



Center for Japanese Studies 50th Anniversary *Hybrid Japan*

Kazuo Hara: Documentary Film Making May 2 - 3, 2009

[Kazuo Hara and Japanese Film Studies \(Video Archive\)](#)

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On Saturday, May 2nd, 2010, the Center for Japanese Studies presented a film screening of two of Hara Kazuo's best known films, *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On* and *Extreme Private Eros: Love Song 1974*. Post-screening comments by director, Hara Kazuo, were hosted by Miryam Sas (Professor, UC Berkeley), followed by a book-signing to launch the release of Hara's new memoir/documentary handbook: *Camera Obtrusa: Hara Kazuo's Action Documentaries*.

On Sunday, May 3rd, the Center for Japanese Studies presented a panel discussion that explored Kazuo Hara's body of work and the future of Japanese film studies at universities worldwide. The symposium, moderated by Miryam Sas, featured three of the country's top Japanese film scholars: Abe Markus Nornes (Professor, University of Michigan), Aaron Gerow (Professor, Yale University), and Akira Mizuta Lippit (Professor, University of Southern California). Nornes discussed the documentary and historical context from which Kazuo Hara emerged as a post-war documentary filmmaker. Gerow spoke on Hara's most recent film, *The Many Faces of Chika* (2004), an intentionally orthodox fiction film, as a way of talking about Hara's career and the present state of cinema in Japan. Lippit reflects on the subject and the subjection of the subject in Hara's films, particularly in *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*. These presentations were followed by discussion between the panelists and Kazuo Hara himself, who shared at length about his experience filming *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*.

Hara Kazuo: Born in 1945, Hara Kazuo was influenced as a young man by the protest movements that took place throughout Japan and the world in the late 1960s and 70s. He founded Shisso Productions in 1971 with his wife, producer, and primary collaborator, Sachiko Kobayashi. He has published five documentary films thus far, including the award-winning *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*, widely recognized as most important and influential documentary ever made in Japan, *Goodbye CP*, *A Dedicated Life*, *Extreme Private Eros: Love Song 1974*, and *Watashi no Mishima*.

Few filmmakers have found themselves in quite such a quandary as Hara Kazuo during the filming of the award-winning *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*. But it was not by chance that this seminal documentarian stumbled into an extreme example of the journalist's dilemma. Throughout the four decades of his career, Hara Kazuo has pursued the bizarre and disturbing margins of Japanese society, certain that central truths are to be found in fringe phenomena. His method of documentation, which he calls "action documentary," pursues the shocking effect of the action film, following the gesture and staying in the moment — not commenting in voiceover from a safe distance. Hara's innovations have transformed documentary filmmaking, and contributed directly to the current ascendance of the documentary, both within the industry and among audiences, on a global scale. His best-known admirer is Michael Moore, who lists Hara as one of his favorite directors.

Event Program: May 2, 2009

Film Screening and Comments from the Director

KAZUO HARA'S DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Location: Pacific Film Archive Theater, UC Berkeley

Time: 12:00pm-6:00pm

FILM SCREENING

Extreme Private Eros: Love Song 1974 (Japan, 1974)

FILM SCREENING

The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On (Japan, 1987)

POST-SCREENING COMMENTS

Hara Kazuo, director

Hosted by **Miryam Sas** (Comparative Literature, UC Berkeley)

BOOK SIGNING AND LAUNCH PARTY

Hara Kazuo's first English language book, *Camera Obtrusa: Hara Kazuo's Action Documentaries*

Co-sponsored by: Pacific Film Archive



Event Program: May 3, 2009

Symposium

KAZUO HARA AND JAPANESE FILM STUDIES

Location: Toll Room, Alumni House, UC Berkeley

Time: 10:00am-1:00pm

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION

Miryam Sas (Comparative Literature, UC Berkeley)

COMMENTS

Hara Kazuo - *in Japanese with translation*

PANEL PRESENTATION



"Documentary and Historical Context"

Abe Markus Nornes (Screen Arts and Cultures/Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan)

"On *Chika*"

Aaron Gerow (Film Studies/East Asian Languages and Literature, Yale University)

"Subjects and Subjection in Hara's Films"

Akira Mizuta Lippit (Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California)

QUESTION & ANSWER

Moderated by **Miryam Sas**

Co-sponsored by: Pacific Film Archive