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SHOCHIKU PRESENTS

小津回顧展
OZU FESTIVAL



director / YASUJIRO OZU

Nov. 4 to 8
AKIBIYORI

late autumn

■ CAST ■

Mariko Okada/Yoko Tsukasa
Setsuko Hara/Keiji Sada

Nov. 9 to 13
TOKYO BOSHOKU

twilight in tokyo

■ CAST ■

Ineko Arima/Setsuko Hara
Chishu Ryu/Isuzu Yamada

Nov. 14 to 18
HIGANBANA

equinox flower

■ CAST ■

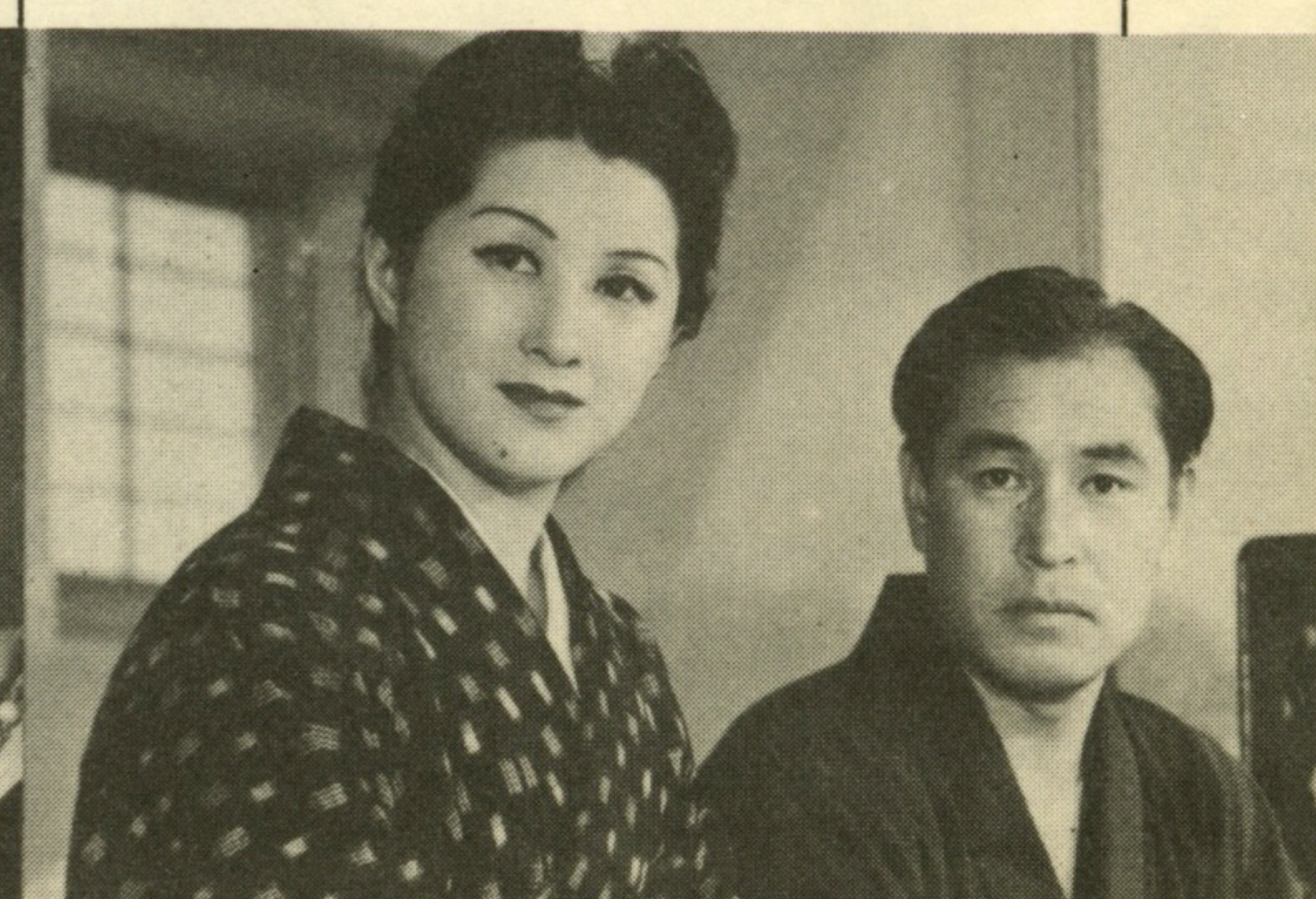
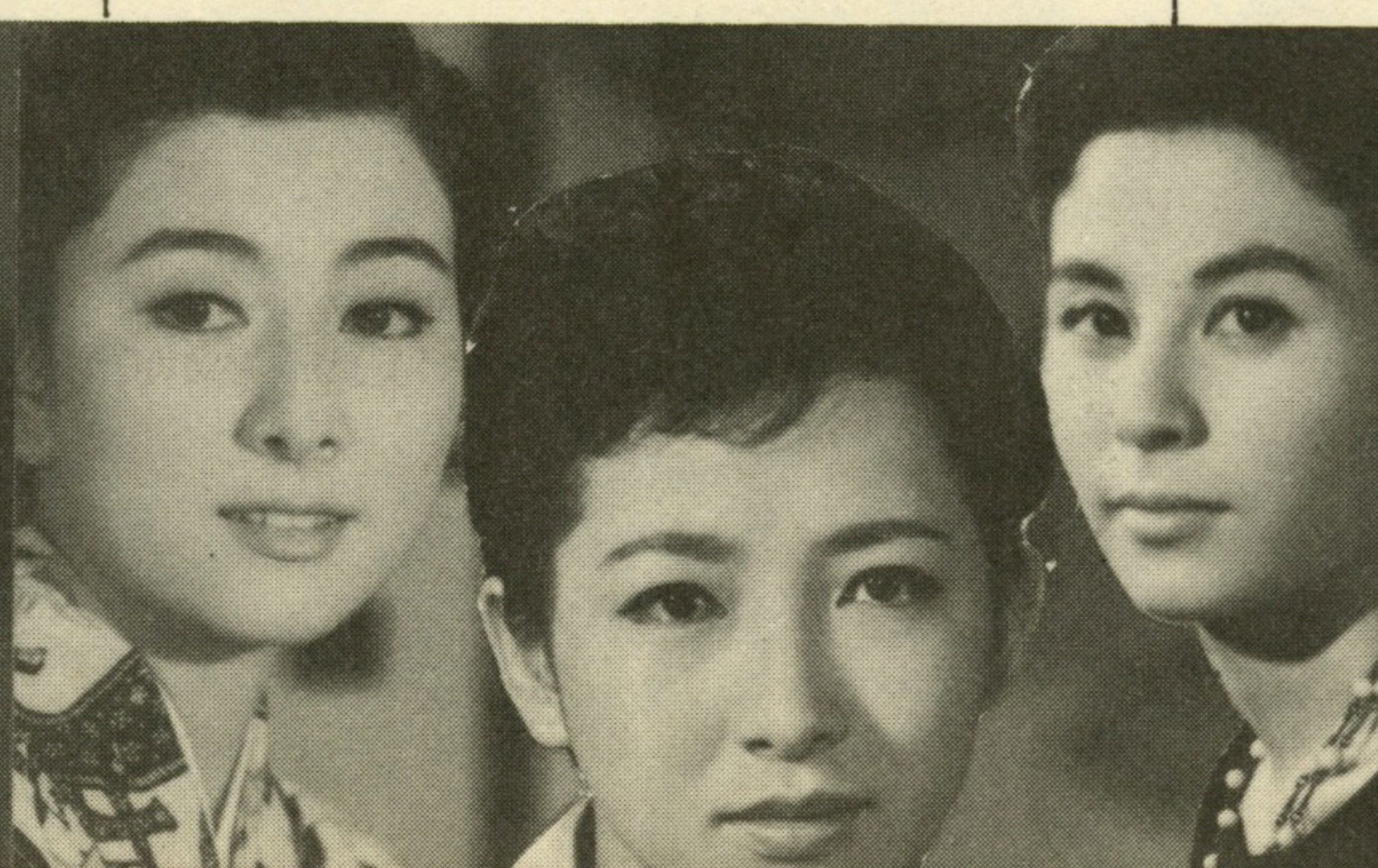
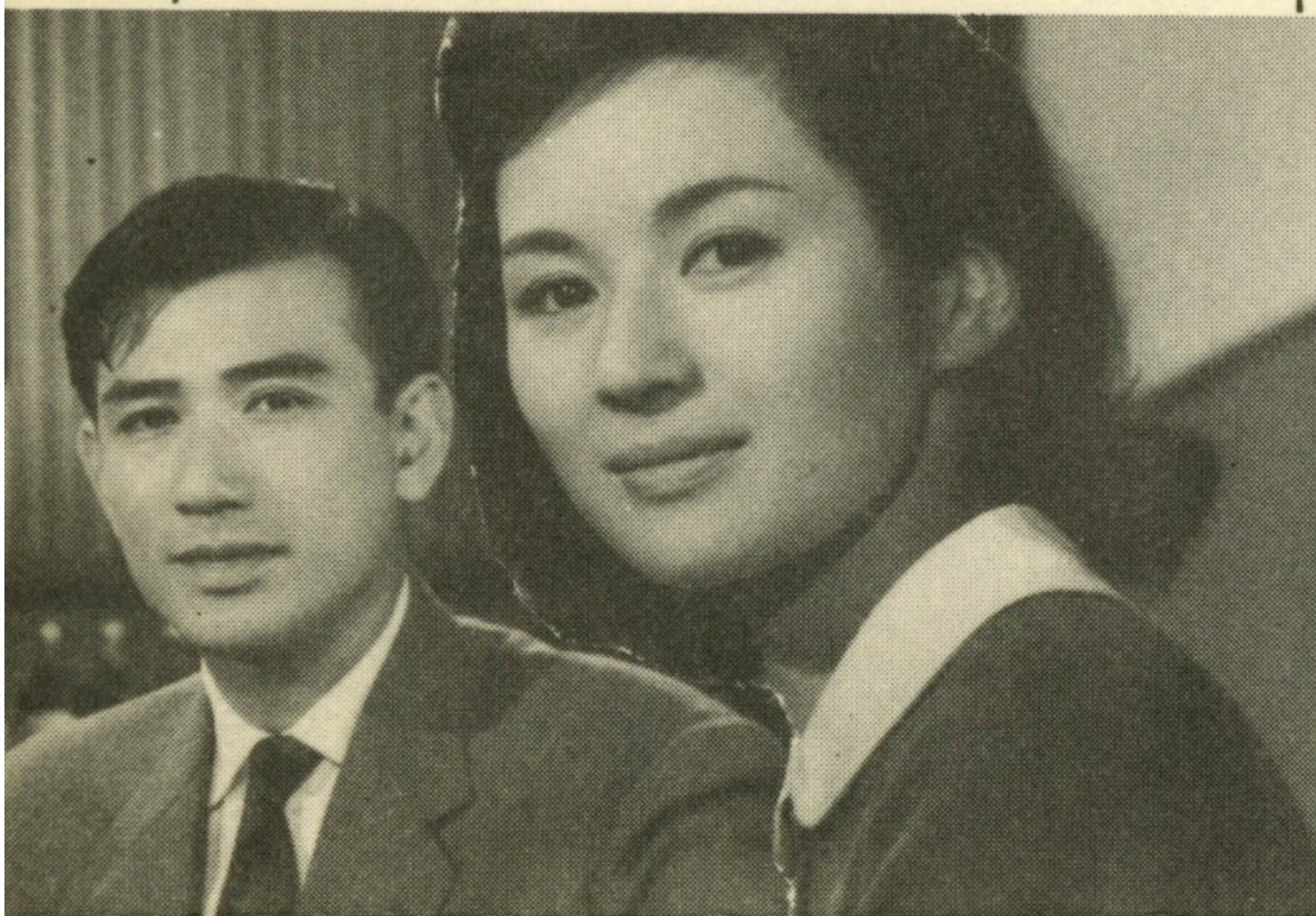
Ineko Arima/Fujiko Yamamoto
Yoshiko Koga/Keiji Sada

Nov. 19 to 24
OCHAZUKE NO AJI

tea and rice

■ CAST ■

Shin Saburi/Michiyo Kogure
Chikage Awashima/Koji Tsuruta



Ozu often remade films that especially appealed to him. *Late Autumn* (1961) is a remake in color of his 1949 *Late Spring*.

The story is simple but poignant. A young girl is living with her widowed mother, feeling it is her duty. The mother attempts to find a husband for the girl but it isn't until she thinks her mother is to be remarried, that the girl agrees.

The mother and daughter go to Nikko on a last trip together, the girl is married and the mother returns to their apartment which is now so empty; the parent is alone, the child gone.

Never has the camera been more intimate, as with the use of large screen close-ups and dialogue that seems to have been snatched from real life instead of written, Ozu has made another graphic study of one phase of Japanese life.

The plot concerns a young girl, unadjusted to present society, who lives alone with her father, but gradually becomes aware that her mother is alive. She searches for her, finds her only resulting in more disappointments.

Disaster results from other complications; suicide — but as in all Ozu films — life goes on.

Yasujiro Ozu always worked toward a simplicity of style — evolving into the *shomin-geki*, the only genre which genuinely describes contemporary Japanese life. This style eliminates plot for its own sake, and becomes the simple recording of events.

Ozu's first color film, *Equinox*, was made in 1958 as an answer to some critical comment of the *ofuna* flavor of his pictures.

With the story of three men and their daughters, of marriageable age, he does not create characters, he observes, with us.

Made in 1952, (*The Flavor of Green*) *Tea and Rice*, depicts a middle-aged, middle-class married couple in trouble as they seek to avoid the responsibilities of married life and yet remain faithful to each other.

The couple have lost their individual personalities and the film shows their attempt to find themselves again. Almost devoid of plot, Ozu here presents us with a profound presentation of character, the two dimensional figures coming alive in a way seldom seen on the screen.

This is the first appearance of this film in the United States.

The Japanese have always called **Yasujiro Ozu** *the most Japanese film director of them all*. His death in December of 1963 brought to a regrettable close the 36-year career of one of the world's great directors.

Although he won more honors than any other Japanese director (including six *Kinema Jumbo* 'Best One' prizes), he was almost unknown outside of Japan. Three or four of his fifty-three films have been seen in Europe and the United States, and those by a few members of film societies.

With the acceptance of Antonioni's *L'Avventura* and other new wave films from Europe, the way is now open for the acceptance of Ozu. His intensely circumscribed vision of the world shares much with that of Resnais and Antonioni.

Ozu's films faithfully reflect Japanese life. He has been the spokesman for the old and young generations of the Japanese family. There is no treatment of *romantic love* as is basic in most western films. He was always interested in character and since character is built on detail, one after another, his cinematic technique was austere.

In the Zen tradition of reverence for beauty, he always paid strict attention to the objects photographed in each frame. Never using *dissolves*, *fades*, and *seldom a pan or a dolly*, Ozu shot at a low angle — the eye level of a person seated on a *tatimi*, three feet from floor level.

In establishing prior scenes, he often cut back to previous sets where important action had occurred. But this time the set is absolutely empty. Thus, in the few seconds it appears on the screen, it serves as a type of abstraction to recall the scene that was played there. There is no need for dialogue, no need for flashbacks. Just a simple short shot of the *dead* set recalls everything.

But with all his attention to detail and technique, probably the most interesting part of an Ozu *classic* is the dialogue, it seems to have been stolen from life.

The result of seeing an Ozu film is the feeling that one has seen the goodness and beauty of everyday people and everyday things; the experiences are indescribable because only the cinema can describe them — it is this subjective, warm legacy that *Yasujiro Ozu* has left us.

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