

Dossier de presse trigon-film

THE TWILIGHT SAMURAI

(TASOGARE SEIBEI)

Yoji Yamada, Japon 2002

DISTRIBUTION

trigon-film
Klosterstrasse 42
Postfach
5430 Wettingen 1
Tel: 056 430 12 30
Fax: 056 430 12 31
info@trigon-film.org
www.trigon-film.org

SUISSE ROMANDE

Irène Fall-Lichtenstein
Tél: 022 329 31 66
lichtenstein@trigon-film.org

MATERIEL PHOTOGRAPHIQUE

www.trigon-film.org

FICHE TECHNIQUE

Réalisation:	Yoji Yamada
Scénario:	Yoji Yamada, Yoshitaki Asama, d'après le roman de Shuhei Fujisawa
Image:	Mutsuo Naganuma
Montage:	Iwao Ishii
Son:	Kazumi Kishida
Musique:	Isao Tomita
Chorégraphie:	Hiroshi Kuze
Costumes:	Kazuko Kurosawa
Producteurs:	Shigehiro Nakagawa, Hiroshi Fukazawa, Ichiro Yamamoto
Production:	Shochiku Co. Ltd., Japon
Coproduction:	Nippon Television Network / Sumitomo / Hakuhodo / Nippon Shuppan Hanbai / Eisei Gekijo
Langue:	Japonais/f/a
Format:	35mm, 1:1.85, couleur, Dolby Digital
Durée:	129 minutes

FICHE ARTISTIQUE

Hiroyuki Sanada	Seibei Iguchi
Rie Miyazawa	Tomoe Iinuma
Min Tanaka	Zenemon Yogo
Nenji Kobayashi	Chobei Kusaka
Ren Osugi	Toyotaro Koda
Mitsuru Fukikoshi	Tomonojo Iinuma
Kanako Fukaura	Yae Iinuma
Hiroshi Kanbe	Naota
Miki Ito	Kayano Iguchi (la fille aînée de Seibei)
Erina Hashiguchi	Ito Iguchi (la fille cadette de Seibei)
Keiko Kishi	Ito Iguchi (vieille dame)

FESTIVALS ET PRIX

12 Japan Academy Awards 2003 pour: le film, la réalisation, le scénario, le rôle principal masculin, le rôle principal féminin, le rôle secondaire, la caméra, la lumière, le son, le montage, la musique

Nomination par le Japon pour les Oscars 2004

Hawaii 2003: meilleur film

Berlinale 2003

Hong Kong 2003

Cambridge 2003

Jérusalem 2003

Montréal 2003

Chicago 2003

SYNOPSIS

L'action se déroule à l'époque du déclin des samouraïs. Seibei Iguchi est un samouraï de classe inférieure. Veuf, après ses heures de travail comme gestionnaire d'entrepôt, il doit s'occuper seul de ses deux filles, de sa mère malade et de la maison dans laquelle ils vivent. Comme il rentre toujours chez lui dès le crépuscule, les autres samouraïs l'appellent «Crépuscule Seibei» (Tasogare Seibei). Faute d'aide, il devient sale et débraillé: On lui conseille vivement de se remarier, mais comme il est très pauvre, il est censé accepter n'importe quelle femme, pourvu qu'elle s'occupe des tâches ménagères et lui donne des enfants. Il refuse. D'ailleurs, il ne s'estime pas plus à plaindre que d'autres puisque voir grandir ses filles et les inciter à développer leur intelligence autant que leurs aptitudes de femmes d'intérieur, est pour lui un grand bonheur. C'est alors que resurgit la belle Tomoe, son amour d'enfance, qui a divorcé d'un homme brutal. A l'évidence, ils s'aiment mais déjà l'ex-mari revient à la charge, un soir qu'il est saoul, et Seibei se voit contraint de s'interposer et d'accepter le duel que l'éconduit exige. Il le gagne haut la main avec un simple bâton et des techniques qu'il a apprises d'un vieux maître. La nouvelle se répand et lorsqu'il s'agit pour son clan de tuer un très dangereux samouraï en rébellion contre le nouveau maître, c'est Seibei qui est désigné. Or il a complètement perdu le désir de manier le sabre. Pour lui, le meurtre requiert une violence animale et il en est exempt. Mais s'il ne veut pas devenir un exclu, il est contraint d'obéir. Le dialogue qu'il a avant le combat avec le samouraï tombé en disgrâce lui révèle qu'ils ont bien des choses en commun, comme leur condition, leur asservissement. Comme le prouvera la courte durée de la vie heureuse avec Tomoe et ses filles.

LE REALISATEUR

Yoji Yamada est né à Osaka en 1931. Entre 1949 et 1954, il étudie le droit à l'université de Tokyo. Puis il est engagé comme assistant réalisateur par la maison de production renommée Shochiku. En 1969, il tourne la première partie de la série la plus longue et la plus populaire jamais réalisée au Japon, qui en comprendra quarante-huit: *Tora-san*. Grâce à elle - qui ne prit fin en 1996 que grâce à la mort de l'acteur principal, Atsumi Kiyoshi -, il tourne de nombreux films de fiction qui tous rencontrent un énorme succès auprès du public japonais. *The Twilight Samurai* est le 77^{ème} et le premier en costumes.

Filmographie (partielle)

- 1969 – 1996 Série *Tora-San* (1-48) (Otoko wa tsurai yo)
- 1970 *Where Spring Comes Late* (Kazoku)
- 1972 *Home From the Sea* (Kokyo)
- 1975 *The Village* (Harakara)
- 1977 *The Yellow Handkerchief* (Shiawase no kiroi hankachi)
- 1980 *A Distant Cry From Spring* (Harukanaru yama no yobigoe)
- 1986 *Final Take* (Kinema no tenchi)
- 1988 *Hope and Pain* (Downtown Heroes)
- 1991 *My Sons* (Musuko)
- 1993 *A Class To Remember* (Gakko)
- 1996 *The Learning Circle* (Gakko 2)
- 1996 *The Rainbow Seeker* (Niji wo tsukamu otoko)
- 1998 *The New Voyage* (Gakko 3)
- 2000 *Fifteen* (Ju go sai)
- 2002 *The Twilight Samurai* (Tasogare Seibei)

L'AUTEUR DU ROMAN

Shuhei Fujisawa est né en 1927 dans la région de Yamagata. Il a travaillé comme enseignant et rédacteur et a obtenu ses premières distinctions littéraires avec la nouvelle *The Vast Sea* (*Kurai umi*). Après avoir obtenu un prix important, le Naoki, pour sa nouvelle *History of Assassination* (*Ansatsu no nenrin*), il cesse son travail de rédacteur pour se consacrer principalement à sa tâche d'écrivain. Fujisawa compte parmi les auteurs préférés de romans historiques du genre samouraï et ses livres restent en tête des listes de best-sellers. *The Twilight Samurai* est la première adaptation de l'une de ses oeuvres au cinéma. Le film se base sur trois nouvelles: *Twilight Seibei* (Tasogare Seibei), *Sukehachi, the Beggar* (Hoito Sukehachi) et *Record of a Bamboo Sword* (Takemitsu shimatsu).

LES ACTEURS

Hiroyuki Sanada, né en 1960, jouait déjà dans des films à cinq ans. A treize ans, il commence sa formation théâtrale, en karaté, en équitation et en danse traditionnelle japonaise. Après la fin de ses études à la Nihon University College of Art, il joue dans divers films d'action et se fait remarquer par son agilité et son talent. Il devient internationalement célèbre en incarnant le rôle principal de la trilogie à succès *The Ring* (1998, 1999, 2001), de Hideo Nakata. Sanada a aussi joué dans de nombreuses pièces de théâtre et a été le premier acteur japonais à se produire en Angleterre avec la Royal Shakespeare Company. Il a reçu plusieurs Japan Academy Awards du meilleur acteur, ce qui a aussi été le cas, en 2003, pour le rôle de Seibei Iguchi dans *The Twilight Samurai*. Dans *Le dernier samouraï* (2003), de Edward Zwick, il joue pour la première fois dans une production hollywoodienne, aux côtés de Tom Cruise.

Rie Miyazawa est née en 1973, fille d'une Japonaise et d'un Néerlandais. Déjà à l'âge de onze ans, elle apparaît dans des films publicitaires puis devient l'un des modèles les plus demandés dans le domaine de la publicité. En 1988, elle reçoit le prix de la meilleure jeune actrice d'une comédie populaire japonaise et reçoit, au Festival de Moscou, en 2001, celui de la meilleure actrice pour son rôle de chanteuse lyrique traditionnelle dans *Peony Pavilion*, du réalisateur hongkongais Yonfan. Pour son interprétation de Tomoe dans *The Twilight Samurai*, lui est décerné, en 2003, le Japan Academy Award de la meilleure actrice.

Min Tanaka est un grand maître de l'avant-garde du Butoh. Né en 1945, il a grandi à Tokyo, où il a étudié la danse moderne. Dans les années 70, il a commencé à créer ses propres chorégraphies, dans lesquelles il explorait de nouvelles formes du mouvement en improvisant. Au milieu des années 80, il fonda la *Body Weather Farm*, où danseurs et artistes pouvaient remonter aux origines de la danse à travers le travail dans une exploitation agricole. Entre 1982 et 1985, il a étroitement travaillé avec Tatsumi Hijikata, qui est considéré comme le fondateur du Butoh. Min Tanaka collabore avec des plasticiens, des musiciens, des danseurs, des troupes de théâtre ou lyriques de la scène japonaise ou internationale. Dans *The Twilight Samurai*, il incarne le samouraï rebelle Zenemon Yogo, son premier rôle au cinéma, qui lui a valu le Japan Academy Award du meilleur acteur secondaire.

INTERVIEW DE YOJI YAMADA («Japan Times» 16 mars 2003)

«Yoji Yamada – Showing samurai as they were»

By Mark Schilling, Japan Times film writer

Why did you decide to do a samurai drama, after more than 40 years of making contemporary dramas and comedies?

First of all, I liked the work of Shuhei Fujisawa – he wrote period fiction about the samurai and the common people. I thought I would make a film based on three of his novellas. This was about four or five years ago. Secondly, I had seen many period dramas over the years, but I wasn't satisfied with them. They were full of lies and said nothing about how the samurai really lived. Akira Kurosawa told me that also bothered him [about the genre]. He wanted to make a realistic film about the lives of the samurai. He had a lot of trouble getting the information he needed – the materials just weren't there – so in 1954 he ended up making *Shichinin no Samurai* (The Seven Samurai) – a totally different kind of film. (laughs) Anyway, I wanted to try to make a film that would show how the samurai lived, ate, talked and felt. I thought I could understand that sort of thing – after all, these people were my ancestors.

The climactic fight scene between Hiroyuki Sanada and Min Tanaka is especially impressive. It gives a sense of the way it really might have been.

I wanted to shoot more realistic fight scenes than you see in [samurai movies], even Kurosawa's. I mean, when the bad guys have the hero surrounded, why do they always

attack him one at a time, so he can pick them off? Why don't they all go for him at once? (laughs) Also, when the bad guys are cut, they die right away. In reality, it's a lot harder to kill someone in a sword fight, unless you get in a good cut. According to period accounts, samurai sword fights could go for two or three hours. They'd cut each other again and

again, until they turned white – and the weaker one finally fell. That's how it was – they would slowly die of blood loss. Also, back then women didn't usually wear the sorts of flashy clothes that you see in samurai films. They dressed more plainly. They didn't do their makeup as nicely or wear their hair as elaborately. I wanted to show that. There have been good period dramas – Sadao Yamanaka's *Ninjo Kamifusen* (Humanity and Paper Balloons (1937)) and of course Kurosawa's *Shichinin no Samurai*. When I saw those films, I was surprised. I realized that there were period dramas that you could watch just as you would contemporary dramas. Those films were my touchstones.

Even though *Tasogare Seibei* is a period film, it has a lot to say about contemporary Japan – the hero deals with the same sort of social and economic turmoil that you find today.

I tried to include plot elements that present-day Japanese could relate to. When you're ordered to do something by the boss, you have to do it – or it might be the end of your job. That's something everyone can understand – and that's the kind of situation the hero faces. Some people buckle under the pressure and commit suicide. In Japan, nearly 30,000 people kill themselves every year – a lot of them men in their 40s and 50s. Some of them have been fired, some have been told to fire others. The hero deals with his situation differently, of course – but the pressure is similar.

The heroine, played by Rie Miyazawa, is also a contemporary type – when her husband beats her, she leaves him. That's not the sort of thing you see in traditional period dramas, where the woman is supposed to stick it out, no matter what.

She has a modern way of thinking, that's true. In a way, her story is a critique of the feudal system, though the film doesn't spell it out as such. In the Edo Period (1603-1867) women weren't allowed to have their say. In the Middle Ages, Japanese women were fairly strong and made important contributions to culture, but in the Edo Period and the Meiji Era (1868-1912) women more or less disappeared from public view. Particularly in the Meiji Era, women were discriminated against. They were supposed to be impure. That way of thinking still exists – women aren't allowed to step into the sumo ring, for example. But while injecting modern elements into the film, I tried to make it exciting. When a company employee is restructured he can't reach for a sword. (*laughs*) But a sword fight makes the film easier for the audience to understand. It also has more impact.

Min Tanaka, the *butoh* dancer who plays the hero's opponent in the climactic fight, is particularly impressive, even though it was his first film role. Did you have to give him any special training or instruction?

He had never used a sword before, so he had to practice that. He really worked hard. (*laughs*) Also, in *butoh*, the dancers hardly say anything, so he had to study how to deliver his lines as well. Fortunately, he had a good voice. He had a great death scene – only Tanaka could have done it that way. It took him two minutes to die on camera. I just told him, "Do it your way." (*laughs*) He had a scary face – that helped. You need a long face to be scary, like Seiji Miyaguchi in *Shichinin no Samurai*. Tanaka has that kind of face.

The film was also something of a departure for Hiroyuki Sanada. Before this film, he had usually played comic roles – not many serious ones.

He had been in a lot of period dramas, but he told me he was also dissatisfied with them. He wanted to know why everything had to be so beautiful, when it wasn't like that in reality. He told me it was his dream to make this kind of film. That was encouraging. His training in the martial arts helped a lot – I felt confident that he knew what he was doing. Real samurai stand differently, somewhat like *noh* actors. Not straight up, but with their hips forward a bit. They take small steps, without lifting their feet from the ground – they do that to keep the sword steady.

There's something of a period drama boom now, but unlike *Tasogare Seibei*, many of the new period dramas use computer graphics to create fantasy elements. They aren't about realism at all.

Yes, that kind of fantastic film is popular. Also, there are a lot of horror films now. In troubled times like these, more films like that tend to get made – fantasy and horror. People want to escape, and that's what they go for.

But *Tasogare Seibei* has done well at the box office, even though it's taken quite a different approach.

That's true, but it's drawing a different kind of audience. First of all, older people came to see it. Then they told their sons about it – men in their 30s and 40s. Then their sons saw it and told their sons about it – junior and senior high school students. (*laughs*) So there are three generations seeing it. That's helped it have a long run – the audience keeps changing.

It has a universality – you don't need to be a period drama fan to enjoy it. The message – that you can find happiness even without a lot of material possessions – appeals to people.

Japanese are wondering what is going to happen to the country. They feel anxious – and so do I. What's going to happen to the banks? Is my money going to be there tomorrow? But at the end of *Tasogare Seibei*, Seibei is with his children – and as long as he has his family and they all love each other, he can go on. The audience leaves with the feeling that everything will somehow turn out all right. They're thinking, if I have something like that in my life, I can make it, even if the company goes under. That thought gives them comfort and courage.

The film is in tune with the mood in Japan now, but do you think the same will be true abroad?

That worries me – how will people from other countries react? But we're living in anxious times, when people everywhere don't know what is going to happen next. What is the Bush administration going to do? Will they start a war? That is certainly worrying. Why have things come to this pass? Why can't this be settled by the United Nations? Why do we have to have this sort of international conflict? What is going to happen if a war starts? People from Iran and other Islamic countries who took part in February's Berlin Film Festival certainly felt this sort of anxiety. The world has come to a strange and unpleasant pass. So in that sense, I think people abroad will be able to relate to the film, even though Americans and Europeans don't feel the same economic anxiety as Japanese.