

## **Swiss Treasures at TOKYO FILMeX**

Swiss films have always been important for the history of world cinema. However, there have not been so many chances for them to be introduced to Japan. French films, German films or Italian films have always come first in Japan when it comes to European films. Indeed, Swiss films have maintained underlying vitality for cinema, and have had not a few masterpieces, including documentaries, despite the comparatively limited number of the film productions. Of course, not only such directors as Jean-Luc Godard, Daniel Schmid, Alain Tanner, and Fredi M. Murer, but actors like Michel Simon and Bruno Ganz, and cinematographer Renato Berta, who are all originally from Suisse and internationally active in European cinema, are also very well-known to the Japanese cinema fans. Most of their films have been theatrically released, or at least screened at some film events in Japan, and consequently they have quite a few fans or admirers in our country too.

It is my pleasure to announce that we will present six Swiss classic films (including a silent film), which were produced before or around the World War II, at TOKYO FILMeX 2005. Some of those films were already commercially released in Japan at the time of the production. However, I am very convinced that not only the Japanese audience at present, but young Asian filmmakers in attendance would also be stimulated, and fascinated to see all the five films together on this special occasion. It's just happened that all the directors of those Swiss films came from other countries outside Suisse. Nevertheless, it could be said that this kind of situation has been one of the special aspects of the Swiss film productions.

In actual fact, the research for this project started a few years ago. We spoke with a number of film historians and researchers, and collected information about Swiss films when we visited such film festivals as Locarno, Berlin or Cannes. In parallel with this process, we studied Swiss film history on our own, and saw as many Swiss films as possible. Finally, we selected five masterpieces, which was made possible by the extraordinary efforts of our associates, especially of Swiss Films. The reason why this special programme will be held this year is simply that we could encounter a number of brilliant Swiss films, and that is all.

TOKYO FILMeX, launched in 2000, has a competition programme for young innovative Asian filmmakers, as well as a special screening section for contemporary films of prominent directors from around the world. Alongside these main programmes, we also have a special program in which we have shown a number of masterpieces of classic films from such countries as Finland, Russia, Hungary, Iran, and Canada. As was expected, each film of this year's special programme are also masterpieces that really deserve to be called "Swiss Treasures." Amongst them, Jacques Feyder's "Visages d'enfants" will be the opening film of the programme, and the screening of the film will be accompanied by live music composed and played by sound artist Mr. Niki Neecke, as it is a silent film.

It is also my pleasure and honour to be having film scholar Ms. Mariann Sträuli as one of the jury members for the TOKYO FILMeX competition programme. We are now planning to have a talk session with her about the past and the future of Swiss films during the festival time.

Lastly, I would like to express my warm appreciation to Swiss Films, Pro Helvetia, and the Embassy of Switzerland in Japan, whose efforts have made this programme possible.

HAYASHI Kanako  
Director  
TOKYO FILMeX

The programme "Swiss Treasures"

- «Visages d'enfants» by Jacques Feyder
- «Rapt» by Dimitri Kirsanoff
- «Die letzte Chance» by Leopold Lindtberg
- «Frauennot-Frauenglück» by S. Eisenstein and E. Tisse
- «Accord Final» by Douglas Sirk
- «Die ewige Maske» by Werner Hochbaum

TOKYO FILMeX 2005  
Dates: November 19 – 27, 2005

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