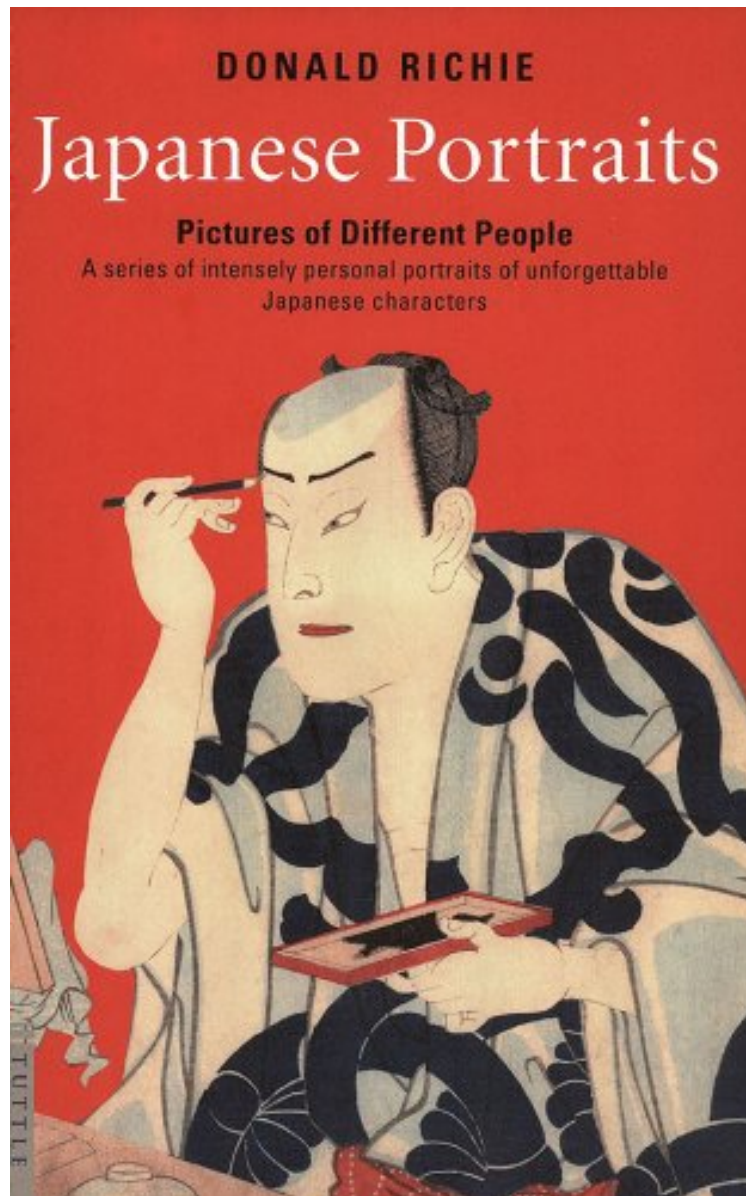


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## Japanese Portraits: Pictures of Different People (Tuttle Classics)

*Donald Richie*

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**Donald Richie : Japanese Portraits: Pictures of Different People (Tuttle Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Japanese Portraits: Pictures of Different People (Tuttle Classics):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The elusive brilliance of Donald Richie By Davalon As I have complained to , and will continue to until they change their policy, three stars does not equal "okay." Neither does it

mean "average," or any other words associated with it. It means it is not great and it is not bad. It means it has flashes of brilliance and other times doesn't quite get there. So, I start my review off with this caveat. I wanted to give it 3 stars, but I would never insult the memory of Donald Richie by choosing such a pedestrian rating. But 4 stars is pushing it. This little book of "portraits" of people Donald Richie met while he spent his life in Japan is mostly fascinating, sometimes highly erotic, and other times (not often) the writer is a bit too full of himself. Some of the portraits feel like he had a word count he had to reach for an article in a newspaper, and, by God, he reached it. Some of the people he "portrayed" were not worth the time. But others, mainly the troubled son of a woman that asked Donald Richie to be his father, were erotically charged and almost poetically written. Then there is story of the twin sisters, the neighbor and the geisha, all of them expertly portrayed. Richie has this unique style where you are right there with him... when he's willing to let his guard down and stop being so clever. Other times you do marvel at the way he has with a word, but some of the subjects just weren't worth covering. I would say that if you have an interest or knowledge about the Japan that once was (oh, how beautiful, harsh, strange and fantastic it must have been), specifically the people, this will be an interesting read. I was sorry when it was over, because, by the time Richie had interacted with the Empress of Japan, I felt he was finally getting his footing... but then the book ended soon after. So, there are hidden gems here and you will quickly determine what they are. That said, please give me the respect I deserve by not telling me that 3 stars is "okay" -- why do you have to qualify what the stars "mean"? Aren't people intelligent enough to figure out that 1 star doesn't have the power of 5? 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. and paint a beautiful picture of the country as many of us will ...By Masya S. Richie got below the surface of Japan, and writes with compassion about the various people he met, from the ordinary to the imperial. They all came alive to me, and paint a beautiful picture of the country as many of us will never get to see it. I first borrowed this book from the library, but then decided this had to be on my (virtual) shelf, so bought it and re-read it with joy. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Pretty nice collection of insights into various Japanese personalities By Mr Axolotl Pretty nice collection of insights into various Japanese personalities, some famous, most are not. I plan to read more of Richie.

The private collections of longtime Japan resident and expert on modern Japanese culture Donald Richie capture the personalities of certain Japanese people--some famous, some unknown--with insight and humor. This extraordinary collection of individual portraits is perhaps the first book about the Japanese to view them entirely unhindered by the various theories about them--people as complicated, as simple, as inscrutable, and as understandable as anyone else. In these fifty-four pieces there are both the famous--Mishima, Kawabata, Mifune, Kurosawa--and the unknown: the would-be geisha, the boxer turned gangster, the scheming bar madame and the old man dying alone. Here is the notorious Sada Abe, who mutilated her dead lover and whose story was filmed in Oshima's *The Realm of the Senses* And here is Oshima himself, dead drunk and making perfect sense; here is the actress who played Abe, exiled in Rome. Here too is the delivery boy who kills himself for love, the girl who loved a Korean, and the actress, a public idol, who suddenly and permanently disappeared from view. And there are dozens of others, individuals who have in common, besides their Japanese nationality, the fact that they knew the author, and that--fortunately for us--he knew them. This highly personal reminiscences form one of the most original and deeply felt books on Japan ever to appear.