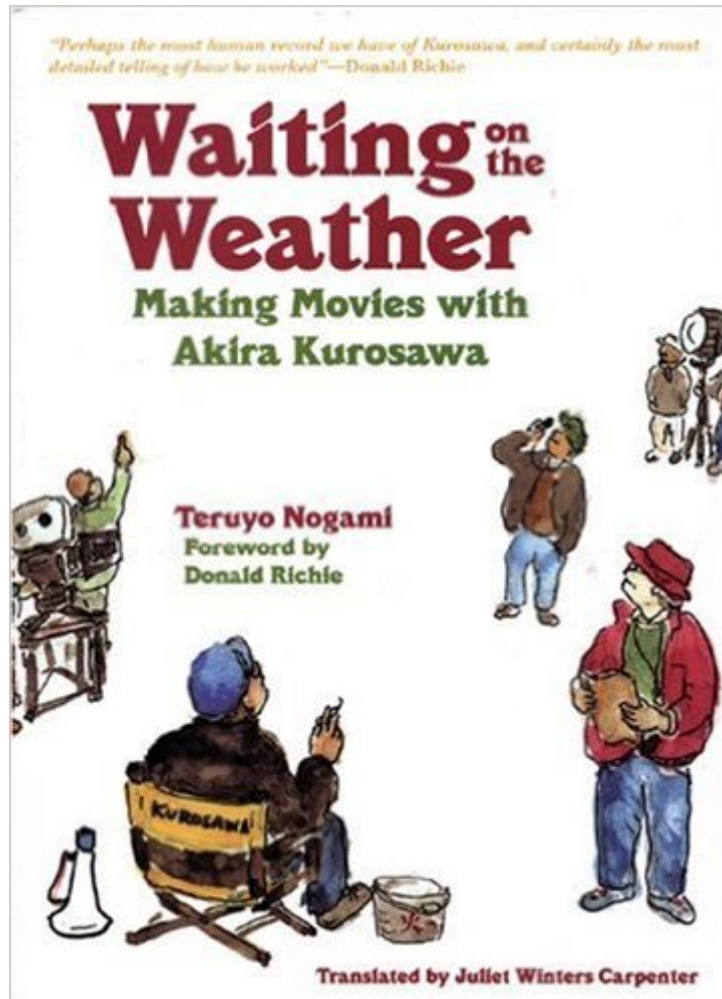


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Waiting On The Weather: Making Movies With Akira Kurosawa



Synopsis

Teruyo Nogami was a relative newcomer to film production when hired as a continuity/script assistant on Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*. A witness to its filming and its near destruction in a fire over the next fifty years she worked on all the master's films: *Ikiru*, *Seven Samurai*, *Kagemusha*, and *Dreams*. No one was more closely involved in Kurosawa's productions, and in this memoir, charmingly illustrated with her own sketches, Nogami writes candidly about the director's energy, creativity, and his famous rages, telling the inside story on how so many classics of world cinema were made. "Teruyo Nogami was Akira Kurosawa's script supervisor throughout his career, more importantly she was his loyal assistant and supporter during both the good and bad moments of his life. She is an extraordinary woman and these memories are a path to understanding the temperament and genius of one of the few...geniuses of cinematic history. It's not uncommon for a film director to have made one or two great films, but Kurosawa was able to create many masterpieces in many styles, set in both modern and classic times. So the opportunity to know this artist through the lucid eyes of a long-time collaborator is a privilege and an opportunity. Nogami-san's salty personality is perfect to show his many sides, not always flattering, which is essential in grasping him. This book is a treasury of stories and a key to the great body of cinematic work of Akira Kurosawa." -- Francis Ford Coppola "If you're interested in movies, then you're interested in the work of Akira Kurosawa. Teruyo Nogami was by Kurosawa's side for almost 50 years, as he quietly (and sometimes, not so quietly) revolutionized the very grammar of cinema. This is a wonderfully intimate and beautifully written portrait of one of the greatest filmmakers who ever lived, which makes it essential reading." -- Martin Scorsese "Sure to become a classic memoir, essential for our understanding of one of the greatest filmmakers of the 20th century." -- The Japan Times

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Customer Reviews

My Kurosawa library is pretty full. Heavy, academic tomes like Stephen Prince's "The Warrior's Camera" and informative and personal showcases like Donald Richie's "The Films of Akira Kurosawa" can do a lot to deepen one's appreciation for the master filmmaker. Only "Waiting for the Weather" can make you smile, make you feel like you are sitting right there, caught up in the whirlwind of genius holding on for dear life and enjoying every minute of the ride. Teruyo Nogami is a familiar face to most Kurosawa fans, having appeared in the 2001 documentary "Kurosawa" as well as lending her insights to the various Criterion Collection releases of Kurosawa's films. I can't picture her as anything else than a pleasantly smiling elderly woman, little realizing the will-power and strength that must have been necessary to serve as an assistant for the fierce personality of Kurosawa for so many years. Nor did I realize that she helped raise Juzo Itami, one of the greatest of Japan's modern filmmakers, best known for his comedy "Tampopo". In "Waiting for the Weather", Nogami, or Non-chan, as Kurosawa called her, waxes nostalgic about all the trials, tribulations, exaltations and boring down-times that went into creating some of the greatest moments ever caught on film. Her entry into the film world came through correspondence with Mansaku Itami, a famous director in his time although now somewhat forgotten, and then continued organically until her being hired on for an experimental new film called "Rashomon", which would change her life forever. From then on, she was a constant presence on Kurosawa's set, staying with him even during the dark times of "Dersu Uzala" and all the way until his final film "Madadayo" and his death.

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