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Ikimono No Kiroku
(I Live In Fear)
(JAPANESE—
ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

Brandon Films release of Toho (Sojiro Motoki) production. Stars Toshiro Mifune. Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Screenplay, Shinobu Hashimoto, Hideo Oguni. Kurosawa; camera, Asachi Nakai. At Museum of Modern Art (in conjunction with N.Y. film festival). Running time, 105 MINS.

Kichiji Nakajima	.....	Toshiro Mifune
Toyo	.....	Kiko Miyoshi
Yoshi	.....	Togo Hatuko
Takso Yamasaki	.....	Masao Shimizu
Ichiro	.....	Yutaka Sada
Kimie	.....	Noriko Senooku
Jiro	.....	Minoru Chiaki
Sue	.....	Kyoko Aoyama
Asako Kuribayashi	.....	Akemi Negishi
Kuribayashi	.....	Kichiji Ueda
Ryochi Suyama	.....	Yochi Tachikawa
Harada	.....	Takashi Shimura
Araki	.....	Ken Mitsuda
Hori	.....	Toranosuke Ogawa
Old Man From Brazil	.....	Ejio Tono
Okamoto	.....	Kamatari Fujiwara
Psychiatrist	.....	Mobuo Nakamura

Like Federico Fellini, Japanese film director Akira Kurosawa is too talented a filmmaker to turn out a dull film even when his ideas seem a bit fuzzy. "I Live In Fear," made in 1955 and not yet released commercially in this country, is Kurosawa's blazing attack on the world's complacency in the face of total annihilation. Told in the terms of a wealthy old industrialist's monomaniacal campaign to persuade his self-satisfied family to move to the safety of Brazil, Kurosawa's message seems to be that anyone who doesn't fear the destruction of mankind must be mad. The kicker of the film is that the old man finally loses his mind and, when last seen, is staring at the setting sun, seeing in it the earth at its incinerated end.

Major flaw of the film is that one never quite believes—or understands—the sincerity of the old man, played in his familiar grunt-and-groan style by Toshiro Mifune, the ruggedly handsome hero of Kurosawa's samurai tales and here caked over with a lot of not very effective makeup. One might understand the old man's fears on a more personal and petty level, but, as written anyway, one suspects he is incapable of such God-like vision which makes him weep for all the world. He's a self-made, hard-driving old martinet who has indulged himself throughout his life to the extent that his family includes not only a long-suffering wife and several legitimate children, but also three illegitimate children and a couple of mistresses.

While the old man's obsession is never fully felt, his relations with his family are beautifully and touchingly realized. Kurosawa's grasp of such human relations is always sure and detailed in scenes both funny and sad. They are so vivid, in fact, that one keeps wanting to believe the old man, only to be brought up short with the realization, from time to time, that Kurosawa really isn't as interested in his characters as in the editorial comment he wants to make. That comment is valid and important, but it is imperfectly articulated, at least by these characters.

The black and white camera work is excellent, as are all technical credits, with the possible exception of the makeup department. The English subtitles are barely acceptable. Anby.

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