

wednesday

FIRE & ICE: THE WINTER WAR OF FINLAND & RUSSIA

★★★★ out of four stars

This documentary features first-class production values (including re-enacted battle footage that would do an action movie proud) and an inspiring story. In November 1939, Russia invaded its pipsqueak of a neighbor under the guise of saving it from Hitler. On paper, it was a colossal mismatch; there was only one fully equipped, fully functional tank in all of Finland. But the Finns had a weapon the Russians didn't take into account: Winter. While the massive Russian force, estimated at three times the size of the Allied landing on D-Day, struggled to move heavy artillery through a snow-filled forest, marauding groups of Finns traveled quickly on skis. For 105 days, the determined defenders kept the mighty Red Army at bay. (7:15 p.m., Oak Street. Finland/U.S., 78 min. Narration is in English, but some of the interviews with Finnish and Russian subjects are subtitled.)

JEFF STRICKLER