



THE FIRST ZEN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

113 East 30th Street New York, NY 10016 212-686-2520 www.firstzen.org

會協禪一第國美

Film Series

Ghost Dog

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Starring Forest Whitaker, a Film by Jim Jarmusch

Friday, February 10, 2012 7:30 – 9:30 PM

113 East 30th Street New York, NY 10016

Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai is an unusual modern urban film with frequent references to Yamamoto Tsunetomo's *Hagakure*, "In the Shadow of Leaves," a Japanese text on the Samurai code of honor published in 1716. The *Hagakure* expounds the code of Bushido – the "Way of the Warrior" in a series of short anecdotes and reflections. The ancient text is loosely a "Zen" piece of writing complete with occasional references to the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*. However it definitely comes from the martial arts side of the Zen world. Forest Whitaker plays the role of a professional hit man living by the Samurai code of honor. The hit man, "Ghost Dog," apparently of Haitian extraction, appears to be living in Newark, New Jersey in an unusual rooftop space where he keeps carrier pigeons – his main form of communication with the gangland boss who he serves. In the end, he squares off against an entire Mafia family, which has its own code of honor. This is an interesting film with unusual cross-cultural references. Forest Whitaker's performance as a modern urban Samurai is fully convincing. Running time: 116 minutes

Admission is free.

