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RECORDED PICTURE COMPANY, YAMANASHI NICHINICHI SHIMBUN, YBS, AMUSE SOFT
ENTERTAINMENT, YAHOO! JAPAN, ASAHI SHIMBUN
& SHOCHIKU PRESENTATION
OF A "HARA-KIRI: DEATH OF A SAMURAI" FILM PARTNERS PRODUCTION

A TAKASHI MIIKE FILM

HARA-KIRI: DEATH OF A SAMURAI

SEE IT IN 3D ONLY IN THEATERS

Press Materials can be downloaded at:

<http://www.tribecafilm.com/festival/media/tribeca-film-press>

Running time: 128 Minutes

Distributor: Tribeca Film

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Select Theatrical Release

- New York: July 20 at IFC Center
Los Angeles: July 20 at Downtown Independent
* Boston, MA: July 27 at Brattle Theatre *
* Atlanta, GA: August 10 at the Plaza Theatre *
Portland, OR: August 10 at the Living room Theater
Seattle, WA: August 10 at SIFF Cinema
* Phoenix, AZ: August 16 at FilmBar *
* New York: August 17 at Cinema Village *
* San Francisco, CA: August 17 at 4-Star Theater *
* San Jose, CA: August 17 at Camera 3 Cinema *
* Spokane, WA: August 17 at Magic Lantern Theatre *
Austin, TX: August 31 at Alamo Drafthouse Cinema
Columbus, OH: August 31 at Gateway Film Center
Honolulu, HI: August 31 at Pearlridge 16
San Diego, CA: August 31 at Gaslamp 15
* Salem, MA: September 7 at Cinema Salem *
* Tucson, AZ: September 14 at The Loft Cinema *
Cleveland, OH: September 18 at Capitol Theatre
* Miami, FL: September 21 at Tower Theater *
* Portland, ME: October 17 at Space Gallery *
* Denver, CO: October 26 at the Denver Film Center *
* Pleasantville, NY: December 9 at The Jacob Burbs Film Center *
* Mesilla, NM: December 14 at Mesilla Valley Film Society *

** Screening in 2D only*

Available on VOD July 18, 2012

FEATURING

EBIZO ICHIKAWA as HANSHIRO

EITA as MOTOME

HIKARI MITSUSHIMA as MIHO

NAOTO TAKENAKA as TAJIRI

MUNETAKA AOKI as HIKOKURO OMODAKA

TAKASHI SASANO as PRIEST

BAIJAKU NAKAMURA as JINNAI CHIJIWA

KOJI YAKUSHO as KAGEYU

CASTING DIRECTOR..... YURIKO KITADA
MUSIC..... RYUICHI SAKAMOTO
LIGHTINGYOSHIMI WATABE
SOUND RECORDING JUN NAKAMURA
COSTUME DESIGN.....KAZUKO KUROSAWA
ART DIRECTION.....YUJI HAYASHIDA SET
SET DESIGNAKIRA SAKAMOTO
.....KAZUTO KAGO
MAKEUP.....KOJI OMURA
SOUND EFFECTS.....KENJI SHIBAZAKI
PRODUCTION MANAGER.....SHINYA ZENDA
PRODUCTION BY.....SEDC INTERNATIONAL
PRODUCTION COOPERATIONOLM RAKUEISHA
ASSISTANT DIRECTORRYOSUKE KANESAKI
LINE PRODUCER.....TOSHIKI KOMATSU
EDITORKENJI YAMASHITA
MAKEUP.....KOJI OMURA
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHYNOBUYASU KITA
PRODUCTION PRODUCER.....MISAKO SAKA
.....SHIGEJI MAEDA
WRITTEN BYKIKUMI YAMAGISHI
BASED ON THE STORY BY.....YASUHIKO TAKIGUCHI "IBUN RONIN KI"
PRODUCED BYTOSHIAKI NAKAZAWA
.....JEREMY THOMAS
DIRECTED BYTAKASHI MIIKE

SYNOPSIS

From visionary auteur Takashi Miike (13 ASSASSINS) comes the story of a mysterious samurai who arrives at the doorstep of his feudal lord, requesting an honorable death by ritual suicide in his courtyard. The lord threatens him with the brutal tale of Motome, a desperate young ronin who made a similar request with ulterior motives, only to meet a grisly end. Undaunted, the samurai begins to tell a story of his own, with an ending no one could see coming. With stunning cinematography and gripping performances, HARA-KIRI: DEATH OF A SAMURAI is a thrilling exploration of revenge, honor, and individuality in the face of oppressive power.

COMMENTS FROM TAKASHI MIIKE

WHAT KINDLES YOUR HEART

It just so happened that this kind of epic film was my next film after 13 ASSASSINS. I don't plan to make only films like this. The touchstone benchmark is quality over quantity. By quality, I mean what kindles your heart or whether or not it makes you feel free as you devote yourself to the filming. Next fall, I will shoot a TV drama for late night television that is ruinously low-budget. But with low-budget works comes an excitement that can only be relished through low-budget.

HUMAN SUFFERING

What excites me about resurrecting this film from the past is being able to feel first-hand the existence of the universal human suffering which HARA-KIRI: DEATH OF A SAMURAI depicts at its core as it transcends time, genres and countries.

FOOLISHNESS AND SADNESS

I guess what attracted me to the theme of ICHIMEI was the foolishness and sadness of not being able to accurately perceive one's self in the next tomorrow. I guess for me, even after seeing this film, you feel pity for the tragedy of the main character and feel the sadness that makes tears of compassion and sympathy for somebody else's problem flow from your eyes. But I guess audiences who see the film will feel different messages based on their own reality. I don't think a director can steal that freedom away from them.

CONNECTED IN TANDEM

My new versions share everything in common with the old films yet everything is a little off. Since things like originality or being finicky about some worthless triviality were thrown away a long time ago, one cannot compare two works by lining them up next to each other. They are only connected in tandem as part of the flow of time in which they were created.

JEALOUSY

I don't feel nostalgic about old Japanese films; I feel jealousy. Jealous because the staff that made those films had everything that modern day Japanese filmmakers have lost. Things like their energy and passion, the old studios that were overflowing with dreams and people making these dreams happen, the studio's investment in human resources and the like.

EBIZO ICHIKAWA (Hanshiro)

Ebizo Ichikawa is the real deal when it comes to being the prize of kabuki. He is the king of traditional performing arts in Japan. He is a man without a net challenging frontiers with a great deal of curiosity. He made the set a fun, stimulating place day after day. I am looking forward to even more exciting things from him.

EITA (Motome)

Eita holds the charisma of youth. His appeal is his subtle sensitivity and depth in his presence. On the surface, he appears quiet and kind, but amid that stillness lies a knife with an incredible cutting edge which contributes to his sharp performance.

KOJI YAKUSHO (Kageyu)

Koji Yakusho is a living treasure in Japanese film. He always seams up the frayed edges in my clumsy directing in an artful way. He is a living treasure of modern Japanese film who leads you into the special world of filmmaking. He always teaches me Japan's unique virtue of humility. Also, his wife is a lovely lady filled with elegance.

SHOOTING IN 3D

Nothing changed for me shooting a movie in 3D. It was the same on set experience as any other film for me. The only difference was that the speed of shooting was slightly slower than normal. All in all, this film will probably be a welcomed development for those who already pursue stereo spatial visuals in the world of 2D via lighting and camera angles. There was no change to my approach other than I was able to go brag to the director shooting at the studio next door and say, "Huh? Yours is flat and level? Ours is bumpy and convexo-concave."

EXPECTATIONS

I would be most pleased if the audience feels that what can be expressed in 2D can also be expressed in 3D. For the people who are not fans of 3D, I hope they will say, "Wow! 3D works." It would be perfect if older audiences would say, "How interesting the way this film bursts out and sucks me up." I guess for the next few years this situation will continue where 3D is just one option for making a movie. And the audiences will probably decide and determine what happens after that. I definitely anticipate making more 3D movies. Next, if I have the chance, I want to have things that shouldn't come out of our bodies be hurled at the audience.

MUSIC BY RYUICHI SAKAMOTO

From the bottom of my heart, I really appreciated Ryuichi Sakamoto providing such wonderful music. The souls of the characters in the film squeal in the soundtrack. And these sounds aren't rammed down-your-throat and don't really come so far forward. His music fills the theater like air with a certain stillness and quietness yet its sureness and authority remain. Ryuichi Sakamoto is an artist who sees through the deception of the essence of 3D.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

EBIZO ICHIKAWA (as HANSHIRO)

One of the kabuki world's most prominent figures, he made his first acting appearance in 1983, at the Kabuki-za Theater in the role of Harunomiya in *The Tale of Genji*. In 1985 he appeared there as Kikanbo in *The Medicine Peddler*, and took the name Shinnosuke VII, as the 7th generation of Ichikawa kabuki lineage. Since then, he has appeared in numerous kabuki plays.

Having appeared in roles such as Kamakura Gongoro in *Shibaraku*, he then took the name Ebizo XI in May of 2004, becoming the 11th generation Ebizo Ichikawa. He performed in Paris (Theatre National de Chaillot) in October 2004 to commemorate his succession to that name. Following that, he was actively involved in appearances outside of Japan, such as in the Paris Opera House *Shochiku Grand Kabuki* (2007), and was awarded the French Order of Culture that year. He also appeared in *Shochiku Grand Kabuki* performances in London and Rome in 2010.

Apart from kabuki, he has been active in a variety of roles, including the protagonist, Miyamoto Musashi, in the NHK TV historical drama series "Musashi" (2003).

EITA (as MOTOME)

He made his movie debut in *BLUE SPRING* (2002). His first role as the protagonist in a movie was in *SUMMER TIME MACHINE BLUES* (2005), followed by many roles in TV and film, and then became popular throughout Japan due to his appearance in the NHK TV historical drama series "Atsuhime" (2008). He appeared in various movies, including *MEMORIES OF MATSUKO* (2006), *THE FOREIGN DUCK*, the *NATIVE DUCK AND GOD* (2007), *APRIL BRIDE* (2009), and *NODAME CANTABILE: THE MOVIE I / II* (2009 / 2010), which had strong followings among young men. He also appeared in many popular movies such as *TOAD'S OIL* (2009), *DEAR DOCTOR* (2009), *NO MORE CRY* (2009), and received numerous awards for his co-starring roles. He also appeared in *MAHORO EKIMAE TADA BENRIKEN* and *TAKE THE 'A' TRAIN*.

KOJI YAKUSHO (as KAGEYU)

In 1996 he received an astounding 14 awards for his leading roles in the movies *SHALL WE DANCE?*, *SLEEPING MAN*, and *SHABU GOKUDO*. He has appeared in numerous films that were shown in international film festivals, including *THE EEL* (1997, Cannes Film Festival Palm d'Or winner), *ALLEY CAT* (2000), *EUREKA* (2001, Cannes Film Festival FIPRESCI Prize, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury), and *WARM WATER UNDER A RED BRIDGE* (2001, Chicago Film Festival Best Actor). He has also appeared in various highly-acclaimed non-Japanese movies, including *MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA* (2005), and *BABEL* (2007, Golden Globe for Best Picture). In 2009 he broadened his scope by achieving his directorial debut with *TOAD'S OIL*. He also appeared in the well-known movies *13 ASSASSINS* and *THE LAST RONIN*.

HIKARI MITSUSHIMA (as MIHO)

After making her debut in the music group Folder, she made her movie debut in *REBIRTH OF MOTHRA II* (1997). She then appeared in *DEATH NOTE* and *DEATH NOTE: THE LAST NAME* (2006).

Her appearances in *LOVE EXPOSURE* (2008), *PRIDE* (2009), and *THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF CAPTAIN KUHIO* (2009) were highly-acclaimed, leading to numerous awards including the Hochi Film Awards Best New Talent and the Kinema Junpo Awards Best 10 Supporting Actress Award.

In 2010 she appeared in RINCO'S RESTAURANT, A PIECE OF OUR LIFE, and SAWAKO DECIDES, and won Supporting Actress Award by the Japan Academy Prize for her role in the much acclaimed movie, VILLAIN. At present she is considered to be one of Japan's most promising young actresses. Her upcoming projects include RABBIT HORROR 3D and SMUGGLER.

FILMMAKERS

TAKASHI MIIKE (Director)

Takashi Miike has become synonymous with the promise of a unique onscreen experience, regardless of the genre. Highly prolific, Miike is credited with over 80 films since making his directorial debut in the early 90s.

Landmark films in Miike's illustrious career include: AUDITION, ICHI THE KILLER, ONE MISSED CALL, THE GREAT YOKAI WAR, THE CITY OF LOST SOULS, VISITOR Q, GRAVEYARD OF HONOR, SUKIYAKI WESTERN DJANGO, YATTERMAN, the CROWS ZERO films and the DEAD OR ALIVE yakuza trilogy.

Although his films are often associated with black humor, inventive violence and audacious style, Miike has shown his versatility in other genres: children's films (ZEBRAMAN), sensitive dramas (THE BIRD PEOPLE IN CHINA), period pieces (SABU) and even a horror musical (THE HAPPINESS OF THE KATAKURIS).

Born in 1960 near Osaka, Miike harbored a passion for motorbike racing and a disdain for academics growing up. He attended the Yokohama Vocational School of Broadcast and Film and then worked for nearly a decade in television. Miike became an assistant director in film to directors like Shohei Imamura and Hideo Onchi, and Japan's "V-Cinema" (direct to video) boom of the early 90s helped his break into directing his own films. For years, he alternated between V-Cinema and higher-budget productions.

In 2005, Miike directed *Demon Pond*, a Kabuki-style play. Miike has also occasionally appeared as an actor in his films as well as others, notably Eli Roth's HOSTEL. Miike's last film, the samurai epic 13 ASSASSINS, screened in competition at the 2010 Venice Film Festival.

CREDITS

CAST

Ebizo Ichikawa	Hanshiro Tsukumo
Eita	Motome Chijiwa
Hikari Mitsushima	Miho
Naoto Takenaka	Tajiri
Munetaka Aoki	Hikokuro Omodaka
Hirofumi Arai	Hayatonosho Matsusaki
Kazuki Namioka	Umanosuke Kawabe
Yoshihisa Amano	Sasaki
Takehiro Hira	Lord li Kamonnokami Naotaka
Ippei Takahashi	Naito
Ayumu Saito	Fujita
Goro Daimon	Landlard
Takashi Sasano	Priest
Baijaku Nakamura	Jinnai Chijiwa
Koji Yakusho	Kageyu Saito

CREW

Director	Takashi Miike
Original Story by	Yasuhiko Takibuchi
Screenplay	Kikumi Yamagishi
Music	Ryuichi Sakamoto
Produced by	Toshiaki Nakazawa Jeremy Thomas
Executive Producers	Yo Hattori Suketsugu Noda Yoshio Irie Toshiaki Okuno Akemiko Noguchi Eiichi Noguchi Tatsuro Hatanaka Tomoko Machida Hiroaki Kitano
Producers	Toichiro Shiraishi Shingo Sekine Toru Hattori Kensuke Zushi Yasushi Uchida

	Shinjiro Yokoyama Misako Saka Sigeji Maeda
Cinematographer	Nobuyasu Kita
Lighting Designer	Yoshimi Watabe
Sound Recordist	Jun Nakamura
Art Designer	Yuji Hayashida
Set Decoration	Akira Sakamoto Kazuto Kagoo
Editor	Kenji Yamashita
Sound Effect	Kenji Shibasaki
Sword Action Coordinator	Keiji Tsujii
Costume Designer	Kazuko Kurosawa
Line Producers	Tomoyuki Imai Toshiki Komatsu
Casting Producer	Yuriko Kitada
Art Coordinator	Yasuto Takemura
Co-Line Producer	Noriko Koyanagi
Associate Producer	Tetsuya Fujimura
Assistant Director	Ryosuke Kanesaki
Production Manager	Shinya Zenda