

JAPANFILMFESTIVAL  
OF SAN FRANCISCO 7.27 - 8.4.2013

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J●POP  
SUMMIT  
FESTIVAL  
2013

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **The 2013 J-POP SUMMIT FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF THE FIRST ANNUAL JAPAN FILM FESTIVAL OF SAN FRANCISCO AT NEW PEOPLE CINEMA**

*Exclusive Premieres Include Dreams For Sale, Himuzu, Lesson Of The Evil, Library Wars, Platinum Data, Space Battleship Yamato And More At First-Ever NorCal/Bay Area Dedicated Japanese Film Celebration; Festival Will Welcome Library Wars Director Shinsuke Sato As Guest of Honor*

**San Francisco, CA, May 20, 2013** – The 2013 J-POP Summit Festival, the popular yearly San Francisco summertime Japanese Pop Culture celebration, has announced the launch of the *Japan Film Festival of San Francisco*, the first fully-dedicated annual Japanese film event for Northern California and the S.F. Bay Area.

The week-long *Japan Film Festival of San Francisco* will take place at the NEW PEOPLE Cinema beginning Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup> through Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup>. The festival will also be a prominent feature of the 2013 J-POP Summit Festival, taking place across Japantown on Saturday and Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. **A complete schedule and advance ticket information is available on [www.jffsf.org](http://www.jffsf.org).**

Tickets are \$13.00 per film unless otherwise indicated. NEW PEOPLE Cinema is located at 1746 Post St. (cross street is Webster St.) in the heart of San Francisco's Japantown.

Nine live-action films representing a vivid cross-section of the best in recent Japanese cinema will have their exclusive U.S. and/or San Francisco premiere at NEW PEOPLE. The *Japan Film*

*Festival of San Francisco* will complement this press release in coming days with a subsequent announcement detailing an exciting slate of anime feature films also set to receive their U.S. and/or San Francisco premieres.

Live-action films include director Miwa Nishikawa's *Dreams for Sale*, *Sakuran* director Mika Ninagawa's *Helter Skelter*, Sion Sono's award-winning masterpiece, *Himizu*, architect/author Kyohei Sakaguchi's documentary, *How To Build a Mobile House*, director Takashi Miike's *Lesson of The Evil*, director Shinsuke Sato's *Library Wars*, actor Kazunari Ninomiya's *Platinum Data*, the samurai adventure of *Rurouni Kenshin*, and *Space Battleship Yamato*, based on one of Japan's greatest anime properties (known in the U.S. as *Star Blazers*) and a must-see for any sci-fi aficionado. Films will be presented with their original Japanese dialogue with English subtitles.

The *Japan Film Festival of San Francisco* is also honored to welcome Director Shinsuke Sato, who is also known for his 2011 blockbuster, *GANTZ*, for a special in-person appearance for the exclusive U.S. premiere of his newest film, *Library Wars*. Sato will participate in a special Q&A session with the NEW PEOPLE Cinema audience and also appear as a Guest of Honor during the 2013 J-POP Summit Festival.

The *Japan Film Festival of San Francisco* is presented in conjunction with the 2013 J-POP Summit, taking place Saturday July 27<sup>th</sup> and Sunday July 28<sup>th</sup> across the city's historic Japantown district to celebrate the phenomenon of Japanese pop culture with a colorful array of live bands and artists, panel discussions, film premieres, edgy fashion shows and DJ dance events, celebrity appearances and more. The J-POP Summit Festival is hosted and organized by NEW PEOPLE in cooperation with the Japantown Merchants Association. In 2012, the two-day event attracted nearly 65,000 attendees. *More information is available at [www.J-POP.com](http://www.J-POP.com).*

### **Japan Film Festival of San Francisco Live-Action Program:**

#### ***DREAMS FOR SALE - S.F. PREMIERE!!!***

**Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm**

Written and directed by Miwa Nishikawa, who's *SWAY* and *Dear Doctor* were screened at numerous film festivals around the world, *Dreams for Sale* is a richly evocative drama about a couple that lose everything in a fire and attempt to make a fresh start by swindling others. Wife Satoko (Takako Matsu) and her husband Kanya (Sadawo Abe) run a small eatery in a corner of Tokyo, but on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its opening, a fire erupts in the kitchen and burns the place to a cinder. In desperate need of cash, Satoko and Kanya embark on a hilarious and heartwarming marriage scam in an attempt to put their lives back on track.

#### ***HELTER SKELTER - S.F. PREMIERE!!!***

**Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4:20pm**

*Sakuran* director Mika Ninagawa's live-action adaptation of the eponymous shojo manga by Kyoko Okazaki utilizes brilliantly colored visuals to depict the descent of an outwardly perfect but inwardly unstable star that reigns over the entertainment world. Top model Liliko (Erika Sawajiri) captivates the public with her beauty that is the envy of all who look upon her. However, her appearance has been entirely engineered through plastic surgery. Complications arise from the numerous operations and begin to eat away at Liliko both physically and psychologically, sending her into a downward spiral.

#### ***HIMIZU - S.F. PREMIERE!!!***

**Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1:10pm**

Sion Sono's award-winning masterpiece is based on Minoru Furuya's manga "Himizu," named for a species of a Japanese mole. Set after the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, all 14-year-old Yuichi Sumida (Shota Sometani) wants is to live a decent life. But his environment keeps dragging him into the mud. Keiko Chazawa (Fumi Nikaido), a classmate of Yuichi, harbors a severe crush on him and sticks around despite being berated by him. One day, the yakuza comes by Yuichi's home and tells him to pay off his father's debt. Yuichi already heartbroken by his mother's abandonment and abuse from his father nears a tipping point. A string of incidents occurs that brings Yuichi's world to a screeching halt. Is there light at the end of the tunnel?

### **HOW TO BUILD A MOBILE HOUSE - U.S. PREMIERE!!!**

**Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1:30pm**

With the appearance of the famous "Zero Yen" architect, Kyohei Sakaguchi, the documentary, *How to Build a Mobile House*, makes its U.S. premiere in his favorite city, San Francisco! Screening attendees will also be invited to his free workshop to build a Mobile Green House with him during the J-POP Summit Festival. Kyohei's numerous books include "Tokyo Zero Yen House, Zero Yen Life," inspired by the exuberant creativity of street dwellers. This documentary delves into the roots of dwelling, and living, through the unique activities of this architect who "does not build." Sakaguchi, who devised a nest-like abode that fits the size of the human body, apprentices himself to a Tama River Robinson Crusoe who actually lives on a riverbed. The film depicts the completion of a mobile house for only \$260.00 in materials.

### **LESSON OF THE EVIL - U.S. PREMIERE!!!**

**Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 4:20pm & Tuesday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm**

Directed by Takashi Miike, *Lesson of the Evil* is a twisted psycho thriller based on a bestseller novel by Yusuke Kishi. Hasumi is a popular teacher among students at Shinko Academy, a private high school, and well respected by the faculty and the PTA. However, a student named Reika feels something menacing lurking beneath his shining reputation. While Hasumi brilliantly solves one problem after another, from a teacher-student sexual harassment to group cheating to bullying, he starts to take control of the school. As the problems go away, Reika becomes uneasy about the way they are solved. Tsuri, an unpopular teacher in the school, despises the popular Hasumi and starts investigating Hasumi's past and discovers that Hasumi is a real psycho.

### **LIBRARY WARS - U.S. PREMIERE!!!**

**Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7:00pm & Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1:10pm**

**\*\* Featuring special in-person appearance by Director Shinsuke Sato**

*Library Wars* is based on the bestselling novel and manga series by Hiro Arikawa. Set in the year 2019 in Japan, a new law is passed to crack down on free expression, which allows for the government to create an armed force to find and destroy objectionable printed material. Meanwhile, to oppose this oppressive crackdown, the Library Force is created. The Library Force includes instructor Atsushi Dojo (Junichi Okada) and Iku Kasahara (Nana Eikura), who work to protect the libraries. A fierce battle soon ensues between these two groups.

### **PLATINUM DATA - U.S. PREMIERE!!!**

**Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 7:00pm & Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7:00pm**

J-Pop artist Kazunari Ninomiya (*Gantz*, Oscar-nominated for *Letters from Iwo Jima*), stars in *Platinum Data*, the biggest film to be released in Japan in 2013 and directed by Keishi Ohtomo (*Rurouni Kenshin*). Ryuheo Kagura (Kazunari Ninomiya) is an exceptional scientist working at the National Police Agency's Special Analysis Research Institute. After solving series of complex criminal cases, he is assigned to investigate the murders of several people connected to the newly developed DNA forensics. Yet, when the faint trace of evidence left at the scene is

analyzed through the DNA forensic system, it identifies himself as the offender. With no such memory, he decides to flee and the pursuer becomes the pursued. Is Kagura guilty or innocent? Should he trust in science, or in himself? Does he represent hope for humanity or despair? Platinum Data holds the key...

**RUROUNI KENSHIN - S.F. PREMIERE!!!**

**Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm & Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 4:00pm**

A new live-action film adaptation of creator Nobuhiro Watsuki 's samurai manga that has sold over 57 million copies, been translated in 23 countries, and also inspired a popular animated series. *Rurouni Kenshin* follows the adventures of a slight and mild-mannered young man who was once an assassin working for anti-Shogunate forces but vows to abandon killing following Meiji revolution in Japan, and devotes his sword-wielding talents to helping others.

**SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO – WEST COAST PREMIERE!!!**

**Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 3:20pm**

A stunning live-action adaptation of the famed space opera originally created by Leiji Matsumoto that laid the foundation for the entire Japanese science fiction anime genre. A brave young crew journeys into space on a fateful trip to save the human race as it teeters on the brink of extinction. Five years have passed since the alien Gamilas first began assaulting Earth with radiation bombs in 2194. Most of the human race is now gone. Susumu Kodai (Takuya Kimura) joins other survivors of the Earth Defense Force in the mighty Space Battleship Yamato in search of a device that can restore the devastated planet. Although director Takashi Yamazaki first gained prominence with his heartwarming film, *Always: Sunset on Third Street*, his background is in science fiction and his talents for VFX shine in this acclaimed film based on one of Japan's greatest sci-fi properties.

NEW PEOPLE Cinema is a 143-seat cinema located in the underground floor of NEW PEOPLE in San Francisco. Equipped with a cutting-edge HD digital projection and THX<sup>®</sup>-certified sound system, NEW PEOPLE Cinema is home for local film festivals and entertaining events.

[www.newpeoplecinema.com](http://www.newpeoplecinema.com)

**About J-POP SUMMIT FESTIVAL**

The J-POP SUMMIT FESTIVAL is an annual Japanese Pop Culture celebration that features live bands and artists from Japan, pop culture panel discussions, film premieres, fashion and DJ dance events, and celebrity appearances. The Festival is hosted by NEW PEOPLE in cooperation with the Japantown Merchants Association. In 2012, the two-day event attracted 65,000 attendees. More information about the J-POP Summit Festival is available at [J-POP.com](http://J-POP.com).

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