

Press release March 10, 2008

**Pictures and info material:**

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**Nippon**

**Connection**

Japanese Film Festival

2. - 6. April 2008

Frankfurt am Main

[www.nipponconnection.de](http://www.nipponconnection.de)

## Little-Tokyo in Frankfurt Japanese Film Festival Nippon Connection

The program is ready: More than 150 films, 30 filmmakers  
and many extra events

The long wait is over: This April, Frankfurt will once again become the epicenter of Japanese film culture. From April 2 – 6, 2008 Nippon Connection, the worldwide biggest film festival for Japanese film, will present new and exciting cinema from Japan. For the 8th time the audience can experience a creative smorgasbord from one of the most fascinating film nations: Around 130 films, ranging from avant-garde to anime, from documentaries to spectacular blockbusters. More than 30 filmmakers will personally introduce their films to the audience. An extensive variety of accompanying events will complete the program. Nippon Connection is a festival to see, feel and taste - a festival for all senses!

An explosion of creativity awaits the audience regarding the film program. On April 2 the festival will open with the sensitive drama **Asyl - Park and Love Hotel** by Izuru KUMASAKA, previously celebrated at the Berlinale. Of course, animation films mustn't be missing at a Japanese film festival. This year Nippon Connection will show two anime premieres in Germany: The short film trilogy **5 CENTI-METRES PER SECOND** by the uncompromising master of anime Makoto SHINKAI and the breathtaking 3D-anime **APPLESEED: EX MACHINA** by Shinji ARAMAKI, the latter being produced by no less than John Woo. CG Director Yasushi KAWAMURA will personally present the film in Frankfurt. The rising star of Japanese directors, Nobuhiro YAMASHITA, will attend with as well, bringing along his new masterpiece **A GENTLE BREEZE IN THE VILLAGE**. Naomi KAWASE's **THE MOURNING FOR-EST**, awarded at Cannes, deals with the subject of mourning with deeply impressive imagery. One of the funniest films in film history is brought to you by Japan's megastar-comedian Hitoshi MATSUMOTO. His film **DAINIPPONJIN** uses the horror of the daily grind to give you a (truly) monstrously good time.

An important topic in Japanese cinema at the moment is the debate of how to deal with the political past. We present three outstanding films which openly discuss this topic: **UNITED RED ARMY** by eminent filmmaker Koji WAKAMATSU about the Japanese United Red Army of the '60s and '70s, the documentary **YASUKUNI** by Ying LI about the controversial Yasukuni shrine, where war-criminals are being honoured, and **WINGS OF DEFEAT** by Risa MORIMOTO, a documentary about kamikaze pilots from World War 2.

Two performances of traditional story tellers (Benshi) constitute a special highlight for the film program. The silent movie **A PAGE OF MADNESS** (1926) by Teinosuke KINUGASA will be accompanied by Ichirō KATAOKA (live music: herrjoergritter). Hirono YAMADA will make sparks fly with his own trash-shortfilms with his sounds and commentary.

For the fourth time, Nippon Connection Film Festival will award the **Nippon Cinema Award** to the best Japanese feature film. The award carries a cash prize of 2.000 Euro and is again sponsored by Bankhaus Metzler. For the first time reruns are shown at the Orfeos Erben movie theatre.

**Nippon Retro** "Wizards of Japanese Independent Animation" is dedicated to rare independent animation films of the '60s till today. After the festival in Frankfurt parts of the Nippon Digital program will journey around the world as **Nippon Connection Festival On Tour**.

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But Nippon Connection has a lot more to offer than just excellent films! **Nippon Culture** includes an extensive variety of additional events, ranging from traditional – a Japanese tea ceremony and Japanese court music (Gagaku) – to contemporary culture, including a karaoke bar, a manga-sketch seminar and a game center. We also investigate the art of Japanese tattoos and, as a special treat, Japanese shibari (bondage) with a live performance. A kamishibai (paper-theatre) - performance will shed light on the roots of modern manga and anime. Accompanying the movie screenings are filmmakers' talks, lectures and a podium discussion with well-known specialists on Japanese cinema. In collaboration with the Künstlerhaus Mousonturm an exhibition of young Japanese artists is made possible. The exhibition SONZAI-DASEIN is curated by the artist Zero Reiko ISHIHARA.

In between events you will also find places to recover: at a shiatsu-massage, for example, or enjoy some tea at our tea-lounge or a delicious noodle-soup at the karaoke bar. Not to forget the legendary Nippon Connection parties: At the opening-lounge on April 2, DJ Jan Hagenkötter (INFRACom!) will introduce Japanese Jazz, on April 4, DJ Scotch Egg will get the audience rocking with his absurd-hysterical Gameboy music, and on April 5, DJane Hito and her friend Kyoka will make sure the audience experiences a festival party they'll never forget.

Nippon Connection is now the largest festival of Japanese film worldwide. The 2007 festival alone featured more than 150 films and attracted more than 16.000 visitors. It provides a unique overview of the current Japanese film scene and enjoys great popularity among audience members and industry attendees alike. As in previous years, the Nippon Connection Japanese Film Festival is organised on a voluntary basis by the non-profit association Nippon Connection e.V.

**Festival venues:** Student Union building (Studierendenhaus) on Campus Bockenheim, Orfeos Erben cinema and cinema at the German Film Museum (Kino im Deutschen Filmmuseum), Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Landungsbrücken Frankfurt

#### **Excerpt of the film program:**

**5 Centimeters per Second** (Byôsoku 5 centimeter) by Makoto SHINKAI, J 2007, DP  
<http://5cm.yahoo.co.jp>

**A Bao A Qu** by Naoki KATO, J 2007

**A Gentle Breeze in the Village** (Tennen kokekko) by Nobuhiro YAMASHITA, J 2007, EP  
<http://tenkoke.com>

**A Permanent Part-Timer in Distress** (Sônan freetâ) by Hiroki IWABUCHI, J 2007, EP  
[http://www.geocities.jp/sounan\\_freeter/e\\_top.html](http://www.geocities.jp/sounan_freeter/e_top.html)

**After Ten Thousand Years** by Isao OKISHIMA, J 2007, IP

**Appleseed: EX MACHINA** by Shinji ARAMAKI, J 2007, DP  
<http://www.exmachina.jp/>

**Asyl - Park and Love Hotel** by Izuru KUMASAKA, J 2007  
<http://www.pia.co.jp/pff/park/>

**Beyond the Fence** (Sakugoe) by Ryuichi HONDA, J 2007, IP

**Dainipponjin** von Hitoshi MATSUMOTO, J 2007, DP  
<http://www.dainipponjin.com>

**Dog in a Sidecar** (Sidoka ni inu) by Kichitaro NEGISHI, J 2007, IP  
<http://sidecar-movie.jp/>

**Family Matters** (Kazoku no hiketsu) by Shôtârô KOBAYASHI, J 2007  
<http://kazokunohiketsu.com/>

**Fine, Totally Fine** (Zen zen daijobu) by Yosuke FUJITA, J 2007, EP  
<http://zenzenok.jp/indexp.html>

**Fragment** by Makoto SASAKI, J 2007, IP  
<http://www.fragment-movie.com>

**Funuke Show Some Love, You Losers!** (Funukedomo, kanashimi no ai wo misero) by Daihachi YOSHIDA, J 2006, DP  
<http://www.funuke.com>

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**Girl Sparks** by Yuya ISHII, J 2007, DP

<http://mukidashi.com/>

**Lazarus – The House of the Rising Sun** (Razaro – Asahi no ataru ie-hen) by Kishû IZUCHI, J 2007

<http://spiritualmovies.lomo.jp/lazarus.html>

**Linda Linda Linda** by Nobuhiro YAMASHITA, J 2005

<http://www.linda-movie.com/>

**Love my Life** by Koji KAWANO, J 2007

<http://www.lovemylife.jp>

**The Mourning Forest** (Mogari no mori) by Naomi KAWASE, J 2007

<http://www.mogarinomori.com>

**NEGADON: The Monster from Mars** by Jun AWAZU, J 2005

<http://www.h2.dion.ne.jp/~magara/project.html>

**Nada Sou Sou - Tears For You** by Nobuhiro DOI, J 2006, EP

<http://www.nada-so.jp/intro.html>

**The Night Time Picnic** (Yoru no pikunikku) by Masahiko NAGASAWA, J 2007, DP

<http://www.yorupic.com>

**Now, I... (Ima, boku ha....)** by Yasutomo CHIKUMA, J 2007, Video, WP

**Route 20** (Kokudô nijûgô-sen) von Katsuya TOMITA J 2007, IP

**Shadow of Sand** (Suna no kage) by Yusuke KAIDA, J 2008, DP

**Sisterhood** by Eiji UCHIDA, J 2007, IP

<http://www.elevenarts.net/Feature/Titles/Sisterhood/index.html>

**Tears of Kitty** (Koneko no namida) by Toshiyuki MORIOKA, J 2007, IP

<http://www.koneko-namida.com>

**Tamala's 'Wild Party'** by t.o.L, J 2007

<http://www.tamala2010.com/>

**Three for the Road** (Yajikita dôchû Teresuko) by Hideyuki HIRAYAMA, J 2007, EP

[http://www.telesco-movie.com/index\\_eng.html](http://www.telesco-movie.com/index_eng.html)

**The Tender Throbbing Twilight** (Ikutsu ni natte mo yaritai otoko to onna) by Shinji IMAOKA, J 2007, IP

**This World of Ours** (Oretachi no sekai) by Ryo NAKAJIMA, J 2006, DP

<http://peijafilm.nightfall.jp>

**Twilight Phantom** (Akôkurô) by Tsukasa KISHIMOTO, J 2007, IP

<http://www.aco-crow.com>

**United Red Army** (Jitsuroku: Rengo sekigun – Asama sanso e no michi) by Koji WAKAMATSU, J 2007

<http://www.wakamatsukoji.org>

**Virgin Wildsides** (Dotei. Wo purodyûsu II. Byûtifuru doriimâ) by Tetsuaki MATSUE, J 2007, IP

[http://www.spopro.net/virgin\\_wildsides](http://www.spopro.net/virgin_wildsides)

**Wings of Defeat** (Tokko) by Risa Morimoto, USA/J 2007, DP

<http://www.edgewoodpictures.com/wingsofdefeat/>

**Yasukuni** von Ying Li, J/China 2007

DP = German premiere, EP = European premiere, IP = International premiere, WP = World premier

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**Stills and press material:**

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