

Cinema/Movement

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www.yorku.ca/finearts/film/events/events.htm

www.yorku.ca/hayashi/cinemamovement

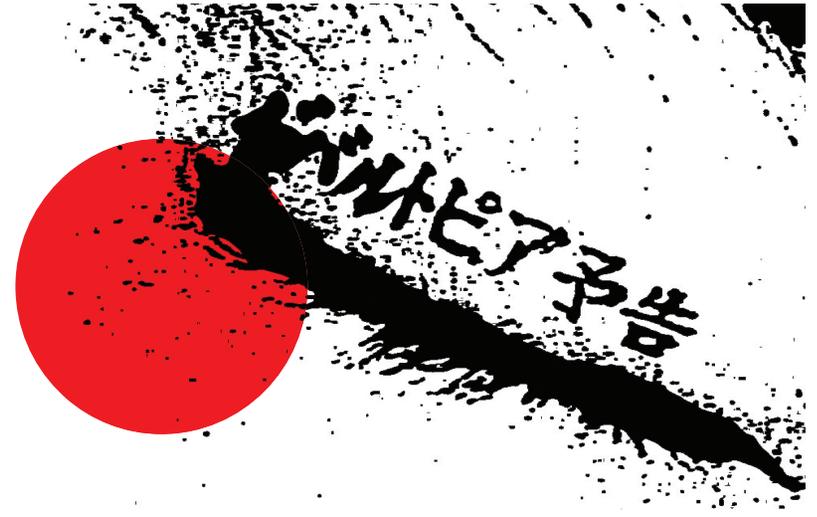
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The Japan Foundation

Department of Film at York University

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival

Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Toronto and Cine Club York



The Department of Film at York University presents

Cinema/Movement

An international conference and film series focusing on the vibrant and controversial interaction between political action and experimental filmmaking in the 1960s and 1970s in Japan

Conference Part I and II

Nov 15 2-5pm, Nick Mirkopoulos Screening Room ACE 004, York University

Nov 16 10am-2pm, East Asian Studies Lounge, Robarts Library 14087, University of Toronto

Film Screenings

Nov 12 6pm, Centre for Film and Theatre 135, York University

Nov 15 7pm, Nick Mirkopoulos Screening Room ACE 004, York University

Nov 16 4pm, Toronto Reel Asian Int'l Film Festival, Innis Town Hall, University of Toronto

Nov 19 6pm, Centre for Film and Theatre, York university

Cinema/Movement

The Interaction between Artistic and Social Praxis
in Japanese Filmmaking

York University, Nov 12-19, 2007

“Cinema/Movement” is a project that seeks to recover and redefine the relationship between artistic and social praxis in postwar Japanese film experiments of the 1960s and 1970s, and to examine the legacy and possibilities of this filmmaking practice for the present moment. Research and discussion of Japanese cinema of this era have often focused solely on either the political or the artistic dimensions of these films. When the filmmaking of this period has been categorized as simply reflective of a political reality, it is often viewed as a nothing more than political propaganda, where form merely conforms to a political message. Similarly, when the purely artistic and experimental merits of these films are isolated from their social and political context, they become trapped in a history of experimental film seen as a series of personal expressions of individual artists isolated from social and political transformations, rather than being acknowledged as important commentators and participants in those social changes. The conference and screenings that comprise “Cinema/Movement” seek to re-examine and re-establish the inseparable link between artistic experimentation and political movements in the postwar Japanese context and trace this connection to the present moment where progressive art and activism converge.

Most cultural histories of Japan neglect the 1960s and 1970s, the decade before and after 1968, when the interaction of artistic experimentation and social praxis was undeniable. An investigation into the ways in which artistic forms and political engagements of this period interacted must be one of collaboration between film scholars and chroniclers of social movements. One of the main objectives of this conference and screening series is to bring together scholars and activists from different fields who possess a familiarity with Japanese history and culture but whose comparative and conceptual frameworks can provide a new perspective on both ‘movement cinema (film of political movements)’ and the ‘cinema of movement (cinematic experimentation).’



Monday Nov 19 6pm,
Centre for Film and Theatre 135, York University

Okabe Michio

Crazy Love, 93min, 1968, 16mm

Total running time 93 minutes.

Okabe Michio began his career in the fine arts. Inspired by the works of Kenneth Anger and the American underground, he gravitated towards filmmaking. *Crazy Love* was his second work and the first feature length underground film in Japan. Eschewing narrative and meaning, Okabe instead layered the film with the music he liked from the Beatles and James Brown to Enka and Group Sounds and peopled it with friends and artists, inserting sequences of performances and happenings, making it a true document of the Shinjuku underground scene. Okabe himself appears recreating his favorite roles from *Bonnie and Clyde* to *Spaghetti Westerns*, as well as incorporating quotations by inserting stills of Godard, Kennedy’s assassination and the Vietnam War. Correlated with Susan Sontag’s theorization of kitsch as well as employing the queer lingo of “camp,” the film’s relentless equal opportunity pop-art montage shattered the foundations of conventional cinema, including the experiments of the early 60s, liberating infinite new possibilities. Sponsored by Cine Club York.