



Dziga Vertov: Defining Documentary Film (KINO: The Russian Cinema Series)

Jeremy Hicks

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Pioneer of political documentary and inventor of cinéma vérité, Dziga Vertov has exerted a decisive influence on directors from Eisenstein to Godard. Yet his reputation long rested upon a lone masterpiece, 'Man with a Movie Camera'. Recently, however Vertov has begun to be recognised as the creator of a body of innovative and distinct films and, as Jeremy Hicks argues, documentary as we know it today is unthinkable without the rediscovery of Vertov. This, the first book in English to cover the whole of Vertov's career, reveals him to be an auteur, allowing readers to combine the familiar and less familiar aspects of his filmmaking and thinking in a cohesive narrative.

Jeremy Hicks demonstrates how Vertov draws on Soviet journalistic models for his transformation of newsreel into the new form of documentary film. Through analyses of 'Cine-Pravda No 21' (Leninist Cine-Pravda), 'Cine-Eye', 'Forward Soviet!', 'A Sixth Part of the Earth', 'The Eleventh Year', 'Man with a Movie Camera', 'Enthusiasm', 'Three Songs of Lenin', and 'Lullaby', he shows how Vertov's greatest works combine authentic documentary footage ingeniously for tremendous rhetorical effect.

Today, with the energetic revival of interest in documentary film, Vertov's reflexive and overtly partisan films are of great relevance; but they need to be better known and understood. This is the purpose of 'Dziga Vertov - Defining Documentary Film'.

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