

For Immediate Release

HKIFF47 TO SHOWCASE COMPLETE ITAMI JUZO RETROSPECTIVE

21 February 2023 (Hong Kong) – The 47th Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF47) will celebrate the 90th birth anniversary of the maverick Japanese director Itami Juzo with a complete retrospective of his ten films, all digitally restored in 4K.

The son of legendary director Itami Mansaku, Itami Juzo was born in Kyoto in 1933. Before making his mark as an actor with award-winning performances in Kon Ichikawa's *The Makioka Sisters* and Morita Yoshimitsu's *The Family Game*, the versatile Itami had successful careers in designing, writing, and even magazine editing.

A late starter, the then 51-year-old Itami directed his debut feature in 1984. The bawdy and witty satire **THE FUNERAL** signalled the arrival of a filmmaker who was not afraid to confront the absurdity of Japanese culture's traditional and conservative aspects.

Acclaimed for his rich filmography that abounds in humorous, sensual and surreal pleasures, Itami's best-known comedies – **Tampopo (Dandelion)** and **THE SUPERMARKET WOMAN** – showcase his gentle and whimsical sense of community spirit that celebrates the ordinary. A stylistic departure, the empathetic drama **A QUIET LIFE**, inspired by his brother-in-law and Nobel Prize laureate Oe Kenzaburo's novel, epitomises Itami's characteristic humanity.

Itami's collaboration with his wife and muse, actor Nobuko Miyamoto, brought fresh comedic perspectives to female-driven narratives. From berating corporate corruption in **A TAXING WOMAN** and its sequel, **A TAXING WOMAN'S RETURN**, to his satirical commentary on political conspiracy in **A-Ge-Man X Tales of a Golden Geisha**, Itami targeted shady practices and ills in the economically straitened post-Bubble Japanese society.

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Before his untimely demise, Itami built a reputation as an *enfant terrible* of Japanese cinema. His films, many of them international hits, are original, often mischievous, and constantly pushing boundaries. ***THE LAST DANCE*** and his final work, ***MARUTAI***, exemplify Itami's disdain against violence, intimidation and even mortality by drawing from his personal experience about the mob attack after the release of ***MINBO OR THE GENTLE ART OF JAPANESE EXTORTION***. They are powerful statements proclaiming his advocacy for fairness and justice, which have been his lifelong themes.

After last year's adjournment, HKIFF47 returns to its traditional dates. It will take place from 30 March to 10 April, featuring physical, in-theatre screenings and audience-engagement events alongside a bespoke online programme. HKIFF47 will unveil this year's complete programme in March.

The Itami Juzo Retrospective will feature the following ten films:

- 1984 ***THE FUNERAL***
- 1985 ***Tampopo (Dandelion)***
- 1987 ***A TAXING WOMAN***
- 1988 ***A TAXING WOMAN'S RETURN***
- 1990 ***A-Ge-Man X Tales of a Golden Geisha***
- 1992 ***MINBO OR THE GENTLE ART OF JAPANESE EXTORTION***
- 1993 ***THE LAST DANCE***
- 1995 ***A QUIET LIFE***
- 1996 ***THE SUPERMARKET WOMAN***
- 1997 ***MARUTAI***

To download more information:

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About The Hong Kong International Film Festival

The Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) is one of Hong Kong's most significant cultural events annually. It is Asia's longest-running platform for filmmakers, film professionals, and filmgoers worldwide to launch new work and experience outstanding films. HKIFF introduces world cinema to local audiences to enrich and deepen the understanding of Hong Kong moviegoers. Committed to discovering new talent, HKIFF premieres the breadth of Chinese cinema and showcases Asian talent. Festival-goers can enjoy world-class films, attend seminars hosted by leading filmmakers from around the world, visit film exhibitions, participate in receptions and parties, and more. HKIFF draws extensive coverage from the local and international media and has grown in importance as one of the premier platforms for launching films in Asia.

About The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited (HKIFFS) is a charitable, non-profit and non-governmental organisation dedicated to discovering and promoting creativity in film art and culture. It organises the annual Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) and the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF). Another highlight is the Cine Fan Summer International Film Festival (SummerIFF), held every August. In 2013, HKIFF introduced the repertory HKIFF Cine Fan Programme to enrich and deepen Hong Kong moviegoers' experience through a monthly programme of contemporary, retrospective, and thematic showcases. In 2021, HKIFFS restructured its film industry services and set up HKIFF Industry to promote and support non-mainstream film industry development through co-production, festival strategies, and overseas distribution (HKIFF Collection).

Official website: www.hkiff.org.hk

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