

**Japanese Girls Never Die and Snow Woman selected for
the 29th Tokyo International Film Festival Competition Section****Japanese Girls Never Die**

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**Snow Woman**

©Snow Woman Film Partners

The 29th Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) is just around the corner!

TIFF is pleased to announce that two Japanese films, **Japanese Girls Never Die** and **Snow Woman** have been selected for the 29th TIFF Competition section.

This year, a total of **1,502** titles from **98** countries and regions were submitted to TIFF.

A total of **16** films will be shown in the competition section at the 29th TIFF, to be held **October 25 (Tue) – November 3 (Thu)**. The full lineup of the competition section will be announced at the press conference on September 26 (Mon), 2016.

Yoshi Yatabe, TIFF Competition Programming Director, comments:

For this year's competition section, I have selected the works of two young directors who I feel are now embarking on the next stage in their careers. Both directors show us youthful ambition as they symbolically illustrate Japan in their respective styles. These two films respectively achieve both in their distinct ways, which is why I think they deserve to be presented to an international audience.

Daigo Matsui cleverly depicts the small-town claustrophobia of his generation through his protagonist, played by Yu Aoi, and gives us an honest, personal portrayal that could only be done now. The zaniness and originality with which Matsui uses girl power to push his characters out of their lethargy is where his talent truly shines.

Kiki Sugino's new film, whose pastel tones harken back to the aesthetics of the Japanese classics left me utterly astonished. Sugino also works in front of the camera playing the protagonist, the snow woman, who emits such a luminous beauty yet charges the film with an ominous terror. The aestheticism in Sugino's portrayal of this classical piece of folklore makes her work the most original of Japanese films this year. A film must be both universal and specific to culture in order to gain international attention.

Japanese Girls Never Die

Cryptic graffiti, borrowed from a missing person poster, begin to appear all over town. A mysterious group of high school girls begins attacking men at random. After the disappearance of Haruko, these two series of incidents overlap. Is this Haruko's plot?

Director: Daigo Matsui

Cast: Yu Aoi, Mitsuki Takahata, Taiga, Shono Hayama, Huwie Ishizaki, Ryo Kase, Akiko Kikuchi, Maho Yamada, Motoki Ochiai, Serina

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Publicity materials are available at www.image.net/ Official Website: www.tiff-jp.net/en/



Japanese Girls Never Die is a new novel by Mariko Yamauchi, known for “It’s Boring Here, Pick Me Up”. Director Daigo Matsui of *Afro Tanaka* and *Wonderful World End* has made it into a film. Yu Aoi stars, for the first time in eight

years, as the main character who has gone missing. Mitsuki Takahata, of the NHK morning drama *Toto Nechan* and *Shokubutsu Zukan* plays a member of a young group called KILROY which is responsible for the appearance, all over town, of graffiti featuring the missing woman's face. This film vividly portrays the lives of three generations of women.

The film will be released by Phantom Film Co. Ltd in December, 2016 (Japan).

Comments from the director, Daigo Matsui

It’s a great honor to be included in the Competition section. I was delighted because my film touched people’s hearts and their enthusiasm helped this nomination. To make this film, I was driven only by my faith, not by money or thoughts of private gain at all. When I heard the news of the nomination, I felt so relieved and started crying. When I attended TIFF’s Japanese Cinema Splash three years ago with *How Selfish I Am!* I experienced the ultimate bliss in connecting with film-related people from all over the world. I understand that I need to gain more ground in filmmaking, but I am still proud of myself for having this opportunity to compete with overseas filmmakers.



Profile of director Daigo Matsui:

Leader of the theater group Gojigen. He debuted as NHK’s youngest writer with *Twin Spica*. In 2012, he debuted as a director with *Afro Tanaka*. His other works include *Sweet Poolside* and *How Selfish I Am!*. *World Wonderful End* was officially screened at Berlinale and *Our Huff and Puff Journey* won two prizes at the Yubari IFF. He won the best new director prize at the Tama Cinema Forum with those two films.

Comments from the main actress, Yu Aoi

Thank you for selecting *Japanese Girls Never Die* for the Competition section of Tokyo International Film Festival. I am very happy that people who saw our film already liked it so much. Sometimes I get nervous about how a film I’ve worked on will be received, since I’m so involved in it. But when I heard the views from the selection committee, I realized I was right this time and now I’m looking forward to the festival premiere. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. We will enjoy TIFF with everyone from the *Japanese Girls Never Die* production team!



Snow Woman - World Premiere

The film is a reinterpretation of ‘Yuki-Onna’, from Lafcadio Hearn’s “Kwaidan”, a book of Japanese ghost stories. Sugino directs and plays the titular lead in her third directorial feature.

Director: Kiki Sugino

Cast: Kiki Sugino, Munetaka Aoki, Mayu Yamaguchi, Shiro Sano, Kumi Mizuno, Yoshiko Miyazaki, Takeshi Yamamoto

On the centennial of Masaki Kobayashi and 50th anniversary of his film, *Kwaidan*, based on Lafcadio Hearn’s novel, Sugino reinterprets one chapter, *Yuki-onna* as director and titular lead. Helming her third feature, she leads a stellar cast including Munetaka Aoki, Mayu Yamaguchi, Shiro Sano, Kumi Mizuno, Yoshiko Miyazaki, Takeshi Yamamoto, Koudai Matsuoka, and Nagisa Umeno. Shot in Hiroshima with the cooperation of Onomichi city, the film includes crew members such as cinematographer Shogo Ueno, production designer Masami Tanaka who trained under Yohei Taneda, and composer Seigan Tominomori.

The film will be released by Wa Entertainment, inc in 2017 (Japan).

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Comments from the director and main actress, Kiki Sugino

It is an honor to be included in the Competition section as a director. *Snow Woman* is a fable that is very familiar to Japanese, a grim and strange story by Yakumo Koizumi. This is a very meaningful opportunity to have the world premiere of this new interpretation in Tokyo. I would like to express my gratitude once again to all those who supported this nomination. I spent years exploring the existence of 'Yuki-Onna', the Snow Woman, and I feel as if I were guided here by an invisible force. Please enjoy this fable about a human and a mysterious woman.



Profile of director Kiki Sugino:

Sugino boasts an already prolific career as actress and producer with films like *Hospitalité*, *Au revoir l'été*, *Odayaka* and *Chigasaki Story* to her credit. TIFF and Taipei Film Festival have held showcases of her work. Her directorial debut *Kyoto Elegy* premiered at TIFF in 2014. Her second directorial feature *Taksu* premiered at BIFF in 2014, and she got the Rising Director Award of marie claire Asia Star Awards.

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**The full line-up of the competition section will be announced at the press conference on September 26.
A separate Japan Now Press Conference featuring Shunji Iwai will be hold on October 4.**

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Press Accreditation is now open! Visit www.tiff-jp.net to apply by September 23.

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29th Tokyo International Film Festival

Date: October 25 (Tue) – November 3 (Thu), 2016

Venues: Roppongi Hills, EX Theater Roppongi and other theaters in Tokyo

Market: TIFFCOM 2016 (Japan Content Showcase 2016) October 25 (Tue) – 27 (Thu)