

a **SONO SION** film

(*Himizu, Guilty of Romance, Cold Fish, Love Exposure*)



The Land of Hope
Written and directed by SONO SION
園子温

FILM FACT

www.kibounokuni.jp/ (Japanese) picturesdept.com/titles/hope/ (English)

Written and Directed by SONO SION (SONO as family name, SION si-o-n as first name)

Cast: Isao Natsuyagi, Naoko Otani, Jun Murakami, Megumi Kagurazaka, Yutaka Shimizu, Hikari Kajiwaru, Daikichi Sugawara, Takashi Yamanaka, Kenzou Kawarasaki, Mariko Tsutsui and Denden

Music: "Adagio" from Symphoney No. 10 by Mahler (Naxos Japan)

Produced by: Yuji Sadai, Mizue Kunizane, Yuko Shiomaki

Co-Producers: Adam Torel (Third Window Films, UK), James Liu (Joint Entertainment International, Taiwan)

Japanese Distributed by: Bitters End, inc. World Sales: pictures dept. co. ltd.

2012/Japan-UK-Taiwan/133 Min./Color/1:1.85

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Japanese Theatrical Release on October 20 (Sat.), 2012 at Shinjuku Piccadilly, Human Trust Cinema Yurakucho, and other theaters nationwide!

Distributed by: Bitters End, inc. | World Sales: pictures dept. co. ltd.

TORONTO SCREENING SCHEDULE

The Land of Hope [Contemporary World Cinema]

AUDIENCE	DATE	TIME	VENUE
Public 1	09/07/12	9:45PM	Winter Garden Theatre
Press & Industry 1	09/08/12	6:00PM	Scotiabank 7
Public 2	09/09/12	3:30PM	Cineplex Yonge & Dundas 3
Press & Industry 2	09/12/12	5:00PM	Scotiabank 11
Public 3	09/15/12	3:30PM	Cineplex Yonge & Dundas 3

INTERNATIONAL PR for TORONTO 2012

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Producers attending tiff 2012

Yuko Shiomaki, Sept. 5 to Sept. 13 | picturesdept@picturesdept.com

Mizue Kunizane, Sept.6 to Sept. 11 | dongyu@picturesdept.com

Yuji Sadai Sept. 6 to Sept. 12

INTRODUCTION

After a sequence of stunning productions, SONO SION steps to the next level in his filmmaking career by portraying a story of families who struggle to live with dignity—.

Gifted with a rare talent broaching such “taboo” subjects as sex and violence through films that are written based on actual incidents, including but not limited to *Love Exposure*, *Cold Fish*, and *Guilty of Romance*, Sion Sono has been overtaking international film festivals every time he introduces his productions to the world. After presenting *Cold Fish* for the Orizzonti section of the 67th Venice International Film Festival and *Guilty of Romance* for the directors fortnight of the 64th Cannes Film Festival, Sono, with his last movie *Himizu*, successfully brought the Marcello Mastroianni Award for Best New Young Actor and Actress to its main cast Shota Sometani and Fumi Nikaido at the 68th Venice International Film Festival. Now, as a theme for his latest movie, Sono has chosen to address the biggest taboo facing Japan today—“*genpatsu*” (nuclear power station).

Suddenly caught in an unprecedented and disastrous situation, three couples experience “despair,” “coexistence,” and “hope” as they struggle to survive

The story begins in 20XX, several years after the Great East Japan Earthquake, in a fictitious prefecture Nagashima-ken. Yasuhiko Ono is a dairy farmer and lives his peaceful and satisfying life with his wife Chieko, his son Yoichi, and Yoichi’s wife Izumi. Their lives are uprooted when a massive 8.3 magnitude earthquake hits off the east coast of the prefecture, followed by a horrible accident at a nearby nuclear power plant. The area within a 20-kilometer radius of the plant was shut down as a danger zone, which ironically divided the Ono family whose house sits just outside the zone from their next door neighbor, the Suzuki Family, who is now forced to abandon their house across the street from the Ono’s and evacuate to a shelter. Yasuhiko, however, vividly remembers what once happened several years back to his country. He declares his disbelief in the government and decides to stay home while sending Yoichi and Izumi to a shelter. After moving to another town, Izumi finds out she is pregnant. Being in the agony of not knowing how to best protect her baby, Izumi’s fears against radiation continues to mount.

“This is an invisible war. We see no bullets or missiles, but they are flying out there all over the place!”

Meanwhile, the Suzuki Family’s young son Mitsuru and his girlfriend Yoko keep searching for Yoko’s missing family on foot as they walk step by step through debris that has totally covered and filled an oceanfront town.

The nuclear plant soon lost control, causing the worst case scenario to become a reality. Yasuhiko’s house is now included in the danger zone, and the evacuation is about to be

enforced in a few days. For them and others who have lost their homes and are forced to live in the fear of radiation, will there really be a hopeful future waiting after this endless despair and anxiety?

A new masterpiece of advocacy entertainment keenly cuts out scenes from today's society while questioning how we human beings should be

Immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, film director Sion Sono shot his last movie *Himizu*, in which he expressed his affirmation of hope for the post-3/11 era of Japan. As more than a year has passed since the nation's worst tragedy in the history, Sono, in his new film, attempts to reveal the hardships that the nation has had to confront following the disaster. Based on the facts he has directly seen and learned from his repeated research trips to disaster sites, Sono successfully reproduces the feelings and emotions of victims, who are suddenly thrown into an unparalleled human crisis. His original story is fictional yet provides a detailed recording of the reality Japan has recently faced. In sharing similarity to works by preceding Japanese master filmmakers such as Shohei Imamura and Nagisa Oshima, this film vividly captures real people's lives as well as human dignity through a keen and sharp observation of society. In this film, Sono again questions and seeks the true meaning of human existence by using a current social issue as the base of the story, which is a universally-approved filmmaking method that is often favored by Clint Eastwood, Steven Spielberg, and other globally-known directors. This film makes a new masterpiece of advocacy entertainment for its attempt in bringing to light the inside of the human spirit that was covered but not fully reported by the media during the aftermath of the disaster.

Powerful performances by seasoned actors who support today's Japanese film industry; Intense and strong storytelling and overflowing poetic sentiment in the SONO SION's world

Casted as the story's main character Yasuhiko is *Isao Natsuyagi*, a seasoned actor known for his performances in supporting roles of many Japanese films since the 1960's. *Naoko Otani*, who plays Yasuhiko's wife Chieko, has been highly acclaimed for her performances in various movies including "*Zigeunerweisen*" (1980). *Jun Murakami*, one of the leading actors in the Japanese independent film industry, plays the role of Yasuhiko and Chieko's son Yoichi; and *Megumi Kagurazaka*, a regular cast member in Sono's past films, plays the role of Yoichi's wife Izumi. Other cast members include: *Denden* (father of the Suzuki family), *Mariko Tsusui* (mother of the Suzuki family), *Yutaka Shimizu* (Mitsuru, son of Suzuki family), and *Hikari Kajiwara* (Mitsuru's girlfriend), as well as *Daikichi Sugawara*, *Takashi Yamanaka*, *Kenzou Kawarasaki* (neighbors of the Ono family). Also appearing in cameo roles are *Yusuke Iseya*, *Mitsuru Fukikoshi*, *Gitan Otsuru*, and *Tetsushi Tanaka* who each have friendships with Sono. The film was completed as a Japan-UK-Taiwan coproduction with financial support

from film production companies in UK and Taiwan, both of which have great admiration for and trust in Sono's talent. The film does not contain the graphic expressions of sex and violence, which have been common elements in Sono's previous films. Instead, backed with the exquisite music of Adagio from Mahler's Symphony No. 10, the tranquil and beautiful images on the screen simply tell the earnest attitudes of families towards their new lives resulting from the tragic disaster. With Sono's strong and intense storytelling technique and a poetic sentiment that overflows throughout the story, the lives of three couples are portrayed as they experience "despair," "coexistence" and "hope." In this film, Sion Sono takes a step to the next level in his filmmaking career through his unseen side as a social filmmaker, which brings a definitive and unparalleled impact to many viewers.

STORY

**The following summary includes the story ending; please read this after viewing the film, if you wish. Also, please be aware that some audience do not want to read endings before they see the film.*

This is an invisible war!

In 20XX, Yasuhiko Ono (Isao Natsuyagi) runs a dairy farm in Ohara Town, Nagashima Prefecture with his wife Chieko (Naoko Otani), son Yoichi (Atsushi Murakami), and Yoichi's wife Izumi (Megumi Kagurazaka). Although Chieko has been suffering from dementia for a while, the family feels satisfied with their peaceful life in taking care of cows and growing broccoli. Their next door neighbors, the Suzuki family, seem to enjoy their lives as well. Mr. Suzuki (Denden) and Mrs. Suzuki (Mariko Tsutsui) never stop complaining about their son Mitsuru (Yutaka Shimizu) who spends most of his time hanging out with his girlfriend Yoko (Hikari Kajiwara), but they have always been a close family. Yasuhiko also has a good friend with whom he keeps contact in Oba Town, which is next to Ohara Town. Oba Town has a nuclear power plant and is known as the "genpatsu town."

It is another normal day at the farm, and Yasuhiko is working in his cowshed when he hears the rumbling of the earth and then suddenly is shaken by a massive earthquake. The epicenter of the 8.3 magnitude quake was off the east coast of Nagashima Prefecture. After confirming there is no major damage around him, Yasuhiko tries to call his friend in Oba Town, but with no success.

"Hope everything is alright at the plant," Yasuhiko's concerns continue to arise. He searches the closet and digs out the Geiger counter he bought years ago when the accident at Chernobyl occurred. As Yoichi tries to calm him down saying the radio is reporting no news about the plant, Yasuhiko disagrees with his son and tells him instead that he has no trust in the government. Soon enough, the 20-kilometer radius of the Nagashima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant is designated as a danger zone for mandatory evacuation. The zone ironically divides Ono outside the zone and Suzuki included the zone, just by a street.

On a bus that is taking the Suzuki family to a shelter, other evacuees are upset and angry. "You remember what happened in Fukushima. We will never be able to return home!" In response, Mitsuru rebukes the evacuees and reminds them, "We are at least alive, so we will work it out somehow!"

Meanwhile, at the house of the Ono family, Yasuhiko tries to persuade Yoichi to leave the house and moves to a shelter immediately. Yoichi and Izumi reluctantly agree to their father's plea and leave the house full of regret. Meanwhile, Chieko keeps telling Yoichi that she wants to go home. Because of her disease she forgets what she has just said.

A hydrogen explosion is reported at the Nagashima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Suzuki spends unsettling days at the shelter with its bulletin boards filled with messages seeking confirmation of the safety of friends and families. As Yoko's family remains missing, Mitsuru and Yoko walk through the oceanfront town which is covered with debris. A group of children who seem to be left alone come out from nowhere and disappear soon after telling the couple that Japanese people will have to walk one step after another.

Soon after moving temporarily to another town, Izumi finds out that she is in the fifth week of her pregnancy. Izumi's fear against radiation soars after she happens to hear a story of breast milk contamination with cesium. Izumi begins to wear a radiation suit even at home, and furiously resists Yoichi as he tries to assure her of the safety; "Are you seeing this? It's an invisible war. We may not see actual bullets or missiles, but they are flying out there—those invisible bullets—all over the place!"

On a visit to his family home, Yoichi finds Yasuhiko being frustrated by Yoichi's undecided attitude and trying to convince him that he and Izumi should go farther away. "It is just that stakes sticking out are to be hammered down. You must leave. Leaving is your strength." Yoichi finally makes up his mind and declares, to those who ridicule Izumi's reaction, his support to her by defending that she is simply trying to protect her child.

The government orders a slaughter of cows, and officials from the city office come to Yasuhiko to encourage him to evacuate. In response, Yasuhiko points out tall trees in his yard and firmly reminds the officials that, having lived with those trees throughout his life, he has no willingness to leave the trees, or the sign of his life and presence behind, just for the sake of continuing his life elsewhere.

As the TV news reports meltdowns at the power plant, Chieko puts on her yukata and disappears from home as she is led by emergency whistles and bells. Yasuhiko went to search for his wife and found her at a place where the two made good memories together, which is now within the off-limits area.

After learning more chilling facts about radiation from doctors, Yoichi decides to move farther with Izumi. Yoichi returns briefly to his parents' house to see his parents once again and for the last time. Yoichi tightly hugs his father.

Finally, a notice of mandatory evacuation is delivered to Yasuhiko and Chieko. As Chieko repeats her request to go home as she has been doing, Yasuhiko finally agrees that it may indeed be time for them to go home. After personally killing all of his cows in the cowshed with a hunting gun, Yasuhiko tells Chieko that he will be with her together forever and also that he loves her. The couple exchange a kiss, and an echo of

a gunshot follows it.

After having driven far away from home, Yoichi and Izumi find their Geiger counter still responding with loud beeps.

Mitsuru and Yoko continue to walk forward, step after step.

The DIRECTOR

Writer/Director: SONO SION

Born in Aichi Prefecture, Sion Sono received his first grand prize in his filmmaking career in 1987 at the Pia Film Festival (PFF) for his film *Otoko no Hanamichi*. He later filmed *Bicycle Sighs* with the PFF scholarship money, which was presented with an official invitation to the Berlin International Film Festival and over 30 other film festivals. Since then, Sono has been acclaimed for his talent every time he releases his new movies and has received numerous awards internationally. Besides making movies, Sono has written and direct popular TV dramas, including *Jiko Keisatsu* (2006, 2007/EX).

Of Sono's recent works, *Love Exposure* received the Caligari Film Award and the FIPRESCI Prize at the 59th Berlin International Film Festival and the agnès b. Award at the 9th TOKYO FILMeX; *Cold Fish* has been officially presented at many international film festivals, including the Orizzonti section at the 67th Venice International Film Festival and also the Vanguard section at the 35th Toronto International Film Festival, and has become a record-breaking hit at the Theatre Shinjuku; *Guilty of Romance* was presented for the directors fortnight at the 64th Cannes International Film Festival; and *Himizu* has brought the Marcello Mastroianni Award for Best New Young Actor and Actress to its two main cast members at the 68th Venice International Film Festival. There is no question that Sion Sono is one of the most prospective geniuses in Japan's film industry.

INTERVIEW with SONO SION

Q: Your previous film Himizu was also about the story after the 3/11 disaster. Why did you decide to shoot another film on the “post 3/11” theme?

A: Making one film just wasn't enough. I wanted to shoot another “post 3/11” film but this time with a direct and straight approach. *Himizu* was made immediately after the disaster, and that movie was produced based on the two major shocks that we experienced—the tsunami and the nuclear power plant accident. Over time, however, I began to see these two events as totally different issues. For a new film, I wanted to address exclusively the nuclear power plant.

Q: Can you explain why you think your interest has intensified towards the nuclear power plants?

A: The problem that surrounds the nuclear power plants is different from the other in that the goal for recovery cannot really be planned. This is a very important and serious issue. I wanted to show the depth of the issue that everybody now knows is a problem. The media repeatedly reported such stories as families who were forced to live separately or the dairy farmer who killed himself after the accident. But those news reports or documentary programs are the record of “information.” Instead, what I wanted to depict and record in this film were the “feelings” and “emotions” that were seen at disaster sites.

Q: You actually visited the disaster sites for research.

A: I visited Ishinomaki, where I shot *Himizu*, as well as Fukushima, many times. There I was able to speak to local people, including city hall employees and shelter residents. Based on what I heard from them, I started writing a scenario little by little. I was determined to exclude my imagination as much as possible from dialogues and scenes, and instead tried to reflect what I have seen and heard as is in the script. I could have made up things if I wanted, but they would not give depth to the story. I avoided my own fantasy in the story.

Q: You let one of the characters in the movie describe the situation surrounding them as “an invisible war.” Would it be appropriate to say that it represents your perception of the “post 3/11” lives of people?

A: I never intended to make a statement or to advocate a political opinion in this movie. I see no significant effect in making a film just to discuss whether a nuclear power plant is good or bad. Films are a device with which you can directly throw a big question out to viewers. So it was satisfying for me just to recognize what is going on there and transform it into a film. I thought, by doing so, more unseen things would actually come

into our sight. During my research trips, I visited some of the most heavily-damaged areas, but I also found that there are quiet and unruffled places. Thus, it was not my desire from the beginning to make this movie sensational.

Q: The movie leaves a clear impression to viewers that it is the story about the nuclear power plant and also the story about families.

A: That should be a base of discussions if we want to talk about nuclear power plants or radiations. Without established human relationships, people would not find sadness or anger in this issue, even after experiencing 3/11. Consequently, it came out as a film about the family, and a story about people living in a land where they were born.

Q: In particular, the movie portrays a close relationship between a father and a son, a theme that has often appeared in your past movies.

A: It was an inevitable result that came out through a process of incorporating what I have learned from the research into the story. When describing human relationship, I am not interested in relationships between lovers or coworkers, so I naturally tend to focus on the blood relationship.

Q: Himizu was the story of “hope” winning over “despair.” In your new film, “hope” sounds very cynical regardless of its title, “The Land of Hope.”

A: After I started writing a script, I decided to let the story go either in the direction of a desperate ending or a hopeful ending. So I did not aim to show hope in the film. In fact, in my research, I did not find a lot that could lead to hope. Nonetheless, I believe that, although we may not see hope in tangible ways, hopes could eventually grow in people’s mind.

Q: Of the significant characteristics of this film, beautiful images and pictures should be noted in particular. Did you have any goals in cinematography this time?

A: My intention was to capture people’s daily lives, so I decided to fix the camera onto the tripod and film each scene by one long take. It’s like a “royal road” technique in Japanese filmmaking. I wanted to avoid randomly taking numerous short shots with a handheld camera and connecting them later. I was pickier on cinematography as never before—I usually let my camera guys take care of it and would rather not involve myself in it. For this film, however, I wanted to be precise about sizes and everything else. My goal was to record present sceneries of the disaster sites, so how they are shown on the screen was very important to me.

Q: Was there any special reason for selecting Adagio from Mahler’s Symphony No. 10 as a film’s theme music?

A: Mahler has always been my favorite, and in fact I had already selected this particular piece as theme for my new film even before I began writing a script. During my research trips to the disaster sites, I occasionally played this piece in the car while searching ideas for a movie. In my opinion, “Adagio” has a melody that alternatively expresses darkness and brightness, and I thought the music was perfect to describe an image of light appearing through the unsettledness. In fact, I even thought I should just translate this music piece into a movie script.

Q: Performances by cast members also deliver a sense of tension and urgency. Did you have your opinions reflected in casting also?

A: Rediscovering Isao Natsuyagi meant a lot to this movie. Along with Naoko Otani, he has a long career in acting for many films that I watched when I was in high school. He is an actor from that generation and still can express that earthiness of the dairy farmer and his appreciation of the world. He was chosen from many other candidates.

Q: How about Jun Murakami and Megumi Kagurazaka, who played Yoichi and his wife?

A: I wrote this scenario by putting myself in the position of Yoichi, so their characters actually include part of me—such as Yoichi’s remaining immaturity, for example.

Q: In making a movie on a theme of the nuclear power plant accident, what have been major challenges to you?

A: From the production side, finding financial sources was harder than ever. I was reassured that making this kind of movie in Japan today is really difficult. The situation might have been different if the film were about “working together for better future” or something; no one really wants to get involved in the one that speaks of dark sides of the issue. Without that, however, this movie were not worth making. So I eventually sought for and found supports from overseas.

Q: The movie gives an impression that it has showed a new side of Sion Sono as a social filmmaker.

A: Personally, I don’t see myself as a social advocator so much. However, after completing this film, I did feel that I was not done yet. I am aware of my needs to continue making more films about radiations, about Fukushima. I have no plan to make a trilogy series nor do I know how soon I would start shooting a next film, or how long I would wait to do so instead. I can say at least that this will be the theme for my future movies for a while.

CAST

Isao Natsuyagi (as Yasuhiko Ono)

Born December 25, 1939 in Tokyo, Natsuyagi began acting while he was studying French at Keio University (from which he later withdrew). He became a trainee actor at the Bungakuza Theater and then transferred to the training center of the Haiyuza Theater. In 1966, he made his movie debut in *Hone made Shaburu* (1966; directed by Tai Kato) and took the main role in *Kiba Ookaminosuke* (1966; directed by Hideo Gosha). Natsuyagi has been playing a wide range of rolls, from main characters to evil ones, for numerous movies and theater productions, while appearing in TV dramas including NHK TV drama series. In recent years, Natsuyagi has been featured in *Mt. Tsurugidake* (2009; directed by Daisaku Kimura), *Andalucia Megami-no Hofuku* (2011; directed by Hiroshi Nishitani), and also a foreign movie *My Way* (2011; directed by Kang Je-Kyu). In 2012, he has also been casted in *Nobo no Shiro* (directed by Isshin Inudo and Shinji Higuchi), which is scheduled to be in theaters later this year.

Naoko Otani (as Chieko Ono)

Born April 3, 1950 in Tokyo, Otani was a high school student when she made her film debut in *The Human Bullet* (1968; directed by Kihachi Okamoto), being selected for a heroin through the audition. In the following year, Otani was casted for NHK's morning drama series, *Nobuko and Grandma*, and became a nationally reknown actress. Since then, Otani has been featured in a number of films, TV dramas, and theater productions. Otani received the Kinema Junpo Best Actress Award for her performance in *Zigeunerweisen* (1980; directed by Seijun Suzuki) and the Takasaki Film Festival Best Supporting Actress Award for *Hashi no Nai Kawa* (1992; directed by Yoishi Higashi). Past films in which she has been casted include *Kaikyo* (1982; directed by Shiro Moritani), *Double Bed* (1983; directed by Toshiya Fujita), *Hebiichigo* (2003; directed by Miwa Nishikawa), *Sayonara COLOR* (2005; directed by Naoto Takenaka), and *What a Wonderful Life!!* (2009; directed by Yuichi Kimura).

Jun Murakami (as Yoichi Ono)

Born July 23, 1973 in Osaka, Murakami was a popular model for fashion magazines before he made a movie debut in *Puru-puru Tenshi-teki Kyujitsu* (1993; directed by Izo Hashimoto). Since then, Murakami has been expanding his career in TV dramas, theater productions, TV commercials, DJ work, and more. In 2000, Murakami received supporting actor awards for his performances in *Nabbie's Love* (1999; directed by Yuji Nakae), *Futei no Kisetsu* (2000; directed by Ryuichi Hiroki), and *New Battles without Honor and Humanity* (2000; directed by Junji Sakamoto). This is the third movie by Sion Sono in which Murakami appears after *Into a Dream* (2005) and *Himizuru* (2012). In 2012, Murakami has been casted in *Kazoku no Kuni* (directed by Yang Yong-hi), *Bakugyaku Familia* (directed by Kazuyoshi Kumakiri), and *A Road Stained Crimson* (directed by Tetsuhiko Kumano) that are scheduled to be shown in theaters later this year.

Megumi Kagurazaka (as Izumi Ono)

Born September 28, 1981 in Okayama, Kagurazaka made her debut as a model in 2004 and later switched her career to acting. Kagurazaka extended her acting career by appearing in such films as *Toku no Sora ni Kieta* (2007; directed by Isao Yukisada), *Pride* (2009; directed by Shusuke Kaneko), *Dotei Horo-ki* (2009; directed by Yuichi Onuma), and *Jusannin no Shikaku* (2010; directed by Takashi Miike). In 2011, her performance in Sion Sono's *Cold Fish* was highly acclaimed, and together with her energetic performance in another Sono's work *Guilty of Romance*, she received the supporting actress awards at Osaka Cinema Festival 2012 and the 33rd Yokohama Film Festival. This is her fourth appearance in a movie directed by Sono. In 2012, she is also casted in *The Incredible Truth* (directed by Sam Leong) which is to be released in Mainland China later this year.

Yutaka Shimizu (as Mitsuru Suzuki)

Born February 5, 1985 in Kanagawa, Shimizu is a graduate of Japan Academy of Moving Images acting course. Past films in which he has appeared include *Aoi Uta Nodojiman Seishun-hen* (2006; directed by Satoshi Kaneda), *Break Through!* (2007; directed by Kazuyuki Izutsu), *Snow Prince* (2009; directed by Joji Matsuoka), *Kanikosen* (2009; directed by SABU), *Oto Na Ri* (2009; directed by Naoto Kumazawa), *Summer Wars* (voiceover)(2009; directed by Mamoru Hosoda), *Tokyo Jima* (2010; directed by Makoto Shinozaki). This is his fourth appearance in Sion Sono's productions after *Kikyu Club Sonogo* (2006), *Love Exposure* (2009), and *Himizu* (2012)

Hikari Kajiwara (as Yoko)

Born December 21, 1992 in Tokyo, Kajiwara made her debut at age 7 on the stage of Tsuka Kohei Theater. She has been successfully expanding her acting career, appearing in TV dramas including *Korogashi Ogin* (2003/NHK), *Jo-oh no Kyoshitsu* (2005/NTV), *Enka no Jo-oh* (2007/NTV), *Sexy Voice and Robo* (2007/NTV), and *Gakko-ja Oshierarenai!* (2008/ NTV), and movies including *Kamen Rider Blade: Missing Ace* (2004; directed by Hidenori Ishida) and *Park and Love Hotel* (2007; directed by Izuru Kumasaka). Kajiwara is known for her performance in Sion Sono's *Cold Fish* as Mitsuko, a daughter of the main character. This is her second appearance in Sono's movie.

Mariko Tsutsui (as Meiko Suzuki)

Born October 13, 1962 in Yamanashi, Tsutsui began acting while she was a student at Waseda University by joining the Daisan Butai Theater operated by Shoji Kogami. Tsutsui made her stage debut in 1982 and since then appeared in almost all of the productions of Daisan Butai. Tsutsui has been actively expanding her acting career in fields of not only the stage but movies, TV dramas, and commercials, establishing an acclaim for her acting talent that allows her to play a wide variety of characters. She made her movie debut for a main role in *Otoko Tomodachi* (1994; directed by Takumi Yamaguchi). In recent years, Tsutsui has appeared in movies including *Welcome to the Quiet Room* (2007; directed by Suzuki Matsuo), *Achilles and the Tortoise* (2008;

directed by Takeshi Kitano), *Hero Show* (2010; directed by Kazuyuki Izutsu), and *Household X* (2001; directed by Kohki Yoshida).

Denden (as Ken Suzuki)

Born January 23, 1950 in Fukuoka, Denden has been active for the theater production of the “Hoshikuzu no Machi” series while appearing in the movie *CURE* (1997; directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa), bringing attention to his unbound, easy-going presence. He has appeared in major films such as *Yuki ni Negau Koto* (2006; directed by Kichitaro Negishi), *Climber's High* (2008; directed by Masato Harada), *Kabei: Our Mother* (2008; directed by Yoji Yamada), *Golden Slumber* (2010; directed by Yoshihiro Nakamura). For his performance as a merciless killer in Sion Sono's *Cold Fish* he successfully expanded his acting career, receiving numerous awards including Japan Academy Best Supporting Actor Award, Mainichi Film Supporting Actor Award, Hochi Film Supporting Actor Award, Yokohama Film Festival Supporting Actor Award, Kinema Junpo Supporting Actor Award, Tokyo Sports Film Supporting Actor Award, and Japan Internet Movie Award Supporting Actor Award. This is his fourth appearance in Sono's works, following *Be Sure to Share* (2009) and *Himizu* (2012).

Daikichi Sugawara (as Shimura)

Born April 4, 1960 in Miyagi, Sugawara has appeared many times in theater productions produced and directed by Ryuji Mizutani including the “Hoshikuzu no Machi” series. In 2006, Sugawara founded an acting unit with his wife Miyako Takeuchi and has been actively performing. With his physical gift and ability of fine expression, he has been casted in many TV productions and movies. He recently was casted in *Hebiichigo* (2002; directed by Miwa Nishikawa), *Hula Girls* (2006; directed by Lee Sang-il), *Happy Flight* (2008; directed by Shinobu Yaguchi), *Hayabusa Harukanaru Kikan* (2012; directed by Tomoyuki Takimoto), *Bokutachi Tokkyu* (2012; directed by Yoshimitsu Morita) and more.

Takashi Yamanaka (as Kato)

Born March 18, 1978 in Tokyo, Yamanaka has been active on stage for productions including *Oil* (2003; NODA MAP), *Omoinomama* (2011; Directed by Norimizu Ameya) while appearing in many TV dramas and commercials. Films in which Yamanaka was casted include *Matsugane Ransha Jiken* (2007; directed by Nobuhiro Yamashita), *All Around Us* (2008; directed by Ryosuke Hashiguchi), *Fish Story* (2009; directed by Yoshihiro Nakamura), *It's on Me* (2009; directed by Yoshimitsu Morita), *Villain* (2010; directed by Lee Sang-il), *Sketches of Kaitan City* (2010; directed by Kumakiri Kazuyoshi) and more.

Kenzou Kawarasaki (as Doctor)

Born November 3, 1943 in Tokyo, Kawarasaki has a long acting career since he made his first stage debut as a child for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Zenshinza Theater. He has been casted over a hundred TV dramas since then, including popular

productions such as *Taiyo ni Hoero* (NTV), *Takeda Shingen* (NHK Taiga Drama), *Kori no Sekai* (CX), and *Beautiful Life* (TBS). He has also appeared in films including *G.I. Samurai* (1979; directed by Kosei Saito), *Whiteout* (2000; directed by Setsuro Wakamatsu), *Bizan* (2007; directed by Isshin Inudo), *Sakurada Mongai no Hen* (2010; directed by Junya Sato) and more.

STAFF

Cinematography: Shigenori Miki

Born in 1969, Shigenori graduated from Japan Academy of Moving Images and began working as an assistant camera crew member for films such as *Katte ni Shiyagare!! Godatsu Keikaku* (1995) and *Katte ni Shiyagare!! Dasshutsu Keikaku* (1995) directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa, and *Tokarev* (1994; directed by Junji Sakamoto) and TV commercials by Yoshihiko Ueda. He joined as an assistant cameraman for *Ikiterumono wa Inainoka* (2012; directed by Gakuryu Ishii) and other films and also as a lighting engineer for *Kodokuna Wakusei* (2011; directed by Takefumi Tsutsui), *Yoru ga Owaru Basho* (2011; directed by Daisuke Miyazaki). He joined Sono's production for the main camera for *THE ROOM* (1993) and also for the "B" camera for *Love Exposure* (2009), *Guilty of Romance* (2011), and *Himizu* (2012).

Lighting: Matsukuma Shinichi

Born in 1965, Matsukuma graduated from Yokohama Broadcast and Film Academy and made his debut as a lighting director for *GEMINI* (1999; directed by Shinya Tsukamoto). Matsunaga has been involved in a number of productions as a lighting director for many movie productions since then, including *KT* (2002; directed by Junji Sakamoto), *One Missed Call* (2004; directed by Takashi Miike), *TOKYO!* (2008; directed by Michel Gondry), *Osaka Hamlet* (2009; directed by Fujiro Mitsuishi), *Salaryman NEO* (2011; directed by Teruyuki Yoshida), and *Gekko no Kamen* (2012; directed by Itsuji Itao). This is his second participation in a Sion Sono production, following *Exte* (2007).

Recording: Hajime Komiya

Komiya is a recording technician of Cinema Sound Works. Komiya began his career by working in *Omoi no Iro* (2004; directed by Yasushi Kyan) and since then has joined many film productions including *Koneko no Namida* (2008; directed by Toshiyuki Morioka), *Instant Numa* (2009; directed by Satoshi Miki), *Tenohira no Shiawase* (2010; directed by Yudai Kato), *RAILWAYS* (2011; directed by Masatoshi Kurakata), and *Shiawase no Pan* (2012; directed by Yukiko Mishima). He has been in other Sion Sono productions including *Kikyu Club Sonogo* (2006), *Love Exposure* (2009), and *Cold Fish* (2011).

Editing: Junichi Ito

Born in 1974, Ito graduated from Japan Academy of Moving Images and joined JAYFILM. He has participated in a number of Sono's films, including *Into a Dream* (2005), *Strange Circus* (2005), *Noriko's Dinner Table* (2006), *Kikyu Club Sonogo* (2006), *Exte* (2007), *Love Exposure* (2009), *Be Sure to Share* (2009), *Cold Fish* (2011), *Guilty of Romance* (2011), and *Himizu* (2012).