

## Document Citation

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# SEVEN SAMURAI

Shichinin no Samurai

Japan, 1954, 207 mins, 35mm, b&w, Japanese w/e.s.  
**Director** Akira KUROSAWA; **Screenplay** Shinobu HASHIMOTO, Hideo OGUNI, Akira KUROSAWA; **Producer** Shojiro MOTOKI; **Dir. Photography** Asakazu NAKAI; **Art Direction** So MATSUYAMA; **Music** Fumio HAYASAKA; **Cast** Toshiro MIFUNE, Takashi SHIMURA, Seiji MIYAGUCHI, Ko KIMURA, Daisuke KATO

Considered by many critics to be the finest film ever made, the late Akira Kurosawa's SEVEN SAMURAI remains a stunning, epic achievement, some 30 years after its initial release. In 16th-century Japan, a small village of farmers tormented by marauding bandits enlists a ragtag team of *ronin*, or masterless samurai, to protect them for nothing more than three bowls of rice a day and the fun of it. This simple plot, inspired in part by John Ford's Westerns and in turn frequently revisited in American movies such as THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, attains epic scope through these underlying themes: the unspoken suspicion between the farmer and samurai classes, the warm camaraderie and mutual respect of obsolescent swordsmen, and the thankless struggle for human survival.

Both Kurosawa's inspired partnership with Japan's archetypal samurai actor, the also recently departed Toshiro Mifune (playing a farmer's son who longs to be a warrior), and the dynamism lost in his later films are at their peak in this superb film, in its day the most expensive and conflict-ridden production in Japan. Containing brilliant characterizations and thrilling action, this classic movie must be seen on the big screen!

—Frako Loden