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# Venice Films

## **Narayama Bushi-Ko** **(The Legend of Narayama)** **(JAPANESE—COLOR)**

Venice, Sept. 9.

Shochiku production and release. Stars Kinuyo Tanaka, Teiji Takahashi; features Yuko Mochizuki, Danko Ichigawa. Written and directed by Kelsuke Kinoshita, from a story by Shichiro Fukazawa; camera (Fujicolor-Grandscope), Hiroyuki Kusuda; art direction, Kisaku Ito; editor, Yoshi Sugihara. At Film Festival, Vienna. Running time, 98 MINS.

Orin ..... Kinuyo Tanaka  
Tatsuhel ..... Teiji Takahashi  
Tama-yan ..... Yuko Mochizuki

An artistically important film with little or no commercial prospects. Basically distasteful story and slow pace are basic strikes against pic, despite moments of great poetry and top acting by all concerned, and especially by Kinuyo Tanaka, in the leading role.

Plot concerns a 69-year-old widow Orin (Kinuyo Tanaka), who must settle her family affairs and find a wife for her son before the law of the land forces her to the hills to die on reaching the age of 70. When all is done and her great-grandchild is on the way, her son reluctantly carries her up the mountain to her peaceful death in the snow, which has just begun to fall to speed her on her way. Theme of hunger also permeates entire pic.

To further director Kelsuke Kinoshita's semi-theatrical style, speaker commentary and song, lighting effects, and stage-like scenic changes are used to span sequences. Entire pic is studio-shot to achieve this. Pace is deliberately slow, and Japanese weakness for violence is seen in a shot in which the old woman knocks out her teeth, supposedly to still her hunger.

This one is strictly for the aficionados, who should find in it a pic of great artistry and poetry of lasting universal value, in the tradition of great Japanese films of the past. Technical credits are good.

Hawk.