

## Kinuyo Tanaka workshop at University of Leeds

To coincide with [Leeds International Film Festival's](#) retrospective on the Japanese actress and filmmaker Kinuyo Tanaka, University of Leeds Centre for World Cinemas and Mixed Cinema Network is proud to host a companion Tanaka workshop on **Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2012**.

The significant importance of Kinuyo Tanaka to world cinema history has, up to this point, been largely unrecognised. While Tanaka is rightly celebrated as one of the greatest actresses in the history of her nation's cinema, lesser known is that she was also the first Japanese woman to build a body of work as a filmmaker in her own right. The workshop will both provide new perspectives on Tanaka as an actress and critically introduce her work as a filmmaker.

The following speakers and papers have been confirmed for the event:

- Dr. Alexander Jacoby (Oxford Brookes University) - 'Meetings and Partings: How Tanaka's Films End'
- Lauri Kitsnik (University of Cambridge) - 'Dancer, Doctor, Virgin, Wife: early star image of Kinuyo Tanaka'
- Irene Gonzalez (SOAS) - 'Kinuyo Tanaka, Film Director'
- Michael Smith (University of Leeds) - 'An Introduction to Kinuyo Tanaka'

The event will be held at Room 1.08, Parkinson Building from 12pm and will be followed by a rare screening of [The Eternal Breasts](#) (Kinuyo Tanaka, 1955) at 17:30 in the ICS Cinema (LT 2.31), Clothworkers' North Building. Refreshments will be provided.

Registration for the workshop and screening is free but a reservation **must** be made by mailing [tanakaworkshop@gmail.com](mailto:tanakaworkshop@gmail.com). All are welcome!

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## Kinuyo Tanaka retrospective at Leeds International Film Festival

While Kinuyo Tanaka (1909-77) is widely recognised as one of the greatest actresses in the history of her nation's cinema, a lesser known fact is that she was also the first Japanese woman to build a body of work as a filmmaker in her own right. Leeds International Film Festival's retrospective aims to remedy this by presenting two of Kinuyo Tanaka's rarely-screened directorial works alongside a selection of her finest performances in films by three of the masters of Japanese cinema, Kenji Mizoguchi, Yasujiro Ozu and Mikio Naruse. Curated by Centre for World Cinemas (University of Leeds)/Mixed Cinema Network research student Michael Smith, the retrospective

both celebrates and sheds new light on the career of a figure of significant importance to world cinema history.

For tickets, please visit [www.leedsfilm.com](http://www.leedsfilm.com) or call the box office on 0113 224 3801. Full details of the films can be found below.

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***Mother*** (*Okaasan*)

Japan

Dir: Mikio Naruse

Subtitles: Yes

1952

35mm, 98 min

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> November, 13:45**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

A rarely screened film from one of the masters of Japanese cinema, *Mother* is a poised study of a woman's fight to keep her family afloat in the face of increasingly difficult personal and economic circumstances. When illness strikes down both eldest son and father, Tanaka's matriarch is forced to shoulder the entire parental and financial burdens of her family. More than a straightforward exploration of domestic life in postwar Japan, Naruse's film offers true depth by focusing on Tanaka's affecting portrayal of a woman struggling to cope with the personal sacrifices and emotional restraint demanded of her by patriarchal family culture.

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***Sansho the Bailiff*** (*Sansho Dayu*)

Japan

Dir: Kenji Mizoguchi

Subtitles: Yes

1954

35mm, 124 min

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November, 14:30**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November, 18:30**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

An epic retelling of an ancient folktale, *Sansho the Bailiff* is the story of a family separated by the injustices of Japanese feudal society. After the governor Masauji is exiled to a distant land for defending the rights of farmers, his wife Tamaki (Tanaka) and their children are kidnapped by bandits, who sell Tamaki into prostitution and her children as slaves to the immoral government official Sansho. Despite being more economical with Tanaka's screen time than many of her other collaborations with Mizoguchi, the great actress nevertheless delivers one of her most hauntingly beautiful performances. A genuine classic of world cinema which was voted as the 49<sup>th</sup> best film of all time in this year's *Sight and Sound* critics' poll.

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***A Hen in the Wind*** (*Kaze no naka no mendori*)

Japan

Dir: Yasujiro Ozu

Subtitles: Yes

1948

16mm, 84 min

**Friday 2nd November, 17:30**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November, 17:00**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

Awaiting her husband's return from the war, Tokiko (Tanaka) struggles to support herself and their young child Hiroshi, a situation which reaches a crisis point when Hiroshi falls ill and requires life-saving treatment. Left with no way to pay for her son's care, Tokiko reluctantly approaches a madam for work. Already troubled by her actions, Tokiko's problems are compounded when her repatriated husband discovers her transgression. A hugely underappreciated film from arguably the most celebrated Japanese filmmaker of all time, *A Hen in the Wind* features an extraordinary performance by Tanaka as a woman possessed by shame. A chance to see a much overlooked example of both director and star at their absolute finest.

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***Girls of Dark*** (*Onna bakari no yoru*)

Japan

Dir: Kinuyo Tanaka

Subtitles: Yes

1961

35mm, 95 min

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 18:30**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

Set in the time following the 1958 criminalisation of prostitution in Japan, *Girls of Dark* charts the attempts of Kuniko (Hisako Hara) to reintegrate herself into legitimate society. In turns comical and harrowing, the film is Tanaka's most direct engagement as a director with the world of prostitution which she so frequently visited as an actress. Deeply critical of the sex trade as a whole and cynical about the methods used to rehabilitate former courtesans, Tanaka's film offers an important woman's perspective on a topic only that had only previously been seen through the (often rose-tinted) lenses of male filmmakers.

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**The Eternal Breasts** (*Chibusa yo eien nare*)

Japan

Dir: Kinuyo Tanaka

Subtitles: Yes

1955

110 min

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November, 18:00**

**Hyde Park Picture House**

Based on the life of *tanka* poet Fumiko Nakajo, Tanaka's film is an unflinching, deeply moving account of a modern-minded woman afflicted with breast cancer. Rather than being an entirely sympathetic portrayal of a woman's struggle with illness, Fumiko (Yumeji Tsukioka) is instead refreshingly presented as an imperfect, often selfish character and Tanaka's handling of the film as a whole is tinged with the same even-handed humanity as she projected in the best of her own performances as an actress. Absent of the clichés so often seen in stories about terminal illness, *The Eternal Breasts* is a challenging film which represents the high point of Tanaka's career as a director.