



SYDNEY
FILM
FESTIVAL
7-18 JUNE 2017

JAPAN FOUNDATION  acmi

MEDIA RELEASE

David Stratton brings best of Kurosawa to Canberra!

FILM CRITIC ICON AT ARC FOR ONE-NIGHT-ONLY, TO CELEBRATE JAPANESE FILMMAKER

Beginning Wednesday 14 June, the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA) will celebrate influential 20th century Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa with *Essential Kurosawa: Selected by David Stratton*, a two-week season of his greatest works curated by renowned Australian film critic David Stratton.

Stratton will be attending our closing night screening of the 4K restoration of *Rashomon* on Friday 30 June.

The program is presented in association with Sydney Film Festival (SFF), Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and The Japan Foundation.

David Stratton said: 'During the 'golden era' of Japanese cinema, Akira Kurosawa was by far the best-known Japanese director internationally. His films were not only accessible, they were marvellously executed.'

'The best of Kurosawa's films possess a grandeur combined with a common touch. No-one filmed action scenes like he did – his use of multiple camera, long lenses and intricate editing combined to make these sequences unforgettable.'

Stratton's full notes on Kurosawa and each of the films are available on the [NFSA website](https://www.nfsa.gov.au/events/essential-kurosawa-selected-david-stratton) (<https://www.nfsa.gov.au/events/essential-kurosawa-selected-david-stratton>). A trailer is also available on the NFSA YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/EssentialKurosawaTrailer>).

Season highlights include:

- David Stratton attends our closing night screening of the 4k restoration of *Rashomon* (Friday 30 June).
- On opening night (Wednesday 14 June) we screen the 4k restoration of 1985 classic *Ran*.
- Includes the master's rarely seen crime thriller *High and Low* (1963) on imported 35mm.

NFSA Community Engagement Officer Louise Sheedy said: 'Kurosawa is one of the most influential directors of all time. He works on the grandest of scales, but with the detail and pathos of the most exacting artist. Kurosawa's films need to be experienced on the big screen - this season provides this very rare, very special opportunity.'

As an entrée to *Essential Kurosawa: Selected by David Stratton*, we've also programmed a double feature titled *The Influence of Shakespeare*, with *Looking for Richard* (1996) and *Chimes at Midnight* (1965) on Wednesday 7 June. One of the primary influences of the great Akira Kurosawa, this double feature looks at Shakespeare from two very different angles.

Interviews available. For more information, please contact NFSA Publicity Coordinator Jemma Pietrus (02) 6248 2106, jemma.pietrus@nfsa.gov.au, or Miguel Gonzalez (NFSA National Media Manager), (02) 8202 0114, miguel.gonzalez@nfsa.gov.au.

ESSENTIAL KUROSAWA: SELECTED BY DAVID STRATTON

When: 14 June – 30 June 2017 (**David Stratton to attend closing night on Friday 30 June**)

Where: Arc cinema, NFSA (Acton)

Tickets: \$14 / \$12 / season passes (\$75 / \$80) also available / [online now \(http://bit.ly/EssentialKurosawa\)](http://bit.ly/EssentialKurosawa)

Also screening at the 64th Sydney Film Festival ([7-18 June](#)) and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) in Melbourne ([25 May – 8 June](#)).

NFSA PROGRAM

'This retrospective is a selection of the finest films made by one of cinema's great directors, Akira Kurosawa. A master of action, Kurosawa was influenced by directors like John Ford and in turn influenced a younger generation of filmmakers, like George Lucas and Martin Scorsese.' – David Stratton

Read David Stratton's full notes on each film on the [NFSA website](#). A trailer is also available on the NFSA YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/EssentialKurosawaTrailer>).

Wednesday 14 June @ 6.45PM

Ran (4k restoration)

1985 / PG

Kurosawa's last great epic is a re-working of *King Lear* with sons replacing the original's daughters. The battle scenes are magnificently staged with impressive use of colour.

Friday 16 June @ 6.30PM

The Throne of Blood

1957 / PG

Macbeth is brilliantly re-invented with elements of Noh theatre incorporated into the drama. A great screen adaptation of Shakespeare, beautiful and ominous.

Friday 16 June @ 8.30PM

Yojimbo

1961 / PG

Toshiro Mifune is the fastest sword in the East in an exciting and entertaining film that inspires Sergio Leone's *A Fistful of Dollars*.

Monday 19 June @ 2PM + Thursday 22 June @ 6.45PM

Kagemusha

1980 / PG

At the time, the most expensive Japanese film ever made, this epic unfolds during a period of clan warfare, and questions the very nature of power.

Friday 23 June @ 6.45PM

Seven Samurai

1954 / PG

Farmers from a remote village, who are regularly attacked and robbed by bandits, seek help from seven warriors in this celebrated action epic.

Monday 26 June @ 2PM + Friday 30 June @ 7PM (closing night with special guest David Stratton)

Rashomon (4k restoration)

1950 / M

An innovative murder mystery that explores the subjective nature of truth. Toshiro Mifune plays a bandit accused of murdering a samurai and raping his wife – but what actually happened?

Wednesday 28 June @ 6.45PM

High and Low

1963 / PG

An Ed McBain thriller (*King's Ransom*) is transformed into an epic moral tale in which a man is faced with a terrible dilemma when his son is kidnapped.

THE INFLUENCE OF SHAKESPEARE double feature

When: 7 June

Where: Arc cinema, NFSA (Acton)

Tickets: \$14 / \$12, also included in the *Essential Kurosawa* season pass (\$75 / \$80) / [online now](#)

Looking for Richard - 6:30PM (Dir. Al Pacino, PG, 1996, 112mins, USA; NFSA collection)

Al Pacino's deeply-felt rumination on Shakespeare's significance and relevance to the modern world through interviews and an in-depth analysis.

Chimes At Midnight - 8:45PM (Dir. Orson Welles, CTC, 1965, 115mins, USA; NFSA collection)

Falstaff is at the centre of what is now regarded as Welles' most fully realised film after *Citizen Kane*.