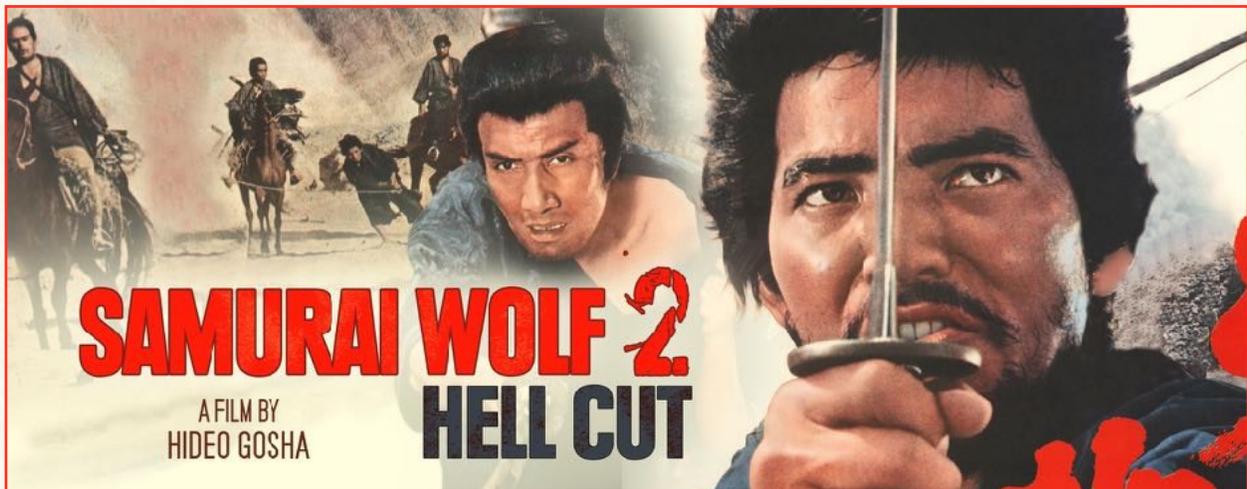




FILM MOVEMENT[®]
CLASSICS



2K RESTORATIONS



“To call it action-packed would be an understatement. At the same time, it is also one of the most imaginatively photographed and edited films of the sixties.”

–Films from the Far Reaches

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SAMURAI WOLF SYNOPSIS

Isao Natsuyagi stars as Kiba, a charismatic ronin who wanders into a small town and ends up ensnared in a local conflict that's more than meets the eye. After dispatching a pair of highway criminals seen robbing a courier wagon, Kiba agrees to assist a beautiful blind woman who runs the local shipping company. Double- and triple-crosses ensue, illustrated with savage but economical violence courtesy of famed director Hideo Gosha's (THREE OUTLAW SAMURAI, VIOLENT STREETS) striking black and white filmmaking. The result is a lean and mean triumph of samurai cinema, cementing Gosha's status as a master of the genre.

SAMURAI WOLF 2: HELLCUT SYNOPSIS

Charismatic ronin Kiba (Isao Natsuyagi) returns, once again entangled in a complex web of intrigue, involving a crooked goldmine owner, a cynical swordsman, and an arrogant dojo master. Master filmmaker Hideo Gosha brings his trademark tight pacing and stylish action to this brisk morality play, inevitably punctuated by the explosions of violent swordplay beloved by fans of the genre.

HIDEO GOSHA BIOGRAPHY

While lesser known in the west, Hideo Gosha was arguably one of Japan's greatest filmmakers. He first made his mark in the samurai and yakuza film genres, and left behind a diverse oeuvre of groundbreaking films.

Gosha was born in Tokyo in 1929. After serving in the navy during WWII he earned a business degree from the prestigious Meiji University. He began his career as a reporter at Nippon television in 1953. In 1957 he was hired by then newly established Fuji Television where he worked his way up to producer and director.

A lifelong fan of jidaigeki (samurai period pieces) and chambara (samurai sword fighting action), Gosha made his breakthrough as a director with the hit television show, Three Outlaw Samurai. He was then hired to adapt it into a theatrical feature by the famed Shochiku film studio in 1964.



He followed his debut with many more successful samurai films including the dynamic spaghetti western informed *Samurai Wolf*; *Goyokin*, a gritty, now-classic opus about stolen gold starring Tatsuya Nakadai; the historical masterpiece *Hitokiri*, starring Shintaro Katsu (titular lead of the popular *Zatoichi* film series) as a ruffian pawn of feudal corruption. Gosha streamlined the action in his films with innovative sound design and spellbinding choreography, both of his actors and the camera, for which he was dubbed "The Chambara Revolutionary."

In the 70's, Gosha started to work more and more in the crime genre. He masterfully essayed themes of corruption and avarice with visceral depictions of unbridled violence and overt sexuality. After all, the main subjects of these films were often contemporary yakuza, prostitutes and other denizens of the underworld. *Violent Streets* (1974) is a prime example of the then new *jitsuroku* (true document) subgenre of yakuza films. Unlike the previous decade's very popular *ninkyō eiga* (films of chivalrous yakuza) the *jitsuroku* films exposed gangsters as the cold blooded killers and thieves that they were known to be in real life.

In contrast with his earlier work, Gosha started to employ more saturated colors to capture the flashy and lurid lifestyles of downtown Tokyo, where he himself grew up. His distinctive style and sense of realism are thus exemplified in later films including *Onimasa* (1982), starring Tatsuya Nakadai as a megalomaniacal self-made gangster boss. In this period he also focussed on the perils of women in a man's world with films such as *The Geisha* (1983), the box office smash *Yakuza Ladies* (1986) about gangster's wives who proved tougher than their male counterparts, and *Tokyo Bordello* (1987).

Gosha worked up until his death in 1992. The following year he was posthumously honored with a lifetime achievement award from the Japanese Academy Film Prize Association (the Japanese Academy Awards). His legacy lives on as his films are finally starting to reach wider and wider audiences.

ISAO NATSUYAGI BIOGRAPHY

While attending the prestigious Keio University, Isao Natsuyagi started attending the Bungakusha actors school to pursue his passion for drama. After some supporting film roles he made his breakthrough starring as the titular antihero of Hideo Gosha's *Samurai Wolf* in 1966. His dynamically eccentric performance proved him a great talent and he went on to have a long and storied filmography, including his part as a ruthless yakuza thug in Gosha's *Violent Streets*.

CAST

Kiba

Isao Natsuyagi

CREW

Directed by

Hideo Gosha

ABOUT FILM MOVEMENT

Founded in 2002 as one of the first-ever subscription film services with its DVD-of-the-Month club, Film Movement is now a North American distributor of award-winning independent and foreign films based in New York City. It has released more than 300 feature films and shorts culled from prestigious film festivals worldwide. Film Movement's theatrical releases include American independent films, documentaries, and foreign art house titles. Its catalog includes titles by directors such as Hirokazu Kore-eda, Maren Ade, Jessica Hausner, Andrei Konchalovsky, Andrzej Wajda, Diane Kurys, Ciro Guerra and Mélanie Laurent.

In 2015, Film Movement launched its reissue label Film Movement Classics, featuring new restorations released theatrically as well as on Blu-ray and DVD, including films by such noted directors as Eric Rohmer, Peter Greenaway, Bille August, Marleen Gorris, Takeshi Kitano, Arturo Ripstein, Sergio Corbucci and Ettore Scola.

For more information, please visit www.filmmovement.com.

