



PRESS RELEASE

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33rd TIFF to Open with *Underdog* and Close with *Hokusai*

The Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) is pleased to announce this year's **Opening and Closing Films**. *Underdog*, directed by **Masaharu Take**, will open the festival on October 31, and *Hokusai*, directed by **Hajime Hashimoto** and starring **Yuya Yagira** and **Min Tanaka**, will close the festival on November 9.

Underdog stars **Mirai Moriyama**, **Takumi Kitamura** and **Ryo Katsuji**, and is Take's first boxing-themed film in six years, since *100 Yen Love* (2014). It depicts the lives of three fighters who have been abandoned in life, as they cross fists in the ring to attempt their comebacks. *Hokusai* is the story of legendary Japanese ukiyo-e artist Katsushika Hokusai and his "Secret of Three Waves," providing a unique perspective and interpretation. Hokusai is best known for his "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji" and his works inspired such artists as Van Gogh and Monet. The film stars Yuya Yagira as young Hokusai and Min Tanaka as the artist in later years, and marks the end of the festival memorably in this year of the 260th anniversary of Hokusai's birth.

TIFF plans to hold physical screenings in Tokyo theaters to enable audiences to experience the joy of watching films on the big screen, and these two remarkable films will provide additional excitement to the 33rd TIFF.

The screening schedule will be announced on the official TIFF website (www.tiff-jp.net/en/) in early October.



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OPENING FILM

***Underdog* (2020/Japan) - World Premiere**

Director: Masaharu Take

Cast: Mirai Moriyama, Takumi Kitamura, Ryo Katsuji

Release Date (Japan): November 27, 2020

Distribution (Japan): Toei Video Company, Ltd.

Dwelling on his past humble glory, a man whose life has hit rock bottom tries to emerge from his despair and shine once again. A story that will stir your soul.

Comment from Masaharu Take

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people who have made it possible to hold TIFF despite the coronavirus pandemic. *Underdog* was filmed in January and February 2020, capturing scenes we have lost due to COVID-19. Boxers, the lonely people in the ring, cannot continue to beat and be beaten without the audiences' cheers. The audience creates the match and continues to talk about it. Sometimes it's an incredible match. But it's not a match with only one viewer. Life is similar to this, and I think filmmaking is, too. The audience completes the film in the end. I'm grateful that audiences can watch *Underdog* at the TIFF opening in 2020. The final conclusion is left to them, and I hope they will continue to pass the story on. Please stay safe.



©2020 HOKUSAI MOVIE

CLOSING FILM

***Hokusai* (2020/Japan) - World Premiere**

Director: Hajime Hashimoto

Cast: Yuya Yagira, Min Tanaka

Release Date (Japan): 2021

Distribution (Japan): SDP

A film about Hokusai, the most famous Japanese artist in the world. "The Man Mad about Art" was once a struggling artist, but after winning fame, continued to pursue his artistic talent, striving his entire life to improve.

Comment from Hajime Hashimoto

The history of film was nurtured in the darkness of movie theaters. Now this darkness is undergoing rapid change. It is easy to say that this is the flow of time. Darkness is a place where strangers sit together, cry, laugh, get angry and enjoy themselves. We put our hopes for *Hokusai* in such a place. Please enjoy it...in the dark.

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The full lineup of the Tokyo Premiere 2020 will be announced at the press conference on September 29.
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Press Accreditation will be open in mid-September! Visit www.tiff-jp.net to apply.
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33rd Tokyo International Film Festival: Oct. 31 – Nov. 9, 2020 tiff-jp.net

For further information or inquiries, please contact: TIFF Public Relations Division

Due to current situation in Japan, we are working remotely.

Please contact us by email: tiff-pr2020@tiff-jp.net