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Entidades colaboradoras:



Abstracts



La fortaleza escondida

COMPROMISE WITH HUMANISM.

The cinema of Akira Kurosawa

José Enrique Monterde

A useful conceptual and methodological precision about what we should understand by the historicity of cinema serves as a doorway to the author's reflection on the historical references which can be traced in Kurosawa's films. Following a chronological order, the article concentrates on underlining the moral rather than socio-political dimension, which hovers over the filmmaker's filmography while underlining its evolution from the more or less camouflaged militarism of some of his first films until his concerns for the reconstruction of Japan following its defeat (in his post-war movies) or for the consequences of the modernization of the country (in his last films). A last section indicates the more intimate nature of what could be called his testamentary films: *Dreams* and *Not Yet*.

BETWEEN THE SURFACE AND THE DEPTHS.

The cinematographic art of Akira Kurosawa

Santos Zunzunegui

The main aim of this article is to do away with the stereotypes surrounding Akira Kurosawa's filmography. To do so, the author examines his work—leaving aside, as is typical in other kinds of analyses, the filmmaker's opinions and tastes—concentrating on certain significant parts of his films to emphasize the formal intentions underlying them and which converts them into musical and visual poems. In all of this formal system—the author finishes by saying—we undoubtedly observe the inheritance of western, but also of Japanese tradition and of all of the cultural sources used by any artist when making their creations.

SAMURAI IN THE CINEMA OF AKIRA KUROSAWA.

Harmony between the pen and the sword

Antonio José Navarro

Having analysed the historical figure of the samurai and taking a brief look at the movies by Kurosawa which revolve around these medieval warriors, the author takes a quick look at the different genres of Japanese cinema (*chambara*, *jidai-geki*), the stars of which are precisely these individuals. From here on, the article establishes a separation in Kurosawa's work between *Throne of Blood* and *Ran*, on the one hand, and *The Seven Samurai*, *The Bodyguard* and *Sanjuro*, on the other, to affirm that while the former two reflect on the traditional moral of the Japanese high classes, the latter three are closer to the individual sphere. An analytical starting point finally complemented with the study of both groups of films and the part played in them by people like the woman or the *ronin* (samurais with no lords), among others.

SHAKESPEARE: REPRESENTATION AND IMAGE

Sara Torres

The conversion of characters into people is, according to the author of the article, one of Shakespeare's principal contributions to the field of drama. Based on this starting point, the article concentrates on analysing the filmings of *Macbeth* in order, while underlining certain features of the Shakespearean universe, to end affirming the originality of Kurosawa's movies on this subject and his faithfulness, despite everything, to the spirit of the Elizabethan poet.

QUARTET IN BLACK.

Kurosawa's thrillers

Antonio Weinrichter

Having separated into two blocks the only four thrillers directed by Kurosawa, the author analyses the first two titles (from the forties), indicating their connections with the American *film noir* and, from the sociological point of view, with Italian neo-realism.

The second part of the study analyses the two movies in this genre made in the sixties, indicating the elements—mainly ambiguity—linking the two previous thrillers while underlining their formal differences with the visual expressionism of *film noir*.

GOOD INTENTIONS.

Three views of Russian literature by Kurosawa

Luis Miranda Mendoza

Following the chronological order of the three adaptations made by Kurosawa of Russian writers, the author begins by analysing *The Idiot* (1951), underlining the similarities existing between the filmmaker and Dostoyevski with respect to their respective understandings of the individual and of the human condition and to the style they use to handle these subjects. He continues by underlining the eminently existential rather than social character emerging from the cinematographic adaptation of *Underground* before, in a last section, describing the mechanisms used by Kurosawa to film Arseniev's *Dersu Uzala* and explore the meaning of the film.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHARACTER IN KUROSAWA'S CINEMA

Manuel Vidal Estévez

Was Kurosawa a humanist, as repeatedly claimed by the critics? That's the question the author tries to answer in his article examining the filmmaker's movies, in which the latter narrates a learning process in order to a glimpse, in his images, the model of character proposed by Kurosawa in his works. We deduce from this analysis that the command of oneself, the ethics of duty and a subjectivity which is affirmative and open to others will be the principal values which—according to the author—will define the characters of the Japanese director, values which, in their practical expression, go further, even, than man himself.

A CELLULOID ARTIST.

Painting and colour in the work of Akira Kurosawa

Zigor Etxebeste Gómez

The influence of painting in cinema is a recurrent subject of cinematographic studies and this article approaches the possible relations between Kurosawa's cinema and the art of painting, divided in three sections. In the first part, the analysis is focused on the various pictorial roots of Kurosawa's image, whose backgrounds are connected either to Orient or Occident. Related to this, the second part observes those seven films made by the director since the astonishing *Dodeskaden* in 1970, which peculiarity is the imaginative and unique use of colour. Finally, in the last section appears an introduction of Kurosawa as a painter, including few data of his relation with painting in his youth and a brief commentary about his drawings and storyboards for his films, from *Kagemusha* (1980) to his very last motion picture, *Madadayo* (1993).

"I HAD A DREAM LIKE THIS".

the apocalypse according to Kurosawa

Alberto Elena

A brief reference to Kurosawa's fear of anything related to nuclear energy serves as an opening to the analysis made by the author on the impact on Kurosawa's work of the nuclear explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Based on an extensive bibliography, the article starts by studying the first two movies made by the filmmaker (*Dreams* and *Rhapsody in August*) on the subject, to conclude that both reflect, in their approach to the subject, the quietist resignation of the *mono no aware*. On the other hand, the analysis of his first incursion into the subject (*I Live In Fear: Record of a Living Being*) reveals, despite several misunderstandings, a more combative attitude by Kurosawa with respect to the nuclear danger.

BRIEF NOTES ON AKIRA KUROSAWA.

His cinema and sex

José Luis Rebordinos

A brief look at Japanese cinema from all times offers the author of the article the chance to underline the importance of sex, eroticism and pornography in Japanese cinematography, while highlighting the need to carry out more in-depth studies into this subject in the West. Following this introduction, the author points out the indirect manner commonly used by Kurosawa when referring to this subject, even in his *Autobiography*, in order to finally underline the subtlety with which sex and eroticism are introduced to his work based on the paradigmatic examination of three of his films: *Sugata Sunshiro*, *Rashomon* and *Living*.

LANDSCAPES OF FEELINGS, SCENARIOS OF EMOTION.

Textures of Akira Kurosawa's cinema

Tomás Fernández Valentí

An analysis of the dramatic use made of sets in Akira Kurosawa's movies constitutes the objective of this article, which underlines, among other aspects, the essential role played by natural settings in the filmmaker's movies, especially in relation to the characters' internal conflict. Continuing along the lines of this idea, the author takes a look at phenomena like rain, wind, cold or heat, to explore their meaning in Kurosawa's films before studying, in a last section, how human feelings are expressed, in combination with those same scenarios, in the Japanese director's filmography.

THE IMPOSSIBLE EAST.

A journey round the aesthetics of Akira Kurosawa

Asier Mensuro

Akira Kurosawa is one of the most famous Asian directors in the Western world. His work has been unfairly judged as being that of a westernized Japanese director. This perception, in addition to being erroneous, demonstrates that our western world has

fabricated a preconceived image of everything differing from it, and that Kurosawa doesn't fit into the pattern. Briefly, Kurosawa doesn't meet our expectations vis-à-vis the kind of stories and images we expect of an oriental movie. This article aims to highlight our mistaken perception of eastern cinema and the place we have allotted to one of its most interesting authors. Analysing Akira Kurosawa's cinema, we will see that the versatility of his proposals combines multicultural references, making him one of the most modern and interesting authors in the history of cinema.

SWEATING IN THE RAIN.

Actors in Akira Kurosawa's work

Carlos Aguilar and Daniel Aguilar

Following a brief analysis of the work methods used by Kurosawa with the actors in his movies, the authors study the relationship of the famous Japanese actor Toshiro Mifune with the filmmaker, while taking a quick look at his professional career. This same procedure is used to approach the personalities of another two actors recurring on his filmography, Takashi Shimura and Minoru Chiaki, and to take another look at the names of the main supporting actors punctuating his filmography. A last section is dedicated to analysing the more irrelevant part played by actresses in Kurosawa's work.

THE TIMES, DOUBLES AND MEMORY.

Chris Marker's *AK*

María Luisa Ortega

The author first of all takes a brief look at several titles on Chris Marker's filmography in order to underline the filmmaker's relationship with Japan and some of his work methods. She then goes on to analyse the documentary itself, pointing out Marker's conceptual starting point and the filming differences between the latter and Kurosawa's fiction. A last section takes a detailed look at the content of *AK*, evaluating its important contribution to knowledge of Kurosawa's filming methods and cinema.