

SILENT

ASIA ON SCREEN
presents



JIRŌKICHI THE RAT

STARRING

Ōkōchi Denjirō

DIRECTED BY

Itō Daisuke (1931)

[with \

SILENT FILM NARRATOR (BENSHI)

Kataoka Ichirō

PIANIST

Tom Roberts

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 26, 2019
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
125 FRICK FINE ARTS AUDITORIUM

KATAOKA ICHIRŌ, SILENT FILM NARRATOR (BENSHI)

Pitt welcomes Kataoka Ichirō from Japan, a practicing Benshi whose performances have delighted audiences in Japan and around the world. A graduate in Theater Arts from Nihon University in 2001, Kataoka discovered kami shibai and other traditional forms of verbal art. He has studied under legendary performer Sawato Midori since 2002. He has performed a range of film genres, including period and contemporary Japanese film, western films, anime, and news, and he has appeared to acclaim at the Bantsuma Film Festival and Train Film Festival, travelling abroad from the US to the UK, from Croatia to Germany. This is his first visit to Pittsburgh.

TOM ROBERTS, PIANIST

Tom Roberts is one of the leading exponents of early jazz piano in the world today (as stated by Ricardo Sciauales in *The Heart and Soul of Stride, Blues, and Swing Piano*). He has performed on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson *The Statler Brothers Show* on TNN, and *A Prairie Home Companion* with Garrison Keillor. Tom arranged and performed the music for the soundtrack of Martin Scorsese's film *The Aviator* as well as several titles for the film *DeLovely*. He has also arranged music for the syndicated PRI show Riverwalk Jazz, Live from the Landing with the Jim Cullum Jazz Band, and a number of pieces for Wynton Marsalis and The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra for a concert of the music of Louis Armstrong in October 2006.

" ... In our humble opinion Tom Roberts is without question one of the finest pianists today in the exciting Harlem stride piano style..."

— JazzBeat Magazine

PROGRAM

- Welcome CHARLES EXLEY
Associate Professor, University of Pittsburgh
- Introduction KATAOKA ICHIRŌ
Silent Film Narrator (Benshi)
- Screening *JIROKICHI THE RAT*
Directed by Itō Daisuke, 1931
- KATAOKA ICHIRŌ, benshi
 TOM ROBERTS, pianist
- Q&A KATAOKA ICHIRŌ
Silent Film Narrator (Benshi)

ABOUT BENSHI

Once called “poets of the dark” benshi (film narrators) brought silent films to life through commentary and vocal performance, giving voice to the characters on screen. Dressed often in a tuxedo and perched on a podium beside the screen, the Benshi was an integral and indispensable part of film entertainment in the silent era. As many as 8000 benshi were performing across the country and the Japanese empire by the 1930s, and their popularity—and power—slowed the introduction of sound film in Japan.

SPECIAL THANKS

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**ASIAN
STUDIES
CENTER**

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