

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PORTRAYING THE HUMAN CONDITION: THE FILMS OF MASAKI KOBAYASHI AND TATSUYA NAKADAI

Series focuses on the remarkable collaboration in nine films directed by Masaki Kobayashi and starring Tatsuya Nakadai; with Nakadai in person for *The Human Condition Part I* and *Harakiri*

May 15–24, 2015

Astoria, New York, April 23, 2015—The great Japanese director Masaki Kobayashi (1916–1996), best known for his passionate, socially committed films in the post-World War II era, and actor Tatsuya Nakadai (b. 1932) worked together on nine notable films, chief among them the epic anti-war drama *The Human Condition* (1959–1961). From **May 15 through 24, 2015**, Museum of the Moving Image will present all nine of these films—all in 35mm—in the series ***Portraying the Human Condition: The Films of Masaki Kobayashi and Tatsuya Nakadai*** to honor this remarkable screen partnership. Nakadai, in his third annual appearance at the Museum, will participate in discussions with screenings of *The Human Condition Part I* (May 16) and the Cannes prize-winning samurai revenge tale *Harakiri* (May 24).

The series is co-presented with the Japan Foundation, and organized by David Schwartz, Chief Curator, and Aliza Ma, Assistant Film Curator, in partnership with Subway Cinema. Special thanks to Hideo Nakamura and Janus Films. Airfare accommodation is provided by All Nippon Airways (ANA).

“We are delighted to host the great actor Tatsuya Nakadai in a return engagement to Museum of the Moving Image,” said Schwartz. “It promises to be a particularly poignant occasion as he realizes a dream of revisiting his collaborations with Kobayashi, especially with the screening of their masterpiece *The Human Condition*.”

According to legend, the Masaki Kobayashi discovered the young actor Tatsuya Nakadai working as a shop clerk in Tokyo and, casting him in a small part in his film *The Thick-Walled Room* (1953), gave Nakadai his first role, initiating one of the most legendary collaborations in all of Japanese cinema. “Nakadai embodied postwar individualism and youth culture—in his clear enunciation and strong, deep speaking voice and in his expressive body movements, facial mobility, and willingness to convey deeply felt emotions, rather than repressing them on behalf of an outworn notion of samurai dignity,” wrote film historian Joan Mellen. This perfectly suited Kobayashi, a

pacifist who had suffered for his convictions during World War II. Summarizing his work, he said “All of my pictures are concerned with resisting entrenched power. I suppose I have always challenged authority.”

SCHEDULE FOR ‘PORTRAYING THE HUMAN CONDITION: THE FILMS OF MASAKI KOBAYASHI AND TATSUYA NAKADAI.’ MAY 15–24, 2015

Screenings will take place in the Sumner M. Redstone Theater or the Celeste and Armand Bartos Screening Room at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Avenue in Astoria. Tickets are \$12 (\$9 seniors and students / free for Museum members at the Film Lover level and above). Advance tickets are available for purchase online at movingimage.us or in person at the Museum’s admissions desk.

This schedule is also posted online [here](#).

Samurai Rebellion (Joi-uchi: Hairyo tsuma shimatsu)

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1967, 128 mins. 35mm. With Tatsuya Nakadai, Toshiro Mifune. Two of the great lions of Japanese cinema, Nakadai and Mifune, team in this samurai classic set in the eighteenth century Tokugawa Dynasty, playing unparalleled swordsmen driven to a final conflict by a social system that demands absolute loyalty. *Samurai Rebellion* may be Kobayashi’s most perfect expression of his lifelong theme: the resistance to oppressive social order.

The Human Condition Part I: No Greater Love (Ningen no joken)

With Tatsuya Nakadai in person

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1959, 208 mins. 35mm. With Tatsuya Nakadai, Michiyo Aratama. The first part of an epic that is often counted among the greatest of all moviegoing experiences begins with self-righteous leftist Kaji (Nakadai) taking a job at a steel mine in Japanese-controlled Manchuria. When his conscience is upset by the inhuman treatment of Chinese workers and he resists the casual brutality of the military police, he is drafted to fight for Japan.

Tickets: \$15 (\$9 for Museum members at the Film Lover, Dual, and Family levels / free for members at the Silver Screen level and above).

The Human Condition Part II: Road to Eternity (Ningen no joken)

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 6:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1959, 181 mins. 35mm. With Tatsuya Nakadai, Michiyo Aratama, Kei Sato, Kunie Tanaka. As the second episode of Kobayashi’s trilogy begins, Kaji (Nakadai) enters the Kwantung Army, stationed in mainland China. Illustrating the dehumanizing effects of boot camp and combat, as well as Kaji’s transformation from callow idealism to hard pragmatism, Nakadai creates one of the most astonishing pieces of sustained character development in all of cinema.

The Human Condition Part III: A Soldier’s Prayer (Ningen no joken)

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1961, 190 mins. 35mm. With Tatsuya Nakadai, Michiyo Aratama, Tamao Nakamura, Chishu Ryu, Taketoshi Naito, Kyoko Kishida. Kaji (Nakadai) is reduced to total abjection and desolation, wandering a devastated landscape and fighting for his very survival, caught between Chinese partisans, the Japanese army, and Red Russia. Nakadai's expressive performance makes this a harrowing finale to Kobayashi's majestic anti-war epic.

Black River (Kuroi Kawa)

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1956, 114 mins. 35mm. With Ineko Arima, Fumio Watanabe, Tatsuya Nakadai. Nakadai, in his first major role, plays Joe, a young yakuza kingpin who will do anything to turn a buck, in Kobayashi's indictment of the lawlessness engendered by the presence of U.S. military bases. Made with a freewheeling, experimental spirit, *Black River* is an important precursor of the Japanese New Wave to come.

The Inheritance (Karami-ai)

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1962, 107 mins. 35mm. With Keiko Kishi, Tatsuya Nakadai, So Yamamura, Misako Watanabe. A rich businessman (Yamamura) is dying, and his three illegitimate children must be located to receive their share of his fortune. In a rare depiction of the bourgeois milieu, Kobayashi creates a vision of modern Japanese life completely corrupted by materialism.

Strike a Life for Nothing (a.k.a. Inn of Evil) (Inochi bo ni furo)

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1971, 121 mins. 35mm. With Tatsuya Nakadai, Komaki Kurihara, Wakako Sakai, Kei Yamamamoto. Nakadai plays thug enforcer Sadahichi "the Indifferent" in this feudal story of a gang of yakuza running a smuggling operation out of a tavern. This rarely screened film is a masterfully paced character study in moody black-and-white, and the final chapter in Kobayashi and Nakadai's storied collaboration.

Harakiri

With Tatsuya Nakadai in person

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1962, 133 mins. 35mm. With Tatsuya Nakadai, Rentaro Mikuni, Shima Iwashita. Kobayashi uses the period film to repudiate the tradition of unthinking obeisance to established power structures in Japanese society. Nakadai plays well beyond his years as the aging samurai Hanshiro Tsugumo, who sets out to avenge the death of his son-in-law through a ritual suicide, which was presided over by the disdainful Iyi clan.

Tickets: \$15 (\$9 for Museum members at the Film Lover, Dual, and Family levels / free for members at the Silver Screen level and above).

Kwaidan

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 6:00 P.M.

Dir. Masaki Kobayashi. 1964, 183 mins. 35mm. With Rentaro Mikuni, Keiko Kishi, Michiyo Aratama, Misako Watanabe, Tatsuya Nakadai. A departure into absolute artifice shot almost entirely on studio-constructed sets, the "meticulously crafted" (David Ehrenstein) *Kwaidan*

consists of four supernatural tales. Nakadai appears in the second, “The Woman of the Snow,” as a woodcutter who finds himself at the mercy of a female ghost. A work of uncanny beauty, it won Kobayashi the Special Jury Prize at the 1965 Cannes Film Festival.

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Press contact: Tomoko Kawamoto, tkawamoto@movingimage.us / 718 777 6830
Screeners and stills are available.

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Museum of the Moving Image (movingimage.us) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In its stunning facilities—acclaimed for both its accessibility and bold design—the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings of significant works; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, craftspeople, and business leaders; and education programs which serve more than 50,000 students each year. The Museum also houses a significant collection of moving-image artifacts.

Hours: Wednesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Unless otherwise noted, tickets for screenings are \$12 (\$9 students and seniors / free for Museum members at the Film Lover level and above) will be available for advance purchase online at movingimage.us. Screening tickets include same-day admission to the Museum’s galleries.

Museum Admission: \$12.00 for adults; \$9.00 for persons over 65 and for students with ID; \$6.00 for children ages 3–12. Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free.

Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Location: 36-01 35 Avenue (at 37 Street) in Astoria.

Subway: M (weekdays only) or R to Steinway Street. Q (weekdays only) or N to 36 Avenue.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: movingimage.us

Membership: <http://movingimage.us/support/membership> or 718 777 6877

The Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and located on the campus of Kaufman Astoria Studios. Its operations are made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation). The Museum also receives generous support from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals. For more information, please visit movingimage.us.