

The Sound of Waves

The Sound of Waves by novelist Yukio Mishima (1925–1970) is a classic boy-meets-girl tale of forbidden love set on Utajima, a fictional island inspired by Kamishima. Mishima spent a great deal of time on the island writing the book, working out of a house he rented from the Terada family just above the village washing area. In his correspondence with the Nobel-prize winning writer Yasunari Kawabata, Mishima described island life, with its close-knit community and lack of big-city vices, as “the real human lifestyle.” In other writings, he described how local residents took care of him, understanding little of his work but worrying that his pale, thin appearance meant that he was undernourished. First published in 1953 as *Shiosai*, the novel won the prestigious Shincho Prize in 1954, and was released in English translation two years later as *The Sound of Waves*. Its enduring appeal continues to draw fans to the story’s locations, many of which feature prominently in theatrical and animated adaptations of the book.