

2015

## Mako Iwamatsu

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### Recommended Citation

Buckner, Jocelyn. "Mako Iwamatsu." *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Stage Actors and Acting*. Ed. Simon Williams. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 359. Print.

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**Mako Iwamatsu** (b. Kobe, Japan, 10 December 1933; d. Somis, California, 21 July 2006). Asian-American actor. Known professionally as Mako, he was a Japanese actor who immigrated to the United States as a child after World War II. He studied architecture at the Pratt Institute in New York City and later acting at the Pasadena County Playhouse in California. He co-founded and served as the first artistic director (1965–89) of the East-West Players theatre company. The company's mission is to create opportunities for Asian-American performers and cultivate new plays by Asian-American playwrights. He maintained his dedication to increasing opportunities for Asian performers in the entertainment industry and to breaking down barriers to diverse casting, challenging racist stereotypes of Asians, and promoting civil rights for all. On stage, Mako earned a Tony nomination for Best Actor in a Musical for originating the role of the Reciter in *Pacific Overtures* (1976). He played in many popular movies such as *The Sand Pebbles* (1966), *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), *Conan the Destroyer* (1984), *Seven Years in Tibet* (1997), *Pearl Harbor* (2001), and *Memoirs of a Geisha* (2005). He was also a well-known television actor.

JOCELYN L. BUCKNER