

## Document Citation

Title	<b>The famous sword</b>
Author(s)	Tom Allen
Source	<i>Pacific Film Archive</i>
Date	
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Meito Bijomaru (The famous sword Bijomaru), Mizoguchi, Kenji, 1945

## The Famous Sword

Kenji Mizoguchi (Japan, 1946)

(*Meito Bijomaru*). “The type of late wartime movie of which Mizoguchi told Donald Richie: ‘Most of the staff members had been drafted. I avoided the draft by making films like this.’ At barely over an hour, *The Famous Sword* is a slim fable of magic and myth about obsessed swordmakers who seek perfection by a fanatic loyalty to the Emperor rather than harboring personal grudges. The mid-nineteenth century late Tokugawa period is recreated through sets reminiscent of *Genroku Chushingura*, but most interesting is the manner in which the aristocratic lady Sasae appears first in ghostly form to shore up the flagging spirits of the loyalist swordsmiths, then fights the climactic duel herself with a treacherous samurai. Even in this piece of period propaganda, the strongest image is of a strong woman taking her fate in her hands.” --Tom Allen, *Village Voice*

Written by Matsutaro Kawaguchi. Photographed by Shigeto Miki.

With Shotaro Hanayagi, Isuzu Yamada, Ichijiro Oya. (66 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, mm, Print from Japan Film Library Council)