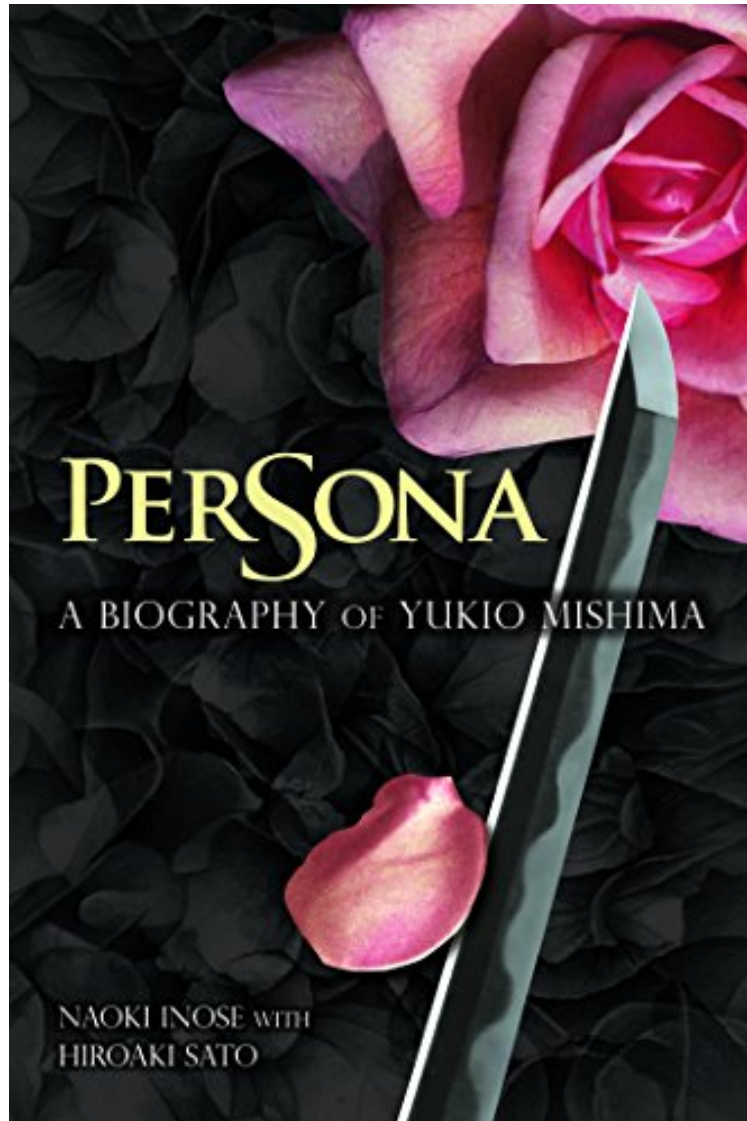


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## Persona: A Biography of Yukio Mishima (NONE)

*Naoki Inose*

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**Naoki Inose : Persona: A Biography of Yukio Mishima (NONE)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Persona: A Biography of Yukio Mishima (NONE):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a GREAT work of scholarship and makes me aware of how ...By Joeseph M. Lin This is a GREAT work of scholarship and makes me aware of how much of Yukio Mishima's work is still yet to be translated. If you like Yukio Mishima's work this is a must read. High marks all round! 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Eric Cooper Magnificent biography. 1 of 2 people found the

following review helpful. Good read! By Adam Donaldson Powell Well-written and well-researched. I disagree with those who maintain that one must know Japanese culture very well in order to benefit from the book. There is much to learn here.

Yukio Mishima (b. 1925) was a brilliant writer and intellectual whose relentless obsession with beauty, purity, and patriotism ended in his astonishing self-disembowelment and decapitation in downtown Tokyo in 1970. Nominated for the Nobel Prize, Mishima was the best-known novelist of his time (works like *Confessions of a Mask* and *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* are still in print in English), and his legacy his personais still honored and puzzled over. Who was Yukio Mishima really? This, the first full biography to appear in English in almost forty years, traces Mishima's trajectory from a sickly boy named Kimitake Hiraoka to a hard-bodied student of martial arts. In detail it examines his family life, the wartime years, and his emergence, then fame, as a writer and advocate for traditional values. Revealed here are all the personalities and conflicts and sometimes petty backbiting that shaped the culture of postwar literary Japan. Working entirely from primary sources and material unavailable to other biographers, author Naoki Inose and translator Hiroaki Sato together have produced a monumental work that covers much new ground in unprecedented depth. Using interviews, social and psychological analysis, and close reading of novels and essays, *Persona* removes the mask that Mishima so artfully created to disguise his true self. Naoki Inose, currently vice governor of Tokyo, has also written biographies of writers Kikuchi Kan and Osamu Dazai. New York-based Hiroaki Sato is an award-winning translator of classical and modern Japanese poetry, and also translated Mishima's novel *Silk and Insight*.

"Mr. Sato has performed something of a miracle in skillfully and patiently adding layer after layer of information, both about the writer and the social and political context in which he worked, in order to give us not only a comprehensible account of the novelists complex personal vicissitudes but what is in effect a trenchant commentary on the history of cultural and political life in postwar Japan. . . . *Persona* now joins a very small group of studies that succeed in portraying, rather than simply sketching, the life of an iconic figure in modern Japanese culture." J. Thomas Rimer, Professor Emeritus of Japanese Literature, Theatre, and Art at University of Pittsburgh "This is a whale of a book both unusually massive and extremely informative and stimulating. . . . Those who are interested in the brilliantly gifted writer of mid-20th century Japan who is its subject will learn much from this volume, and should be stimulated to go back and read, or re-read, what Yukio Mishima has left us." Paul McCarthy, *The Japan Times* "From this biography the reader gains a great sense of the milieu from which Mishima arose, the approaches he took in his cutting-edge writing, and his increased fascination with conservative, hypermasculine Japanese traditions... this is an essential addition to all collections with a strong emphasis on world literature and Japanese history, and for English-reading students of 20th-century Japanese literature." *Library Journal*, November 2012 "Naoki Inose's biography is immensely detailed and punctilious and not easy reading for a foreigner not versed in Japanese culture and history... but does show him to have been an extraordinary man, in many respects a sympathetic one, and a writer of extraordinary range... I hope that this biography revives interest in the best of his novels, especially in the tetralogy." *Wall Street Journal*, December 2012 "Personais a book about Japan itself, as filtered through the life of one of its perhaps most important creations.... If Japan truly represents the Occident and the Orient as so many would have us believe, its because of icons like the talented, tragic Mishima." Will Eells, *Three Percent* "Mishima's life and his many interests... make for fascinating reading, and *Persona* is a riveting account." M.A. Orthofer, *The Complete* "Persona deftly reveals to us the actual man and writer who willingly traded his life for a legend: Yukio Mishima. Lurching forward vivid drama by drama and then backtracking to provide us with context, the biography opens up a whole epoch of sexual, literary, and artistic creativity, guiding us through the fiction, the friendships, and the passions that ultimately made Mishima Mishima." poet Forrest Gander, 2012 Pulitzer Prize finalist