

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 19
FOR RELEASE:
Saturday, May 9, 1964

JAPANESE FILMS AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Six films by the Japanese director Yasujiro Ozu will be the first programs of The Museum of Modern Art Film Library when the "new" Museum opens on May 27. Selected by Donald Richie, noted authority on the Japanese film, the films will be shown in the refurbished Museum auditorium, 11 West 53rd Street from May 28 through June 7. Except for one 1932 silent film, all date from after World War II.

Ozu, who died in 1963 at the age of 60, was one of Japan's most honored filmmakers. Although he produced 54 films during his career, his work is relatively little-known to the rest of the world. The programs at the Museum mark the first time these films have been exhibited in the United States.

Donald Richie, author with Joseph Anderson of The Japanese Film: Art and Industry (Tuttle, 1959) first went to Japan in 1946 as film critic and feature editor of Pacific Stars and Stripes and since 1954 has reviewed films for the Japan Times. His articles have appeared in leading cinema-art magazines throughout the world.

"Yasujiro Ozu," writes Mr. Richie, "is the director the Japanese themselves call most Japanese. His films always depict family life; are about the two generations, older and younger; they faithfully recreate the tempo of the traditional way. Though it would seem paradoxical, since his pictures concern themselves with traditional Japan, their extreme restraint in both form and content, method and meaning - brings them very close to what the West at present considers avant-garde. Ozu's intensely circumscribed vision of the world happens to share much with that of Antonioni or Resnais. Ozu's world, its stillness, its nostalgia, its hopelessness, its serenity, its beauty is indeed very Japanese but it is because rather than despite this that his pictures are meaningful to the West."

The films, which will be shown at 3:00 and 5:30 (except where otherwise noted), were written by Ozu and Kogo Noda, photographed by Yushun Atsuta and produced by

more...

Shochiku Company, Ltd. They are shown through the courtesy of Shochiku Company, Ltd. and Brandon Films, Inc. All have English subtitles. The films will be circulated to educational institutions throughout the United States under the auspices of the Film Library of The Museum of Modern Art.

May 28 : I WAS BORN BUT... (UMARETE WA MITAKEREDO), 1932 (silent) 85 minutes. A comedy, contrasting the world of the child with the world of the adult. (Music arranged and played by Arthur Kleiner)

May 29-30: LATE SPRING (BANSHUN), 1949. 112 minutes. A young woman reluctantly leaves her widowed father to marry under the mistaken impression that he plans to marry again.

May 31 -

June 1 : TOKYO STORY (TOKYO MONOGATARI), 1953. 130 minutes. (One showing only at 3 p.m.) Depicts the sad, but necessary differences between generations in a family.

June 2-3 : EARLY SPRING (SOSHUN), 1956. 149 minutes. (One showing only at 3 p.m.) An office worker and his wife part and are re-united.

June 4-5 : GOOD MORNING (OHAYO), 1959. 97 minutes. A family living in a Tokyo housing development and the various pressures resulting from their effort to keep up with their neighbors.

June 6-7 : LATE AUTUMN (AKIBIYORI), 1960. 131 minutes. (One showing only at 3 p.m.) A young girl leaves her widowed mother alone when she marries.

Beginning June 8 and continuing through the summer, the Film Library will present Selections from the Film Library Collection chosen by Iris Barry, its first curator.

Additional information available from Allison Matsner, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York 19, N. Y. CI 5-8900.