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PENANCE

A Film by

Kiyoshi Kurosawa

In Japanese with English subtitles

300 min., Japan, 2012

Official site:

<http://www.musicboxfilms.com/penance>

Press materials:

<http://www.musicboxfilms.com/penance-press>

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Synopsis

Japanese master of suspense Kiyoshi Kurosawa's eerie, intense psychological thriller *PENANCE* (Shokuzai) unfolds on a sleepy small town playground, when a mysterious stranger approaches a group of young friends, then kidnaps and brutally murders one of the girls. Wracked with grief, the victim's unhinged mother Asako (Kyoko Koizumi) demands that the shaken survivors identify the killer or face a penance of her choosing. Growing up in the shadow of this tragic debt, each of the four girls cultivates a warped survival mechanism – avoidance, desperation, fear, and obsession.

A disturbing, sensitively helmed chronicle of post-traumatic stress from a female perspective, *PENANCE* offers Kiyoshi Kurosawa's trademark creepy twists as well as a subtle commentary on Japanese society and gender expectations. This gripping long-form serial drama highlights a new facet of renowned auteur Kurosawa (*PULSE*, *CURE*, *CHARISMA*) and features absorbing performances from a stellar line-up of award-winning, up-and-coming young actresses.

Director's Biography

Born on July 19, 1955 in Kobe, Japan, Kiyoshi Kurosawa started directing 8mm independent films while studying Sociology at Rikkyo University. In 1980, His first work SHIGARAMI GAKUEN was screened at the Independent Film Festival in Tokyo. In 1983, he made his commercial debut with the feature film KANDAGAWA WARS.

Kurosawa first achieved international acclaim with his serial killer film CURE (1997). In 1999, LICENSE TO LIVE screened at the Berlin Film Festival, and CHARISMA was highly acclaimed at the Cannes Film Festival Directors' Fortnight. In that same year, BARREN ILLUSION was screened at the Venice International Film Festival. In 2006, Kurosawa returned to the Venice Film Festival with RETRIBUTION.

Director's Statement

I think of "murder" as an impulsive and irrational crime. Yet, I suppose it must be a process that takes years, maybe decades to culminate... I've never directed a film that chronicles such an extraordinary span of time. In this film, I had to grasp five such intervals at once, and it was staggering. How do I portray not one, but five such disparate lives? But in the end, I think this was the best way. When five tragic paths converged, I pictured a flowing, inevitable force called fate.

Which of the five characters will viewers empathize with? Or will they just sit, mesmerized, holding their collective breaths? With a powerful story, amazing staff and dynamic actors supporting me, I may have captured true tragedy for the first time in my life.

Director's Filmography

The Kandagawa Wars (1983)
The Excitement of the Do-Re-Mi-Fa Girl (1985)
Dangerous Stories (1988)
Sweet Home (1988)
Guard from Underground (1991)
Suit Yourself or Shoot Yourself 1 - The Heist (1995)
Suit Yourself or Shoo Yourself 2 - The Escape (1995)
Suit Yourself or Shoot Yourself3 - The Loot (1995)
Suit Yourself or Shoot Yourself4 - The Gamble (1995)
DoorIII (1996)
Suit Yourself or Shoot Yourself5 - The Nouveau Riche (1996)
Suit Yourself or Shoot YourseLf6 - The Hero (1996)
The Revenge - A Visit from Fate (1996)
The Revenge - The Scar That Never Fades (1996)
Cure (1997)
Serpent's Path (1997)
Eyes of the Spider (1997)
License to Live (1998)
Charisma (1999)
Barren Illusion (1999)
Seance (1999)
Pulse (2000)
Bright Future (2002)
Doppelganger (2002)
Loft (2005)
House of Bugs (2005)
Retribution (2006)
Tokyo Sonata (2008)

CAST

KYOKO KOIZUMI (Asako ADACHI)
TERUYUKI KAGAWA (Hiroaki NANJO)
YU AOI (Sae KIKUCHI)
EIKO KOIKE (Maki SHINOHARA)
SAKURA ANDO (Akiko TAKANO)
CHIZURU IKEWAKI (Yuka OGAWA)
MIRAI MORIYAMA (Takahiro Otsuki)
KENJI MIZUHASHI (Teacher TANABE)
RYO KASE (Koji TAKANO)
AYUMI ITO (Mayu MURAKAMI)
TOMO HARU HASEGAWA (Keita MURAKAMI)
HIROFUMI ARAI (Detective MORIYA)
TETSUSHI TANAKA (Toshiro ADACHI)

CREW

Director: Kiyoshi KUROSAWA
Screenplay: Kiyoshi KUROSAWA
Director of Photography: Akiko ASHIZAWA
Editor: Koichi TAKAHASHI
Production Designer: Chie MATSUMOTO
Music(Composer of Original Score): Yusuke HAYASHI
Sound: Shinji WATANABE
Sound Effects: Kenji SHIBASAKI
Costume Designer: Masae MIYAMOTO
Make-up Artist: Midori ONUMA
Gaffer: Hidenori NAGATA
Producer: Tomomi TAKASHIMA, Yumi ARAKAWA, Nobuhiro Iizuka

About Doppelgänger Releasing

The genre label of Music Box Films, Doppelgänger Releasing launched in 2013 and kicked off its slate with EDDIE: THE SLEEPWALKING CANNIBAL, followed by such titles as the Slamdance award-winner 100 BLOODY ACRES and Santiago Segura's action-comedy TORRENTE series. Upcoming releases include Fabrice Du Welz's psychosexual thriller ALLELUIA, winner of four awards including Best Picture at Fantastic Fest 2014.

Music Box Films is a leading distributor of international, American independent, and documentary content in North America along with the best in international TV series and mini-series. Music Box Films is independently owned and operated by the Southport Music Box Corporation, which also owns and operates The Music Box Theatre, Chicago's premiere venue for independent and foreign films.