

# THE OLDEST PROFESSION

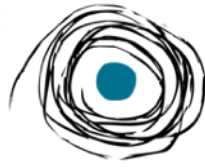
A FILM BY  
NOBORU TANAKA

秘  
色情めす市場

A NOBORU TANAKA FILM "THE OLDEST PROFESSION" STARRING MEIKA SERI, JUNKO MIYASHITA, GENSHU HANAYAGI, SHIRO YUMEMURA, MOEKO EZAWA. EDITED BY JUN NABESHIMA.  
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY SHOHEI ANDO. LIGHTING BY MAKOTO SHINKAWA. ART DIRECTION BY GUNJI KAWASAKI. SOUND BY ELJI KIMURA. MUSIC BY YASUO HIGUCHI. WRITTEN BY AKIO ITO. DIRECTED BY NOBORU TANAKA.

FILM MOVEMENT CLASSICS © 1974 NIKKATSU CORPORATION NIKKATSU





FILM MOVEMENT<sup>®</sup>  
CLASSICS

*presents*

# THE OLDEST PROFESSION

a film by NOBORU TANAKA

**RESTORED IN 4K FROM THE 35MM MASTER NEGATIVE**

**“An intriguing mix of social critique and carnal gratification.”**

*–Japanoscope*

Japan | 1974 | Japanese with English subtitles  
Drama | 83 minutes | 2.39:1 | Mono

Press Contact

Michael Krause | Foundry Communications | (212) 586-7967 | [mkrause@foundrycomm.com](mailto:mkrause@foundrycomm.com)

Film Movement Booking Contact

Erin Farrell | Theatrical & Festival | (212) 941-7744 x213 | [erin@filmmovement.com](mailto:erin@filmmovement.com)

## SYNOPSIS

Following in the footsteps of her mother, 19-year-old Tome (Meika Seri) has become a sex worker to support herself and her disabled brother in the red-light district of Osaka. Challenged by grisly clients, an environment of ceaseless criminality and an irreducible ennui, Tome finds brief respite in a charged flirtation with a mysterious man whose face she suspects to have seen on a “Wanted” poster around town.

A standout by Roman Porno master director Noboru Tanaka, *THE OLDEST PROFESSION* distinguishes itself within the genre with its bold use of form, gut-wrenching performances and uncompromising depiction of the realities of sex work in 1970s Japan, creating one of “the most distinctive titles of the category” (*Asian Movie Pulse*).



## ABOUT NOBORU TANAKA

Noboru Tanaka was a Japanese film director known for his Roman Porno films, including three critically respected films known as the Showa trilogy: *A Woman Called Sada Abe* (1975), *Watcher in the Attic* (1976), and *Beauty's Exotic Dance: Torture!* (1977), all three starring Nikkatsu Roman porno queen Junko Miyashita. Though at the time his career was overshadowed by directors such as Kumashiro Tatsumi and Sone Chusei, many critics today consider Tanaka the best of Nikkatsu's Roman Porno directors.

Tanaka was born in Hakuba in Nagano prefecture on August 15, 1937. He majored in French literature at Meiji University in Tokyo. While working on his thesis, Tanaka took a part-time job at a movie studio to gain first-hand knowledge of film production. He served as a production assistant on Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* (1961), an experience that created Tanaka's enthusiasm for the film industry. After graduation, he applied to Nikkatsu studios for a job as an assistant director and passed their entrance exam.

Tanaka was given his first chance to direct in 1972 with the early Roman porno, *Beads from a Petal*. The same year, Tanaka directed *Night of the Felines*, an unusually realistic look at the lives of a group of prostitutes, and received critical recognition for *Woman on the Night Train*.

As his career progressed, Tanaka's films became known for their imaginative, sometimes surreal, use of color and poetic imagery within harsh, brutal world settings. In 1973, Tanaka directed the second entry in the Secret Chronicle trilogy, *Secret Chronicle: Torture Hell*. A thematic departure from the series' first entry, Tanaka's film was a serious look at religious-sexual ceremonies at a temple and won the Directors Guild of Japan New Directors award.

*Rape and Death of a Housewife* (1978), despite its sensationalistic title, is considered one of Tanaka's masterpieces and was his major mainstream critical break-through. Kinema Jumbo gave the film their Best Film award.

After making nearly 25 films for Nikkatsu, Tanaka left the studio to try his hand at directing mainstream films for other studios. He directed several hits including the 1983 Shochiku film, *Village of Doom*. He returned to Nikkatsu to direct *Monster Woman '88* (1988) and then retired from the film industry. Just as international recognition was beginning to come to Tanaka, he died of a brain aneurysm on October 4, 2006.

## CAST

Tome Marunishi  
Fumie Hirabayashi  
Yone Marunishi  
Jitsuo Marunishi  
Yuri

**Meika Seri**  
**Junko Miyashita**  
**Genshu Hanayagi**  
**Shiro Yumemura**  
**Moeko Ezawa**

## CREW

Director  
Screenplay  
Cinematography  
Lighting  
Editor  
Art Direction  
Music  
Sound

**Noboru Tanaka**  
**Akio Ido**  
**Shohei Ando**  
**Makoto Shinkawa**  
**Jun Nabeshima**  
**Gunji Kawasaki**  
**Yasuo Higuchi**  
**Eiji Kimura**



## ABOUT FILM MOVEMENT

Founded in 2002, Film Movement is a North American distributor of award-winning independent and foreign films based in New York City. It has released more than 300 feature films culled from prestigious film festivals worldwide including the Oscar-nominated films *Theeb* (2016) and *Corpus Christi* (2020). Film Movement's theatrical releases include American independent films, documentaries, and foreign-language arthouse titles. Its catalog includes works by directors such as Ryusuke Hamaguchi, Lee Isaac Chung, Hirokazu Kore-eda, Maren Ade, Jessica Hausner, Ciro Guerra, Bertrand Bonello and Mélanie Laurent.

In 2015, Film Movement launched its reissue label Film Movement Classics, featuring new restorations released theatrically as well as on digital platforms, Blu-ray and DVD, including films by such noted directors as Ang Lee, Chen Kaige, Luchino Visconti, Stanley Kwan, Peter Greenaway, Bille August, Marleen Gorris, Takeshi Kitano, Arturo Ripstein, King Hu, Lee Chang Dong, Hideo Gosha and Sergio Corbucci.

For more information, please visit [www.filmmovement.com](http://www.filmmovement.com).

