



# Wizard of Darkness

**Shimako Sato**

JAPAN, 1995

81 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **Gaga Communications/Tsuburaya Eizo Co.**

Executive Producer: **Hiroshi Yamaji,**

**Akira Tsuburaya**

Producer: **Yoshi Chiba, Shun**

**Kobayashi, Tomoyuki Imai**

Screenplay: **Junki Takegami,**

**Shimako Sato**

Cinematographer: **Shoei Sudo**

Music: **Ali Project**

Principal Cast: **Kimika Yoshino, Miho**

**Kanno, June Takagi, Kanori**

**Kanomatsu**

Print Source/Foreign Sales Agent:

**Gaga Communications Inc., East**

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Heralding an important new talent in the horror world, Shimako Sato's *Wizard of Darkness* is simply one of the best Satanic possession films ever made.

Seika High School in downtown Tokyo has been the site of countless mysterious phenomena. Mizuno, magic freak and resident nerd, announces to his class that there is nothing at all mysterious going on; these outlandish happenings are part of a concerted effort by someone in the school to conjure up Lucifer himself. He is ignored by his classmates, who are more interested in the hot lesbian affair between classmate Wami Tanaka and homeroom teacher Kyoko Shirai. Only one student, recent transfer Misa Kuroi, takes Mizuno very seriously. Practised in black magic, she casually demonstrates her power with a voodoo doll that causes a lecherous teacher to have a minor accident. But the teacher subsequently dies and the suspicious Mizuno discovers that death and destruction follow Misa from school to school. When Kyoko calls for a special after-school exam for 13 students, the kids hurtle towards a hell beyond redemption, and Misa is blamed for it all.

*Wizard of Darkness* is based on one of Japan's most popular comic books, "Eko Eko Azaraku," a fifties horror series recently revived to huge popular acclaim; the character of Misa Kuroi has especially become a cult heroine among the young. Sato and collaborator Junki Takegami's screenplay reflects this reclaimed heritage, with hip

modern dialogue and kinky sex meshing happily with traditional horror elements.

Strikingly filmed in rich browns and deep shadows, the film is never less than stunning to look at. But Sato's deep understanding of what makes this genre work – creepy death rites, bizarre twists and the psychology of religious fervour – makes *Wizard* a satisfying and thoroughly demented experience.

– *Noah Cowan*

**Shimako Sato** was born in 1964 in Tokyo, Japan. After graduating from Asagaya Art Special School in 1985, she worked as an animator. She moved to London in 1987 to study film production at the London International Film School. She began working with Trifield Productions in 1989 and, in 1992, wrote and directed her feature debut, *Tale of a Vampire*. *Wizard of Darkness* (95) is her second feature film.

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