

## Document Citation

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# Theater Programs / Film Notes

## August

### Friday August 1

Politics' Choice: Japan's Best Film of the Year, 1931-1978  
Presented in Cooperation with the Japan Society of New York and the Japan Film Library Council

### The Profound Desire Of The Gods (Kamigami no fukaki yokubo) 7:30

Shohei Imamura's first color film, also known as *Curagejima: Tales From A Southern Island*, offers a fresh look at the confrontation between the machine age and a waning primitive culture, stunningly photographed by Masao Tochizawa. "Filmed... entirely in the southern Ryukyu Islands, this... film has been called 'an at times uneasy but always fascinating combination of documentary, epic, melodrama, and philosophical dissertation.' Playing once more with illusion and reality, Imamura goes back to the myths of the founding of human society in the Ryukyus - one of the likely sources of the Japanese people - and shows how the primitive beliefs survive, even beneath the veneer of modernization." --Audie Bock, "Japanese Film Directors."

The story is of a construction company engineer who arrives on a remote island to survey the possibilities for development. The villagers regard him, with all his modern gadgetry, as something of a god. The engineer is befuddled by the primitive conditions and strange ways he finds among the natives, who present him with a girl, Toriko, totally unencumbered by the complex rules of behavior of modern society.

Directed by Shohei Imamura. Written by Imamura and Keiji Hasebe. Photographed by Masao Tochizawa. Music by Toshiro Mayuzumi. With Rentaro Mikuni, Toshiro Kawarazaki, Hideko Okiyama, Kazuo Yamamura, Kanjuro Arashi. (1968, 150 mins, 35mm, color, English titles, Print from Japan Society)

### Saturday August 2

The Films of Michael Powell

### The Spy In Black 7:30

(Producer Alexander) Korda brought Powell and Pressburger together for the first time to devise a subtle worthy of the autocratic Conrad Veidt. He plays a World War I U-boat captain who comes ashore at Spa Flow to collect naval secrets from a German spy, but instead enters a well-prepared trap. The night scenes are remarkable, while Pressburger's concern with dramatic paradox is already evident in the relationship between Veidt and 'Mrs. Ashington,' and in the reversals of duty and deceit." --British Film Institute.

... of a number of films made on the threshold of WWII, which seemed to say that if war came, there was no reason why it couldn't be conducted along the thematically lines of certain aspects of the previous...

Of course, this largely depended on one's opinion turning out to be like Conrad Veidt! *Spy In Black* is one of the best of the earlier Powell thrillers, giving visual echoes from *Nosferatu*, using a fine (lyric) score by Miklos Rosza, and mixing studio work with well-chosen locations in the manner of so many of Powell's films." --William K. Everson

Directed by Michael Powell. Produced by Irving Berlin, Alexander Korda. Written by Emeric Pressburger, Roland Pertwee from a novel by J. Storer Clouston. Music by Miklos Rosza. With Conrad Veidt, Sebastian Shaw, Valerie Hobson. (1939, 82 mins, Print courtesy of W.K.E.)

### Canterbury Tale 9:00

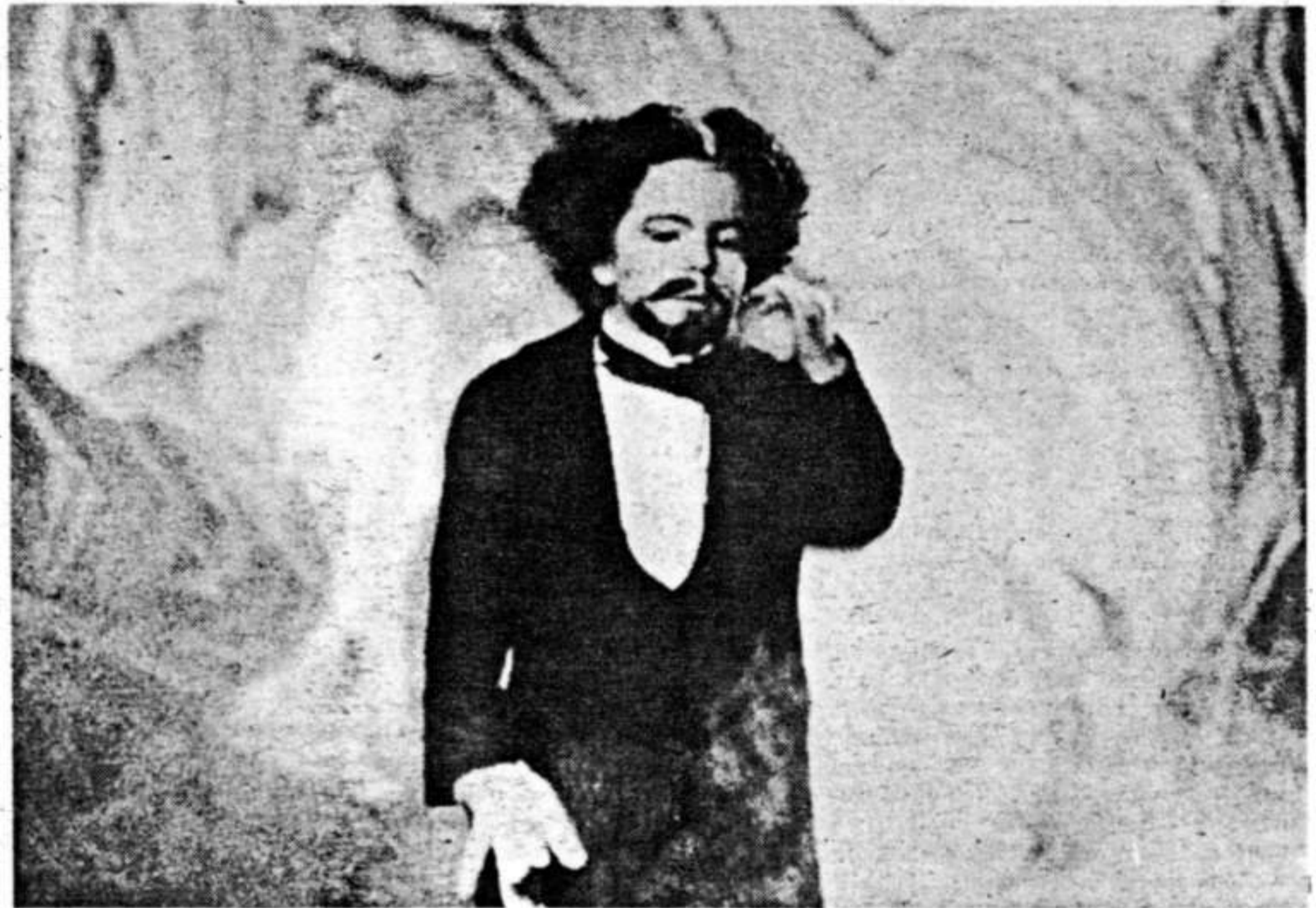
Vorkapich (montage and special effects designer, and renowned advocate of "purely cinematic expression") tells the story of a cog in the mighty clockwork of the Hollywood studios. Most of it was filmed at night in Vorkapich's kitchen.

• Directed and Written by Robert Florey. Designed, Photographed and Edited by Slavko Vorkapich. Close-up Photography by Gregg Toland. (1928, 14 mins, silent, Print from Kit Parker)

Von Sternberg's Last Film:

### Anatahan 9:20

In 1975, a project began to restore the badly decomposed *Saga Of Anatahan*, Josef von Sternberg's last feature. What was essentially a new version of the film, reconstructed according to the director's original conception with outtake footage which had never been incorporated into the original for fear of incurring censorship problems, had its premiere at Los Angeles' Filmex '77.



Hans Juergen Syberberg's *Ludwig: Requiem For A Virgin King* (August 5)

*Anatahan* is taken from the celebrated account of a group of Japanese sailors recently found marooned on the obscure island of Anatahan in the Marianas Archipelago. Having lived in isolation from the world for several years after the War's end, they discover the presence of another human being, Keiko, stranded like themselves, who becomes for them the only woman on earth.

*Anatahan* is the only film over which von Sternberg had total creative control. As always, von Sternberg preferred to construct his own sets rather than shoot Japanese locations. He overcame the problem of language by superimposing a running commentary - sometimes a first-person narration, sometimes a detached observer - over the Japanese dialogue, a move which caused enormous critical controversy.

Keiko is played by Akemi Negishi, who played the young woman in Kurosawa's *Iku* (1952).

• Directed, Written and Photographed by Josef von Sternberg. With Akemi Negishi, Tadashi Suganuma, Shoji Nakayama. (1953, 95 mins, 35mm, Print from Twyman Films)

### The Case Of The Three Million (Three Thieves) 8:25

"Although frowned upon by the authorities as nothing more than an 'ordinary drawing room comedy,' *The Case Of The Three Million* proved extraordinarily popular with the public when it was released in 1926. The story, set in Italy, has to do with the comic interactions of several types of crooks - a banker-speculator, a gentleman-thief, and a ragamuffin street thief - who accidentally find themselves in the same proximity to 3,000,000 rubles swindled by the banker in a land deal. When the film was released in New York in 1933, the official state censors ordered nine specific cuts (restored in this print), eliminating scenes or shots which they defined as 'sacrilegious,' 'indecent,' or 'will tend to incite to crime.'" --Tom Luddy, Yvette Biro

• Directed by Yakov Protazanov. Screenplay adapted by Protazanov from the story and play, "The Three Thieves," by Umberto Notari. Photographed by Pyotr Yermolov. With Igor Ilinsky, Anatoli Ktorov, Mikhail Klimov. (1926, 75 mins, 35mm, silent, translation of Russian titles provided, Print from PFA Collection)

### Holiday Of St. Jorgen (Prazdnik Svaytogo Iorgena) 9:45

"The first successful approach to an anti-religious sub-

ject - laughter. As in *Three Thieves* where the methods of petty crime and big business are compared satirically, so in *St. Jorgen* the business methods of thieves are paralleled with the financial and political pressures of the church - all in a richly vaudeville manner calculated not so much to convince the spectator as to amuse him while making him a little more sceptical than before. Two thieves arrive in town at the time of the annual holiday of the local saint, an event efficiently exploited by town and church - only this time the two thieves exploit it for their own benefit. The film opens on exactly the right note with the production of a propaganda film to attract worshippers to the shrine of St. Jorgen." --Jay Leyda

• Directed by Yakov Protazanov. With Anatoli Ktorov, Igor Ilinsky. (1930, 70 mins, English intertitles)

### Abram Room's *Bed And Sofa* (August 6)