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## WEXNER CENTER SPEARHEADS KUROSAWA TRIBUTE IN JUNE

"His influence on filmmakers throughout the entire world is so profound as to be almost incomparable."—Martin Scorsese

On the occasion of the 100-year anniversary of the legendary filmmaker Akira Kurosawa's birth, the Wexner Center is paying tribute with **Kurosawa @ 100**, a month of screenings at the Wexner Center as well as at the Gateway Film Center (GFC) in the South Campus Gateway. The series kicks off at the Wexner Center June 3 with *Stray Dog* and *Sanshiro Sugata* (from 1949 and 1943 respectively), followed June 4 with the first night of a weeklong run of *Seven Samurai* (1954), Kurosawa's best-known film, at the GFC. (The Wexner Center and the GFC launched into a partnership earlier this year, with the Wex programming some films there on an ongoing basis.)



Photo of Kurosawa, courtesy of Janus Films

Kurosawa's career as a director spanned 57 years and 30 films. While best known for his samurai classics, Kurosawa (1910–1998) proved himself equally adept at contemporary dramas and thrillers. Wex film curator Dave Filipi notes, "Our tribute to this film great showcases the variety of genres he mastered. Kurosawa's films hold the same power and allure today as they did when they were first released. This is a great chance to see some of his best—and his first—on the big screen, not to mention the screenings of *Seven Samurai* at the Gateway Film Center."

The complete schedule follows.

### **Akira Kurosawa @ 100**



***Stray Dog*** (1949) and ***Sanshiro Sugata*** (1943)

Thursday, June 3 at 7 pm; 2nd film at 9:10 pm

Tough guy icon Toshiro Mifune stars in *Stray Dog* as a rookie detective forced to pose as a homeless veteran in the gritty lower depths of postwar Tokyo. (122 mins., 35mm)

Set in the late 19th century, *Sanshiro Sugata* is Kurosawa's first feature, focusing on a young man studying with a jujitsu master and seeking the spiritual discipline needed to acquire martial arts skills. (81 mins., 16mm)

### ***Seven Samurai*** (1954)

June 4–10 | Gateway Film Center | Times vary

Solidifying Kurosawa's place in the filmmaking lexicon, *Seven Samurai* tells the story of a poor village under attack by bandits that recruits seven unemployed samurai to help them. This film was highly influential, inspiring *The Magnificent Seven* (1960) and an impending remake starring George Clooney (2011). (207 mins. with an intermission, 35mm)



*(schedule continues)*

***Drunken Angel* (1948)**

Thursday, June 10 | 7 pm

The first of Kurosawa's 16 collaborations with Toshiro Mifune, *Drunken Angel* finds the actor as a member of the Japanese mafia, being consumed by disease no less than by his own criminal gang. It's an assertively stylish noir film, evoking contemporary Italian neorealism as well as James Cagney-style gangster pictures. (98 mins., 35mm)



***Rashomon* (1950)**

Thursday, June 17 | 7 pm

Perhaps Kurosawa's most deeply influential film and winner of the Academy Award for best foreign film, *Rashomon* revolutionized how stories can be told. The film depicts different versions of the "same" event through flashbacks of the murder of a samurai and the rape of his wife. Each character recounts what happened from his or her point of view, yet none of them is definitive. With Toshiro Mifune. (88 mins., 35mm)

***I Live in Fear* (1955)**

Thursday, June 24 | 7 pm

One of Kurosawa's most resonant contemporary dramas, *I Live in Fear* finds Mifune as a middle-aged father and husband whose absolute fear of nuclear annihilation forces him to plan for his entire family to relocate to South America. A compelling critique of Cold War anxieties, the film is also a scathing look at changing family attitudes in Japan, as the Mifune character's children take him to court to gain control of his estate. (103 mins., 35mm)



**Tickets to films at the Wexner Center are \$7 general public, and \$5 members, students, and senior citizens. Admission for Wexner Center members to *Seven Samurai* is \$5 (and to all Wex films at Gateway, as well as to all other Gateway films Sunday–Thursday). More information on becoming a Wexner Center member is at [wexarts.org/join](http://wexarts.org/join). General admission to the Gateway is \$8.50. The Wexner Center is located at 15<sup>th</sup> and High. More info: [wexarts.org](http://wexarts.org). The GFC is just off High at 10<sup>th</sup> in the South Campus Gateway. More info: [gatewayfilmcenter.com](http://gatewayfilmcenter.com).**

**SEASON SUPPORT**

Significant contributions for the Wexner Center's 2010–11 film/video season are made by the Rohauer Collection Foundation.

The preferred airline of the film/video program is American Airlines/American Eagle.

All film/video programs and events also receive support from the Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation and Wexner Center members, as well as from the Greater Columbus Arts Council, The Columbus Foundation, Nationwide Foundation, and the Ohio Arts Council.

Kurosawa prints courtesy of Janus Films. *Sanshiro Sugata* print courtesy of The Japan Foundation.

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