

## Document Citation

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Dekigokoro (Passing fancy), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1933  
Shukujo to hige (The lady and the beard), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1931  
Wakaki hi (Days of youth), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1929  
Sono yo no tsuma (That night's wife), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1930  
Kohayagawa-ke no aki (The end of summer), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1961  
Rakudai wa shita keredo (I flunked, but...), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1930  
Tokyo no gassho (Tokyo chorus), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1931  
Banshun (Late spring), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1949  
Seishun no yume ima izuko (Where now are the dreams of youth?),  
Ozu, Yasujiro, 1932  
Munekata shimai (The Munekata sisters), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1950  
Hijosen no onna (Dragnet girl), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1933  
Ochazuke no aji (The flavor of green tea over rice), Ozu,  
Yasujiro, 1952  
Soshun (Early spring), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1956  
Tokyo boshuku (Tokyo twilight), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1957  
Ukigusa (Floating weeds), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1959  
Akibiyori (Late autumn), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1960  
Samma no aji (An autumn afternoon), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1962  
Higanbana (Equinox flower), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1958  
Kaze no naka no mendori (A hen in the wind), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1948  
Bakushu (Early summer), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1951  
Tokyo no onna (Woman of Tokyo), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1933  
Ukigusa monogatari (A story of floating weeds), Ozu, Yasujiro,  
1934  
Haha o kowazuya (A mother should be loved), Ozu, Yasujiro, 1934

# UC Berkeley Art Museum Pacific Film Archive

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## YASUJIRO OZU: FILMMAKER FOR ALL SEASONS

The elements of Yasujiro Ozu's famously minimalist mature style can be itemized in just a few phrases: camera placed three feet above the floor, eye-height of someone seated on a tatami mat; simple cuts, not fades or dissolves; static shots sans tracking or pans. But no laundry list of techniques can capture the essence of Ozu (1903–1963). In the subtle grace with which he tells the simplest of stories—the quiet fracturing of ordinary middle-class families, grown children marrying and leaving home (or not), parents confronting the hard wisdom of age—there remains something ineffable. Ozu's was an art of showing rather than telling, meant not to be described but to be seen.

This major centenary retrospective is a chance to experience on the big screen the formal precision and emotional force of mid-century classics like *Late Spring*, *Early Summer*, and *Tokyo Story*, and also the delights of Ozu before the “Ozu style.” For this filmmaker so often called the “most Japanese of directors” began as a young man in the late 1920s and 1930s enthralled with American films, making forays with a freewheeling camera into crime melodrama, social realism, and college comedy. As filmmaker Nathaniel Dorsky wrote, “What is extraordinary here is the opportunity to witness the magical leap into being of Ozu's radical film form....From what had been good-hearted, witty, socially perceptive storytelling, Ozu's art transmutes into a totality of expression where the cinema itself is the story, the heart, and the philosophy.”

Juliet Clark

Complementing this series, the Castro Theatre in San Francisco will present selected postwar films by Ozu, November 14 through 20. For information, visit [www.castrotheatre.com](http://www.castrotheatre.com) or call (415) 621-6120.

A project of The Japan Foundation

We express our deep appreciation to Mamiko Nakai, Rimi Yang, and Nobuaki Izawa, The Japan Foundation.

The series is presented with the generous support of Owsley Brown III. Special thanks also to Nathaniel Dorsky for his contributions to the series.

New prints have been provided by Cowboy Pictures, except where otherwise noted.

Archival and restored prints and musicians for silent films are presented with support from the Packard Humanities Institute.

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SUNDAY NOVEMBER 23

### 5:30 **Days of Youth**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1929)

Joel Adlen on Piano

(*Wakaki hi*). The earliest extant Ozu film, and one of several satires on college life, *Days of Youth* is set partly at a ski resort, where two college roommates vie for the same girl and fail on two counts: to win her, and to pass the exams for which they have not studied. The film's comic touches—running gags involving socks, gloves, and even persimmons, and a “Room to Let” sign used for meeting girls—are in the service of brilliant narrative and visual symmetry. As David Bordwell writes, “*Days of Youth* is clearly indebted to Japanese genres...[but] in many respects [it] is not a typical Japanese film. Its immediate debts are

clearly to Lloyd and Lubitsch, and the structural rigor of the plot and style put it far closer to the Hollywood comedy of the mid-1920s....Already Ozu is considerably more fastidious and rigorous a filmmaker than most of his contemporaries."

- Written by Akira Fushimi, Ozu. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Ichiro Yuki, Tatsuo Saito, Junko Matsui, Choko Iida. (105 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

*Preceded by shorts:*

**A Straightforward Boy** (*Tokkan Kozo*) (Yasujiro Ozu, Japan, 1929). A romp about a luckless crook who gets more than he bargains for when he kidnaps an irrepressible child. Following his success in this film, child actor Tomio Aoki changed his professional name to Tokkan Kozo, the name of his character. (16 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

**I Graduated, But...** (*Daigaku wa deta keredo*) (Yasujiro Ozu, Japan, 1929). This collegiate satire was the basis for Ozu's later *I Flunked, But...* (11 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

- (Total running time: 132 mins)

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 28

### 3:30, 6:40, 9:20 **Tokyo Story**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1953)

(*Tokyo monogatari*). *Tokyo Story* is about the gap between generations in a Japanese family. It tells a simple, sad story of an elderly couple who travel to Tokyo to visit their two married children, only to find themselves politely ushered off to a hot springs resort. There, the mother dies, leaving only their widowed daughter-in-law to care about the father. "From this simple anecdote unfolds one of the greatest of all Japanese motion pictures. Ozu's style, now completely refined, utterly economical, creates a film that is unforgettable because it is so right, so true, and also because it demands so much from its audience. Evasions of any sort are rare in an Ozu picture, but here there are none at all. Two generations, a simple story that allows all the characters to change places, a pervading delineation of high summer, and the deceptive simplicity of the film's style—all these combine to create a picture so Japanese and at the same time so personal, and hence so universal in its appeal, that it becomes a masterpiece" (Donald Richie).

**Tokyo Story is repeated on Sunday, November 30.**

- Written by Ozu, Kogo Noda. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Chishu Ryu, Chieko Higashiyama, So Yamamura, Haruko Sugimura. (140 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

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SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29

### 2:00, 7:00 **Late Spring**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1949)

(*Banshun*). Chishu Ryu, who appears in minor roles in most of Ozu's earlier films, took his place in the later films as the director's persona, with Setsuko Hara perhaps the feminine counterpart. In *Late Spring*, a widowed father believes that his daughter spurns marriage in order to remain with him. He allows her to think that he plans to remarry, though he has no intention of doing so, and she finally accepts an offer of marriage herself. The hint of a smile on Ryu's face as he hears the bell of the shoji door (his daughter, as always) opens the viewer to the full emotional force of the narrative machinations just set in motion. Father and daughter's farewell trip to Kyoto must be counted among Ozu's most moving sequences, and the film itself, among his most beloved, a subtly disturbing portrayal of the trap that is love.—Judy Bloch

- Written by Ozu, Kogo Noda. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Chishu Ryu, Setsuko Hara, Yumeji Tsukioka, Haruko Sugimura. (107 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

### 4:10, 9:10 **An Autumn Afternoon**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1962)

(*Samma no aji*). Chishu Ryu again portrays a widowed father who takes a notion to marry off his daughter, and pulls it off with the help of his drinking circle of ex-school chums. After the wedding, still dressed up, he is asked at a bar, "Formal affair—funeral?" "Something like that," he replies. Ozu's beautiful last film is an almost bitter portrayal of loss linked to the tensions of modern living and the unsavory effects of consumer society on family life (displayed in golf clubs and Frigidaires, in a heightened awareness of objects). That nothing is as it was implies that nothing is as it should be: the former *sensei* who now runs a noodle shop (reminding us of 1931's *Tokyo Chorus*) and who drinks—where, indeed, are the dreams of youth?; the characteristic Ozu corridors that here give way to alleyways, signs, dumps, and ruins. "It is autumn again," Donald Richie writes, "but now it is deep autumn. Winter was always near, but now it will be tomorrow."—Judy Bloch



- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Shima Iwashita, Chishu Ryu, Mariko Okada, Keiji Sada. (112 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, Color, 35mm)

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SUNDAY NOVEMBER 30

## 2:00 **Tokyo Story**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1953)

*Please see Friday, November 28.*

## 5:30 **I Was Born, But...**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1932)

### **Judith Rosenberg on Plano**

(*Umarete wa mita keredo*). *I Was Born, But...* is a comedy, but a “serious” one. A typical wage earner moves to the suburbs with his typical wife and two delightfully atypical sons, aged eight and ten. The boys pass quickly through the neighborhood rites of initiation, but are confronted with their father’s politics of submissiveness when asked to kowtow to the boss’s prissy son. The recognition of the falseness of adult behavior, which they at first innocently reflect, then challenge, and finally must accept, marks another sort of initiation for the boys—their loss of innocence. *I Was Born, But...* is an early classic of the *shomin-geki* genre, films about middle-class manners and mores. Donald Richie has written, “In this film, Ozu brought together in almost perfect form the various elements which made up his style, his personal way of looking at the world.”

- Written by Akira Fushimi, after an original story by “James Maki” (Ozu). Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Tatsuo Saito, Mitsuko Yoshikawa, Hideo Sugawara, Tokkan Kozo. (92 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

## 7:25 **Where Now Are the Dreams of Youth?**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1932)

### **Judith Rosenberg on Plano**

(*Seishun no yume ima izuko*). Ozu could be Cary Grant with a camera (peripatetic, witty, gorgeous), but his Depression-era college comedies were getting more serious, as the title of this film attests. “There is some hilarious comedy, but also considerable cruelty. There is pathos but also pain” (David Bordwell). It opens with a riotous cheerleading sequence in a montage that hints at the military nature of school drills; later, when a line of men compare watches, we see there’s a short jump from school to the life of a salaryman. The story concerns four college classmates as they graduate and seek work. One, Horino, becomes a tycoon on the death of his father, and the other three must turn to him for jobs. The strain on their friendship increases when Saiki, the most lackluster of the four, feels he must deliver his fiancée (Kinuyo Tanaka) to Horino in order to protect his job.—Judy Bloch

- Written by Kogo Noda. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Ureo Egawa, Kinuyo Tanaka, Haruo Takeda, Tatsuo Saito. (93 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

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THURSDAY DECEMBER 4

## 5:30 **Woman of Tokyo**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1933)

### **Free Screening!**

### **Joel Adlen on Plano**

(*Tokyo no onna*). “*Woman of Tokyo* was the moment when Ozu became Ozu; when the egg cracked. Form and content synchronized. Photography was not *of* but *was*...” (Nathaniel Dorsky). Amazing, or perhaps not, that it should have happened with a “quickie,” short both in length (forty-seven minutes) and in its making (eight days). The story involves a young woman who resorts to prostitution to help put her younger brother through college; when he finds out, tragedy ensues. Reminiscent, in its theme of women’s sacrifice, of the social-realist films that Mizoguchi began making at this time, still it has at least one diversion from the tragedy (a clip from a Lubitsch film). J. Hoberman has called *Woman of Tokyo* “a subtle riot of discordant formal devices....The crucial scene is dominated by a giant close-up of a teapot, and the ending is a breathtaking wrench of perspective from individual tragedy to matter-of-fact social breakdown. Ozu never made another film like this one, and neither has anyone else.”

***Woman of Tokyo* is repeated on Thursday, December 11.**

- Written by Kogo Noda, Tadao Ikeda, from a story by “Ernst Schwartz” (Ozu). Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Yoshiko Okada, Ureo Egawa, Kinuyo Tanaka, Shinyo Nara. (47 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)



## 7:00 **Walk Cheerfully**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1930)

### Joel Adlen on Plano

(*Hogaraka ni ayume*). Ozu re-creates a world of petty thieves, confidence men, and flappers in this comedy about a delinquent boy who reforms for the love of a virtuous girl. Ozu made silent films well into the sound era, experimenting with rapid editing and camera movements, and developing his special knack for establishing atmosphere. The opening sequence is a dazzling display of action, the colliding vectors of human and camera movement. The young hoods are masters of signs and gestures, and the camera is their medium. The Ozu tatami shot is already in evidence, and objects are already more than the sum of their clutter, but *Walk Cheerfully*, while truly beautiful, is rarely contemplative. It's a film about quirks and collective fetishes; a cinematic *attitude*. Nobody could extract humor from a tapping foot, a fedora placed just so, or a repeated tic as could Ozu in the silents.—Judy Bloch

- Written by Tadao Ikeda, from a story by Hiroshi Shimizu. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Minoru Takada, Hiroko Kawasaki, Nobuko Matsuzono, Satoko Date. (99 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

## 9:00 **I Flunked, But...**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1930)

### Joel Adlen on Plano

(*Rakudai wa shita keredo*). In this Depression-era satire on college life, our heroes concentrate less on their studies than on a unique shuffle they have perfected—just as Ozu delights in running gags, simultaneity, and other comic details more than plot. Takahashi and his pals, facing “exam hell,” come up with some innovative techniques for cribbing. It all comes out in the wash, however—literally—and the cheaters are back next year as cheerleaders while their earnest graduating compatriots hopelessly scan the want ads. The wistful melancholy of many of Ozu's films of the period is found in this film's central irony: since there are no jobs, the boy who flunks is more secure than the boy who graduates.

- Written by Akira Fushimi from an idea by Ozu. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Tatsuo Saito, Kaoru Futaba, Kinuyo Tanaka, Chishu Ryu. (65 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

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FRIDAY DECEMBER 5

## 7:30 **An Inn at Tokyo**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1935)

(*Tokyo no yado*). “This beautifully observed film is among Ozu's most realistic. Indeed, the term *neo-realismo* has been used to describe Ozu's establishing scenes of the effects of the Great Depression in Tokyo” (Donald Richie). It tells of an unemployed factory worker who takes to the road with his two sons after being abandoned by his wife. They find companionship with an equally destitute widow and her daughter. “The towering, distant factories, tenderly blowing smoke, the weedy vacant fields and potholed roads lined with telephone poles and trolley lines, the energy and beauty of children, and the caring faces of destitute parents are rendered in Ozu's most mature photographic style....The magic of Ozu's totally cinematic vision is seen here, almost for the first time, in full bloom” (Nathaniel Dorsky).

- Written by Tadao Ikeda, Masao Arata. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Takeshi Sakamoto, Tokkan Kozo, Takayuki Suematsu, Yoshiko Okada. (80 mins, Silent with music track, English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

## 9:10 **The Only Son**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1936)

(*Hitori musuko*). Ozu converted to the sound film late, and incorporated the “new” medium into his rigorous style. *The Only Son*, his first sound feature, has been called by film theorist Noel Burch “his supreme achievement.” The story has an O. Henry-like irony out of which Ozu has fashioned one of his most emotional films, “filled with originality, integrity, and the sharpest kind of observation” (Donald Richie). A widowed mother who has worked for years to send her boy to college spends her entire savings on a visit to her “successful” son. He, being unemployed and impoverished, must borrow money to put her up. Ozu's use of sound highlights the industrial backdrop against which the story is set, from the mother's simple grinding of rice flour to the hum of the factory machines.

- Written by Tadao Ikeda, Masao Arata, from an original idea by “James Maki” (Ozu). Photographed by Shojiro Sugimoto. With Shinichi Himori, Choko Iida, Chishu Ryu, Yoshiko Tsubouchi. (87 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)



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SATURDAY DECEMBER 6

3:00, 7:00 **What Did the Lady Forget?**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1937)

(*Shukujo wa nani o wasuretaka*). A splendid satire on Tokyo's suburban bourgeoisie. Into the home of a society lady and her cowed husband, a professor of medicine, comes the professor's niece, a thoroughly modern girl from Osaka. Discovering that her uncle's "golf" games take place on the proverbial nineteenth hole, she follows him to the Ginza district and insists on participating in the fun. "Amongst the shoji screens, a sublime comedy of coming and going. Light, effortless, fresh, and truthful, the proportions of the surface bring to mind 'Mozartian perfection.' And what did the lady forget? I think, to sleep with her husband" (Nathaniel Dorsky).

• Written by "James Maki" (Ozu), Akira Fushimi. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Tatsuo Saito, Sumiko Kurishima, Michiko Kuwano, Shuji Sano. (75 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

4:35, 8:35 **The Brothers and Sisters of the Toda Family**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1941)

(*Toda-ke no kyodai*). The patriarch of the wealthy Toda family dies unexpectedly just after the clan has gathered for a photograph. His death leaves his sons and daughters in a financial bind, and none of them wants the responsibility of taking care of their mother and youngest sister, whom they think should learn to be independent, but whom they would hate to see lowered to working for a living....This [film] broke a four-year hiatus that had been imposed by Ozu's induction into the army....It was wryly noted by his colleagues that he spent his conscripted time well: mostly watching American films that had been banned at home and captured abroad.—David Owens, Japan Society

• Written by Ozu, Tadao Ikeda. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Hideo Fujino, Fumiko Katsuragi, Mitsuko Yoshikawa, Tatsuo Saito. (102 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

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SUNDAY DECEMBER 7

5:30 **That Night's Wife**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1930)

**Judith Rosenberg on Plano**

(*Sono yo no tsuma*). A crime melodrama based on a Western-style magazine story and inspired by Fritz Lang and American thrillers. As ever, Ozu tests the conventions as he employs them, "drawing on thriller iconography for its own sake" and thereby distancing himself from the genre, as David Bordwell notes. The film is set in a twelve-hour period. A commercial artist of meager means is driven to robbery in order to provide medicine for his critically ill daughter. As the film opens he is being pursued by the police. After a series of diversions, he hails a gypsy cab that delivers him to his door—but the night is young. Much of the delight of this film is in the play of visuals and the use of space, from the taxicab with its mirrors to the family's cluttered apartment, where most of the action takes place.

• Written by Kogo Noda, from a story adaptation by Ozu. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Tokihiko Okada, Emiko Yakumo, Mitsuko Ichimura, Togo Yamamoto. (67 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

7:00 **Dragnet Girl**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1933)

**Judith Rosenberg on Plano**

(*Hijosen no onna*). This was the last of Ozu's several excursions into the world of American-style crime melodrama in the early thirties and, suitably enough, the story centers on the efforts of a gangster's moll to get herself and her lover-accomplice out of their murky world into "a decent life." Although the material seems rather over-stretched and sentimentalized towards the end, the early parts are full of fascinating lowlife detail, an atmospheric lighting style, and some nicely observed small-part playing. Most interesting of all, though, is the presentation of the girl's character. Kinuyo Tanaka was tackling an extraordinary variety of parts in the 1930s, and she brings a wide range of moods and emotions to this role (especially in the tense, slightly quirky scenes with the other, rival girl) and gives the film a center and force which it may not have possessed otherwise.—John Gillett, British Film Institute

• Written by Tadao Ikeda, based on an idea by "James Maki" (Ozu). Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Joji Oka, Sumiko Mizukubo, Hideo Mitsui. (99 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

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TUESDAY DECEMBER 9

7:00 **The Lady and the Beard**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1931)

**Joel Adlen on Plano**

(*Shukujo to hige*). A delightful comedy about a collegian kendo swordfighter who passionately loves his beard and despises all modern ways. He employs his chivalry to save a young typist from a mugging at the hands of a tough young woman, but any other kind of employment is beyond his reach. The girl suggests that he might find a job if he shaved his beard, which he does, but his new, attractive, modern face only complicates his life. John Gillett observed, "Ozu obviously had fun with the leading character, whose unpredictable outbursts and changes of mood are used to great comic effect. Looking at the performance from today's standpoint, one wonders if Toshiro Mifune may have somehow seen this film."

• Written by Komatsu Kitamura. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Tokihiko Okada, Hiroko Kawasaki, Satoko Date, Toshiko Iizuka. (75 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

8:35 **Tokyo Chorus**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1931)

**Joel Adlen on Plano**

(*Tokyo no gassho*). A charming social comedy on a serious theme: an office worker and family man is dismissed from his insurance-company job when he stands up for a coworker in a trifling dispute. His family is forced to economize while he walks the streets looking for work, until his luck changes when he happens to meet an old high school teacher now managing a restaurant. "In these dark prewar films, [Ozu] was showing conditions in so faithful a manner that they indicted themselves. At the same time he was also quietly celebrating a character—a personal rather than national ideal—that could remain brave in the face of family pressure, could continue to hope in the face of an increasingly restrictive social order, could remain simple, naive, strong enough to continue to have faith in itself. From this stuff of tragedy, Ozu fashioned some of his best comedies" (Donald Richie).

• Written by Kogo Noda, based on a novel by Komatsu Kitamura. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Tokihiko Okada, Emiko Yagumo, Hideo Sugawara, Hideko Takamine. (91 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

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THURSDAY DECEMBER 11

7:30 **Woman of Tokyo**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1933)

**Judith Rosenberg on Plano**

*Please see Thursday, December 4.*

8:40 **A Mother Should Be Loved**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1934)

**Judith Rosenberg on Plano**

(*Haha o kowazuya*). The first and last reels of this very rare film are lost; a written synopsis of the missing reels is provided. Ozu's own father died during the making of the film, which opens with the death of a beloved father of two boys. Eight years later, the college student Sadao learns that he was actually the son of his father's first wife. Ozu explores the complexities of sibling relationships in this story about half-brothers. He also delves, early on, into what would be a favorite subject of the postwar films—the dissolution of the family and the importance of place (the family moves three times). Ozu's signature motif of set design—Western movie posters—here significantly includes the French film *Poil de carotte*, about the sadness of an unloved child.

• Written by Tadao Ikeda, Masao Arata, based on an idea by Kogo Noda. Photographed by Isamu Aoki. With Den Ohinata, Hideo Mitsui, Mitsuko Yoshikawa, Yukichi Iwata. (71 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

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FRIDAY DECEMBER 12

7:30 **There Was a Father**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1942)

(*Chichi ariki*). Ozu's control over the most sensitive and potentially overwhelming emotional material is at its height in this exquisite film about a widowed father and his son who are separated when the father must relocate and the boy is sent to



boarding school. Their moments of happiness together carry the shadow of impending loss. The film was one of Ozu's personal favorites, perhaps because of the plot's similarity to his own situation: while Ozu grew up in the small town of Matsuzaka near Nagoya, his father carried on the family business in Tokyo. The theme of separation was particularly poignant for Japanese audiences at a time when so many families were fractured by the hardships of the war.

- Written by Tadao Ikeda, Takao Yanai, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Chishu Ryu, Shuji Sano, Mitsuko Mito, Takeshi Sakamoto. (87 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

## 9:20 **The Record of a Tenement Gentleman**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1947)

(*Nagaya shinshi roku*). Ozu's discrete sensibility in relating incidents from everyday life to the pathos of living is deeply Japanese in its philosophical/artistic roots but profoundly sympathetic to a good many Western eyes and ears. *The Record of a Tenement Gentleman* takes a sentimental idea—an awkward, abandoned child in postwar Japan is foisted upon a widow who claims to dislike children—and gives it a decidedly austere, unsentimental, and even funny treatment. Unrelieved poverty forms the setting of the film (though the main direction of Ozu's art is not sociological): the chaos of urban life in the immediate postwar period is masterfully evoked in a studio recreation of the *shitamachi* community of Tokyo, an area destroyed by air raids during the war and being rebuilt house by house.

- Written by Ozu, Tadao Ikeda. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Chishu Ryu, Choko Iida, Takeshi Sakamoto, Reikichi Kawamura. (72 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

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## SATURDAY DECEMBER 13

### 4:00, 8:45 **Early Summer**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1951)

(*Bakushu*). About *Early Summer*, Ozu stated, "I was interested in getting much deeper than just the story itself; I wanted to depict the cycles of life, the transience of life....Consequently, I didn't force the action, but tried to leave some spaces unfilled...leave viewers with a pleasant aftertaste." As Donald Richie notes, "These tiny empty moments are the pores in an Ozu picture through which the movie breathes. They define the film by their emptiness. They are examples of *mu*, a Zen aesthetic term implying...nothingness; they are also examples of care and respect." Each of the members of *Early Summer's* endearing postwar family practices not wanting too much—except for the young children, whose natural greed Ozu indulges good-naturedly. The "aftertaste" is a bit sad, however, as a daughter marries, a family dissolves, leaving parents alone to contemplate their life and their hopes for the children; to savor transience. Their gaze extends the film beyond the edges of the screen.—Judy Bloch

- Written by Ozu, Kogo Noda. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Setsuko Hara, Ichiro Sugai, Chieko Higashiyama, Chishu Ryu. (135 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

### 7:00 **A Hen in the Wind**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1948)

(*Kaze no naka no mendori*). Tokiko (Kinuyo Tanaka) lives in a tenement with her son awaiting her husband's demobilization. Destitute, she attempts to make a living taking in sewing and selling her possessions. But when her son becomes ill, she takes the advice of a meddlesome neighbor and prostitutes herself to pay the hospital bill. On his return, her irate husband lashes out at her; it is only when he visits a prostitute himself that he begins to understand what his wife has gone through. Ozu considered *A Hen in the Wind* a failure (although it ranked seventh in the *Kinema Junpo* critics' poll). Donald Richie wrote: "In the general context of Ozu's style...sacrifices of realism to beauty were already visible, and it was through such sacrifices that a new and perhaps higher reality was shortly to emerge."

- Written by Ryosuke Saito, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Shuji Sano, Chieko Murata, Reiko Minakami. (84 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

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## SUNDAY DECEMBER 14

### 5:30 **Passing Fancy**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1933)

#### **Joel Adlen on Piano**

(*Dekigokoro*). This lively and accessible film introduces the character of Kihachi, the flawed but lovable proletarian everyman of several Ozu films, always played by Takeshi Sakamoto. Kihachi is always depicted as single but having a son or two; here the son is delightfully played by Ozu's favorite obnoxious youngster, Tokkan Kozo. Factory worker Kihachi's brief affair with a young

woman raises his son's ire, but the sparring between parent and child reveals depths of feeling ultimately leading to sacrifice and redemption. "This film was inspired by King Vidor's 1931 *The Champ*...a story of vagabonds abundant with humor and pathos, which Ozu clearly transferred from the American picture to his own" (Tadao Sato).

- Written by Takao Ikeda. Photographed by Shojiro Sugimoto. With Takeshi Sakamoto, Nobuko Fushimi, Den Obinata, Tokkan Kozo. (101 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

**7:30 A Story of Floating Weeds**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1934)

**Joel Adlen on Plano**

(*Ukigusa monogatari*). The leader of a down-at-the-heels band of traveling players returns to a small mountain town and meets his grown son, who was unaware of his father's existence. The son himself becomes involved with one of the actresses in the troupe. Ozu took the idea from a 1929 American film, *The Barker*, about a circus barker whose educated son falls for a performer in his father's troupe, and completely transformed it with added vital characters, including the former mistress. "Ozu turned this slightly melodramatic story into a picture of great atmosphere and intensity of character, one in which story, actors, and setting all combine to create a whole world, the first of those eight-reel universes in which everything takes on a consistency somewhat greater than life: in short, a work of art. Ozu himself remained fond of this film and successfully remade it in color in 1959, under the title *Floating Weeds*" (Donald Richie).

- Written by Tadao Ikeda. Photographed by Hideo Shigehara. With Takeshi Sakamoto, Choko Iida, Hideo Mitsui, Emiko Yakumo. (90 mins, Silent with English intertitles, B&W, 35mm)

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**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17**

**7:30 Early Spring**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1956)

(*Soshun*). In *Early Spring* Ozu returns to the office-worker milieu of his earlier films to "show the life of a man with such a job...his hopes for the future gradually dissolving, his realizing that...he has accomplished nothing....[I hoped] that the audience would feel the sadness of this kind of life" (Ozu). The disaffected hero finds a pleasant diversion in a young woman nicknamed Goldfish, leading to marital complications, a split, and a renewal. "A great, unpleasant film with some of the most poetic and mysterious montage in Ozu's career. The sequence of cuts showing commuters arriving at the station in the early morning, and the cut, later on, in the midst of dramatic crises to a neon sign at twilight are of a profoundness found nowhere else in cinema" (Nathaniel Dorsky).

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Ryo Ikebe, Chikage Awashima, Keiko Kishi, Teiji Takahashi. (145 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

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**THURSDAY DECEMBER 18**

**7:00 The Flavor of Green Tea over Rice**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1952)

(*Ochazuke no aji*). Ozu made many films about intentions of marriage—especially as concerns parents and children—but he made only a few films that centered on husband-wife relations, as this one does. "I wanted to show something about a man from the viewpoint of a woman," Ozu said of this film, which is a subtle portrait of an unhappy middle-class marriage told through a series of extraordinarily revealing domestic details. The husband is a placid, country-born businessman who marries a woman from a wealthier background. His very stolidity drives his wife to boredom and contempt; she wants to avoid what this life will be—simplicity itself, like the flavor of green tea over rice—and for this he scolds her harshly. Into this painful scene arrives a favorite niece whose romantic optimism stirs the couple into a noble fight for the return of grace and acceptance into their marriage.

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Shin Saburi, Michiyo Kogure, Koji Tsuruta, Chishu Ryu. (115 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

**9:15 Equinox Flower**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1958)

(*Higanbana*). *Equinox Flower* is about a successful businessman and his attempts to cope with a daughter who defies an arranged marriage and runs off with a pianist. Ozu's sympathy is never with one character over another, therefore ours cannot be either. Perhaps this is what makes his films, for all their designed tranquility, so wrenching. Russell Merritt writes, "Ozu was one of the great precisionists [and] the exactness of *Equinox Flower* (his first color film) is apparent everywhere: in the formal



pattern of camera setups, in the opaque non-expressive acting, in the framework of parallel plots, and most of all in the exquisite design of his spatial editing....His fastidiousness is not just an assertion about the resources of the movies. It is also an idea about life, about what Susan Sontag called 'the discovery of what is necessary.'

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu, based on a novel by Ton Satomi. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Shin Saburi, Kinuyo Tanaka, Ineko Arima, Miyuki Kuwano. (118 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, Color, 35mm)

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FRIDAY DECEMBER 19

## 7:00 Tokyo Twilight

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1957)

(*Tokyo boshoku*). Ozu's last black-and-white film finds him in an unusually melodramatic mode. Set among the twilit interiors, dingy bars, and mahjong parlors of Tokyo's seedier quarters, the story tells of two sisters living with their father. The elder has fled an unhappy marriage; the younger, unmarried, is rapidly sliding into delinquency and worse. When the sisters discover that their mother, formerly presumed dead, is in fact living nearby, a series of disasters ensues. Setsuko Hara gives a stunning performance as the elder sister trying to hold together a broken family. Her mixed loyalties and her final, painful choice give the film its crushing emotional weight.

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Setsuko Hara, Ineko Arima, Chishu Ryu, Isuzu Yamada. (141 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 35mm)

## 9:40 The Munekata Sisters

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1950)

(*Munekata shimai*). Two sisters come to Kyoto from Tokyo to visit their dying father. Setsuko (Kinuyo Tanaka), the elder of the two, is resigned to her life as the hostess of a bar she has opened to support herself and her perpetually unemployed husband. The younger sister, Mariko (Hideko Takamine), is an audacious postwar freethinker who tries to pry Setsuko away from her husband and reunite her with an old flame. The sisters' attitudes represent a deep division in Japanese society between prewar tradition and postwar modernity, but in the end, duty to father determines the course of both sisters' lives. This atmospheric and picturesque film was Ozu's first departure from Shochiku studios, in response to a lucrative offer from Shintoho.

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu, from a novel by Jiro Osaragi. Photographed by Joji Ohara. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Hideko Takamine, Ken Uehara, Chishu Ryu. (112 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, 16mm, Courtesy The Japan Foundation, permission Toho)

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SATURDAY DECEMBER 20

## 2:00, 7:00 Good Morning

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1959)

(*Ohayo*). Ozu's "bad boys" strike again! *Ohayo* is *I Was Born But...* updated to the fifties. In a housing development outside of Tokyo, only one family owns a TV; naturally, their home becomes the neighborhood clubhouse. But the electronic emission in their living room makes the family suspect in the eyes of the rest of the community (they also "loll around the house in Western-style nightgowns," it is said). Minoru and Isamu are tired of having to go to their neighbors' to watch television; they demand one of their own. And another thing, why must they always greet people with "good morning" (*ohayo*) and ask "how are you?" when they obviously don't care? They go on a silence strike. *Ohayo* is literally a comedy of manners—a quiet duel between the ceremonial politesse that greases the wheels of daily life (and parental authority) and the robust rituals of boyhood.—Judy Bloch

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Koji Shidara, Masahiko Shimazu, Chishu Ryu, Kuniko Miyake. (93 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, Color, 35mm)

## 4:00, 8:55 Late Autumn

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1960)

(*Akibiyori*). In *Late Spring*, Setsuko Hara played a young woman whose protests—"I'm happy as I am"—went unheeded by a well-meaning widowed father who wanted to see her married. *Late Autumn* is a reworking of the earlier film with Hara playing a widowed mother allowing her young daughter to think it is in her mother's best interest that she marry. Donald Richie notes, "There is an elegiac sadness in *Late Autumn* and, perhaps in consequence, some relaxation of the extraordinary objectivity that so distinguishes *Late Spring*. Of this 1960 film Ozu has written: 'People sometimes complicate the simplest things. Life, which seems complex, suddenly reveals itself as very simple—and I wanted to show that in this film.'"

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu, from a novel by Ton Satomi. Photographed by Yuharu Atsuta. With Setsuko Hara, Yoko Tsukasa, Chishu Ryu, Mariko Okada. (127 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, Color, 35mm)

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SUNDAY DECEMBER 21

**2:30, 7:35 Floating Weeds**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1959)

(*Ukigusa*). “A fairly close remake of the 1934 silent film about a group of traveling players whose leader visits his illegitimate son in a remote island town. The remake gains enormously from the playing of Ganjiro Nakamura and Machiko Kyo, and the stunning color photography of the great Kazuo Miyagawa, here working with Ozu for the first and last time. Interesting, also, to note the small alterations made by Ozu in this version, strengthening the end and introducing a different flavor to the scenes of the troupe at work” (John Gillett). “From the sentimental detailing of the traveling players’ lives, almost deliberately anachronistic in 1959, emerges deep nostalgia for the dying folk culture of old Japan” (Hong Kong Film Festival).

- Written by Ozu, Kogo Noda, based on the 1934 script by Tadao Ikeda. Photographed by Kazuo Miyagawa. With Ganjiro Nakamura, Machiko Kyo, Haruko Sugimura. (119 mins, Color, 35mm, Courtesy The Japan Foundation, permission Cowboy Pictures)

**5:30 The End of Summer**

Yasujiro Ozu (Japan, 1961)

(*Kohayagawa-ke no aki*, a.k.a. *Early Autumn*). *The End of Summer* comes in with many humorous touches and goes out with a bleak recognition of the fleeting nature of all things. It is the chronicle of a sake-brewing family in Fushimi, outside of Kyoto. While the daughters are variously considering marriage proposals and attempting to reform their philandering father, the old man suffers a heart attack. The family is left to contemplate his last words, spoken to his mistress: “So this is how it ends.” Only in its pacing and visuals, where Ozu meditates on emptiness, does the film prepare us for this abrupt encounter with death. “Death, in the films of Ozu as in life, is simple absence,” Donald Richie has noted. In *The End of Summer*, Richie writes, “death triumphs....One of Ozu’s most beautiful films, it is one of his most disturbing.”

- Written by Kogo Noda, Ozu. Photographed by Asakazu Nakai. With Ganjiro Nakamura, Setsuko Hara, Yoko Tsukasa, Michiyo Aratama. (103 mins, In Japanese with English subtitles, Color, 16mm, Courtesy The Japan Foundation, permission Cowboy Pictures)