



JAPANESE
FILM
FESTIVAL
10
CORK
LIMERICK
GALWAY
DUBLIN

OCT29-NOV14

Cinemobile Cork | UL Limerick

Cinemobile Galway | Cineworld Dublin

9 Souls

Confessions

Fish Story

Ping Pong

The Place Promised in Our Early Days

The Sky Crawlers





WELCOME TO THE JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL 2010

This year's Festival, the third collaboration between The Embassy of Japan and access>CINEMA, hopes to build on previous years, which, thanks to your support, were a great success.

There is a new feature this year – The Cinemobile - which will facilitate screenings in Galway and Cork. We are also bringing the Festival to the University of Limerick and Cineworld in Dublin, as we did last year, and we hope to include a number of special cultural events in addition to the screenings.

Highlights in the programme include *Confessions*, the Japanese submission for the Best Foreign Language Oscar® 2011, and *The Sky Crawlers*, directed by Mamoru Oshii (whose *Ghost in The Shell 2.0* screened at last year's Festival). Book early to avoid disappointment!

We are hoping to introduce more Japanese films to Ireland through future events. We would be happy to receive your suggestions and comments.

Enjoy and Arigato!

Embassy of Japan & access>CINEMA

Toshiaki Toyoda (born 1969) attended the prestigious Shogi (Japanese chess) Promotion Association from age 9 to 17. He entered the film industry as screenwriter for *Checkmate (Ote)*, directed by Sakamoto Junji in 1991.

After some scriptwriting credits, including *Biliken* (1996), and writing for the stage and comics, he made his debut as director with *Pornostar* (1998). The film won him the Best Newcomer Award of the Japanese Film Directors' Association.

In 2001, he completed *Unchain*, his second feature following the real lives of four boxers in the ring over five years until retirement.

He adapted top comic writer Matsumoto Taiyo's *Blue Spring* for the large screen in 2002. It recorded a box office hit, especially among teenagers. *9 Souls* is his fourth film. His other features include *Hanging Garden* (2005) and *The Blood of Rebirth* (2009).



9 SOULS

• DIR TOSHIAKI TOYODA | 2003 | 120 MINUTES | CERT: CLUB

• STARRING | Yoshio Harada, Ryuhei Matsuda, Kouji Chihara, Itsuji Itao

In an isolated prison, nine inmates make a break through a hole in the floor. Stealing a van, the assorted losers, psychos, professional criminals, over-the-edge-businessmen and a dwarf flee to a school near Mount Fuji, where a stash of money has their names on it.

As the men travel towards their destination with equal anticipation and dread, their colourful memories are vividly brought to life. When they arrive to pick up the loot, they are shocked to discover only an enigmatic glass key.

Masterfully taking us on a journey into the minds of these nine damaged men, director Toshiaki Toyoda, has produced a striking and invigorating film. – *Melbourne International Film Festival 2004*

'A masterful work of pure kinetic energy, surreal imagery, raucous humour, eccentric characters and a driving guitar score. Toshiaki Toyoda displays a unique and unforgettable vision that marks him as a major filmmaking talent.' – *Philadelphia International Film Festival 2004*

Tetsuya Nakashima (born 1959) developed his fast and inventive filmmaking style directing award-winning commercials, and music videos for J-pop artists like Chara and Momoko Bido. While he made his debut with *Happy-Go-Lucky* (97), it was with his sophomore

film *Beautiful Sunday* (98) that audiences really took notice of him. His other features include *Kamikaze Girls* (04), *Memories of Matsuko* (06), *Paco and the Magical Picture Book* (08) and *Confessions* (10).



CONFESSIONS

KOKUHAKU

- DIR TETSUYA NAKASHIMA | 2010 | 106 MINUTES | CERT: CLUB
- STARRING | Takako Matsu, Masaki Okada, Yoshino Kimura

Tetsuya Nakashima's *Confessions* is one of Japan's most important films of the year. Reigning the national box office for weeks, the film has seduced, frightened, provoked and moved audiences with the depth of its focus on the delinquency of a despairing youth. A stylized mixture of cruelty and compassion, *Confessions* deals with school violence, bullying, revenge and love, while also addressing the miserable state of Japanese public schools, prejudices against HIV victims and the consequences of allowing teenage violence to go unpunished.

A monologue is delivered over the usual chaos of a seventh grade classroom on a spring morning. The voice belongs to a teacher who stands powerless in front of her class. The teacher's voice and her chilling address gradually become more and more disturbing.

She announces that she is going to leave the school at the end of the month. A single mother overwhelmed by the death of her daughter, she cannot work any longer because she knows her child was killed by two of her own students.

Confessions reveals the key mystery in its opening sequence and then focuses on the reasons that prompted this violent act and subsequent vendetta. Shifting between the point of view of the teenagers and the devastated, grieving teacher, Nakashima prevents the audience from taking sides, allowing the viewers room to come to their own conclusions about the dark acts they witness.

– *Giovanna Fulvi, Toronto International Film Festival 2010*

→ Official Japanese Submission, Best Foreign Language Film for 2011 Academy Awards®

Yoshihiro Nakamura (born 1970) has worked as both a screenwriter and director and is known for his varied range. He co-wrote the films *Dark Water* (2002) and *Quill* (2004) and directed the horror film *The Booth* (2005).

Fish Story is Nakamura's tenth film, but the first of his creations to really get out of Japan. It is adapted from a novel by Kotaro Isaka, as is this year's *Golden Slumber* (2010), and showcases Nakamura's unique style, contagious passion for pop culture and rare talent for mixing various moods and tones while maintaining an uncompromising fluidity.



FISH STORY

FISSHU SUTŌRI

• DIR YOSHIHIRO NAKAMURA | 2009 | 112 MINUTES | CERT: CLUB

• STARRING | Ito Atsushi, Kora Kengo, Tabe Mikako, Moriyana Mirai,

Gaku Hamada, Vincent Giry

This is an intriguing Japanese “butterfly effect” movie that links five periods in time starting with the mistranslation of an American book in postwar Japan. There follows in time, though not in sequence, a proto-punk band that made a cult record in 1975 and disappeared; a couple of musical fans obsessed with rock legends and their young chauffeur in 1982; a group of cultists waiting for the ending of the world in 1999; the hijacking of a ferry by terrorists in 2009; and a meteor threatening to destroy our planet in 2012.

The movie is full of quirky detail, though nothing becomes clear until the five stories are connected in the final three or four minutes. A nicely paced, curiously likeable film. — *Philip French, The Observer*

‘With a lively tone and an intricately plotted multi-strand story, this Japanese drama holds our attention using humour, drama and an end-of-the-world scenario. It’s also a thoroughly charming bit of filmmaking.’ — *Rich Cline, Shadows on the Wall*

Fumihiko Sori (born 1964) is known as a widely diverse director and producer. In 1997 he worked on special effects for James Cameron's *Titanic*. His feature debut *Ping Pong* (2002) brought him international recognition and won him the best director prize at the Japanese Academy Awards.

Since then he has produced the science-fiction animation *Appleseed* (2004) and directed films including *Vexille* (2007) and *Ichi* (2008) as well as the anime series *To* (2009).



PING PONG

• **DIR** FUMIHIKO SORI | 2002 | 114 MINUTES | CERT: CLUB

• **STARRING** | Arata, Sam Lee, Yosuke Kubozuka

Ping pong may be an unlikely subject for a feature film, but this madcap Japanese outing proves to be much more than just a load of old balls. Based on a popular Japanese Manga comic, it's the story of two table tennis players: cocksure Peco (Yosuke Kubozuka), and his retiring mate "Smile" (Arata) as they prepare for a major high school tournament. Unloading an inventive arsenal of surreal camera tricks and overblown characters, *Ping Pong* more than lives up to its zappy title.

Described by some critics as *The Matrix* of ping pong, this little film comes with a great weight of expectation behind it. For the most part, it doesn't disappoint, delivering some off-the-wall thrills as Peco and Smile play in competition against their adversaries: tetchy China (Sam Lee), who didn't make his homeland's national team so has come to Japan to start over;

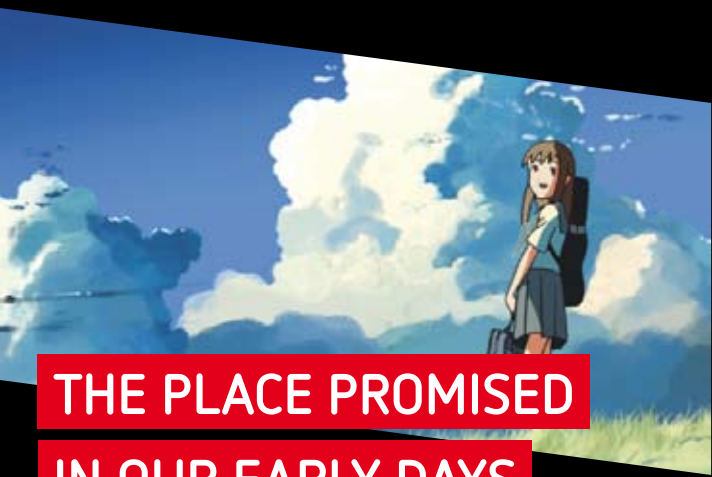
Demon (Akira Nishihara), a slaphead with black-rimmed specs and a big mouth; and the fearsome Dragon (Shido Nakamura), the martial arts ninja of the ping pong world.

"No other sport demands the reaction time of ping pong," yells the boys' demented coach as he whips them into shape. It's something that director Fumihiko Sori has obviously taken to heart since he uses an array of technical tricks to capture the energy and the agony of the game. Slow-mos follow the tiny plastic ball as it backspins across the table, while speeded-up sequences show the players hurtling through the air.

Part *The Matrix*, part *The Karate Kid*, and completely ping pong bonkers, it's full of zany flights of fantasy. — *Jamie Russell, BBC Films*

Makoto Shinkai (born 1973) studied Japanese literature at university and has worked as a voice actor, animator and anime director. He directed the short films *She and Her Cat* (1999) and *Voices of a Distant Star* (2003) before making his feature debut with the critically acclaimed

The Place Promised in Our Early Days (2004). Hailed by some as the next Miyazaki, Shinkai's dreamy mindscapes are often described as equalling or surpassing the anime maestro in breadth of detail and depth of emotion. His other films include *5 Centimeters Per Second* (2007).



THE PLACE PROMISED IN OUR EARLY DAYS

KUMO NO MUKO, YAKUSOKU NO BASHU

• DIR MAKOTO SHINKAI | 2004 | 91 MINUTES | CERT: CLUB

• WITH THE VOICES OF | Hidetaka Yoshioka, Masato Hagiwara, Yuuka Nanri,

Kazuhiko Inoue, Risa Mizuno, Unshou Ishizuka

For those just catching up with the talent of Makoto Shinkai, another chance to view his classic first feature on the big screen.

In an alternate postwar Japan where half the country is governed by the US and the other by 'The Union', three schoolfriends resolve to build a plane and cross the border to reach a mysterious tower, only to abandon their plan when one falls ill.

Years later, with war looming once more, the remaining pair have hard decisions to make.

A beautifully lyrical combination of fine animation, music and storytelling. – *British Film Institute*

Mamoru Oshii (born 1951) originally planned to become a priest but later he turned away from the Church. After working in Japanese television, Oshii's first animated feature was *Urusei Yatsura 1: Only You* (83).

In 1988, Oshii joined the talented creators group called Headgear, giving birth to the "Mobile Police Patlabor" project which introduced new realism to the robot genre in animation.

In 1995 Oshii released *Ghost in the Shell* and nine years later, he directed its sequel *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*, the first Japanese animated feature to compete for the Palme d'Or at the Festival de Cannes.

He has made over twenty feature and short anime films including *Urusei Yatsura 2: Beautiful Dreamer* (84), *Patlabor: the Movie* (89), *Patlabor 2: The Movie* (93), *Avalon* (01) and *The Sky Crawlers* (08). He is also a screenplay writer and is considered to be the father of Japanese philosophical anime.



THE SKY CRAWLERS

SUKAI KUKORA

• DIR MAMORU OSHII | 2008 | 122 MINUTES | CERT: CLUB

• WITH THE VOICES OF | Rinko Kikuchi, Ryo Kase, Shosuke Tanihara, Chiaki Kuriyamae

In this alternative reality, warfare has become a bizarre, company-sponsored form of television entertainment. Combat pilot Yuichi Kannami arrives at his new airbase, where he lives an escapist and heroic life together with his fellow comrades. Memories of the past are just a blur to him, and all he can recall ever doing is flying and fighting. But when Kannami becomes interested in Suito Kusanagi, the mysterious and beautiful base commander, he starts to question the futility of his way of life.

Internationally celebrated anime director Mamoru 'Ghost in the Shell' Oshii has conjured up a true epic,

commenting on the state of humanity, the status of the Japanese nation and the frightening perspectives of war. Touching on how our personal identities are built by love and memories, the poetic scope of Oshii tells a thought-provoking story through dramatic dogfights and romanticism. Based on the novel series by Hiroshi Mori, *The Sky Crawlers* is fantasy disturbingly close to reality. – *Stockholm International Film Festival 2008*

+ Film critic Tara Brady will introduce the screening of *The Sky Crawlers* in Dublin on Friday November 12

FESTIVAL

TIMETABLE

CINEMOBILE, CORK

FRIDAY 29 OCTOBER

- | | |
|--------------|-------|
| • Fish Story | 19.00 |
| • 9 Souls | 21.30 |

SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER

- | | |
|---------------|-------|
| • Ping Pong | 19.00 |
| • Confessions | 21.30 |

SUNDAY 31 OCTOBER

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| • The Sky Crawlers | 14.00 |
|--------------------|-------|

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

MONDAY 01 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| • Fish Story | 18.30 |
| • The Sky Crawlers | 21.00 |

TUESDAY 02 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|--|-------|
| • The Place Promised in Our Early Days | 19.15 |
| • Ping Pong | 21.00 |

CINEMOBILE, GALWAY

FRIDAY 05 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|--------------|-------|
| • Fish Story | 20.30 |
|--------------|-------|

SATURDAY 06 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|---------------|-------|
| • 9 Souls | 19.00 |
| • Confessions | 21.30 |

SUNDAY 07 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| • Ping Pong | 14.00 |
| • The Sky Crawlers | 16.30 |

CINEWORLD, DUBLIN

FRIDAY 12 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| • The Sky Crawlers | 18.30 |
| • Confessions | 21.00 |

SATURDAY 13 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|---------------|-------|
| • Ping Pong | 16.00 |
| • Fish Story | 18.30 |
| • Confessions | 20.30 |

SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| • The Sky Crawlers | 16.00 |
| • 9 Souls | 18.00 |

→ PLEASE NOTE:
all films are in
Japanese with
English subtitles

★ All films are
unclassified
therefore are
subject to club
conditions,
i.e. open to 18
years+ only



BOOKING

INFORMATION

TICKET PRICES

€8 / Conc. €6

VENUE INFORMATION / ADVANCE BOOKING

CORK

OCT 18 – OCT 28 Contact 01 679 4420

OCT 29 – OCT 31 Contact 087 2837326

Cinemobile, University College Cork Campus, Cork

LIMERICK

OCT 18 – NOV 2 Contact 01 679 4420

Jonathan Swift Lecture Theatre (B1023),

Main Building, University of Limerick

GALWAY

OCT 18 – NOV 04 Contact 01 679 4420

NOV 05 – NOV 07 Contact 087 2837326

Cinemobile, beside Courthouse, Galway

DUBLIN

OCT 18 – NOV 11 Contact 01 679 4420

NOV 12 – NOV 14 Contact the Festival Desk,

Cineworld Foyer, Cineworld, Parnell Street, D1

Opening Hours 14.00-21.00 daily

 Embassy of Japan in Ireland
在アイルランド日本国大使館

access > CINEMA

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