkin from the camp makes him a hero in the eyes of the other children. It turns out that the children, the camp counselors, and even the state farmworkers were against the rules imposed by the head. The rehearsal of

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the open day depicts a criticism of post-Stalinist society. The counselors try on old costumes. There are raggedy uncomfortable costumes of "corn - queen of fields" among them. Dynin suppresses the camp counselors and children's dissatisfaction with the program of competitions. The head of the camp doesn't consider the fact that children pronounce the phrase "We are cheerful" with a sad look on their faces. There is only one way to get rid of the system, which is to organize their holiday. The event organized by the children and the camp counselors is highly appreciated by the parents who also want changes.

In the camp of the Thaw, there is no place for restrictions. Now children can swim out alone instead of swimming in the specially designated swimming area, supervised by staff. The grotesque image of Inochkin's flight from the camp to the island becomes a powerful sign for everyone who dreamt of violating the imposed rules. The camera follows Inochkin flying in the sky. We see a panoramic view of the seashore, the children, their parents, and all the camp staff swimming in the sea. Only Dynin is unhappy. He leaves the camp by the old truck.

Flight is the image of freedom in the cinema of the Thaw. Albert Lamoris's film "The Red Balloon" and Andrei Konchalovsky's movie "The Boy and the Dove" are about the young characters' dreams of flying. "Welcome, or No Trespassing" by Elem Klimov explores the characters' dreams of the sea, a long journey, and the sky. In the late 1960s, children get the freedom of action. This causes parenting problems. Freedom gradually turns into permissiveness.

c) Sentimental Education

The analysis of generational conflict helped to look at the parenting issue from another perspective. A new cinema movement, the main image of school, was formed at the end of the 1960s. It continued to flourish during the period of Stagnation. Education ideas proposed in the cinema of the 1970s destroyed Soviet educational principles.

In Stanislav Rostotsky's film "We'll Live Till Monday" (1968), there is no place for formal rules and instructions that Dynin loved so much. The movie focuses on the relationship between teachers and students. All old principles are left in the past. The teacher asks the students to reflect on the theme of love and to write an essay about their understanding of happiness.

Gennadi Poloka's "The Republic of ShKID" tells the story of homeless children. The director brings up the theme of education. Both children and adults try to organize an equal dialogue to solve the educational problem. Relationships between children and adults, based on common views and values, lead to the unwillingness of the youth to recognize the authority of adults. This conflict will serve as a basis for such films as "Practical Joke" (1977) by Vladimir Menshov, "Other People's Letters" (1976) by Ilya Averbakh, and "Dear Yelena Sergeyevna" (1988) by Eldar Ryazanov.

IV. Conclusion

The young hero is one of the main archetypes of the Thaw cinema. This concept is deeply connected with archetypes of Home and Road. The theme of growing up and developing the character is highly important in the films of the Thaw period. The same topic was brought up in the Soviet children films.

The poetic image of a child is a characteristic feature of the cinema of the Thaw. Movies of that time depict a strong image of a young character whose world is shown through his dreams about flying, traveling, reaching the sea and sky. The movies of the Thaw period show the conflict between generations, explore the theme of escapism from reality, unlived childhood, torn by the war. The new reality brings to the screen the image of the existent hero. It's a little man who is trying to find his place in the world.

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The short from the film “The Boy and the Dove” (1961) by Andrei Konchalovsky.

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Films

1. The 400 Blows,1959
Feature sound film
Running time: 99 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Francois Truffaut
Screenwriter: Marcel Moussy, Francois Truffaut
DOP: Henri Decae
Music by: Jean Constantin
Cast overview: Jean-Pierre Leaud as Antoine Doinel, Claire Maurier as Antoine's mother

2. Two Fyodors.1958
Feature sound film
Running time:83 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Marlen Khutsiev
Screenwriter: Valeri Savchenko
DOP: Peter Todorovsky
Music by: Yuliy Meitus
Cast overview: Vasiliy Shukshin as senior Fyodor, Nikolai Chursin as little Fyodor, Tamara Syomina as Natasha.

3. Welcome, or No Trespassing.1964
Feature sound film
Running time: 74 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Elem Klimov
Screenwriter: Semyon Lungin, Ilya Nusinov
DOP: Anatoly Kuznetsov, Mikhail Koroptsov
Music by: Mikael Tariverdiev, Igor Yakushenko
Cast overview: Evgeniy Evstigneev as comrade Dynin, Vitya Kosykh as Kostya Inochkin.

4. Ilyich's Gate. 1964
Feature sound film
Running time: 190 min

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Color: Black and white
Director: Marlen Khutsiev.
Screenwriter: Marlen Khutsiev,Gennady Shpalikov
DOP: Margarita Pilikhina
Music by: Nikolay Sidelnikov
Cast overview: Valentin Popov as Sergey Zhuravlyov, Aleksandr Mayorov - Sergey's father

5. Ivan's Childhood. 1962
Feature sound film
Running time: 96 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Andrei Tarkovsky
Screenwriter: Vladimir Bogomolov, Mikhail Papava
DOP: Vadim Yusov
Music by: Vyacheslav Ovchinnikov
Cast overview: Nikolai Burlyayev as Ivan Bondarev
Valentin Zubkov as Captain Kholin

6. The Steamroller and the Violin.1960
Feature sound movie
Short film
Running time: 46 min
Color: Color
Director: Andrei Tarkovsky
Screenwriter: Andrei Konchalovsky and Andrei Tarkovsky
DOP: Vadim Yusov
Music by: Vyacheslav Ovchinnikov
Cast overview:Igor Fomchenko as Sasha,Vladimir Zamansky as Sergey

7. The Red Balloon
Feature sound movie
Short film
Running time:34 min
Color: Color
Director: Albert Lamorisse
Screenwriter: Albert Lamorisse
DOP: Edmond Sechan
Music by: Maurice Leroux
Cast overview: Pascal Lamorisse as the boy

8. The Boy and the Dove
Feature sound movie
Short film
Running time: 20 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Andrey Konchalovsky, Evgeny Ostashenko
Screenwriter: Andrey Konchalovsky
DOP: Mikhail Kozhin
Music by: Vyacheslav Ovchinnikov
Cast overview: Nikolay Burlyaev as the boy, Vladimir Shurupov as the pigeon owner

9. The Foundling.1939
Feature sound movie
Running time: 76 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Tatyana Lukashevich
Screenwriter: Rina Zelyonaya
Writer: Agniya Barto
DOP: Semyon Sheinin
Music by: Nikolay Kryukov
Cast overview: Veronika Lebedeva as Natasha, Faina Ranevskaya as Lyalya

10. Splendid Days. 1960
Feature sound movie
Running time: 80 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Georgiy Daneliya and Igor Talankin
Screenwriter: Georgiy Daneliya, Vera Panova
DOP: Anatoly Nitochkin
Music by: Boris Tchaikovsky
Cast overview: Borya Barkhatov as Seryozha, Sergey Bondarchuk as Korostelyov,Irina Skobtseva as Seryozha's mother

11. Man Follows the Sun.1962
Feature sound movie
Running time: 72 min
Color: Black and white
Director: Mikhail Kalik
Screenwriter: Valeriu Gajiu, Mikhail Kalik
DOP: Vadim Derbenev
Music by: Mikael Tariverdiev
Cast overview: Nika Krimnus as Sandu

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