



THE FIRST ZEN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

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會協禪一第國美

Film Series

Onibaba

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Friday, October 2, 2015 7:30 – 9:30 PM

113 East 30th Street New York, NY 10016

Deep within the wind-swept marshes of war-torn medieval Japan, an impoverished mother and her daughter-in-law eke out a lonely, desperate existence. They murder lost samurai and sell their belongings for grain. They dump the corpses down a deep, dark hole and live off of their meager spoils. When a bedraggled neighbor returns from the war, lust, jealousy, and rage threaten to destroy the trio's tenuous existence, before an ominous, ill-gotten demon mask seals their horrifying fate. Driven by primal emotions, dark eroticism, a frenzied score by Hikaru Hayashi, and stunning images both lyrical and macabre, Kaneto Shindo's chilling folktale, *Onibaba*, is a singular cinematic experience.

Onibaba derives its demon-mask sequence from an old Buddhist folk tale involving a mother and her daughter-in-law. The daughter-in-law is very pious and frequently goes to temple to pray to the Buddha. Her mother-in-law despises this and waits for her on a path at night. She jumps out in front of her daughter-in-law while wearing a Noh demon mask and frightens her to death. Then, the mother-in-law finds it impossible to remove the demon mask, which is now stuck to her face. She prays to the Buddha to allow her to remove the mask, and eventually, she is able to pull the mask off of her face, but it takes the skin of her face along with it. *Onibaba* means "female demon." *Onibaba* is our Halloween offering this year. 103 minutes.

Admission is free.

