



Gohatto

Taboo

Nagisa Oshima

JAPAN/FRANCE/UNITED KINGDOM,
2000

100 minutes ■ Colour/35mm
Production Company: **Shochiku Co. Ltd.,
Bac films/Le Studio Canal +/
Recorded Picture Company Ltd.**
Executive Producer: **Oshima
Productions Ltd., Eiho Oshima,
Shigehiro Nakagawa, Kazuo Shimizu**
Producer: **Eiko Oshima, Shigehiro
Nakagawa, Kazuo Shimizu**
Screenplay: **Nagisa Oshima, based on
the novellas "Maegani no Sozaburo"
and "Sanjogawara Ranjin" by
Ryotaro Shiba**

Cinematographer: **Toyomichi Kurita**
Editor: **Tomoyo Oshima**
Production Designer: **Yoshinobu
Nishioka**

Music: **Ryuichi Sakamoto**
Principal Cast: **Takeshi "Beat" Kitano,
Ryuhei Matsuda, Shinji Takeda,
Tadanobu Asano, Yoichi Sai**

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In a thrilling comeback, Nagisa Oshima has returned to the world's stage with a powerful and confrontational work that tweaks the nose of Japanese machismo while delivering a smoldering exploration of gay desire. Blunt, often hilariously direct intertitles introduce luminescent scenes filled with Sirkian samurai melodrama bordering on satire, rough sex and awesome sword fighting. Oshima constantly seeks ways to knock us off balance and has no fear of bending and twisting the language of film.

The film is set in Kyoto in the spring of 1865. In the venerable Nishi-Honganji temple, the militia of Shinsengumi is selecting new recruits for training, men of outstanding fighting ability. Those in the running must square off against the best man in the militia, Soji Okita. When the dust settles, only two men are left standing: Hyozo Tashiro, a swaggering lower-ranked samurai, and Sozaburo Kano, a vain young man whose bewitching beauty attracts the attentions of every man he meets, even those not prone to "such feelings."

The two men who most desire the young samurai are Tashiro and Toshizo Hijikata, the militia captain. In typical Oshima style, these roles are played, respectively, by the hyper-masculine Tadanobu Asano (*Away With Words, Sharkskin Man And Peach Hip Girl*) and the toughest tough guy

of them all, Takeshi "Beat" Kitano. The result is wonderfully subversive and convincingly sexy.

■ Noah Cowan



Nagisa Oshima was born in 1932 in Kyoto, Japan. He graduated from Kyoto University in 1954 with a degree in Law, and soon after joined the Shochiku Film Company as an assistant director. His films such as *The Sun's Burial* (60) and *Night and Fog in Japan* (60) introduced the world to the Japanese New Wave. Films include: *Town of Love and Hope* (59), *The Pleasures of the Flesh* (65), *Death by Hanging* (68), *Boy* (70), *The Ceremony* (71), *In the Realm of the Senses* (76), *Empire of Passion* (78), *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence* (83), *Max, mon amour* (86) and *Gohatto* (00).

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