



The Fifty-fifth Annual

Conference on World Affairs

"The Power of an Idea"

Roger Ebert's Film Interruptus

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55th ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON WORLD AFFAIRS ANNOUNCES EBERT'S 2003 FILM INTERRUPTUS:

Floating Weeds

(Boulder) – March 31, 2003 – “After two or three years of popular movies, I’m taking on the challenge this year of Ozu’s *Floating Weeds*, returning for a year, anyway, to the CWA tradition of art films,” says **Roger Ebert**, who will once again host “Cinema Interruptus” —a film analysis series to be held daily, at 4-6pm, Sunday through Friday, April 6-11, 2003, in Macky Auditorium on the CU campus in Boulder as part of the Fifty-fifth Annual Conference on World Affairs. All CWA events—over 200 this year—are free and open to the public.

Floating Weeds is a 1959 Japanese picture directed by Yasujiro Ozu about a group of traveling actors who visit a town where the leading actor's (Ganjiro Nakamura) ex-mistress lives with their son. Nakamura's present lover (Machiko Kyo) is understandably jealous.

“Ozu is one of the directors I most admire, and his distinctive visual style is ideal for the Interruptus approach,” says Ebert. “After several years of recent and more commercial films, it should be challenging to plunge again into the classic cinema. Since Ozu often cheerfully ignored standard Western or Hollywood visual strategies, he'll allow us to reevaluate what we take for granted.”

The Conference on World Affairs Cinema Interruptus Series begins on Sunday, April 6 with an introduction by Ebert and an uninterrupted screening of *Floating Weeds*. The next day, April 7, the series will continue with an uninterrupted screening *Tokyo-Ga*.

Ebert explains, "On Monday, after some introductory remarks, I'll show Wim Wender's 1985 documentary *Tokyo-Ga*, about the director's first trip to Japan, which he made in order to search for the Japan of Ozu and to talk to those who had worked with him, including his cinematographer. The documentary was photographed by Ed Lachman recently an Oscar nominee for *Far from Heaven*. It provides an ideal curtain-raiser for the Ozu experience."

During the Tuesday through Friday, April 8-11, "Interruptus" sessions, the audience will participate with Ebert in analyzing *Floating Weeds* as the film is again screened, this time in stop-and-start fashion. Ebert or anyone in the audience may direct the projectionist to freeze frame by yelling, "Stop!" in order to make comments or ask questions.

Ebert's annual CWA shot-by-shot film analysis in Boulder has inspired the commentary tracks for DVDs of *Dark City*, *Casablanca* and *Citizen Kane*, which won *Variety's* Video Premiere award as the best DVD commentary of the year. This year's analysis of *Floating Weeds* will form the basis for a commentary track on the forthcoming DVD of that film.

"I am revved up about this because Ozu is not only a great master, but VERY shot-by-shotable," says Ebert. "Rarely have I anticipated a session so keenly."

The Pulitzer prize winning film critic never accepts any payment for doing commentary tracks on DVDs because he feels it might be a conflict of interest, "I do them pro bono. When we did *Dark City* at the CWA and I later did the commentary track, I gave full credit to the discoveries and observations by the audience."

Ebert, who will be appearing on a variety of CWA panels in addition to the Interruptus series, is returning for his thirty-fourth consecutive year of participation in the Conference. "Why is this week like lifeblood for me? Once we settle into our life's careers, most of us charge the line with our heads down, doing our jobs and trying to get ahead. We become specialists, and develop tunnel vision. I have a tendency, for example, to think the world revolves around movies. Once a year at the Conference, I am forced to think on subjects not of my own choosing...I get to talk to people from other worlds."

Every year in April approximately 100 participants representing a wide range of backgrounds gather on the University of Colorado's Boulder campus for the Conference on World Affairs. The *New York Times* refers to the CWA as "a week-long extravaganza of discussion and debate" with over 200 non-academic, cross-disciplinary panels, plenary sessions and performances attended by an audience of about 40,000.

For further information, feel free to contact Ramsay Thurber at 303.492.2526, or e-mail the Conference on World Affairs at cwa@colorado.edu. The full CWA schedule and a biographical listing of all our participants are now online at: www.colorado.edu/cwa

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