

# THE SUMMIT

## A Chronicle of Stones

(TSURUGIDAKE: TEN NO KI)

A Toei/Fuji TV Production

Director: Daisaku Kimura

Cast: Tadanobu Asano (“Mongol” “Invisible Waves” “Kabei - Our Mother”)  
Teruyuki Kagawa (“Tokyo Sonata” “Tokyo!”)  
Toru Nakamura (“2009 Lost Memories” “Purple Butterfly”)  
Ryuhei Matsuda (“Gohatto -Taboo-” “Nightmare Detective”)  
Aoi Miyazaki (“Atsuhime” (TV) “Nana” “Heavenly Forest”)  
Koji Yakusho (“Babel” “Silk” “Memoirs of a Geisha”)

*In 1907, a band of men challenged Japan's last unconquered mountain,  
in order to complete a map of their nation.*

**Mt. Tsurugidake** - Located in Tateyama mountain range in the Northern Alps in Toyama Prefecture, Mt. Tsurugidake stands 2999m above sea level. Tsurugidake is renowned as a difficult mountain and since the beginning of historical records, it has been designated as the “god” for those engaged in mountain asceticism-shamanism and sometimes referred as “needle mountain” or “mountain of death” for its inaccessibility.

Neither for fame, nor for profit, the men staked their lives on an impossible mission, for nothing more than a map. This true story gives us a frank view of the noble spirit of devotion and royal spirit, gradually becoming lost to the society of today.

*“This work is certainly not a film about the mountains: rather, it is a tale of human emotions and feelings and a film about life, set against the background of the mountains.”*

—Dir. Daisaku Kimura

To realistically depict the noble existence of the climbers, Daisaku Kimura, a veteran cinematographer who filmed *“Mount Hakkoda”* (1977) *“Virus: Day of Resurrection (Fukkatsu no Hi)”* (1980) and *“Poppoya-Railroad Man”* (1999) challenged the shooting together with the hand-picked staff and cast set off like a group of mountaineers to challenge the beautiful yet cruel Mt. Tsurugidake.

The central character, Shibasaki, a surveyor, is played by Tadanobu Asano, with the supporting role by internationally acclaimed actors including Teruyuki Kagawa, Ryuhei Matsuda, Toru Nakamura, Aoi Miyazaki and Koji Yakusho.

**Budget:** 10 mil.USD  
**Status:** Completed  
**Release:** June 2009

## STORY

*“If no one tries, there will never be a path.”*

The year is 1907. Shibasaki, renowned for his skills as a surveyor, is suddenly called to General Staff Headquarters, where he receives orders to conquer Mt. Tsurugidake, the last uncharted region of Japan. At the time, the survey unit attached to General Staff Headquarters was in the process of charting Japan and had already created maps after triangulation of numerous mountain peaks. Aside from mountains climbing of which was prohibited for religious reasons, the survey group has climbed almost all the mountains in the country with the exception of Tsurugidake. Moreover, shortly after its inauguration, the Japan Alpine Club was already planning the tackle Tsurugidake and the army survey unit could not be seen to lose out to a civilian organization.

After receiving his orders, Shibasaki tackled the challenge of reaching the peak of Tsurugidake together with Chojiro, a local guide of good character familiar with the Tsurugidake area. Can they achieve the daunting task of crossing the precipitous mountain range and planting the survey records?

(140 min.)



### <<Survey Record>>

The survey record is a record of the triangulation stones and is divided into three types: Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 triangulation stones. The record includes the date of planting of the triangulation marker and the person who planted the marker, the date of construction of the survey tower and the persons responsible for the construction as well as a record of necessary items such as the course by which the triangulation stone was reached, laborers employed, accommodation facilities and drinking water and such documents dating from 1888 and thereafter are kept at the Geographical Survey Institute as permanent records.

### Director DAISAKU KIMURA

Kimura has been a legendary Japanese cinematographer for decades. He began his career at Toho in 1958 and worked as a camera assistant on five films by Akira Kurosawa: *The Hidden Fortress*, *The Bad Sleep Well*, *Yojimbo*, *Sanjuro* and *Dodeskaden*. Kurosawa was especially fond of Kimura because of his genius touch following focus. Kimura debuted as a director of photography in 1973 with *Hunting Beasts*, followed by such blockbusters as *Japan Sinks*, *Mount Hakkoda* and Kinji Fukasaku's *Day of Resurrection*. Even after he left Toho to become an independent cinematographer, he often teamed with superstar Ken Takakura, filming *Poppoya-Railroad Man* (99), *The Firefly* (01) and working with director Zhang Yimou on *Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles* (05). In 2003, he received the *Shijuhosho* (Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon), an award for scholarly and artistic achievements, and set a record of twenty-times nominations for Best Cinematographer for the Japan Academy Prize.

*The Summit: A Chronicle of Stones* marks his debut as a director. It is a film he has been preparing to make all his life. The film was in production for 2 years, requiring over 200 days of filming. Never resorting to a single frame of computer graphics, Kimura chose to film it in sequence on the actual mountain ranges depicted in the film in order to dramatize their austere beauty in each season.

