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as such, seem to demand. The form, rather, is organic; it is that demanded by the characters rather than the plot. Open-ended sequences, visual non-sequiturs, and lapses of continuity, all carefully judged, create the air of believability so characteristic of this film. Though far different from such early films about children as those of Ozu and Shimizu, it joins them through its honest realism and its bitter perception.

Equally perceptive were *Ceremony* (Gisaku, 1971), and, in particular, *The Man Who Left His Will on Film* (Tokyo Senso Sengo Hiwa, 1970), an elaborately self-referential film about a student making a movie. He kills himself at the end of the picture, and the film he was making becomes the film we have been seeing. Using a completely amateur cast, Oshima succeeded brilliantly in creating a visual counterpart for the world which an acutely sensitive youth must feel and fear. In these later and mature films the excesses of youth, its revolts, its retreats, are captured with a compassion quite missing from the earlier work.

At the same time, however, one must add that the individuality of Oshima, of Kobayashi, and of Masumura is a bit like that of Imai, and is different from that, say, of Ozu or Kurosawa, in that stylistic unity is imposed not by the director but by the subject matter he chooses.

Another example would be Yasuke Chiba, whose personal style was based entirely in the *shomin-geki* genre seen in the films of Shimazu, of Ozu, or Gosho. *Downtown* (Shitamachi, 1957) was an excellent short film about a poor working woman—beautifully played by Isuzu Ya-

mada—who finds love with a truck driver (Toshiro Mifune) only to lose it when he is accidentally killed. Chiba's finest work was found in the tetralogy *Oban* (1957-58) about a large young man whose ambitions are equally big. (Both of the English titles sometimes used, *Large Size* and *Mr. Fortune Maker*, are not precise: *oban* is an Osaka word, now somewhat quaint, used to designate, not the boss of a company, but the man just under him.) He is a go-getter of the mythological American (or Osakan) variety whose constant energy in life and business is completely foreign to the traditional social ideals of the Japanese. There is no plot as such; the story is a Balzac-like chronicle of the hero's various rises and falls. The richness of character and detail and the many early-1920s touches create throughout all four films an almost palpable atmosphere, one to which Daisuke Kato adds greatly in his perfect interpretation of this César Birotteau transplanted to Tokyo.

Chiba's limitations were the limitations of the genre in which he chose to excel. Now, in this age of affluence, there are no more *shomin* and consequently no more such *geki* and Chiba has long had to resign himself to being merely one of the many house directors of his studio.

Another casualty of his times was Ko Nakahira. He may not have achieved Masumura's brilliance nor Kobayashi's singleness of purpose, nor Oshima's breadth, but he contributed other qualities, such as a lightness one does not often associate with Japanese pictures and a willingness to experiment. His debut film, *Crazed Fruit* (Kurutta Kajitsu, 1956), known abroad as *Juvenile Pas-*