

The Museum of Modern Art

50th Anniversary



NO. 29
For Immediate Release

April 22, 1981

KENJI MIZOGUCHI RETROSPECTIVE AT MoMA

14 RARE FILMS

Kenji Mizoguchi (1898-1956), one of the great artists of world cinema, created nearly 100 feature-length films in the course of his prolific career, which began in 1923 and ended with his death. 14 rare works by this master filmmaker, many shown in America for the first time, will be presented by The Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art in the Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, from May 14 through June 4, 1981.

Mizoguchi is the subject of an extensive retrospective sponsored by the Japan Society with the assistance of the Japan Film Library Council in Tokyo. The complete retrospective will be held at Japan House (333 East 47 Street) from May 1 through June 28. The Department of Film is privileged to participate in this event through the screenings of 14 RARE FILMS. The films, dating from 1927 through 1954, will be shown in their original versions, the majority with English subtitles.

During the period in which Mizoguchi worked, Japanese society underwent great upheaval; the 33 years spanned World War II and the war with China, the devastation of the atomic bombings, and the post-war modernization of Japanese culture. Changes in the thematic content of Mizoguchi's films reflect the many social and political developments in these years. "Kenji Mizoguchi lived in a tradition of the old Japanese esthetic, yet he was an artist who succeeded in adding something modern to the heart of that tradition" writes Tadao Sato, a leading Japanese film critic.

A flyer containing complete schedules of both the Japan House and MoMA retrospectives is enclosed. A publication containing more extensive information, including program notes by David Owens of the Japan Society and a tribute to Mizoguchi by Akira Kurosawa, is available at Japan House. The Department of Film would like to thank both Peter Grilli and David Owens of the Japan Society for their enthusiastic assistance.

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