



NIKKATSU



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
CANNES CLASSICS
2021 OFFICIAL SELECTION

A Film by Kinuyo Tanaka

The Moon Has Risen

[4K Digitally Restored Version]



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The Moon Has Risen concentrates what we love about classic Japanese cinema and, still, a strong voice is there, on screen. Originality and beauty care in the simplest way the complexity of human feelings. Being able to discover such a strong feature and giving the opportunity for new audiences to rediscover the film is an opportunity we couldn't miss. Cannes Classics was the perfect place for this gem.

- Cannes Classics Team

CONTACT

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Tagline

An enchanting love story based on a superlative screenplay by master filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu, and directed by distinguished actress Kinuyo Tanaka.

The romantic fortunes of three sisters living in Japan's ancient capital Nara are elegantly evoked, from a uniquely female perspective.

Introduction

Devised by the Directors Guild of Japan, "The Moon Has Risen" is based on a screenplay jointly written by Yasujiro Ozu and Ryosuke Saito, and is Kinuyo Tanaka's second feature film as a director. She is also a member of the cast for this enchanting love story told from a uniquely female perspective, which follows the romantic fortunes of three sisters leading tranquil lives in Japan's ancient capital Nara during late autumn. Tanaka's direction is enhanced by the participation of several of Ozu's regular collaborators, such as Chishu Ryu who plays the sisters' father, and Takanobu Saito who composed the score. Other main cast members include Hisako Yamane, Yoko Sugi, Mie Kitahara, and Shoji Yasui, who adopted the name of his character in this film, his motion picture debut, as his stage name.

Story

Mr. Asai left Tokyo during World War II, and now resides in Nara. He is a widower who lives with his three daughters: Chizuru, the eldest, who has returned home after her husband's death; Ayako, who is of marriageable age but shows little interest in leaving home; and Setsuko, the youngest and most tomboyish of the three sisters. The latter is platonically close with Shoji, the out-of-work younger brother of Chizuru's late husband, who lodges at a temple near the Asai's home. They all occasionally get together to enjoy songs from Noh plays, as the days pass by uneventfully.

One day, Shoji's old friend Amamiya drops by while on a business trip. When Setsuko finds out that he remembers Ayako well from their youth, she joins forces with Shoji in a sneaky bid to reconnect the two. Deceptive phone calls ultimately bring Amamiya and Ayako together in a park under a full moon, and they begin to fall in love. Ayako travels to Tokyo on the pretense of putting an end to her aunt's attempts to marry her off to another suitor, but her true aim is to reunite with Amamiya.

Soon after, Shoji becomes a leading candidate for a job in Tokyo, but eventually lets his struggling friend Tanaka have it instead. This upsets Setsuko greatly, as she has long dreamed of a life in Tokyo with Shoji, which causes a seemingly insurmountable rift to open between the two. However, the chief priest at the temple where Shoji stays praises

his generosity, and asks if he is interested in teaching at a school for trainee priests in Tokyo. Shoji decides to depart right away, but his late brother's friend Takasu and Chizuru learn of this and quickly come up with a clever ruse to make sure the unrequited lovers cross paths again. Setsuko is overjoyed and breaks down crying, and Shoji embraces her tightly. They vow to support each other in their new life together, and leave Nara.

A few days later, the Asai home is quiet and peaceful once more. As Mr. Asai and Chizuru ponder how Ayako and Setsuko are getting on in Tokyo, the patriarch surprises the widow by urging her to remarry. "Find a sturdy man who won't die on you. Mr. Takasu perhaps? He's the sturdy and durable type. You like him, don't you?" "Oh my..." All alone in the Asai home, they gaze at the beautifully clear early autumn sky over Nara. Their eyes do not exude loneliness, but rather a serene, grand, and abundant hopefulness.

Details

Country: Japan

Language: Japanese

Filming Locations: Shiga, Osaka and Nara (Japan)

Release Date: 8 January 1955 (Japan)

Production Company: NIKKATSU

Distribution Company: NIKKATSU (Japan)

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Technical Specs

Running Time: 102 mins

Sound Mix: Mono

Color: Black and White

Aspect Ratio: 1:1.37

Main Staffs

Director: Kinuyo Tanaka

Planning: Directors Guild of Japan

Executive Producer: Eisei Koi

Screenplay: Ryosuke Saito, Yasujiro Ozu

Cinematography: Shigeyoshi Mine

Lighting: Ko Fujibayashi

Sound Recording: Masakazu Kamiya

Production Design: Takeo Kimura
Music: Takanobu Saito
Assistant Director: Buichi Saito
Editing: Mitsuo Kondo
Chief Producer: Hiroyoshi Hayashimoto

Main Casts

Asai: Chishu Ryu
Takasu: Shuji Sano
Chizuru: Hisako Yamane
Ayako: Yoko Sugi
Setsuko: Mie Kitahara
Amamiya: Ko Mishima
Yasui: Shoji Yasui
Yoneya: Kinuyo Tanaka
Tanaka: Junji Masuda
Fumiya: Miki Odagiri
Priest: Yo Shiomi



Preview of "The Moon Has Risen" at the screening room in NIKKATSU's head office
Back row: Left to right, Eisei Koi, Shigeyoshi Mine, Ko Fujibayashi, Masakazu Kamiya
Front row: Mie Kitahara, Yasujiro Ozu, Kinuyo Tanaka, Mikio Naruse

© 1955 NIKKATSU

Director: Kinuyo Tanaka

Biography

Born on November 29th 1909 in Shimonoseki City, Yamaguchi Prefecture. Her extended family included filmmaker Masaki Kobayashi.

Learned to play the biwa (a lute-like musical instrument) from an early age, attaining full proficiency at the age of 10 and receiving the performing name "Kinka" Tanaka. A viewing of the film "Gubijinso" in 1921 inspired her to set out to become a film actress.

In 1924, she was invited by the head of entertainment company Shochiku's Osaka branch to join Shimogamo Studio in Kyoto, and made her screen debut in October in Hotei Nomura's "Genroku Onna," then received her first starring role within the year in Hiroshi Shimizu's "Mura no Bokujo." Due to the closing of Shimogamo Studio in 1925, she transferred to the Shochiku's Kamata Studio in Tokyo, where she swiftly made a name for herself as a box office draw. Her career subsequently went from strength to strength, and in 1938, she cemented her status as a national darling with the record-breaking hit movie "Aizen Katsura."

Upon leaving Shochiku in 1949, her sphere of activity expanded to films from studios Toho, Shintoho, Daiei, and Nikkatsu. She featured in works by illustrious filmmakers

such as Kenji Mizoguchi, Heinosuke Gosho, Yasujiro Ozu, Mikio Naruse, and Keisuke Kinoshita, but it was her collaborations with Mizoguchi that particularly brought her acclaim at home and abroad, perhaps most notably at the Venice International Film Festival, where “The Life of Oharu” won the International Prize, and “Ugetsu” was awarded the Silver Lion.

In parallel with her exploits in acting, she also branched out into directing. She took part in the making of Mikio Naruse’s “Older Brother, Younger Sister” as a directorial apprentice, learning the ropes of film direction. In 1953, she became only the second woman in Japanese film history to direct a feature film, “Love Letter.” Adapted from a screenplay by Keisuke Kinoshita, it was screened in competition at the 1954 Cannes International Film Festival. Her second film, “The Moon Has Risen,” was based on a script by Yasujiro Ozu that he had originally intended to direct himself. The production also drew attention due to Kenji Mizoguchi, a director of the Directors Guild of Japan that planned the film, objecting to her directing the project. She directed six features in total, with “Love Under the Crucifix” becoming her final endeavor behind the camera in 1962.

Towards the end of her acting career, she appeared in Kei Kumai’s “Sandakan No. 8,” for which she was awarded Best Actress at the Berlin International Film Festival as well as other accolades, exemplifying her unflagging dynamism. She died on March 21st, 1977 as one of the greatest actresses in the history of Japanese cinema, who was a pillar of the film industry from its early days, and appeared in over 250 films in her lifetime.



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Filmography (as a director)

“Koibumi” (Love Letter) / 1953

“Tsuki wa Noborinu” (The Moon Has Risen) / 1955

“Chibusa yo Eien Nare” (The Eternal Breasts*) / 1955

“Ruten no Ouhi” (The Wandering Princess) / 1960

“Onna Bakari no Yoru” (Girls of the Night*) / 1961

“Ogin-sama” (Love Under the Crucifix) / 1962

* Tentative English title

Director’s Statement (from the original press materials)

This is my second film as a director, following my debut “Love Letter,” so I believe I have a better idea of what I should do than I did when I made my first film, and I feel as if I won’t be more nervous than I should be.

Confidence is something I never have enough of, and there is no guarantee that the slightest mistake in one shot won’t cause a film to fall apart in its entirety, so I myself would like to maintain a modicum of confidence while making this motion picture.

From a directing standpoint, perceptions of people from our female perspective are especially important. For example, I am not sure I can evoke humanity laid bare as So Yamamura did with “The Black Tide,” but Mr. (Kenji) Mizoguchi and Mr. (Keisuke) Kinoshita are able to depict believable female characters despite their own maleness, so I am sure I can depict male characters from my own female outlook.

Therefore, I think it is easier for a woman to depict aspects of men that they themselves are not aware of, than for a woman to depict a woman.

That is true of “The Moon Has Risen,” which I will direct with such aspects very much in mind, and I hope dearly that it will become a film that does not betray your expectations.

Restoration

Digitally restored in 2021, based on a 35mm master positive preserved by NIKKATSU CORPORATION.

Restored by NIKKATSU CORPORATION, The Japan Foundation

Digital Restoration Services: Imagica Entertainment Media Services, Inc.

The process of digitally restoring “The Moon Has Risen”

A 35mm duplicate negative with sound track and 35mm master positive with sound track still exist for “The Moon Has Risen.” Despite having been made over 50 years ago,

both materials are in good condition. After comparing their image quality, the master positive was chosen as our source, due to its generation being closer to that of the original. Scanning, digitally restoration, and cleaning were carried out entirely at 4K resolution. The digital restoration effort strived to not only reduce flickering caused by film deterioration and remove minute debris and scratches attached to the film after many years of use, but to also rectify major damage, frames in which the image has peeled, lost frames, and other aspects to bring it as close to the original as possible.

Intense shaking and warping of the image resulting from the duplication process was conspicuous, so particular attention was given to the stabilization process that reduces such distortions.

As for image grading, the original contrast was maintained while restoring balance that had been lost due to degradation over time. We sought to preserve the tone of this film, which is staggeringly refined despite only being Kinuyo Tanaka's second directorial effort, and wrestled with the difficulties it presented.

Sound restoration involved digitizing the master positive source, reducing characteristic film noise, and making sure the audio was more listenable overall.

Through this digital restoration, the atmosphere of Nara and the expressive faces of the actresses are once again as vivid as they were when the film was first released.

- *IMAGICA Entertainment Media Services, Inc.*

<Before>



<After>



Comment from NIKKATSU

The Cannes International Film Festival's selection of the 4K digital restoration of Kinuyo Tanaka's "The Moon Has Risen" for its Cannes Classics section is a great honor and wonderful news for our company, which celebrates the 110th anniversary of its founding next year.

Kinuyo Tanaka is perhaps most famous for her career as one of Japan's greatest-ever actresses, featuring in numerous works by legendary filmmakers such as Kenji Mizoguchi, Yasujiro Ozu, Mikio Naruse, and Akira Kurosawa, but the fact she also directed six feature films is less well known, even in Japan. "The Moon Has Risen," which is based on a screenplay co-written by Ozu, serves as a particularly brilliant example of Tanaka's exquisite directing prowess.

Due to the ongoing COVID epidemic, our representatives are regrettably unable to attend the festival in person, but here across the ocean in Japan, we are eager to learn how the audience in Cannes will respond to the restored film's world premiere.

- Kenjiro Toba, Executive Vice President, Filmed Business Department

I'm very glad and also very thrilled with the selection of "The Moon Has Risen" for Cannes Classics. "The Moon Has Risen" was created by Kinuyo Tanaka, recognized as one of the greatest Japanese actresses in the history and was also a second Japanese female director who challenged the industry's standard over sixty years ago. It's a pity that I cannot watch this ambitious film with the film-goers in Cannes, but having such a great place for this film is just like a dream for all of our team. I appreciate Cannes Classics team for hosting this film, Mr. Gérald Duchaussoy for supporting us, Mr. Vincent Paul-Boncour of Carlotta Films for so many efforts to present this film to the festival, The Japan Foundation and IMAGICA EMS for being the great partner for the restoration works and all of the people who have been involved in the creation of "The Moon Has Risen."

- Taku Kato, International Sales, Filmed Business Department