

## DVD press release



# Kurosawa Classic Collection

## 5-disc box set

**Akira Kurosawa has been hailed as one of the greatest filmmakers ever by critics all over the world. This, the first of two new Kurosawa box sets from the BFI this month, brings together five of his most profound masterpieces, each exploring the complexities of life, and includes two previously unreleased films.**

An ideal introduction to the work of the master filmmaker, the Kurosawa Classic Collection contains **Ikiru** (aka **Living**), **I Live in Fear** and **Red Beard** along with the two titles new to DVD, the acclaimed Maxim Gorky adaptation **The Lower Depths** and Kurosawa's first colour film **Dodes'ka-den** (aka **Clickety-clack**). The discs are accompanied by an illustrated booklet of film notes and credits and selected filmed introductions by director Alex Cox.

### **Ikiru** (*Living*), 1952, 137 mins

Featuring a beautifully nuanced performance by Takashi Shimura as a bureaucrat diagnosed with stomach cancer, *Ikiru* is an intensely lyrical and moving film which explores the nature of existence and how we find meaning in our lives.

### **I Live in Fear** (*Ikimono no Kiroku*), 1955, 99 mins

Made at the height of the Cold War, with the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki still a recent memory, Toshiro Mifune delivers an outstanding performance as a wealthy foundry owner who decides to move his entire family to Brazil to escape the nuclear holocaust which he fears is imminent.

### **The Lower Depths** (*Donzonko*), 1957, 120 mins

Once again working with Toshiro Mifune, Kurosawa adapts Maxim Gorky's classic play of downtrodden humanity. Set in a slum at the bottom of a ravine in which its inhabitants while away their time longing for escape or dreaming of a better life, he remains faithful to Gorky's exploration of the conflict between the comfort of illusion and bitter reality.

### **Red Beard** (*Akahige*), 1965, 172 mins

The last and most ambitious of Kurosawa's collaborations with Toshiro Mifune, *Red Beard* chronicles the tumultuous friendship, in a nineteenth-century rural clinic, between an idle and socially ambitious intern (Yuzo Kayama) and Mifune's compassionate yet commanding doctor, and serves as testament to the goodness of humanity.

### **Dodes'ka-den**, 1970, 134 mins

Kurosawa's first film in colour follows a group of people living around a city dump and is by turns both tragic and transcendent. Made at a critical point in his life, Kurosawa poured himself into this film and the negative reaction it garnered resulted in a suicide attempt.

### **Release date: 24 October 2011**

RRP: £49.99 / cat. no. BFIV939 / Cert 15 / 5-disc box set

Japan / 1952-1970 / black & white, and colour / Japanese with English subtitles / mixed aspect ratios

Available from DVD retailers & BFI Filmstore Tel: 020 7815 1350 or  
[www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore)

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Images are available at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI >DVD & Blu-ray

