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| Mikio, Naruse (1905-1969) |
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| Naruse Mikio was a popular and critically renowned Japanese film director active from the early 1930s through mid-1960s. He completed eighty-nine films, of which sixty-seven survive. From a poor family and raised by his sisters, he began work as a prop assistant at Shochiku studios at fifteen, where he would direct his first film ten years later. Beginning with slapstick comedies, Naruse’s interest in urban poverty and strong, if ill-fated female characters drew him to the ‘josei eiga’ (women’s pictures) genre. By the mid-1930s, he moved to PCL (Photo-Chemical Laboratories, later to incorporate into Toho studios), where he would work for the following three decades, with additional projects at Shintoho and Daiei. While his prewar silent pictures display early experimentation with voiceover, flashbacks, and montage sequences, his work in sound and later widescreen and color is characterized by exacting mise-en-scène, and quick unrelenting cuts following performers’ gestures and expressions. Naruse’s modernist economy of style moves at the pace of urban life, thrusting his female protagonists (often Takamine Hideko, who starred in seventeen of the director’s best-known titles) into the financialization of interpersonal relationships, whereby yearning for love outside money and family is dulled by having to survive the quotidian hardships of patriarchal society and monetary debt. |
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File: naruse\_takamine.jpg  Figure Naruse Mikio and Takamine Hideko on the set of *Onna ga kaidan o agaru toki* (*When a Woman Ascends the Stairs*, 1960)  Source:<https://www.dropbox.com/s/voza71qhcmh0zei/naruse_takamine.jpg>  File: repast.jpg  Figure Promotional photo for *Meshi* (*Repast*, 1951), featuring Hara Setsuko and Uehara Ken.  Source: Copyright Toho Co., Ltd.  File: sound\_of\_the\_mountain.jpg  Figure Still from *Yama no oto* (*Sound of the Mountain*, 1954), featuring Hara Setsuko.  Source: Copyright Toho Co., Ltd.  File: ACQUIRE FILE FROM CRITERION COLLECTION.  Figure 4 Clips from *Koshiben gambare* [*Flunky, Work Hard*] (1931) and *Onna ga kaidan o agaru toki* [*When a Woman Ascends the Stairs*] (1960).  Source: Montage sequence from Koshiben gambare at 23:01-24:20 in 2011 Criterion Collection release, then Takamine Hideko’s scene in *Onnu kaidan o agaru toki* from 1:39:00-1:47:00 in 2007 Criterion Collection release. The Criterion Collection. <https://www.criterion.com/> List of Works: *Chambera fufu* [*Mr. and Mrs. Swordplay*] (1930)  *Junjo* [*Pure Love*] (1930)  *Oshikiri shinkonki* [*A Record of Shameless Newlyweds*] (1930)  *Fukeiki Jidai* [*Hard Times*] (1930)  *Ai wa chikara da* [*Love is Strength*] (1930)  *Ne kofun shicha iya yo* [*Now Don’t Get Excited*] (1931)  *Nikai no yumei* [*Dreams From the Second Floor*] (1931)  *Koshiben gambare* [*Flunky, Work Hard*] (1931)  *Uwaki wa kisha ni notte* [*Fickleness Gets on the Train*] (1931)  *Hige no chikara* [*The Strength of a Moustache*] (1931)  *Tonari no yane no shita* [*Under the Neighbours’ Roof*] (1931)  *Onna wa tamoto o goyojin* [*Ladies, Be Careful of Your Sleeves*] (1932)  *Eraku nare* [*Be Great!*] (1932)  *Aozora ni naku* [*Crying to the Blue Sky*] (1932)  *Mushibameru haru* [*Moth-Eaten Spring*] (1932)  *Chokoreite garu* [*Chocolate Girl*] (1932)  *Nasanu naka* [*Not Blood Relations*] (1932)  *Kashi no aru Tokyo fukei* [*Tokyo’s Candy-Coated Landscape*] (1933)  *Kimi to wakarete* [*Apart From You*] (1933)  *Yogoto no yume* [*Nightly Dreams*] (1933)  *Boku no marumage* [*My Bride’s Coiffure*] (1933)  *Sobo* [*Two Eyes*] (1933)  *Kinga shin nen* [Happy New Year] (1934)  *Kagiri naki hodo* [*Street Without End*] (1934)  *Otome-gokoro sannin shimai* [*Three Sisters With Maiden Hearts*] (1935)  *Joyu to shijin* [*The Actress and the Poet*] (1935)  *Tsuma yo bara no yo ni* [*Wife! Be Like a Rose!*] (1935)  *Saakasu gonin-gumi* [*Five Men in the Circus*] (1935)  *Uwasa no musume* [*The Girl in the Rumour*] (1935)  *Tochuken Kumoemon* (1936)  *Kimi to yuku michi* [*The Road I Travel With You*] (1936)  *Asa no namiki michi* [*Morning’s Tree-Lined Street*] (1936)  *Nyonin aishu* [*A Woman’s Sorrows*] (1937)  *Nadare* [*Avalanche*] (1937)  *Kafuku* I, II [*Learn From Experience*, parts 1 and 2] (1937)  *Tsuruhachi Tsurujiro* [*Tsuruhachi and Tsurujiro*] (1938)  *Hataraku ikka* [*The Whole Family Works*] (1939)  *Magokoro* [*Sincerity*] (1939)  *Tabi yakusha* [*Travelling Actors*] (1940)  *Natsukashi no kao* [*A Fond Face From the Past*] (1941)  *Shanhai no tsuki* [*Shanghai Moon*] (1941)  *Hideko no shasho-san* [*Hideko the Bus Conductor*] (1941)  *Haha wa shinazu* [*Mother Never Dies*] (1942)  *Uta andon* [*The Song Lantern*] (1943)  *Tanoshiki kana jinsei* [*This Happy Life*] (1944)  *Shibaido* [*The Way of Drama*] (1944)  *Shori no hi made* [*Until Victory Day*] (1945)  *Sanjusangendo toshiya monogatari* [*A Tale of Archery at the Sanjusangendo*] (1945)  *Urashima Taro no koei* [*The Descendants of Taro Urashima*] (1946)  *Ore mo omae mo* [*Both You and I*] (1946)  *Yottsu no koi no monogatari, II: Wakare mo tanashii* [*Four Love Stories, Part II: Even Parting Is Enjoyable*] (1947)  *Haru no mezame* [*Spring Awakens*] (1947)  *Furyo shojo* [*Delinquent Girl*] (1949)  *Ishinaka sensei gyojoki* [*Conduct Report on Professor Ishinaka*] (1950)  *Ikari no macho* [*The Angry Street*] (1950)  *Shiroi yaju* [*White Beast*] (1950)  *Bara gassen* [*The Battle of Roses*] (1950)  *Ginza gesho* [*Ginza Cosmetics*] (1951)  *Maihime* [*Dancing Girl*] (1950)  *Meshi* [*Repast*] (1951)  *Okuni to Gohei* [*Okuni and Gohei*] (1952)  *Okasan* [*Mother*] (1952)  *Inazuma* [*Lightning*] (1952)  *Fufu* [*Husband and Wife*] (1953)  *Tsuma* [*Wife*] (1953)  *Ani imoto* [*Older Brother, Younger Sister*] (1953)  *Yama no oto* [*Sound of the Mountain*] (1954)  *Bangiku* [*Late Chrysanthemums*] (1954)  *Ukigumo* [*Floating Clouds*] (1955)  *Kuchizuke, III: Onna doshi* [The Kiss, Part III: Women’s Ways] (1955)  *Shuu* [*Sudden Rain*] (1956)  *Tsuma no Kokoro* [*A Wife’s Heart*] (1956)  *Nagareru* [*Flowing*] (1956)  *Arakure* [*Untamed*] (1957)  *Anzukko* (1958)  *Iwashigumo* [*Summer Clouds*] (1958)  *Kotan no kuchibue* [*Whistling in Kotan*] (1959)  *Onna ga kaidan o agaru toki* [*When a Woman Ascends the Stairs*] (1960)  *Musume, tsuma, haha* [*Daughters, Wives and a Mother*] (1960)  *Yoru no nagare* [*Evening Stream*] (1960)  *Aki tachinu* [*The Approach of Autumn*] (1960)  *Tsuma toshite onna toshite* [*The Other Woman*] (1961)  *Onna no za* [*Woman’s Status*] (1962)  *Horoki* [*A Wanderer’s Notebook*] (1962)  *Onna no rekishi* [*A Woman’s Story*] (1963)  *Midareru* [*Yearning*] (1964)  *Onna no naka ni iru tanin* [*Stranger Within a Woman*] (1966)  *Hikinige* [*Hit and Run*] (1966)  *Midaregumo* [*Scattered Clouds*] (1967) |
| Further reading:  (Bock)  (Fujiwara)  (Jacoby)  (Russel)  (Russel, Classical Japanese Cinema Revisited) |