RUSSIAN GRADUATE SEMINAR
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

SHOWING OF TWO MOVIES BY BORIS FRUMIN
ERRORS OF YOUTH (1978/1987)
¡VIVA CASTRO! (1993)
FOLLOWED BY A DISCUSSION WITH THE DIRECTOR

TAYLOR INSTITUTION, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
ST GILES, OXFORD OX1 3NA
THURSDAY 8 MARCH 2018
2.30 PM ERRORS OF YOUTH
4.00 PM ¡VIVA CASTRO!
BOTH MOVIES HAVE ENGLISH SUBTITLES
5.30 PM DISCUSSION WITH BORIS FRUMIN, FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION

We are grateful to the Ludwig Fund, New College, and the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages, University of Oxford, for sponsorship of this event.

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Boris Frumin (b. 24 November 1947, Riga) is one of the leading directors to come out of the Soviet ‘new wave’ movement of the 1970s. Educated at the State Film Institute in Moscow (VGIK), he already attracted attention with his prizewinning coursework short, *Three*. His *Diary of a Head Teacher*, shot at Lenfilm in 1974, was controversial enough to earn him a short period of exile at the Riga Studios, where he made *Family Melodrama* (1976). For *Errors of Youth*, made back at Lenfilm, Frumin radically transformed a soft-centered script by Eduard Topol into an unsparing account of late Soviet life. The central character slightly resembles Lindsay Anderson’s protagonist in *Oh Lucky Man* (1973), and has a similar life of desultory sexual encounters and bungled attempts at self-enrichment. Completed in 1978, the film was repeatedly returned for further edits by the State Film Board (Goskino), provoking Frumin’s emigration from the USSR. The film was ‘shelved’ for nearly a decade before being cleared for release in 1987 with the support of the Union of Filmmakers. It was well received at home, and in 1989 was screened in the *Un certain regard* section at Cannes.

Since his emigration, Boris Frumin has directed a further three films, including *Black and White* (1992), *¡Viva Castro!* (1993), and *Illegal* (2006), and has scripted *Street Days* (2010), *Blind Dates* (2013), *Oh, Lucy* (2016), *Brighton 4* (2017), and *Blizzard of Souls* (2017). He also acted as producer of *Hostages* (shown at the Berlin Film Festival, 2017). His films have been widely shown at leading festivals, and in 1993 and 2006, he was a prizewinner at the ‘Window on Europe’ festival in Vyborg, one of post-Soviet Russia’s premier movie events. Until 2017 he taught film at New York University.

As well as *Errors of Youth*, we will be showing *¡Viva Castro!* Set in Gatchina, a small town outside Leningrad, in the mid-1960s, the film follows the life of a group of young people just before and after they leave school. Boris Frumin has commented on the two movies: ‘“Errors” was a Soviet -- under censorship -- product. “Castro” was directed with “no budget”, but no one was “watching” – it was a “perestroika” product. Directing “Castro” -- I had the opportunity to make it my way. But -- then -- small budget, short schedule, accidental crew (after being absent from Lenfilm studio for a few years etc.). It is a Soviet movie made after Soviet times.’