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FLOATING WEEDS (Ukigusa), 1959, color, 119 minutes

Sunday December 12, 2:40 p.m.

Screenplay: Kogo Noda and Yasujiro Ozu. Photography: Kazuo Miyagawa.

Music: Takanobu Saito. Art Direction: Tomoo Shimogawara.

Cast: Ganjiro Nakamura (Komajuro Arashi), Machiko Kyo (Sumiko), Ayako Wakao (Kayo), Hiroshi Kawaguchi (Kiyoshi Homma), Haruko Sugimura (Oyoshi, his mother), Hitomi Nozoe (Aiko, the barber's daughter), Chishu Ryu (the theater owner), Koji (Hideo) Mitsui (Kichinosuke), Haruo Tanaka (Yatazo), Yosuke Irie (Sugiyama), Hikaru Hoshi (Kimura), Mantaro Ushio (Sentaro), Kumeko Urabe (Shige), Toyo Takahashi (the barber's wife), Mutsuko Sakura (the bar maid, Okatsu).

Ozu re-made his silent masterpiece for Daiei and thus had the services of master cameraman Kazuo Miyagawa. Though he was a latecomer to color, as he had been to sound, once converted to the new medium Ozu embraced it enthusiastically. Miyagawa has related how Ozu was especially fond of anything red and tried to include a dash of red wherever it was appropriate to the compositions: a mailbox, a public telephone, a bit of wash hanging on a line. The available prints have all faded, however, and the film is much redder than Ozu ever imagined it would be.

Ozu also changed the setting (moving it from the mountainous north to an Inland Sea island) and the character's names in his new version, but the story remained basically the same. In the original, though, the son was studying at an agricultural school and had some ambitions to greatness; in this version he is a rather placid villager, more or less contented with his place in life--until he meets the young actress.

The cast here, too, is first-rate, with Ganjiro Nakamura and Machiko Kyo giving off some magnificent sparks in their roles as feuding leaders of the acting company. Koji Mitsui, who as a young man created the role of Shinkichi, the son, appears here as a member of Komajuro's troupe given to drink and leering pursuit of whatever woman he can find.