



## **Conserve, Show, Restage, Revivify. The Film as (Trans)portable and Projectable Museum**

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# Conserve, Show, Restage, Revivify. The Film as (Trans)portable and Projectable Museum

Eugénie Zvokane

This text examines two cases in order to start outlining the aspects of a specific relationship between cinema, on the one hand, and museum and exhibition spaces, on the other. It studies two films (*Assa* by Sergei Solovyov and *Jean-Luc Godard, The Disorder Exposed* by Céline Gaillarde and Olivier Bohler) as models of cinematic conservation

and curating invisible and ephemeral museal art forms. These films aim at making visible a work of art made invisible by censorship and the socio-political system in place, or by its public failure, on the one hand, and its brevity, on the other. The author shows how these films work as a (trans)portable museum.

**Keywords:** museum, cinema, Soviet cinema, documentary cinema, exhibition, memory

Amidst the great spectrum of relations between cinema and museum, going from utter fascination to rejection, one of its less studied vectors is the idea that cinema could be (and sometimes already is) the guardian, the missing link, the keeper, and curator of the museum spaces and of pieces of art that initially belong to it. This short text will examine two case studies in order to start outlining the aspects of this specific relationship between cinema on the one hand and museum and exhibition spaces on the other. Of course, a large scale of interactions exists between video, cinematic renditions, and museum and exhibition practices, among which the category of 'exhibition films' made on a regular basis to accompany exhibitions has to be taken in account. Some of them are made without an independent artistic scope, and only to document an exhibition, others present inventive and artistic approaches. The lockdowns around the world, for instance, have inspired museums to invent new ways to convey the museal space through moving image to the audience. These videos are of course very important for spectators and scholars to be able to experience the exhibitions that are no longer available to them. One might imagine a whole scale of films that make an account of real or invented exhibitions. On one side of the spectrum, we could find films whose goal is to make an account of an event rather than to integrate one form of art into another. The two feature films that I intend to analyze in this paper would be situated on the other side of the spectrum.

These are, of course, only two examples from a large collection where real or invented museum spaces are used and represented in feature films.

In France, two edited collective books were dedicated to this specific practice in cinema (Le Maître and Verraes 2013, Jibokji et al. 2018). The authors suggest that we consider cinema as 'a museal potency'—*le cinéma comme puissance muséale* (Le Maître and Verraes 2013: 5). Taking the film *Cinema Museum* by Mark Lewis (2008), Le Maître showed how the experimental director and visual artist 'transformed a medium into an instrument of *musealization*' (Le Maître 2013: 24). My text would like to prolong these reflections and analysis by dwelling on the film as a *conservation* and *curating* practice of invisible and ephemeral art forms.

*Assa* (1987) by Sergey Solovyov, the film in my first case study, aims at making visible a work of art made invisible by censorship and the socio-political system in place. In the other one, the exhibition is also invisible, but more because of its public failure on the one hand and its brevity on the other hand. Even though the museum is an institution present in the form we know it since the seventeenth century (Poulot 2008), the art exhibition itself is in most cases an ephemeral form. In both films I will analyze here, cinema prevents the oblivion of the art piece and pushes the cinema to embody what André Bazin called its ontological function, that of embalming (Bazin 1945). For this reason, I will prefer the term 'museum' to qualify the spaces created by the films, rather than simply equating them to audio-visual exhibitions. Indeed, whereas the exhibition's aim is to present artefacts to the public (and the word's etymology shows that the word was used in different social situations of public displays), and it is most often an ephemeral form, the museum works not only as a display but also as a conservation and preservation space.

Both these films are thus related to what Barbara Le Maître theorized as a 'fiction of restoration' (Le Maître 2018): a film that by its mere existence not only 'projects' a possible utopia of conservation of artefacts from the past but sheds light on them and even changes their future in real life.

My examples come from very different socio-historic and cultural contexts in order to authorize us to observe how these questions are decided and adapted by artists and directors in different contexts. My first example is the cult Soviet film *Assa* by Sergey Solovyov (1987) and my second one is the contemporary French documentary *Jean-Luc Godard, the Disorder Exposed [Jean-Luc Godard, le désordre exposé]*, 2012] by Céline Gailleurd and Olivier Bohler.

### ***Assa* as a 'portable museum'**

The film *Assa* is from the start conceived by Solovyov himself as an *œuvre* linked to contemporary artists. He discovered the artwork of the 'New Artists,' a group created by Timur Novikov in 1982, and decided to put some

of it inside the film. He described this encounter as a vivifying moment for his artistic inspiration: 'I am thankful to this film because it made me discover a completely new continent. It was as if I had been sprinkled with living water' (Solovyov, quoted by Aleynikov 1988: 64). These artists were in fact known only by a small segment of the public and the film thus became a way to present their artwork to a much larger audience. Solovyov formulated this in the following way: 'They were half-forbidden, and I was completely authorized!' (Solovyov 2012). Remember that some of the artists whose work will appear in Assa were part of the famous 'bulldozer exhibition' which happened on the wasteland between the streets Profsoiuznaia and Ostrovitianova in Moscow on 15 September 1974. This exhibition of non-conformist and avant-garde art was repressed by actual bulldozers sent by Brezhnev, that destroyed most of the art pieces there. However, as Emanuel Landolt reminds us, this decision 'and the indignant reaction on the international level that followed, forced the regime to soften the political repression, which profoundly changed the artistic landscape (with the first organization of semi-official exhibitions)' (Landolt 2015: 6). This is why Solovyov uses this apparently strange formula of 'half-forbidden' to qualify the artists he collaborated with for his feature film. They survive in the margins, unknown to a large public.

Making the most of his status in the Soviet context as a renowned and respected film director and of what it allowed him to do, Solovyov was completely aware of his part as a conserver, a keeper of these art pieces inside his film. The actor who played the main part in the film, Sergey 'Afrika' Bugayev, a musician and a plastic artist, talked about their collaboration as a way of 'relocating' their art inside the film: 'We transported our ways, our forms of work and of relationships on the platform of Solovyov's film. We were very thankful to him because he was very attentive to and respectful with every proposal and suggestion made by Sergey Shutov and Timur Novikov' (Bugayev in Barabanov 2019: 255).

While preparing the film, Solovyov discovered the flat that Novikov transformed into the art gallery named 'Assa.' He immediately was impressed by the artistic potency of what he saw, but also took on the role of an art curator and conserver: 'Sergey Bugayev 'Afrika' took me to his room, where he lived, which was later reproduced exactly as it was in the film Assa. When I entered it, I immediately said: "(...) this needs to be transported in the film exactly in the same way as the Hermitage Museum was evacuated during the war. You need to put a number on every item, take it away and reinstall it identically on the set"' (Solovyov in Barabanov 2019: 71-72).

I used the term of 'relocating' on purpose; this is a notion proposed by Francesco Casetti (Casetti 2015). Casetti uses it to theorize moments when cinema tends to be presented *not* on the wide screen and thus is being relocated to another screen such as the computer or other interactive screens. This term is also quite useful in our case as it emphasizes the spatial transference of the artworks from the real-life space which is accessible only to few viewers and spectators and which is ephemeral (nowadays, only a few testimonies exist of this gallery and of its precise installation) to a more lasting

venue that is also accessible to many more viewers: the set and the film itself. In this sense, it is also quite striking that the title of the film is the same as the name of the art gallery as if one was trying to substitute one for the other.

Igor Aleynikov in his critical review of the film insisted on this merger between cinema and other arts which could open 'large new perspectives in our national cinema that are still unexplored' (Aleynikov 1988: 64). The necessity of cinema as a platform for underground and non-conformist artists becomes obvious from the story of the film *premiere*. It was to be organized in the cinema Udarnik, one of the oldest movie theatres in Moscow. Opened in 1931, for a long time considered as the most important movie theatre of the country, in 1989 it still had 1200 seats. Solovyov wanted to accompany the *premiere* screening of the film with an exhibition of avant-garde painters from Moscow and Leningrad, as well as with a concert by underground rock groups (about Solovyov's relationship with the rock groups, see Safarians 2018 and 2019). As Aleynikov put it, he wanted to 'drag out a whole layer of culture from the "underground"' (Aleynikov 1988: 64). Solovyov even had the goal to create on the basis of this event the Moscow Centre of Arts that would highlight the symbiosis and collaboration between different art forms (cinema, painting, music, etc.) But the event aroused many concerns, the director of the cinema started complaining to administrative authorities about the project, considering it as ideologically questionable. Finally, the *premiere* was forbidden at that venue (for the full story of this *premiere*, cf. Solovyov 1988.) The first public screening of *Assa* finally took place on 24 March 1988, at the DK Melz, aka the Dvorets na lauze, also an important venue, but not as big (800 seats) nor as central as the Udarnik: whereas the Udarnik is situated in the heart of Moscow, the Dvorets na lauze is far from the centre and far beyond the Garden Ring. This clearly shows how the Soviet administration tried and effectively managed to marginalize the avant-garde and underground artists in those last years of the Soviet era.

However, the film did perform its part as a 'portable' museum since it started showing in different cinemas in April 1988 and gathered in total more than 17 million viewers during the Soviet period. Even though some of the spectators (or maybe many of them) might not have been aware of the art pieces they saw in the film, they still were made available to them on a very large scale. This is what Natalya Surkova, now an art curator in the city of Perm, tells about her discovery of the non-conformist painters through the screening of *Assa* which she watched in a local cinema theatre in 1988: 'At that time, it was my very first encounter with contemporary art. How could we even know this existed? Until 1989, Perm was a closed city, and I didn't know any local artists at the time' (Surkova 2020).

### The film incorporates the artwork

The art pieces inside the film are quite a few. Among them we can quote the most important ones: *The Communication Tube* by Guennady Donskoy,

Mikhail Roshal-Fedorov, and Viktor Skersis (group Gnezdo, 1975'), *The Iron Curtain* by Gennady Donskoy, Mikhail Roshal-Fedorov, and Viktor Skersis (group Gnezdo, 1975'), the lamp *Hand with a gas mask* by Sergey Shutov. Sergey 'Afrika' Bugayev shows a notebook with his drawings during the film. The first Bananan's dream in the film is an experimental animation made by painting on film by Sergey 'Afrika' Bugayev. The second 'dream' is an excerpt from the film *Nanainana* by Evgeny Kondratyev (1984). Thus, Solovyov really becomes a curator of contemporary art, introducing in his film excerpts from other films, just as they could be screened in a museum. Even though these art pieces might not be numerous enough for a real-life museum, they still appear on a much larger scale than contemporary art would normally do in a Soviet film at the time, which confers a specific status on this film.

What is especially interesting to us is how these art pieces are integrated in the cinema and fiction canvas of the feature film.

There are three different modalities in which Bananan's room is shown in the film. The first one is that of the 'guided tour,' a traditional stylistic exercise in a museum (on the 'guided tour' in cinema, see Lavin 2013). There are two of those in the film. The second one, made by Bananan himself when he comes back to his room after being beaten up, shows in a quite obvious way the director's desire to make the spectator 'visit' this space as a museum visitor, since Bananan, being the lodger and the owner of this room, is not very likely to explore and to discover different items. Still, this is what he does, and the camera lingers on his hands touching and moving around different art objects in the room.



Figure 1. Bugayev visiting his own room. Screenshot of Sergey Solovyov, *Assa* (1987), DVD Extralucid Films 2021.

The longest sequence when we find ourselves inside the room takes place an hour after the beginning of the film. We are inside the 'exhibition' space of the room. Alika and Bananan are talking, and Alika starts looking around the room. She asks: 'Who is this?' This question reroutes the sequence

into a 'guided tour' of the room. Bananan does not stop at the object he was questioned about and continues explaining other items to Aliko: 'This is very much my favourite singer, Nick Cave. And this is Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space. And this is the *Communication Tube*.' The camera, in tune with this new turn of events, leaves the characters and gets closer to the wall, sliding along the wall and the described artefacts. The *Communication Tube* is presented just as in a museum since there is not only the object itself but also a text with a title plate and directions for its use on the wall next to it.



Figures 2 and 3. Bananan points out the artefacts and the text presenting *The Communication Tube*. Screenshots of Sergey Solovyov, Assa (1987), DVD Extralucid Films 2021.

We discover another cinematographic modality of integrating art pieces into the film canvas immediately afterwards. The feature film literally engulfs the art object, since it becomes interactive and then participates in the dramaturgy of the characters' relationships. Bananan explains to Aliko how the *Tube* works in 'position number one' (Aliko speaks, he listens) then in 'position number two' (he speaks, Aliko listens). This display authorizes Aliko to share with him her close relationship with the mafioso Krymov and her



Figures 4, 5, 6. Alika and Banana use *The Communication Tube* in positions 1 and 2, Alika and Krymov 'invent' position 3. Screenshots of Sergey Solovyov, Assa (1987), DVD Extralucid Films 2021.

reluctance to leave him, even though romantic feelings start to grow between herself and Bananan. Afterwards Bananan offers the *Communication Tube* to Alika who brings it to the hotel room where she stays with Krymov. This time, she explains to him how it works, and it is a new occasion for meaningful discussions. When Krymov, who has already discovered her feelings for Bananan, tries to force her to tell him about it, they both freeze, their ears pressed to the tube, in a new position, that could be 'position number three.' Thus, the film gives a new life to the art piece and even invents new uses for it.

I would argue, however, that the most present and perceptible modality used by Solovyov in his film is that of withdrawal, of difficulty to see and enjoy this art, since it constantly appears and disappears from our view, reminding us of its ephemeral quality. The first time we see Bananan's room, it appears as a luminous rectangle and a sort of artistic 'parenthesis' in the rather dark and very Soviet flat where he lives. Its bright colours strike us, but then the image goes black, and the vision of the room comes back a few seconds later only to disappear again, thus teasing the spectator—Bananan is playing with the lights, switching them on and off. Bananan and Alika then leave the flat and we won't be authorized over the threshold of the room for seven more minutes. The next morning, we will catch another glimpse of the room, which accentuates again the moment of discovery, curiosity, and unattainability: Alika slowly opens the door to the room and the sequence ends abruptly. This image of entering the museum space is reiterated once more, in the second part of the film, when Krymov slips inside Bananan's room. The camera is again positioned outside the room and this time, when Krymov opens the door, his progression is stopped by an artwork we hadn't seen before — the *Iron Curtain*. It hangs in the doorway, preventing us from seeing the room. Krymov hesitates in front of it, leaving enough time for the spectator to read the inscription on it, then moves it aside with a strong metallic noise and enters the room. We stay outside the space and observe it from a distance. Later, we will find ourselves inside the room with Krymov who turns on and off the lamp created by Shutov, thus once again making our vision uncomfortable and intermittent.

It is precisely this aspect of mixing all these oeuvres inside one canvas, that has an official author (the film director) is what we can consider as problematic about this 'portable' museum. Thus, Avdotia Smirnova recounts the scandals made by Mikhail Roshal-Fedorov and other artists about not being credited clearly enough in the film (Smirnova in Barabanov 2019: 238). An ignorant spectator might think that all these art pieces are Solovyov's or his team's inventions. The reaction of the artists also means that they indeed considered the film as a kind of a portable museum space and a platform for their art that failed to promote their names.

#### 'Everything must go'

Gailleurd and Bohler's *Jean-Luc Godard, the Disorder Exposed* opens with a reminder of the ephemeral aspect of the museum exhibition of art—it



Figure 7. *The Iron Curtain* temporarily stops Krymov from entering Banan's room. Screenshot of Sergey Solovyov, *Assa* (1987), DVD Extralucid Films 2021.

starts with a sequence where we see workers dismounting and folding the poster of the exhibition curated by Jean-Luc Godard in the Pompidou Centre in 2006. The workers finish their work, carelessly throw the poster in their van, close it, and address the camera in a joking tone: 'Farewell, Godard!' Afterwards, in a staged sequence, the camera follows André S. Labarthe, the famous documentarist and film critic, who enters the Pompidou Centre and pretends trying to buy a ticket to the Godard exhibition. 'But this exhibition is over for years now,' answers the museum employee. Both these sequences clearly state one of the main ideas of the film: the museum exhibition is an ephemeral form, and it becomes unavailable even though we might like it to be conserved for the years to follow and next generations of visitors. The initial title of the documentary project was, by the way, *Farewell, Godard! Everything Must Go*, making it obvious that one of the main themes of the film would be the oblivion and destruction of the remnants of this exhibition.

The choice of this exhibition is particularly interesting for two reasons. First, it is an exhibition commissioned by the Pompidou Centre to one of the most famous film directors. But the second reason is also quite interesting: this exhibition was a resounding failure. Many texts have already been written about this exhibition and its failure to meet the public or even to satisfy its organizers and the director himself (see Godard 2006, Fabre 2006). Daniel Fairfax stated that the disputes around the exhibition equalled a 'boxing match' and were able 'to create a genuine sense of scandal within the museum institution' (Fairfax 2015: 24-25).

Most visitors hated the 2006 exhibition, as the film makes us aware through several quotes from radio or else from visitors' reactions. The reasons of the failure might also be twofold. The initial concept by Godard for the exhibition, entitled *Collage(s)*, was never realized. The Pompidou Centre decided instead to produce a previous project for an exhibition that the director had—*Travel(s) into Utopia, 1946-2006, In Search of the Lost*

*Theorem.* In her paper on Godard and the museum, Jennifer Verraes reminds that Godard's 'hostility towards institutions in general' extended to the museums: 'he not only battled with all the institutions that intended to exhibit his work (the MoMA, le Fresnoy—National Studio of Contemporary Arts, the Pompidou Centre) but also refused with tenacity to use the museum as a set for his films' with only three brief exceptions: *Bande à part* (1964), *Allemagne année 90 neuf zero* (1991), and *Our Music [Notre musique]*, 2004' (Verraes 2018: 266). The other reason is what spectators and art buffs expect from an exhibition curated by a film director. Their 'horizon of expectation' (according to Jauss's terminology) is not met by the exhibition. Gailleurd as a scholar wrote that 'one of the main theories that Malraux develops in his texts about art ends here: the museum is not any more capable to separate the œuvre from the world.' (Gailleurd 2009: 32). In the film we see the non-cathartic disposition of the objects that compose the exhibition, bathed in a 'neutral lighting, without any trace of aura' which contributes to a 'desacralisation of the art' (Gailleurd 2009: 33). A sequence of the film edits together the indignant commentaries from visitors, which go from questions such as 'Why turn the Pompidou Centre into an attic?' or 'Are the perplexed looks on the visitors faces part of the concept of the exhibition?' to direct insults—'It is disgusting.'

### The 'dreamed up' museum

The origin of the documentary is a salvation gesture by the two young directors who also happen to be cinema scholars, both of them. When they learned that all the elements composing the exhibition were thrown away or given to a charity, they were desperate to safeguard 'an archive' (Gailleurd 2021, personal communication<sup>2</sup>) of the exhibition and asked the permission to film the uninstallation of the exhibition with a small video camera. Then they took the paper rolls with quotes out of the Pompidou Centre bins and went to the charity—Emmaüs, an association who collects used items to be given away or sold for little money to the poor—and bought everything they could and that seemed valuable from the exhibition. For several years they lived with the furniture from the exhibition in their Parisian flat and conserving panels from Pompidou in their safekeeping, before the idea of the film dawned on them.

In the film, the directors of the documentary decide to perform a double salvation of the exhibition: they edit video materials of the exhibition they filmed when it was happening, and they use archival footage from Godard's previous interviews and films, and they invite André S. Labarthe to help them decipher the meaning of this artistic event and why it was not understood by the public.

Once more, the exercise in style that is a guided tour takes here diverse and playful forms. A sequence extracted from the film *Amateur Report [Reportage amateur, Maquette expo, 2006]* by Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Mieville shows us Godard explaining the exhibition Collage(s)

as it should have existed on a small-scale model. He points out the different rooms and their names: *The myth, Mankind, The camera, The films, The unconscious, Bastards, The reality, Murder, and The grave*. His hand pointing out these little spaces and tiny objects reminds us of a reversed museum tour, where the museum is small and the visitor a giant. Gailleurd and Bohler also invent another device: in response to the classical 'white cube' of the museum, they propose to the spectator a 'black cube.' It is not the 'black box' as Erika Balsom calls the movie theatre (Balsom 2013: 39–43), but an exhibition and screening space all at once: in a completely black room, they dispose *fac-similes* of exhibit items and different sizes of screens where they show excerpts of the exhibition, of Godard's films and of the shows Labarthe made with Godard over the previous years. Labarthe, the only authorized visitor of this 'black cube,' reacts to these excerpts and comments on them. Once again, the film not only preserves the artefacts of the exhibition, but goes further, staging the 'relocation' in a visible and underlined way inside the film.



Figures 8 and 9. André Labarthe inside the black cube. Céline Gailleurd, Olivier Bohler, *Godard, le désordre exposé*, 2012 (image courtesy of the directors).

As Gailleurd herself puts it, this black space and the sequences that happen inside it were an attempt to compose a 'dreamed up museum, dreamed and reorganized by Labarthe' (Gailleurd 2021). This dreamed up museum has of course its roots in the 'imaginary museum' by André Malraux which brings together and makes it possible to juxtapose and compare artworks from different countries and cultures (Malraux 1965). However, the black cube invented by Gailleurd and Bohler makes this imaginary museum spatialized, they give it three dimensions even though they are then filmed and reprojected on a bidimensional screen.

Two years after the completion of the documentary, Anne Marquez who had collaborated with the commissioner of the exhibition, Dominique Païni, dedicated a thesis and then a book to this exhibition, entitled *Godard, his back to the museum. The story of an exhibition* [*Godard, le dos au musée. Histoire d'une exposition*, 2014]. She suggests interpreting the story of this exhibition as the first true attempt by Godard to 'relocate' his artwork from the screen to the museal space. For her, 'even though it takes the form of a failure, this "displacement" reveals to be fertile' and helps to understand Godard's work (Marquez 2014: 9). She also states, following the hypothesis by Gailleurd and Bohler, that Godard's link to the museal space is much stronger than one could fathom, because of his discovery of cinema through the contact with Henri Langlois (Marquez 2014: 7). The documentary film directors insert in their film an excerpt of an interview where Godard says: 'Unlike other people, we learned about cinema at the museum. And his museum was also a movie theatre.'

The film by Gailleurd and Bohler thus seems to come full circle, by reintroducing the exhibition in a cinematic apparatus.

### **Back to narrativity**

Their documentary, even though it is entitled 'the Disorder Exposed,' reintroduces a sense of narration inside the apparent chaos of the exhibition. While Fairfax argues that *Travel(s) in Utopia* is an experimentation at montage in space just as Godard's films are experimenting with editing in time, the documentary reintroduces some historicity in the discovery of the exhibition by summoning elements from Godard's films and past interviews to juxtapose them with the scenes from the exhibition. The film ends with images of the exhibition being uninstalled and most of its items sent to Emmaüs. This is how Gailleurd and Bohler described this sequence in their script: 'In the courtyard of the association are exposed, in the open air, those that belonged to the exhibition *Travel(s) in Utopia*: an armchair, a coffee table, centenary olive-trees, a bed, drowned amongst others, anonymous and everyday-looking objects. Slight vertigo seizes us when we realize how they blend in with the crowd. On each one, there is a tag with a modest price' (Gailleurd and Bohler 2012: 29). And then something magic happens: one of the Emmaüs 'companions,' whose face we do not see, starts re-visiting the dismantled

exhibition, offering to the spectator an ultimate guide tour on the remnants of the project. He points out a drawing and starts wondering if it is 'a nose or an eye, because if it is a nose, it is a cyclops, but if it is an eye, it is a clown.' He then approaches the black panels where are glued the etching of a crucified man by Goya and small wooden crosses aligned. He then starts interpreting what we see with a 'surprising erudition' (Gailleurd and Bohler 2012: 30), but also with an unfeigned enthusiasm which most of Pompidou Centre visitors clearly lacked: 'He crucified the image. It is quite remarkable.' He goes on like this for some time, making us participate in his playful and insightful interpretation.

**COMMUNAUTE EMMAÜS – NEUILLY-SUR-MARNE :** Dans la cour de la communauté sont exposés, en plein air, parmi une foule d'autres objets, ceux qui appartenaient à l'exposition *Voyage(s) en Utopie* : le fauteuil club, une table basse, les oliviers centenaires, le lit, noyés au milieu d'autres, anonymes et usuels. Léger vertige de constater à quel point ils se fondent dans la masse. Sur chacun, une étiquette indiquant un prix modique.



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Puis, avisant un des panneaux noirs de Godard où sont collées une gravure de Goya représentant un crucifié et des croix en bois alignées en petites rangées, l'homme poursuit, avec une érudition étonnante : « *Regardez, il a mis une croix, il a crucifié l'image. C'est assez remarquable d'ailleurs. Puis, il a fait une sorte de petit cimetière de croix ...* (Il se saisit d'un panneau portant une formule mathématique) ... *Et quand on regarde bien l'équation X+3=1, le X est une croix. C'est un rébus non ? X+3 ça donne 1. Ça veut dire que de toute manière quelque soit le nombre de croix que vous ayez ça donne une seule chose c'est la mort. Tous ces symboles, ça donne la mort. Ce que vous avez été, après, vous n'existez plus.* ».

Figures 10 and 11. Excerpts from Céline Gailleurd and Olivier Bohler's script, 2012. Céline Gailleurd, Olivier Bohler, *Adieu, Godard ! Tout doit disparaître [Farewell, Godard! Everything must go]*, script, 2012 (courtesy of the authors).

Thus, just as in Solovyov's film, art is not only preserved from oblivion, but it is performed inside the film as 'thrown in the big wide world' to create the possibility of a playful and joyous interaction with the public. Just as Aliko naturally uses the *Communication Tube*, the Emmaüs companion reveals to be a much better art viewer than many when he encounters the artwork outside of the museum. The last 'relocation' of the exhibition to charity guarantees the success of its reception inside the cinematographic oeuvre.

Both films, suffused with a strong feeling of melancholy concerning the fleeting of the ephemeral forms of art, not only function as 'portable' museums, but also restore artworks to their status and meaning through their staged exit from the museum space and an interaction with an unprepared but willing and benevolent audience. They both present situations where artists (the directors of the films) not only devote a part (or the whole) of their film to function as portable museums, but also invent new ways of incorporating one artform into another. Considering these two quite different films together also allows us to see how films can participate in an interdisciplinary discussion on the museum, since both oeuvres challenge the idea of the museum as a non-performative place by allowing the artefacts to be brought to life through their interaction not only inside the film, but also by means of it, preparing the artefacts for further interactions and performances.

1. You can see the artwork here: <http://www.museum.ru/alb/image.asp?4155>
2. Gailleurd C (2021, September 20) Personal communication, interview.

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## Author's bio

Eugénie Zvonkine (PhD and Accreditation to supervise doctoral research) is an associate professor in the film studies department at the University of Paris 8. She writes on history and aesthetics in Soviet and post-Soviet cinema from the 1960s to the present day. She has published three monographs on Soviet and post-Soviet cinema, including *Kira Mouratova: un cinéma de la dissonance* (2012), and (co-)edited the collective volumes *Cinéma russe, (r)évolutions* (2018) and *Ruptures and Continuities in Soviet/Russian Cinema: Styles, Characters and Genres Before and after the Collapse of the USSR* (2019). She was also a regular contributor to *Cahiers du cinéma* from 2010 until 2020. In October 2021, she was named a Junior member of the French University Institute (IUF).

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