

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

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Thirteen feature films by the Japanese director Kon Ichikawa will be presented by the Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art from February 12 through February 27. The films range from Ichikawa's satirical comedies of the early '50's to the more recent tragedies attempting to show the "pain of our age." All of the films are in Japanese with English subtitles.

Describing his work, Ichikawa says, "I try to visualize everything...I'm the kind of person who has to see something -- even in my own imagination -- before I understand it. I started as a painter and I think like one. That is why the camera is so important to me. I plan all the set-ups and I always check the framing, and I usually try to work with (a cameraman) I know....I design the sets too, usually... and I'd probably do the music too if I could."

Film critic Donald Richie describes the resulting "Ichikawa look": "The angular pattern is usually bold, the balance is almost always asymmetrical, the framing is precise, and yet the composition rarely calls attention to itself."

At 18 after graduation from an Osaka commercial school Ichikawa began studying animation and in 1946 completed a puppet-film based on a famous Kabuki dance. (The Occupation authorities, concerned with discovering "feudal remnants," seized the negative and it has never been found.) After that, Ichikawa joined Toho Production Company and began making satirical comedies until 1955 when he switched to more serious subject matter with The Burmese Harp. He says, "I had become aware that men are unhappy. You can even say that they are in anguish and so the only way to show a real man is to show an unhappy one. Oh, I look around for some kind of humanism but I never seem to find it. People are always complaining; the ending of the Olympic film (Tokyo Olympiad) is an example -- why show all that strain and pain, they say. And they want happy endings too. But doesn't this desire for a happy ending show how unhappy they really are?"

Now 50, Ichikawa still considers himself a cartoonist and believes that the greatest influence on his films, besides Chaplin, is Disney. He says, "There is a lot of Disney in me -- it's just that my subjects are different."

The program for THE FILMS OF KON ICHIKAWA is attached. (more)

 Screenings are daily, except Wednesdays, at 2 and 5:30 p.m., Thursdays again at 8 p.m., and Saturdays at 11:30 a.m., 3 and 5:30 p.m. in the Museum Auditorium. Program notes, stills and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Linda Gordon, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.

 THE FILMS OF KON ICHIKAWA

- Feb. 12 THE BURMESE HARP (BIRUMA NO TATEGO) (1956). Directed by Kon Ichikawa. Photography by Minoru Yokoyama. With Shoji Yasui, Rentaro Mikuni. Japanese and Burmese dialogue; English titles. 116 min. Print courtesy of Brandon International Films.
- Feb. 13 FIRES ON THE PLAIN (NOBI) (1959). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. With Eiji Funakoshi, Osamu Takizawa, Micky Curtis. Japanese dialogue; English titles. Not recommended for children. Print courtesy of Daiei. 100 min.
- Feb. 14 CONFLAGRATION (ENJO) (1958). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. With Raizo Ichikawa, Tatsuya Nakadai, Ganjiro Nakamura. Japanese dialogue; English titles. Print courtesy of Daiei. 99 min.
- Feb. 16 ODD OBSESSION (KAGI) (1959). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. With Ganjiro Nakamura, Machiko Kyo and Tatsuya Nakadai. Japanese dialogue; English titles. Not recommended for children. Print courtesy of Daiei.
- Feb. 17 A BILLIONAIRE (OKUMANCHOJA) (1954). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Seinen Haiyu. With Isao Kimura, Yoshiko Kuga, Isuzu Yamada, Eiji Okada. Japanese dialogue; English titles. 85 min.
- Feb. 18 ALONE ON THE PACIFIC (TAIHEIYO HITORI BOCCHI) (1963). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Ishihara International. With Yujiro Ishihara. Japanese dialogue; English titles.
- Feb. 19 THE OUTCAST (HAKAI) (1962). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. Japanese dialogue; English titles.
- Feb. 20 HER BROTHER (1960). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. With Keiko Kishi, Hiroshi Kawaguchi, Kinuyo Tanaka, Masayuki Mori. Japanese dialogue; English titles. Print courtesy of Daiei.
- Feb. 21 THE REVENGE OF YUKI-NO-JO (1963). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. With Kazuo Hasegawa, Ayako Wakao, Raizo Ichikawa. Japanese dialogue; English titles. 120 min.
- Feb. 23- TOKYO OLYMPIAD (1965). Directed by Ichikawa. A documentary produced by the
 Feb. 24 Organizing Committee for the XVIII Olympiad Games. Japanese dialogue; English titles. Print courtesy of Jack Douglas and Toho. 135 min.
- Feb. 25 POO-SAN (1953). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Toho. With Yunosuke Ito, Fubiki Koshiji, Kamatari Fujiwara. Japanese dialogue; English titles. 97 min.
- Feb. 26 PUNISHMENT ROOM (SHOKEI NO HEYA) (1955). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Daiei. With Ayako Wakao, Hiroshi Kawaguchi. Japanese dialogue; English titles. Not recommended for children. 95 min.
- Feb. 27 THE HEART (KOKORO) (1954). Directed by Ichikawa. Produced by Nikkatsu. With Masayuki Mori, Michiyo Aratama, Shoji Yasui. Japanese dialogue; English titles. 125 min.