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RE-ELECT KEN BYLUND



KEN BYLUND has refused to give special treatment to developers, speculators and rich investors.

- Ken ended assessment discounts of 40-60% for owners of large subdivisions.
- Ken put commercial and industrial property on the same yearly adjustment program that homeowners have faced for years.
- Ken has fought to maintain fair values against the appeals of rich and powerful property owners.

KEN BYLUND has championed human rights.

- Ken has refused to discriminate in hiring and promotion on any basis whatsoever. His department has the best affirmative action results in county government.
- Ken has appointed women to posts as appraisers and tax collectors. There were no women in these traditionally male jobs when he took office.
- Ken ended invasions of privacy by appraisers who formerly were instructed to search homes for marijuana and report back to the District Attorney.

When you vote on May 23, please remember...

**KEN BYLUND
FOR COUNTY ASSESSOR**

Paid for by Re-elect Ken Bylund Committee, Dorothy Leeper, treasurer.

Obligation, oppression lines drawn clearly for women

Japanese master director Kenji Mizoguchi's *A Geisha*, which he made in 1953, between *Ugetsu* and *Sansho Dayu*, will have its Oregon premiere at Cinema 7 next Monday through Thursday. It is the finest film to open in Eugene so far this year.

Mizoguchi's world is rich, complex, and, for his characters — trapped among conflicting needs and goals — often confusing.

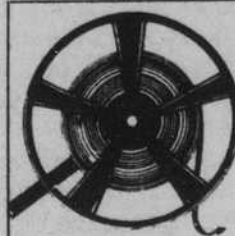
After early training as a painter, Mizoguchi, still in his mid-twenties, got a chance to direct his first film in 1922 when most of the staff at Nikkatsu Studio walked out to protest the hiring of women to play female roles. These biographical details are interesting, since Mizoguchi's beautiful, precisely composed images provide a setting for some of the most fully developed female characters ever to emerge from the world's (male-dominated) film industry.

Most of Mizoguchi's films either have historical settings (often adapted from Japanese folk tales) or deal with contemporary women forced by social constraints into various forms of prostitution. *A Geisha* is a masterly summation of the contemporary strain in the director's work. It examines two women, Miyoharu, a veteran geisha, and Miyoe, orphaned at 16 and anxious to become a geisha to escape the sexual demands of a gentleman "protector." The profession of geisha — or hostess — is early described as part of Japan's cultural heritage, a "national treasure." One lengthy sequence recreates some of the training a woman must go through before she has mastered a profession that is also an art.

Against the elaborate formality of the geisha's rituals, costumes and behavior is the sordid reality that her foremost obligation is to satisfy her customers. In several early scenes, the conflicting obligations of the job are implied in the contrast between the professional dignity of the experienced geishas and the drunken crudity (stylized almost to the point of caricature) of the men they must serve. There is a peculiarly joyless quality to the revelry, no matter how skilled the hostess.

gles with a customer as he tries to rape her. But the violence in this scene — she is battered and bloodied, he knocked unconscious and sent to a hospital — is only a metaphor for the infinitely more decorous and ritualized, but equally brutal assault on the selfhood of Miyoharu taking place simultaneously as she refuses to accept a well-mannered but unappealing customer as her "patron."

The real force of these parallel sequences comes in the oddity of



By **DAVID COURSEN**

A Geisha

From the film's beginning, Miyoharu's actions are constrained by personal obligations, of loyalty, friendship, and favors owed, as much as by professional obligations. In one strikingly evocative sequence, she is definitively caught in a vast network of formal obligations, going through a religious ritual at a shrine as her boss asks her to repay a favor and orders her to do her duty.

The early part of the film focuses on Miyoe's apprenticeship and on the difficulty of reconciling her personal feelings with her obligations to others. With the uncompromising idealism of youth, she refuses to be reconciled to her pathetic father after his early refusal to help her.

Later, in the film's most powerful sequence, she violently strug-

their aftermath. Fighting off a customer-rapist is treated as a novice's professional indiscretion. Rejecting a patron, particularly one who might provide the wherewithal to repay old debts, is cause for ostracism and professional ruin. (The rapist, still a valued customer, actually jokes about the incident, drunkenly reenacting it to the obligatory delight of the geishas attending him.)

Eventually, a series of maneuvers induces Miyoharu to accept the spurned patron, to do her duty and resume her subservience. Ironically, it is her very human feelings that make her susceptible to manipulation, by forcing her to respond to the needs of others as well as her own. It is Miyoharu's tragedy that the very qualities that make her admirable also make her vulnerable.

The conflict between obligations is timeless and irreconcilable. It is in the nature of social institutions that they distort and ultimately defeat spontaneous human feelings. The things that make people most human are precisely the things that doom them to be victims. Suggesting that oppression is all-encompassing, that a society offers its members — particularly its women — only the alternatives of being dehumanized or victimized, is the truest form of social protest.

Mizoguchi draws the lines of the conflict with clear and relentless logic, even as he sketches Miyoharu with warmth and compassion. He invests his film with the cruel complexity of life and the transcendent simplicity of art.

Juggler

(Continued from Page 3B)

sions of having, but really don't.

"My juggling is a constant organic process in real time and real space. It's not a frozen illusion as so much abstract art is. And when my juggling is combined with music, a synaesthetic experience is created for both artist and viewer that is unequalled in any film or light show."

As part of his act, Feder juggles three or four fluorescent balls under a black light, constantly

creating changing patterns — bold and jagged, smooth and flowing, blunt and subtle.

Feder is making the appearance in hopes it will interest deaf (and hearing) people in juggling "as a form of music — visual music."

Friday's show is \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for students. Tickets can be purchased by calling 688-0105 or 485-6642, or at the door.

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Thursday, May 18, 1978