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BURIED TREASURES



Yukinojo Henge (An Actor's Revenge)

Japan 1963

Director Kon Ichikawa

Production Company Daiei

Screenplay Daisuke Ito, Teinosuke Kinugasa, Natto Wada,
from the novel Otokichi Mikami

Cinematography Setsuo Kobayashi

Music Yasushi Akutagawa

Principal Cast Kazuo Hasegawa, Fujiko Yamamoto,
Ayako Wakao, Ganjiri Nakamura, Raizo Ichikawa

113 minutes

One of the boldest movies ever made about the convergence of theatre and cinema (in which, paradoxically, the stagier it gets, the more cinematic it becomes), Kon Ichikawa's highly eccentric masterpiece, shot in dazzling colour, was one of the favourite films of the late Nicholas Ray. Based on a rickety melodramatic warhorse and starring an aging matinee idol, Kazuo Hasegawa, *An Actor's Revenge* improbably suggests William Shakespeare as well as Walt Disney (the latter Ichikawa's greatest single influence, by his own admission) in its brilliant pyrotechnics.

In an intriguing double role, Hasegawa plays both an *oyama* (female impersonator) who's an experienced swordsman and a clever petty thief. A recurring contemporary jazz score and an almost continual shift of gears between different levels of reality and artifice make this, in the words of film theorist Noël Burch, "one of the first important instances in the Japanese cinema of the conjunction between an objective 'Brechtianism' of the traditional stage and the influence of the modern cinema and theatre on traditions as diverse as Brecht, Elizabethan drama and the comic strip."

Toronto Film Fest 81

Thursday 17 Sept. 11:00 a.m. Festival