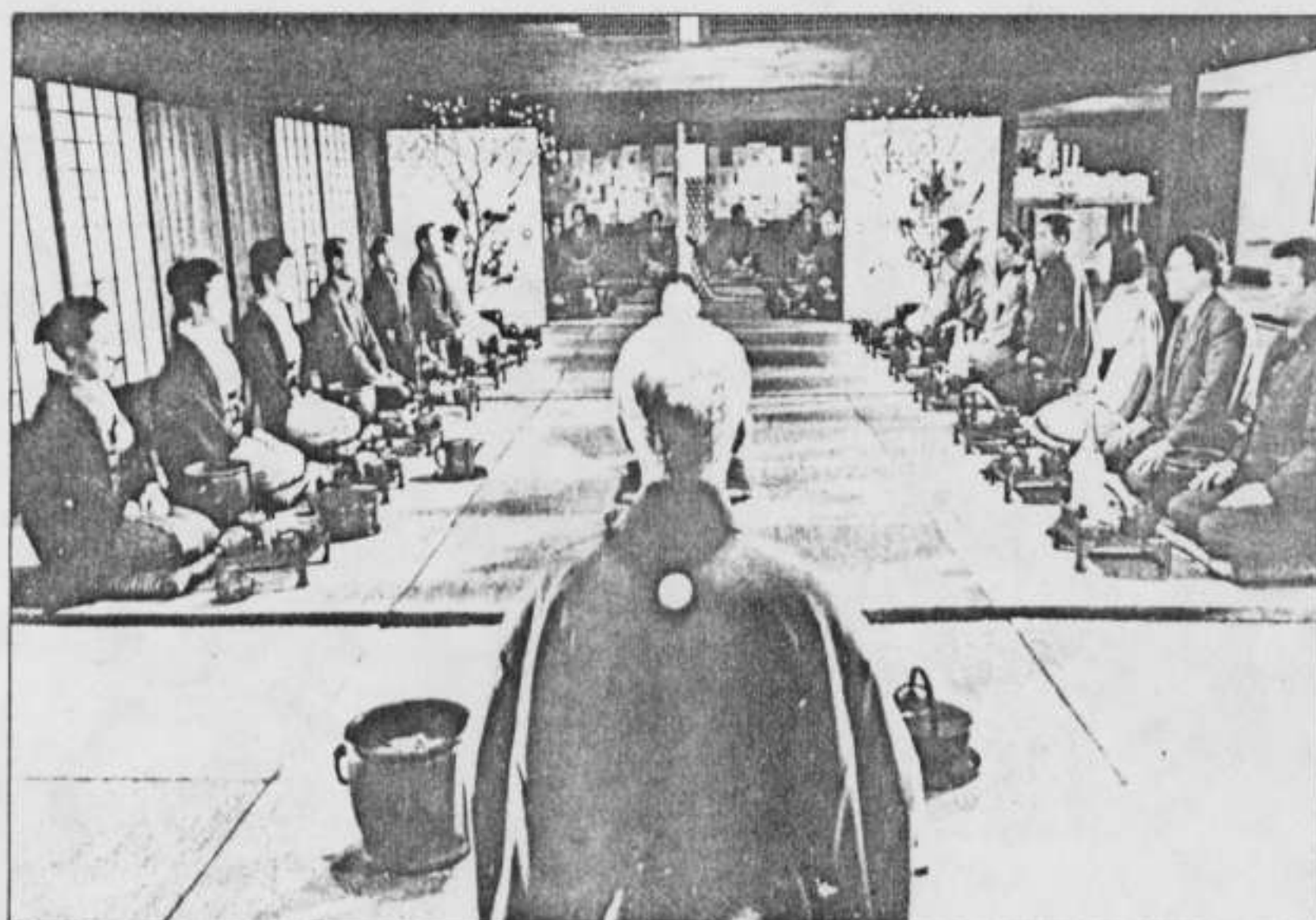


## Document Citation

Title	<b>The ceremony</b>
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Publisher name not available</i>
Date	
Type	synopsis
Language	English
Pagination	24-25
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Gishiki (The ceremony), Oshima, Nagisa, 1971

# Oshima/1971

## The Ceremony *Gishiki*



Sozosha/Art Theatre Guild, 1971  
Color, cinemascope. 123 minutes  
Shown by courtesy of New Yorker Films

**Director:** Nagisa Oshima  
**Producers:** Kinshiro Kuzui and Takaharu Yamaguchi  
**Screenplay:** Tsutomu Tamura, Mamoru Sasaki, Nagisa Oshima  
**Photography:** Toichiro Narushima  
**Art direction:** Shigemasa Toda  
**Music:** Toru Takemitsu  
**Lighting:** Reijiro Yamashita  
**Sound:** Hideo Nishizaki  
**Editor:** Keiichi Uraoka

**CAST**  
**Masuo Sakurada, the man from Manchuria:** Kenzo Kawasaki  
**Ritsuko Sakurada:** Atsuko Kaku  
**Kazuomi Sakurada, the grandfather:** Kei Sato  
**Shizu Sakurada, the grandmother:** Nobuko Otowa  
**Kiku Sakurada, Masuo's mother:** Shinju Takayama  
**Tomiko Sakurada, Masuo's great-grandmother:** Shizue Kawarazaki  
**Setsuko Sakurada, Ritsuko's mother:** Akiko Koyama  
**Isamu Sakurada, Masuo's uncle:** Hosei Komatsu  
**Susumu Sakurada, Masuo's uncle:** Fumio Watanabe  
**Tadashi Sakurada, Susumu's son:** Kiyoshi Tsuchiya

Social commentator Oshima here presents one of his most beautiful yet damning films. Through the complex relationships within a single prestigious family, he traces the entire postwar history of Japan: the hope and disappointment represented by communism and China, the illusion of democratic freedom, and the gradual retrenchment of the old aristocracy. The tyranny, rape, murder and incest within the Sakurada family become metaphors for postwar Japanese society, ending in the impotent self-destruction of the young.

In 1947, the little boy Masuo and his mother are repatriated from Manchuria and return to the Sakurada family estate. Masuo, heir to the family line, is quickly wrested away from his mother's hands and placed in a position facing his grandfather, Kazuomi, and being cared for by his aunt Setsuko. The boy develops a love for baseball, playing with his relatives Ritsuko, Terumichi and Tadashi, whose exact relationship to him he will only later comprehend. He comes to realize that with the family under his grandfather's tyrannical sway, the only things that are his own are his baseball and the sound he seems to hear of his dead brother crying under the ground.

As a teenager, Masuo immerses himself in baseball as the family disperses, coming together only for ceremonial occasions such as weddings and funerals. On his mother's death, Masuo begins to face manhood and the strange love he has for both his aunt Setsuko and her daughter. But Masuo's inability to defy his grandfather and take any kind of assertive

action results in both the women he cares for being taken by Terumichi, following in grandfather Kazuomi's footsteps. Masuo's ultimate humiliation at his grandfather's hands is an arranged marriage, duly carried out even though the bride does not appear for the ceremony. Tadashi turns to right-wing fanaticism and is run over while reading a political tract. Finally, upon his grandfather Kazuomi's death, Masuo is greeted by powerful politicians and industrialists, who urge him to take the old man's place. At this point a telegram arrives from Terumichi, who, recognizing that he is really the only one capable of replacing Kazuomi, takes his own life. Ritsuko and Masuo travel to the island where Terumichi has been living, where Masuo allows Ritsuko to follow Terumichi in death. Masuo is left alone on the rocky shore, playing a ghostly baseball game and putting his ear to the ground.

