

Professional Writing Skills
SS 2007

Midterm Exam
Campbell/Wurschitz

Midterm Exam

Write either a film review or a book review based on the attached short story: *A Family Supper* by Kazuo Ishiguro. Length: 300-325 words

Book Review

Write a review of *A Family Supper* by Kazuo Ishiguro. You should pretend that the plot of the attached short story is the basis for a novel. You can invent any background information you wish about the author, his previous work, etc.

Film Review

Write a review of a film adaptation of *A Family Supper*. You can adapt the plot of the story as you wish but make sure the basic elements of the plot remain. Remember to add information about the director and actors.

G3**Film Review – *A Family Supper***

After five years, David Lynch, director of widely lauded films such as *Mulholland Drive* and *Twin Peaks* has finally returned. With the adaptation of *A Family Supper*, a short story by Kazuo Ishiguro, Lynch has created another enigmatic and surreal, yet entirely compelling masterpiece. *A Family Supper* is the disturbing story of a Japanese family that is haunted by the ghosts of the past, problems of the present and the uncertainties of the future.

Two years after his mother's death, Jakeshi, a young Japanese man who has emigrated to California, returns to his mother country in order to visit his father and sister. It's late already when he arrives at his father's house. Suddenly Jakeshi believes he has seen a mysterious woman clad in a white kimono disappear behind the house. He follows her but she's gone. This is only the first instance of a bone-chilling evening full of despair, fear, pain and insanity that awaits Jakeshi.

As in most other movies by David Lynch the story-line is entirely impenetrable and impossible to interpret. However, *A Family Supper* is atmospheric and transmits the characters' emotions in an effective yet unconventional way. The film's atmosphere is generally supported by Howard Shore's brilliant score and the extra-ordinary sound effects.

Most of the film was shot on location in a small town on Hokkaido, Japan. And also the cast is mostly Japanese. *A Family Supper* stars Japan's most talented and renowned actor, Ken Watanabe, who gives an outstanding performance as the father. The main character Jakeshi is played by the up-and-coming Ishiguro Misaki, who depicts the character of Jakeshi in a most memorable way. 28-year-old Misaki gave his film debut in Kawasaki's epic drama *The Lore of the Dragon*. In *A Family Supper*, he proves that he doesn't need special effects in order to perform well. Misaki is a brilliant actor who is able to depict mental as well as physical agony.

Unfortunately, next to Watanabe's and Misaki's outstanding performances, Amy Kenobe's efforts to depict Kikuko remain largely unnoticed. Her acting qualities are pathetic and deserve no recognition. She is the only miscast in the movie.

Despite Kenobe's disappointing performance, David Lynch's *A Family Supper* will certainly please his fans and supporters of surreal cinema. *A Family Supper* proves once again that Lynch is a genius. Even if the products of this genius cannot be understood or interpreted.

Band 1**Justification**

All content points addressed, i.e. basic elements of the plot provided; directors & actors covered; implicit recommendation; length. Text type requirements met, i.e. paragraphing, register. Good balance between description (i.e. plot, director, adaptation) and evaluation (i.e. atmosphere, acting, score, directing). Elegant use of language, e.g. *haunted by the ghosts of the past, problems of the present and the uncertainties of the future*; final incomplete sentence is highly appropriate to the genre.