

Okinawa

In Japan and Out of It

Inuhiko Yomota

The Japanese islands of Okinawa have always had a distinct identity. For long, they suffered discrimination at the hands of the mainlanders; at other times, they were regarded as objects of anthropological interest, as evident in some of the films made by prominent filmmakers from the mainland. More recently, a handful of directors have tried to paint a more complex picture of an Okinawa which, "while structurally within Japan, is still really the other in terms of history, culture and language." Inuhiko Yomota speaks of how Japanese films and filmmakers have approached the question of the singularity of Okinawa and Okinawans and about the films now being made by Okinawans themselves.

The Profound Desire of the Gods
(1968), Imamura Shohei

