

Document Citation

Title	The adventures of Kyoshiro Nemuri
Author(s)	Judy Bloch
Source	<i>Pacific Film Archive Calendar</i>
Date	1988 Aug 28
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Nemuri Kyoshiro shobu (The Adventures of Kyoshiro Nemuri), Misumi, Kenji, 1964

The Adventures of Kyoshiro Nemuri

(Nemuri Kyoshiro shobu)

7:30

Kyoshiro Nemuri, the lone wolf, full moon swordsman, even more than Zatoichi is darkly estranged from the mainstream of Tokugawa society. As portrayed by Raizo Ichikawa throughout the sixties (an earlier Kyoshiro Nemuri series in 1956-1958 starred Tsuruta Koji), this auburn-haired Eurasian, the illegitimate offspring of a Portuguese missionary and a Japanese lady-in-waiting, casts himself as the anti-hero, a brooding existentialist haunted by his rootlessness. Nemuri resists any attempt to glorify the swordsmanship for which he is renowned—

"Swordsmanship is nothing but murder," he avers in this first film of the series—nevertheless, the Kyoshiro Nemuri films are a swordplay buff's delight. "What's your style?" precedes any duel. Nemuri's style is the Engetsu or what he terms the "full moon cut"; but if no one has survived the completion of the arc, this is due as much as anything to the "fatal inward draw" of his obsession. In *The Adventures of Kyoshiro Nemuri*, Nemuri is shadowed by five enemies (each with his own style), a mysterious woman fortune teller, a precocious orphan boy and a vulnerable pro-reform Shogunate official. Their stories are intertwined and set against a delightfully detailed Edo period backdrop. Gorgeous color cinematography does more than bring out Nemuri's red highlights; the emergence of the five foes against a blue-green misty night, and the climactic battle captured in long-shot amidst the slim trees of a forest, help distance us from any stray emotions that Kyoshiro Nemuri might have—in spite of himself.

- Directed by Kenji Misumi. Written by Seiji Hoshikawa, based on a novel by Renzaburo Shibata. Photographed by Jishi Makiura. With Raizo Ichikawa, Miwa Takada, Yoshi Kato, Shiho Fujimura. (1964, 82 mins, Color, 'Scope, 35mm, Print from PFA Daiei Collection with permission of Shochiku Films)