

# The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

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## MoMA TO HELP INTRODUCE THE WORK OF MASTER JAPANESE FILMMAKER MIKIO NARUSE WITH RETROSPECTIVE OPENING OCTOBER 13

"If such a term as light tragedy did not sound so pejorative," critic Donald Richie has written, it might indicate the characteristic mood of the "sunny yet hopeless" films of Mikio Naruse. Naruse (1905-1969) usually is linked with his contemporaries and peers Ozu and Mizoguchi. But, unlike them, he has remained almost unknown in the West, despite a career that spanned 88 films and 37 years. The Museum of Modern Art now has joined with the Japan Society to bring Naruse's work before American audiences with a retrospective of 25 films. Japan Society will present the entire series, beginning October 12. The Museum of Modern Art has selected 11 films from the retrospective for presentation in its Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2, beginning October 13.

Audie Bock, the leading scholar of Naruse's work, notes that the usual protagonist of his films is a woman whose family or social milieu has trapped her in a situation that can lead only to compromise or disappointment. But "the determined characters of the Naruse film never give up. A stubborn dedication to their own self-respect in the face of overwhelming crassness, vulgarity and exploitation from even those who should be most sensitive and protective toward the individual lends Naruse's heroines a distinctive nobility....There are no happy endings for Naruse, but there are incredibly enlightened defeats."

Naruse, a private and modest man, spent his entire career within the Japanese studio system. Yet, as Bock explains, he "employed the two major studio restrictions, time and money, to the advantage of his style. Rejecting attention-drawing locations and elaborate sets, flashy camera movement and angles, even imaginative editing, his style narrowed in on the character in the everyday agony of life." But Naruse's first assignments with his studio were comedies, and he turned that experience to his advantage as well. Richie describes Naruse's mature dramas as "richly detailed, meticulously honest...Monotony is successfully suggested, but one is kept from monotony through the interest one feels in character and story and, perhaps most important, in structure."

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MIKIO NARUSE: A MASTER OF THE JAPANESE CINEMA is being presented at The Museum of Modern Art, co-ordinated by Curator Adrienne Mancina, in co-operation with the Japan Society. The program was organized by the Film Center of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The Department of Film would like to acknowledge its gratitude to Audie Bock; David Streiff, Director of the Locarno Film Festival, where a significant Naruse retrospective was shown in 1983; David Owens of the Japan Society, New York; Richard Peña of the Film Center of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Mrs. Kashiko Kawakita of the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute in Tokyo; John Poole and Peter Meyer of Corinth Films; John Gillett of the British Film Institute; and Donald Richie.

For further information, the public may call (212) 708-9500.

COMPLETE SCHEDULE IS ATTACHED

September 1984

PRESS PREVIEWS: For information on press previews, please contact David Owens, The Japan Society (212) 832-1155.

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 The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019 (212) 708-9752.  
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SCHEDULE

MIKIO NARUSE: A MASTER OF THE JAPANESE CINEMA

October 13-29, The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2

- Sat. 10/13 2:30 Yama No Oto (Sounds from the Mountain). 1954. Mikio Naruse. With Setsuko Hara, So Yamamura, Ken Uehara. 92 min.
- 5:00 Meshi (Repast). 1951. Mikio Naruse. With Setuko Hara, Ken Uehara. 96 min. Introduced by Audie Bock.
- Sun. 10/14 2:30 Ukigumo (Floating Clouds). 1955. Mikio Naruse. With Hideko Takamine, Masayuki Mori, Mariko Okada. 123 min.
- 5:00 Onna Ga Kaidan O Agaru Toki (When a Woman Ascends the Stairs). 1960. Mikio Naruse. With Hideko Takamine, Masayuki Mori, Reiko Dan, Tatsuya Nakadai. 110 min.
- Thu. 10/18 2:30 Meshi (Repast).
- 6:00 Yama No Oto (Sounds from the Mountain).
- Fri. 10/19 2:30 Ukigumo (Floating Clouds).
- 6:00 Onna Ga Kaidan O Agaru Toki (When a Woman Ascends the Stairs).
- Sat. 10/20 2:30 Hataraku Ikka (The Whole Family Works). 1939. Mikio Naruse. With Musei Tokugawa, Fumiko Honma, Akira Ubukata. 65 min.
- 5:00 Otome-Gokoro Sannin Shimai (Three Sisters with Maiden Hearts). 1935. Mikio Naruse. With Chikako Hosokawa, Masako Tsutsumi, Tatsuko Umezono. 74 min.
- Sun. 10/21 2:30 Iwashigumo (Herringbone Clouds). 1958. Mikio Naruse. With Chikage Awashima, Michiyo Aratama, Ganjiro Nakamura. 128 min.
- 5:00 Tsuma Yo Bara No Yo Ni (Wife! Be Like a Rose!) 1935. Mikio Naruse. With Tomoko Ito, Sachiko Chiba, Sadao Maruyama. 73 min.
- Thu. 10/25 2:30 Otome-Gokoro Sannin Shimai (Three Sisters with Maiden Hearts).
- 6:00 Hataraku Ikka (The Whole Family Works).
- Fri. 10/26 3:00 Tsuma Yo Bara No Yo Ni (Wife! Be Like a Rose!)
- 6:30 Iwashigumo (Herringbone Clouds).

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- Sat. 10/27 2:30 Inazuma (Lightning). 1952. Mikio Naruse. With Hideko Takamine, Mitsuko Miura, Chieko Murata, Kumeko Urabe. 87 min.
- 5:30 Okasan (Mother). 1952. Mikio Naruse. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Masao Mishima, Kyoko Kagawa, Eiji Okada. 97 min.
- Sun. 10/28 2:30 Okasan (Mother).
- 5:30 Inazuma (Lightning).
- Mon. 10/29 3:00 Koshiben Gambare (Little Man, Do Your Best!). 1931. Mikio Naruse. With Isamu Yamaguchi, Tomoko Naniwa, Seiichi Kato. Silent, with English intertitles. 28 min. / Yogoto No Yume (Every Night Dreams). 1933. Mikio Naruse. With Sumiko Kurishima, Teruko Kojima, Tatsuo Saito. Silent, with English intertitles. 64 min. No piano accompaniment.
- 6:00 See above at 3:00; live piano accompaniment.

All films in Japanese with English subtitles.

Yama No Oto (Sounds from the Mountain) and Ukigumo (Floating Clouds) courtesy of Corinth Films, New York.

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