



Sergei Eisenstein's *OCTOBER*, created for the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917, set radical new aesthetic standards. With the help of "intellectual montage" the film presented historical events as an explosive process of liberation from long repression and, as such, fell under the notorious verdict of formalism by means of which nearly all films of the Soviet avant-garde were banned from cinemas.

The film was locked away until the 1960s, yet its authentic revolutionary images were in circulation and used as documentary material in the absence of original recordings. A thorough reconstruction took place at the State Film Archive Gosfilmofond in the mid-1960s. The Munich Film Museum's new digital HD restoration is based on this version, which Gosfilmofond acquired and photographically improved upon with material from the EYE Film Institute in Amsterdam and Berlin's Federal Archive.

## OCTOBER

The great rediscovery lies in reconstructed film music by Edmund Meisel, who composed an Eisenstein film for the first time in 1926. As with *BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN*, the music for *OCTOBER* was created for the German version of the film. Meisel planned his music "according to a recorded system of gradation that should underscore the plot as it unfolds." The result is a score of tremendous innovation whose acoustic soundscape and rhythmic patterns function as a precursor to punk and techno music.

Meisel's film music arose for the (shorter) German version of the film *TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD*, which caused sharp controversy upon its premiere in April 1928. The score was reconstructed based on material stored in the Russian State Archive.

The epochal scores of Edmund Meisel (1894-1930) for films such as *BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN*, *BERLIN. SYMPHONY OF A METROPOLIS* and *OCTOBER* played an influential role in the history of film. Meisel not only experimented with the technological possibilities for musical accompaniment in the theater and the cinema, writing fourteen stage works and ten compositions for silent film, but also conducted and produced radio shows, studio broadcasts and recordings. When he died in 1930, the world of film lost one of its most productive composers. As Leo Hirsch wrote in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, "Meisel was a musician who on some level wrote with his eyes; he was the only composer born to film. His style became the accepted standard, his rhythm fashion."

Director:  
Sergei Eisenstein,  
Grigori Aleksandrov  
(USSR, 1928)  
Music: Edmund Meisel,  
reconstructed and  
orchestrated by  
Bernd Thewes (2012)

Instrumentation:  
1+1/pic+pic.2+ca.2+Ebcl  
+bcl.2+cbsn – 4.2+corn+  
thn.2+btrb.1 – timp.4perc –  
pno – hp – strings  
116 min.

The restored version of  
*OCTOBER* is an initiative  
project of ZDF/ARTE  
realised in co-production  
with Deutschlandradio Kultur,  
the Munich Film Museum,  
the roc berlin and the  
Russian State Archive for  
Literature and Art in Moscow.