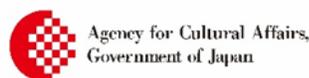


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**THE FEMALE GAZE:
WOMEN FILMMAKERS FROM JAPAN CUTS AND BEYOND**

Selected by
Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan and Japan Society



November 11-20, 2022

**In-theater focus, featuring new premieres
including visits from Akiko Ohku and Naoko Oigami
Spotlights on contemporary female directors, producers, cinematographers and
screenwriters from Japan along with a classics film selection**



Riverside Mukolitta © 2021 "Riverside Mukolitta" Film Partners

New York, NY (October 20, 2022) – A survey of the growing prominence and visibility of women in film, the latest ACA Cinema Project series ***The Female Gaze: Women Filmmakers from JAPAN CUTS and Beyond*** focuses on the essential roles that female artists play from behind the camera in Japanese cinema—ranging from directing and screenwriting to production and cinematography. Presenting an exciting array of screenings and premieres—that include

new mainstream and independent works from JAPAN CUTS alumni and rising talents alongside a classics selection—*The Female Gaze* offers a much-needed deep dive into the remarkable and overlooked contributions of women in contemporary Japanese cinema.

Kicking off on November 11 with the North American premiere of **JAPAN CUTS** favorite **Akiko Ohku's *Wedding High*** followed by a post-screening discussion and Q&A with the filmmaker and an opening night party, *The Female Gaze* continues with the latest works of JAPAN CUTS alumni **Riho Kudo** (*Orphan Blues*) and **Mayu Nakamura** (*Among Four of Us*). Series highlights include **Shuichi Okita's** charming ***One Summer Story***, shot by cinematographer **Akiko Ashizawa**; ***Nagi's Island***, a slice-of-life summer tale produced by industry veteran **Kumi Kobata** (***One Million Yen Girl, Rent-a-Cat***); and the U.S. premiere of **Naoko Oigami's *Riverside Mukolitta*** on November 18th, which will include a post-screening discussion and Q&A with director Oigami, followed by a reception.

In collaboration with the **National Film Archive of Japan**, *The Female Gaze* also includes a classics focus on celebrated screenwriters **Yoko Mizuki** and **Natto Wada**. Among Japan's most acclaimed and accomplished screenwriters of the Golden Age of Japanese cinema, the two were noted for their celebrated literary adaptations. Japan Society will present the international premieres of two new 4K restorations—***Conflagration*** and ***Her Brother***—written by the screenwriters and directed by **Kon Ichikawa**. As part of the ACA Cinema Project, a three-film **Filmmakers on the Rise** slate will be presented, screening the recent works of burgeoning talents **Naoya Fujita**, **Risa Negishi** and **Nanako Hirose**.

TICKETING

In-person screenings: Tickets on sale starting **Friday, October 21 at noon**; Most tickets are \$15/\$10 members. Tickets for *Wedding High* and *Riverside Mukolitta* with post-screening Q&A and party are \$21 general /\$18 seniors & students/ \$16 members. For *Filmmakers on the Rise* selection, tickets are \$5 general / free for members, seniors & students.

SCREENING SCHEDULE

Friday, 11/11

7:00PM *Wedding High*

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A with director Ohku, and an opening night party.

Saturday, 11/12

1:00PM *Dreaming of the Meridian Arc*

5:00PM *She is me, I am her*

7:00PM *One Summer Story*

Sunday, 11/13

1:00PM *Good Stripes*

4:00PM *The Nighthawk's First Love*

7:00PM *Her Brother*

Monday, 11/14

7:00PM *Conflagration*

Tuesday, 11/15

7:30PM *two of us / Long-Term Coffee Break*

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A.

Friday, 11/18

5:00PM *His Lost Name*

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A.

8:00PM *Riverside Mukolitta*

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A with director Oigami, and a reception.

Saturday, 11/19

1:00PM *No Longer Human*

7:00PM *Let Me Hear It Barefoot*

Sunday, 11/20

1:00PM *Nagi's Island*

4:00PM *a stitch of life*

Lineup and other details are subject to change.

For complete information visit <https://www.japansociety.org/films/female-gaze/>.

Screeners available for most titles. Please send all press inquiries to Sylvia Savadjian at sylvia.savadjian@gmail.com. For inquiries regarding Japan Society, please contact Allison Rodman at arodman@japansociety.org.

FILM DESCRIPTIONS

All films are in Japanese with English subtitles. Films are listed alphabetically.

FEATURE SLATE

***Dreaming of the Meridian Arc* (U.S. Premiere)**

『大河への道』

Saturday, November 12, 2022 at 1:00 PM

Dir. Kenji Nakanishi. 2022, 111 min., DCP, color. With Kiichi Nakai, Keiko Kitagawa, Kenichi Matsuyama.

A TV dramatization of Tadataka Ino, the first person to map Japan, runs into trouble when it's discovered mid-production that Ino died three years prior to the completion of his map. Adapted for the screen by Yoshiko Morishita from Shinosuke Tatekawa's *rakugo* story, *Dreaming of the Meridian Arc* weaves between modern day and Edo-era Japan to offer an entertaining account of the exploits that led to the completion of Ino's revolutionary map.

***Good Stripes* (North American Premiere)**

『グッド・ストライプス』

Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 1:00 PM

Dir. Yukiko Sode, 2015, 119 min., DCP, color. With Akiko Kikuchi, Ayumu Nakajima, Asami Usuda.

An ode to romantic rediscovery and second chances, the second feature of director Yukiko Sode (*Aristocrats*, JC 2021) follows a couple on the verge of breaking up. When a surprise pregnancy results in a shotgun wedding, the two decide to stick it out for the baby's sake.

Let Me Hear It Barefoot (East Coast Premiere)

『裸足で鳴らしてみせろ』

Saturday, November 19, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Dir. Riho Kudo, 2021, 128 min., DCP, color. With Shion Sasaki, Shuri Suwa, Kaho Ito, Jun Fubuki, Masahiro Komoto.

Riho Kudo's second feature (*Orphan Blues*, JC 2019) focuses on college dropout Naomi who encounters local pool staff Maki and his blind adoptive mother Midori. To fulfill Midori's wishes of seeing the world, Naomi and Maki began to record traveling tapes of a fictional world-trip. As their "footprints" cover the Sahara Desert, Iguazu Falls and more, the hard-to-stop recording becomes the bond of a secretive and delicate romantic affair.

Nagi's Island (North American Premiere)

『凧の島』

Sunday, November 20, 2022 at 1:00 PM

Dir. Masahiko Nagasawa, 2022, 107 min., DCP, color. With Chise Niitsu, Rosa Kato, Hana Kino.

Produced by Kumi Kobata (*One Million Yen Girl*, JC 2010; *Rent-a-Cat*, JC 2012), *Nagi's Island* follows young Nagi who lives a peaceful island life with her mother and grandmother. Nagi begins a particularly eventful summer vacation on the island during which she learns to reconcile her own traumas and estrangements while growing and helping others.

The Nighthawk's First Love (International Premiere)

『よだかの片想い』

Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Dir. Yuka Yasukawa, 2021, 98 min., DCP, color. With Ayumu Nakajima, Rena Matsui, Mina Fujii.

An adaptation of Naoki Prize-winning author Rio Shimamoto's romantic novel, Yuka Yasukawa's second feature follows the life of grad student Aiko whose facial birthmark has left her reluctant to pursue love. Aiko finds herself in unknown territory when rising interest in her story catches interest for a film adaptation.

No Longer Human (East Coast Premiere)

『人間失格』

Saturday, November 19, 2022 at 1:00 PM

Dir. Mika Ninagawa, 2019, 120 min., DCP, color. With Shun Oguri, Rie Miyazawa, Erika Sawajiri, Fumi Nikaido.

Adapting the life of celebrated novelist Osamu Dazai (played by Shun Oguri), visionary director Mika Ninagawa's (*Sakuran*, JC 2008; *Helter Skelter*, JC 2013) sumptuous period piece focuses on the troubled, womanizing author's formative relationships with his wife and two mistresses during his late-career years.

One Summer Story (New York Premiere)

『子供はわかってあげない』

Saturday, November 12, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Dir. Shuichi Okita, 2020, 138 min., DCP, color. With Moka Kamishiraishi, Kanata Hosoda, Yuki Saito, Etsushi Toyokawa.

Lensed by cinematographer Akiko Ashizawa, longtime DP for Kiyoshi Kurosawa whose collaborations include *Tokyo Sonata* and *To the Ends of the Earth*, Shuichi Okita's charming *One Summer Story* follows young Minami and her friend Shohei as she tries to investigate the whereabouts of her missing father.

Riverside Mukolitta (U.S. Premiere)

『川っぺりムコリッタ』

Friday, November 18, 2022 at 8:00 PM

Dir. Naoko Oigami, 2021, 121 min., DCP, color. With Kenichi Matsuyama, Tsuyoshi Muro, Hikari Mitsushima.

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A with director Oigami, and a reception.

Director Naoko Oigami's (*Kamome Diner*, JC 2007) newest feature, *Riverside Mukolitta*, focuses on ex-con Takeshi Yamada, who is eluding his past by relocating to a quaint rural village in the Hokuriku region. There, he moves into a rural apartment complex, getting to know its community of earnest (if audacious) locals and adapting to a quieter, simpler pace of life.

She is me, I am her (World Premiere)

『ワタシの中の彼女』

Saturday, November 12, 2022 at 5:00 PM

Dir. Mayu Nakamura, 2022, 70 min., DCP, color. With Nahana, Fusako Urabe, Kota Kusano, Miyoko Asada.

A socially-distanced college reunion, an unusual rapport struck between a food delivery man and a patron, a bus-stop encounter, and a blind woman scammed into thinking her brother is sick constitute the stories of Mayu Nakamura's COVID-era quadriptych—a work that delves into the lives of women in COVID-era Japan, finding profundity and human connection amid the unlikely encounters of strangers.

a stitch of life (New York Premiere)

『繕い裁っ人』

Sunday, November 20, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Dir. Yukiko Mishima, 2015, 104 min., DCP, color. With Miki Nakatani, Takahiro Miura, Hairi Katagiri.

Refashioning, hemming and threading, dressmaker Ichie utilizes the old-fashioned techniques passed down to her from her grandmother. When department store employee Fujii approaches her clothing boutique to develop it into a brand with mass-produced garments, Ichie refuses. Fujii gradually comes to appreciate the philosophies that motivate Ichie, as she finally dares to branch out and design her own work.

Wedding High (North American Premiere)

『ウェディング・ハイ』

Friday, November 11, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Dir. Akiko Ohku, 2021, 120 min., DCP, color. With Ryoko Shinohara, Tomoya Nakamura, Nagisa Sekimizu

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A with director Ohku, and an opening night party.

The latest from Akiko Ohku (*My Sweet Grappa Remedies*, JC 2020; *Tremble All You Want*, JC 2018) steps away from the director's singular heroines to offer a wildly entertaining ensemble piece. When Akihito and Haruka decide to tie the knot, little do they know of the impending chaos to follow when the wedding guests—each with their own set of motivations, passions and backstories—begin to use the occasion for their own means, threatening to derail a “perfect wedding.”

CLASSICS FOCUS ON NATTO WADA AND YOKO MIZUKI

In collaboration with the National Film Archive of Japan.

Natto Wada and Yoko Mizuki are among the most acclaimed and accomplished screenwriters of the Golden Age of Japanese cinema. Wada was the collaborator and wife of Kon Ichikawa, and Yoko Mizuki, an award-winning scenarist recognized for her work with filmmakers Tadashi Imai and Mikio Naruse. Wada worked on over 30 screenplays including *Fires on the Plain*, and was known for her “gift for witty dialogue and meaningful silences” (Audie Bock). Mizuki, whose accolades include four Kinema Junpo Awards, would focus on untouched social issues in her works, introducing a female perspective to her adaptations. In collaboration with the National Film Archive of Japan, Japan Society is proud to present two seminal restored works—*Conflagration* and *Her Brother*—written by Mizuki and Wada and directed by Kon Ichikawa.



Conflagration (International Premiere of 4K Restoration)

『炎上』

Monday, November 14, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Dir. Kon Ichikawa, 1958, 99 min., DCP, b/w. With Raizo Ichikawa, Tatsuya Nakadai, Ganjiro Nakamura.

Conflagration is the pinnacle of the many acclaimed literary adaptations Kon Ichikawa and his constant collaborator and wife Natto Wada worked on together. Loosely based on true events that inspired Yukio Mishima's novel *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, the story involves the spiritual and psychological breakdown of troubled youth named Goichi, whose desire for pure beauty leads him to Kyoto's Shukaku temple, where he becomes an apprentice to the priest.

***Her Brother* (International Premiere of 4K Restoration)**

『おとうと』

Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Dir. Kon Ichikawa, 1960, 98 min., DCP, color. With Keiko Kishi, Hiroshi Kawaguchi, Kinuyo Tanaka, Masayuki Mori.

Based on the autobiographical novel by Aya Koda, *Her Brother* was adapted to the screen by Yoko Mizuki, renowned for her work on *Kwaidan* and *Floating Clouds*. *Her Brother* is a restrained family melodrama told from the viewpoint of Gen, a lonely yet resilient young woman obligated to her distant writer father and invalid, Christian stepmother. Gen is left to serve as a surrogate mother for her delinquent younger brother Hekiro, to whom she remains lovingly devoted.

FILMMAKERS ON THE RISE

His Lost Name

『夜明け』

Friday, November 18, 2022 at 5:00 PM

Dir. Nanako Hirose, 2019, 113 min., DCP, color. With Yuya Yagira, Kaoru Kobayashi, Keiko Horiuchi, Young Dais.

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A.

Small-town carpenter Tetsuro finds an unconscious young man on a riverbank who eventually says his name is Shinichi. The middle-aged widower sympathetically takes Shinichi in, offering a room in his home and apprenticeship in his woodshop. Before long, the pair soon develop a father-son dynamic—forcing Tetsuro's other carpenters and patient fiancée to adjust to the strange new situation—though long-held secrets threaten to undo everything.

two of us

『ふたり』

Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Dir. Risa Negishi, 2019, 47 min., DCP, color. With Meirin, Manami Usamaru, Shohei Yamashita.

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A.

Told in a fragmented, nonlinear style, Risa Negishi's short provides snapshots of two women enduring emotional hardships while leaning on one another, and features dreamy, experimental photography and editing.

Long-Term Coffee Break

「*Long-Term Coffee Break*」

Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Dir. Naoya Fujita, 2022, 30 min., DCP, color. With Mina Fujii, Hiroki Sano, Mayuko Fukuda.

Screening followed by a post-screening discussion & Q&A.

Yuko is in the midst of a successful career when she meets Naoki, a spontaneous and aloof actor, and the two hit it off over coffee—his love of it and her disinterest in it—and get married. Shifting from sweet to bitter at a moment's notice, *Long-Term Coffee Break* is a modern romance in brief, and a promising work from Naya Fujita.

About Japan Society

Japan Society is the premier organization connecting Japanese arts, culture, business, and society with audiences in New York and around the world. At Japan Society, we are inspired by the Japanese concept of kizuna (絆)—forging deep connections to bind people together. We are committed to telling the story of Japan while strengthening connections within New York City and building new bridges beyond. In over 100 years of work, we've inspired generations by establishing ourselves as pioneers in supporting international exchanges in arts and culture, business and policy, as well as education between Japan and the U.S. We strive to convene important conversations on topics that bind our two countries together, champion the next generation of innovative creators, promote mutual understanding, and serve as a trusted guide for people everywhere who seek to more fully appreciate the rich complexities and abundance of Japan. From our New York headquarters, a landmark building designed by architect Junzo Yoshimura that opened to the public in 1971, we look forward to the years ahead, which will be defined by our digital and ideational impact through the kizuna that we build. Our future can only be enhanced by learning from our peers and engaging with our audiences, both near and afar.

About the ACA Cinema Project

The ACA Cinema Project is a new initiative organized as part of the "Japan Film Overseas Expansion Enhancement Project," an ongoing project founded by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (ACA) to create opportunities for the increased exposure, development and appreciation of Japanese cinema overseas through screenings, symposiums and other events held throughout the year. The ACA Cinema Project introduces a wide range of Japanese films in the United States, a major center of international film culture, together with local partners, such as the IFC Center, Harmony Gold and the Japan Society.

Past events: 1st edition: [21st CENTURY JAPAN: Films from 2001-2020](#)

2nd edition: [Flash Forward: Debut Works and Recent Films by Notable Japanese Directors](#)

3rd edition: [New Films from Japan](#)

4th edition: [Emerging Japanese Films](#)

Credits

The Female Gaze: Women Filmmakers from JAPAN CUTS and Beyond is presented by Japan Society and the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan.

Lead Sponsor



Japan Society programs are made possible by leadership support from Booth Ferris Foundation and Shiseido Americas. Film programs are generously supported by ORIX Corporation USA, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and endowment support from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Endowment Fund. Additional season support is provided by The Globus Family, David Toberisky, Akiko Koide and Shohei Koide, Geoff and Fumi Matters, Laurel Gonsalves, and David S. Howe. Transportation assistance is provided by Japan Airlines, the exclusive Japanese airline sponsor of Japan Society Film.



JAPAN AIRLINES

Media Contacts:

Sylvia Savadjian, sylvia.savadjian@gmail.com, 516-606-3091

Allison Rodman, arodman@japansociety.org, 914-715-9794

###