

Late Ozu DVD Collection

By Jan Uhde

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YASUJIRO OZU needs neither introduction nor recommendation. Many of Ozu's features have been available on DVD for some time in Asia but mostly only on Region 3 which the great majority of DVD players in the West would not play. There has been only little Ozu available in the West so this Criterion release is good news. The Eclipse series presents the director's work of the last decade of his life - a mature artist who has honed his restrained style. It also shows Ozu experimenting with colour and revealing more of his subtle, understated humour, as in *The End of Summer* and *Late Autumn*.

Ozu's films have always had a finger on the pulse of Japanese society: in these late period films, perceptive references to the post-war poverty and environmental devastation evolve into images of growing material comfort as well as generational conflicts and increasing Americanization. The image quality of the films is better than those issued by Hong Kong Panorama Entertainment. Despite the lack of supplements (unusual for Criterion), *Late Ozu* is a true bargain - as the other two sets mentioned above.



Figure 1: *LATE OZU* DVD COLLECTION ¶ (*Early Spring, Tokyo Twilight, Equinox Flower, Late Autumn, The End of Summer*). ¶ Yasujiro Ozu, Japan 1956-61, 5-disc set, NTSC, Region-0, DVD-9, 85min, b&w and colour. ¶ Criterion Eclipse series #3. ¶ Japanese with English subtitles. ¶ (USD 49.99 at Amazon.com).

Author Information

Jan UHDE is Professor Emer. (Film Studies) at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Born in Brno, Czech Republic. Graduated (MA) from the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno; PhD received at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. He taught at the University of Waterloo (1970-2012) where he founded a General and Honours BA program in Film Studies at the Department of Fine Arts.

Publications: *Latent Images: Film in Singapore* Second edition, with Yvonne Ng Uhde (Ridge Books, National University Press of Singapore, 2010); *Latent Images: Film in Singapore*, with Yvonne Ng Uhde (Oxford University Press, 2000); *Latent Images: Film in Singapore CD-ROM* (2003, co-author); *Vision and Persistence: Twenty Years of the Ontario Film Institute* (University of Waterloo Press, 1990) and *Ontario Film Institute Programming Activities Index 1969-1989* (Toronto: Ontario Science Centre, 1990). He co-edited

the *Place in Space: Human Culture in Landscape* (Proceedings from the Second International Conference of the Working Group "Culture and Landscape" of the International Association of Landscape Ecology, Pudoc Scientific Publishers, Wageningen, Holland, 1993). Jan Uhde has published articles and reviews in several countries (including Canada, USA, Germany, Italy), participated in international juries at film festivals and presented papers at international conferences in North America and Europe. In 1998/99, he was a visiting researcher at the School for Film and Media Studies, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore.

His professional and research interests focus on Singapore cinema; the identification and distancing mechanisms of the film viewer; the non-authored modifications and manipulation of films; and specific aspects of film history, including the Central European cinema.

He founded KINEMA in 1993.