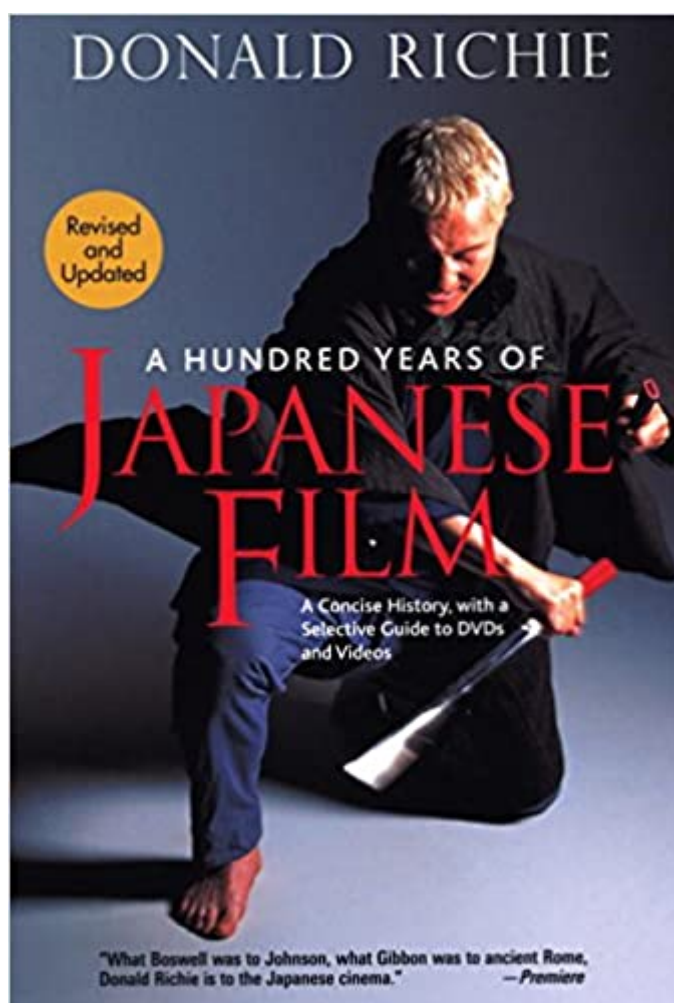


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# A Hundred Years Of Japanese Film: A Concise History, With A Selective Guide To DVDs And Videos



## Synopsis

The authoritative guide to Japanese film, completely revised and updated. Now available in paperback for the first time, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* by Donald Richie, the foremost Western expert on Japanese film, gives us an incisive, detailed, and fully illustrated history of the country's cinema. Called "the dean of Japan's arts critics" by Time magazine, Richie takes us from the inception of Japanese cinema at the end of the nineteenth century, through the achievements of Kurosawa, Mizoguchi, and Ozu, then on to the notable works of contemporary filmmakers. This revised edition includes analyses of the latest trends in Japanese cinema, such as the revival of the horror genre, and introduces today's up-and-coming directors and their works. As Paul Schrader writes in his perceptive foreword, Richie's accounting of the Japanese film "retains his sensitivity to the actual circumstances of film production (something filmmakers know very well but historians often overlook) . . . and shows the interweave of filmmaking—the contributions of directors, writers, cinematographers, actors, musicians, art directors, as well as financiers." Of primary interest to those who would like to watch the works introduced in these pages, Richie has provided capsule reviews of the major subtitled Japanese films commercially available in DVD and VHS formats. This guide has been updated to include not only the best new movie releases, but also classic films available in these formats for the first time.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Widely considered the leading Western authority on Japan, Richie has a particular affinity for the nation's films, as is evident on every page of this authoritative survey. He emphasizes the

collaborative nature of film, which is particularly appropriate since in Japanese culture the collective usually trumps the individual, and shows how Japanese cinema largely eschewed realism and narrative until it fell under Western influence. The section on the silent era, when live narrators, benshi, described films' stories to audiences, is particularly revelatory, since 90 percent of pre-1945 Japanese films haven't survived. Richie comments insightfully on the acknowledged masters--Mizoguchi, Ozu, and Kurosawa--and also on other notable directors who are virtually unknown to even the most avid American cineasts. He finds less to praise about contemporary filmmakers, whose flashier, Westernized approach seems less to his liking. The impressive amount of information on films renowned and obscure and Richie's enthusiasm and critical acumen make this essential for film studies collections. Brief reviews of about 200 films, with notations on video availability, top things off nicely. Gordon Flagg

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"What Boswell was to Johnson, what Gibbon was to ancient Rome, Donald Richie is to the Japanese cinema." *Premiere Magazine* "[An] essential study." *The New York Times*, "Arts and Leisure" "The guide to DVDs and videos includes the names of the principals and capsule-summaries of the films and it alone worth the price of the book. A Hundred Years of Japanese Film is both illuminating and thought-provoking." *The Bloomsbury Review* "...Through classic works by Akira Kurosawa, Shimizu Ozu and Kenji Mizoguchi, and into modern day films by Takeshi Kitano, Hirokazu Kore'eda and Hayao Miyazaki. A selective guide for film aficionados of all ages." *Rafu Shimpo* "Richie's sense of both future and past remains as sharp as ever." *Film Comment* "Donald Richie is the leading U.S. authority on Japanese film." *American Cinematographer* "Donald Richie, whom we may call the 'Emperor' of Japanese film history, has done it again! This is probably the best, extensive 'digest' on all aspects of Japanese cinema to be available today in English." *Cinemaya* "Superb." *In These Times* "A concise, beautifully realized guide to the expansive history of Japanese film." *A Magazine: Inside Asian America* "Richie's expertise is hard to miss; surely he overlooks no aspect of these films." *Library Journal* "The impressive amount of information ... and Richie's enthusiasm and critical acumen make this essential for film studies and collections." *Booklist* "Richie's awareness of various film theories and criticism and his sensitivity to historical specificity and to new trends in Japanese film make this book an extremely inspiring one." *Persimmon* "A new book by Richie is always a welcome event ... He writes with an insider's view of Japanese culture. ...Both funny and refreshingly critical. He is the perfect guide to

little-known styles, directors, and studios of his adopted land... For all collections."

•Choice"Monumental. Tracing the roots of Japanese film while exploring artistic and industrial intricacies of the business, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* is encyclopedic and laced with wonderful insights." •Tucson Weekly"Richie's journey through a century of Japanese cinema is designed to fascinate. Like a master tour guide, he uses his encyclopedic knowledge of Japanese art, theater and history to show us how and why this national cinema is so fundamentally different from others." •Pacific Reader"*A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* is a well-informed, insightful, and accessible (not loaded down with jargon) product of a lifetime devoted to the study and appreciation of his subject." •Hawai'i Herald"For a scholarly, thoughtful, in-depth analysis on just about every classic Japanese movie, as well as a meaningful overview about the genre as a whole, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* is clearly and justifiably the principle reference to consult!" •Midwest Book Review"A gorgeous book, written out of love by an obsessive film fan, and its only potential drawback is that it's likely to convert readers into equally obsessive fans." •Bookreporter.com"A fitting coda to a lifetime of work from a writer who, to no small degree, helped to save the Japanese cinema from what might have easily been one hundred years of obscurity." •Japan Times

If you are interested in Japanese cinema, this is the book with which you are best to begin. Richie is a master of his subject matter, and the book is beautifully written and illustrated. This book has been a great companion for me while watching and researching Japanese cinema for a new book that I'm writing. You will find interviews and commentary from Donald Richie on the Criterion Collection releases of many of their Japanese films. Richie provides a blending of cultural analysis, politics and history, so that the Western viewer can begin to appreciate more of what they are seeing. This book provides the broad overview - 100 years. Once you've mastered this, then go looking for the other details that interest you.

Historical and comprehensive descriptions of the evolution of film in the Japanese library.

This comprehensive, somewhat erudite book captures the history and genius of Japanese cinema. It is the author's intention to introduce the reader(s) to a different world of the film, where reality is interpreted differently from Western ideas of cinema. Included is a brief filmography of extant Japanese films, available on VHS and DVD. The hardcover was a bargain!

Great book

Great information!

There are two reasons why I enjoyed reading *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*. The first is I have many of the films the author writes about. From *Late Spring* to *Early Summer*, from *Manji* to *The Seven Samurai*, from *After Life* to *When a Woman Ascends the Stairs*, I have watched a small cross-section of Japanese movies and it allowed me to understand many of the points he was trying to make. Also, the author Donald Richie, has done the commentary of many of the above films, which means I already have a feel of where he is going with his views and observations. Overall the author is a very serious person when it comes to Japanese films, how they developed and what has happened to them over the years. A great book for anybody already deeply interested on the subject.

Donald Richie has spent a good part of his life living in Japan and has been reviewing Japanese films for just as long. He personally knows many of the film makers and so his reviews carry weight and are sensitive to the changes in Japanese film-making. A must buy for the serious fan of films made in Japan.

I scout around for shortcuts to the Japanese mind, having a mild interest in the subject. This is the best I've found. The text usefully comments on the Japanese temperament, traces through film the trends in that temperament over the first two-thirds of the 20th C, and through those trends gives insight into the experience of the Japanese, through their film directors, in becoming "Westernized." I felt it could give me as much insight as I was ready for. And of course once I needed more I could view the movies themselves--a useful guide to sources of video and DVDs is included. Wonderful writing, from a trustworthy guide. An enjoyable read.

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