Written by David McKendry
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It was reported that director Kôji Wakamatsu has passed away this morning in Tokyo. The 76-year-old director was injured when he was struck by a taxi while crossing a busy Tokyo intersection. He never recovered from the injuries.

Koji, who directed GO, GO SECOND TIME VIRGIN, was one of the most important directors of the Pinky film (pink eiga), a genre known for its copious amounts of horror, sex and violence often folding in elements of rape and bondage.

Heavily influenced by the films of Jean-Luc Godard, Wakamatsu brought the French New Wave art movement to Japan. His film ECSTASY OF ANGELS, the aforementioned GO, GO SECOND TIME VIRGIN and VIOLATED ANGELS are the best examples of his bold style and ability to pull beauty from darkness. Though a political awareness and motive is present in all of Wakamatsu's work, SEX JACK (1970) is best known for his use of sex and rape as metaphor. He also produced the controversial and provocative sex/art film IN THE REALM OF THE SENSES, directed by Nagisa Oshima.

Without question, Koji Wakamatsu's works will be studied for generations to come in the same vein as Godard and fellow countryman Kurosawa. Koji Wakamatsu was an influential talent who'll be missed by the entire film community. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.

For superb examples of Wakamatu's work please see ECSTACY OF THE ANGEL and IN THE REALM OF THE SENSES, both available through The Criterion Collection, as well as GO, GO SECOND TIME VIRGIN on DVD from Image Entertainment.