KINONIK

SCANDAL (1950)

Directed by Akira Kurosawa

WEDNESDAY July 2nd 7PM



Director Akira Kurosawa was born the year following the Press Law went into effect in Japan, a law that further restricted newspaper reporting. One among many that curtailed individual and journalistic expression in the country, Kurosawa grew up in a censored environment. In 1945, as WWII ended, freedom of speech was established (though it would take until 1952 to fully go into effect, with the end of the American occupation). The press and publishing industries exploded. Suddenly, for the first time in Japanese history, there were tabloids.

And Akira Kurosawa was furious. While he supported freedom of speech, and benefitted from no longer having to rewrite his scripts after review by censors, he felt that many news outlets were taking freedom too far. As he always did when angry, Kurosawa made a film about it: 1950's ***Scandal.*** Declaring it a protest film, he decried, "the rise of the press in Japan and its habitual confusion of freedom with license. Personal privacy is never respected and the [tabloids] are the worst offenders."

Scandal is a fascinating stab at the question, can free speech be too free? What does it mean to report ethically, what do journalists owe to their subjects and audiences? Kurosawa's opinion is clear–but will you agree? Join us Wednesday to watch powerhouses Toshiro Mifune, Takashi Shimura and Yoshiko Yamaguchi navigate muckraking and its aftermath. ***Scandal*** is a beautiful, tight drama featuring the only courtroom scene of Kurosawa's directing career–a must-see as we grapple with our own contemporary questions about misinformation, reportage, and freedom of the press.