



The Ozu Collection The Gangster Films

Three silent films by Yasujiro Ozu

The latest volume in the BFI's celebrated collection of the works of Japanese master Yasujiro Ozu (*Tokyo Story*), released on 18 March 2013, focuses on his gangster-genre films. This 2-disc set contains *Walk Cheerfully* (1930), *That Night's Wife* (1930) and *Dragnet Girl* (1933), all coming to DVD for the first time. Each film is presented with a newly commissioned score by Ed Hughes. Also included is the only surviving fragment of Ozu's *A Straightforward Boy* (1929).

Ozu honed his craft in the early 1930s, a time when young Japanese directors were experimenting with cinematic conventions. In these rare, silent works, Ozu mixes a Hollywood-infused dynamism with elements of his later unique and poetic style.

Disc one:

Walk Cheerfully (Hogaraka ni ayume)

When Kenji 'the Knife' Koyama, leader of a gang of hooligans, falls for the beautiful and virtuous Yasue he faces a tough decision: go straight to win her heart or carry on with his life of petty crime and easy luxury. With its expressionist lighting – reminiscent of Sternberg's *Underworld* – and distinctive characterisation, *Walk Cheerfully* sees Ozu combine international cinematic influences with comic touches all of his own.

Japan / 1930 / b&w / silent with music, English subtitles and intertitles/ DVD9 / 92 mins / Original aspect ratio 1.33:1

Disc two:

That Night's Wife (Sono yo no tsuma)

In desperation over the illness of his daughter, young father Shuji turns to crime to pay the medical bills. Enter Detective Kagawa (played by Togo Yamamoto) for a tense nighttime stand-off with Shuji's wife, Mayumi. *That Night's Wife* demonstrates Ozu's masterly handling of drama as the film reaches its emotional climax.

Dragnet Girl (Hijosen no onna)

By day sweet-faced Tokiko (played by *Equinox Flower's* Tanaka Kinuyo) is an ordinary typist but come nightfall she's a glamorous, fun-loving gangster's moll. When her boyfriend Joji starts to stray, Tokiko is forced to confront the effects of her dissolute lifestyle. Hugely popular when it was released, Ozu's *Dragnet Girl* remains one of Ozu's most enduring silent films.

Japan / 1930 + 1933 / b&w / silent with music, English subtitles and intertitles / DVD9 / 63 mins + 96 mins / Original aspect ratio 1.33:1

Special features

- *A Straightforward Boy* (1929, 13 mins): a kidnapped boy gets the better of the baddies in this surviving fragment of the film, directed by Ozu, which shot its Tomio Aoki, its child star, to fame
- *Ozu: Emotion and Poetry* (2012, 10 mins): an extract from Asian cinema expert Tony Rayns' 2010 lecture on Ozu's early work

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- Illustrated booklet with newly commissioned essays from Tony Rayns

Product details

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