



CONTACTS:

Sara Groves, 42West | sara.groves@42west.net | 212.774.3685

Matt Hirsch, Bond Influence and Strategy | matth@bondinfluence.com | 212.354.2118

Sarah Dunn, GKIDS | sarah@gkids.com | 212.528.0500

**THE
KINGDOM
OF
DREAMS
AND
MADNESS**

A FILM BY MAMI SUNADA

PRESENTED BY
IN COOPERATION WITH
PRODUCED BY
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
MUSIC BY
PRODUCTION COMPANY

Dwango
Studio Ghibli
Nobuo Kawakami
Mami Sunada
Masakatsu Takagi
ENNET

Technical Specifications

FORMAT	Digital
ASPECT RATIO	1920 x 1080
SOUND	5.1ch
COLOR	Color
RUNNING TIME	118 minutes
LANGUAGE	Japanese with subtitles
PRODUCTION YEAR	2013

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Synopsis

Granted near-unfettered access to the notoriously insular Studio Ghibli, director Mami Sunada follows the three men who are the lifeblood of Ghibli – the eminent director Hayao Miyazaki, the producer Toshio Suzuki, and the elusive and influential “other director” Isao Takahata – over the course of a year as the studio rushes to complete two films, Miyazaki’s *The Wind Rises* and Takahata’s *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya*. The result is a rare “fly on the wall” glimpse of the inner workings of one of the world’s most celebrated animation studios, and an insight into the dreams, passion and singular dedication of these remarkable creators.

How Ghibli Became the Subject of a Documentary Feature

During the summer of 2012, a certain company approached Mami Sunada about creating a documentary about Studio Ghibli. Sunada had just finished working on her first theatrical feature documentary, *Death of a Japanese Salesman*, and was hoping to direct a narrative feature next. According to her, it remains a mystery to this day why she was the one who was approached about this Ghibli-related project, but having grown up watching Ghibli films since her childhood, she considered it an honor and instantly agreed to work on it.

From there, Sunada pitched several different ideas to Ghibli’s producer, Toshio Suzuki, but found progress slow to come. She was never given a flat-out “no,” but she was continually told, “I don’t really understand what you want to do.”

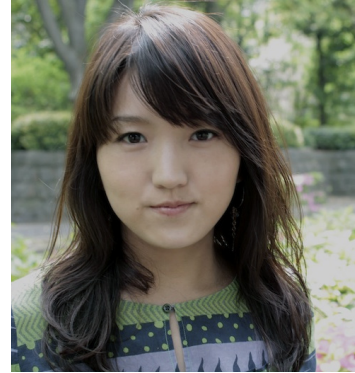
As Sunada pored through books after books about Ghibli, re-watched Ghibli films, and listened to people talk about Ghibli, her thoughts gradually changed. She then went back to Suzuki and boldly told him, “What I’d like to do is make a theatrical documentary about Ghibli.” The look on Suzuki’s face suddenly changed. “I see. Understood,” he said as he agreed to the proposal. There had been numerous TV documentaries about Ghibli, but apparently Sunada was the first to suggest a theatrical documentary feature about Ghibli.

Matters progressed quickly after that. By the fall of 2012, filming had begun as Sunada started frequenting Ghibli alone with a camera in hand, day after day. She began filming without a producer on board, until Suzuki introduced her to Dwango’s Nobuo Kawakami, who had been apprenticing as a producer at Ghibli.

Thus began Sunada’s nearly year-long adventure as she found herself getting a first-hand look at the never-before-seen inner workings of Studio Ghibli.

Director: Mami Sunada

Born in 1978, Mami Sunada studied documentary filmmaking while at Keio University before apprenticing as a director's assistant under Hirokazu Kore-eda and others. Her directorial debut, *Death of a Japanese Salesman*, a documentary about her father's last days after being diagnosed with cancer, garnered numerous first-time director awards. The film's revenue also surpassed 100 million yen at the box office, exceptional for a documentary.



Awards for *Death of a Japanese Salesman* (partial list):

28th Fumiko Yamaji Culture Award
36th Hochi Film Award for Best New Artist
52nd Directors Guild of Japan New Directors Award
62nd Ministry of Education Geijutsu Sensho Shinjin Award

Production credits (partial list):

Letter from a Yellow Cherry Blossom (2002), directed by Naomi Kawase
The Ichikawa Kon Story (2006), directed by Shunji Iwai
Still Walking (2007), directed by Hirokazu Kore-eda
Air Doll (2009), directed by Hirokazu Kore-eda
ANPO (2010), directed by Linda Hoaglund

Producer: Nobuo Kawakami

Born in 1968, Nobuo Kawakami graduated from Kyoto University Faculty of Engineering in 1990 and immediately joined Software Japan Laboratory. In 1997, he founded Dwango Company, Ltd. and became its president. He currently serves as Dwango's chairman while apprenticing as a producer at Studio Ghibli. Since 2006, he has been involved with the operation of the popular video sharing website Nico Nico Douga through the company Niwango, Inc. *The Kingdom of Dreams and Madness* is his first film as producer.

Music: Masakatsu Takagi

Born in 1979, Masakatsu Takagi is both a visual artist who processes material he films himself through animation and other techniques as well as a musician who creates work centered on the use of his long beloved piano. In 2009, Newsweek Japan named him one of the "100 Japanese People Respected by the World", earning him worldwide attention. He also scored Mamoru Hosoda's animated feature *Wolf Children* (2012).

HAYAO MIYAZAKI

Born in 1941, Hayao Miyazaki is one of the most acclaimed Japanese filmmakers of all time. In 1961, he joined Toei Animation, where he met Isao Takahata and began working as a key animator on numerous projects. He made his feature debut as a director with *The Castle of Cagliostro* (1979), then went on to make some of Japan's most beloved animated films, including *Castle in the Sky* (1986) and *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988). His latest film, *The Wind Rises* (2013), is his eleventh feature as director, and his last. In September 2013, he announced his retirement from feature-length filmmaking, though he indicated that he intends to continue working in some manner. His nickname is "Miya-san".

Feature Filmography (as director):

1979 *The Castle of Cagliostro*
1984 *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*
1986 *Castle in the Sky*
1988 *My Neighbor Totoro*
1989 *Kiki's Delivery Service*
1992 *Porco Rosso*
1997 *Princess Mononoke*
2001 *Spirited Away*
2004 *Howl's Moving Castle*
2008 *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea*
2013 *The Wind Rises*

ISAO TAKAHATA

Born in 1935, Isao Takahata is one of the most influential animation filmmakers in Japan, and a long-time collaborator of Miyazaki. Joining Toei Animation in 1959, he soon became one of its most prolific directors in addition to being active in its labor union. He has directed countless feature films and animated TV series (some of which were later edited into theatrical features), including *The Little Norse Prince Valiant* (1968), *Anne of Green Gables* (1979) and *Heidi a girl of the Alps* (1979). One of his most acclaimed films, *Grave of the Fireflies* (1986), was released as a double feature with Miyazaki's *My Neighbor Totoro*. His latest film, *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya*, was released in Japan on November 23, 2013. His nickname is "Paku-san". (Paku-paku is an onomatopoeia for the sound of eating, similar to "gobble-gobble".)

Feature Filmography (as director):

1968 *The Little Norse Prince Valiant*
1979 *Heidi a girl of the Alps*
1980 *Marco, From the Apennines to the Andes*
1981 *Downtown Story*
1982 *Gauche the Cellist*
1987 *The Story of Yanagawa Waterways (documentary)*
1988 *Grave of the Fireflies*
1991 *Only Yesterday*
1994 *Pom Poko*
1999 *My Neighbors the Yamadas*
2013 *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya*

TOSHIO SUZUKI

Born in 1948, Toshio Suzuki is the former president of Studio Ghibli and has been the producer for nearly every Ghibli film since *Only Yesterday* (1991). He joined the publishing company Tokuma Shoten in 1972 and launched the animation magazine *Animage* in 1978. After meeting Miyazaki, Suzuki commissioned a manga serial from Miyazaki that became *Nausicäa of the Valley of the Wind*, which was then adapted into an animated feature by Miyazaki himself. He helped Miyazaki and Takahata found Studio Ghibli before leaving Tokuma Shoten in 1989 to officially join Ghibli. Though he stepped down as president of Studio Ghibli in 2008, he continues to serve as its managing director and executive producer.

OTHER NOTABLES

Hideaki ANNO

Filmmaker best known for directing the enormously popular animated series *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. Responding to an ad for animators, Anno was hired by Miyazaki to draw the Giant Warrior at the end of *Nausicäa of the Valley of the Wind* (1984). He is considered one of the foremost filmmakers in Japan today.

Joe HISAISHI

One of the most acclaimed film composers in Japan, known for having scored every feature directed by Miyazaki since *Nausicäa of the Valley of the Wind* as well as seven of Takeshi Kitano's films. He also scored Yojiro Takita's Oscar-winning *Departures* (2008). He is also the composer for *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya*.

Goro MIYAZAKI

Trained and working as a landscape architect, Goro Miyazaki, son of Hayao Miyazaki was initially reluctant to follow in his father's footsteps, until Suzuki brought him in to design the Ghibli Museum in 1998. Also at Suzuki's behest, he directed *Tales from Earthsea* (2006) – despite fierce opposition from his father – as well as *From Up on Poppy Hill* (2011).

ABOUT *THE WIND RISES*

The Wind Rises is Hayao Miyazaki's final animated feature. After opening in Japan on July 20, 2013, the film has surpassed 120 billion yen at the box office. Fusing two real-life figures – Jiro Horikoshi and Tatsuo Hori – into one fictional character, the film tells the story of a young man who dreams of building planes, and his relationship to the great love of his life, Nahoko.

ABOUT *THE TALE OF THE PRINCESS KAGUYA*

The Tale of The Princess Kaguya is the long-awaited film from Isao Takahata and his first in 14 years. Adapted from the famous Japanese folktale *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter*, it tells the story of a mysterious girl – discovered as a baby inside a stalk of bamboo – who turns out to be a princess from the moon. The film was originally announced to open simultaneously with *The Wind Rises*, but its release date was pushed back to November 23, 2013.

ABOUT THE POSTER ART

Excerpted from Producer Toshio Suzuki's column in the Chunichi Shimbun newspaper

A film called *The Kingdom of Dreams and Madness* will be opening in November. It's directed by Mami Sunada. She's a young filmmaker who earned attention for a film titled *Death of a Japanese Salesman*, in which she follows her father's last days before he succumbs to cancer. She appeared before me one day, asking to make a documentary feature with Ghibli as the subject. Not a TV documentary, but a theatrical movie. What's the difference? I listened to her explanation but couldn't make much sense of it. Figuring I'll understand it in time, I agreed to it.

It's been perhaps just over a year since she showed up. The film is almost finished. It's produced by Dwango's Nobuo Kawakami.

Today I'll write about the film's poster and how it came about. It's already being displayed in theaters, so I'm sure many readers have already seen it. It shows Isao Takahata, Hayao Miyazaki and me seated side by side. Behind us is a large building. If you look closely, it becomes quite obvious that the building is drawn. The sign reads: "Nagomi-sou (Serenity House)". It would appear that the three of us are at a senior home. Look even closer and you'll find that the building is in fact Studio Ghibli's former office. The truth is that this poster art is a prank by Hayao Miyazaki.

While we were in production on *The Wind Rises*, the French photographer Nicolas Guérin visited Ghibli. His career is dedicated to photographing film directors and producers around the world. To be photographed by him is like a stamp of approval.

Miya-san suggested that it would be a good opportunity for the three of us to be photographed together. Indeed, it was true that the three of us had never sat down to have a proper picture taken. Miya-san is never shy about suggesting such things.

Takahata-san and I did as we were told. We gathered at the front gate of Ghibli. It was Miya-san who suggested that the three of us sit there together. Then the question became, who will sit in the middle? I suggested Takahata-san, who's the most senior among us, but somehow I found myself being placed in the middle. The photo session went off without a hitch.

Some time later, the photos arrived from France. There were perhaps five photos included. Miya-san chose the one he liked. Of course, he asked neither me nor Takahata-san for our opinions. Before we knew it, he drafted up a sketch of how we wanted the background and asked the resident art director Noboru Yoshida to draw it. In no time, the background was done. Miya-san wrote the "Nagomi-sou" sign himself.

Miya-san took a pair of scissors and cut the photo himself, placed it on the background and came up with an ad hoc composite. He then taped it to the wall of the producer's office.

People who visited the room peered curiously at this photo. Seeing that, Miya-san couldn't have been more tickled. They say we can always find a peaceful moment even when we're busy, but in Miya-san's case, that moment can turn into something rather elaborate.

When Nobuo Kawakami came to me asking about the poster design, I immediately suggested the photo to him. "It has to be this." Fortunately, Kawakami was thinking the same thing, and agreed.

ABOUT STUDIO GHIBLI

Studio Ghibli was founded in 1985 by animation directors Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata and is one of the most successful and well-respected animation studios in the world. Cultivating a creative force of talented directors, animators, and storytellers under the revered brilliance of Miyazaki and Takahata, Studio Ghibli's films have been praised for their originality, dazzling animation, and epic storytelling. The films have become a beloved part of Japanese popular culture, and have garnered worldwide acclaim from audiences and critics alike. Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* won the Academy Award® for Best Animated Feature of 2002 and in 2005 Miyazaki was named one of "the most influential people" by TIME Magazine.

ABOUT GKIDS

GKIDS is a distributor of award-winning feature animation for both adult and family audiences. The company has scored four Best Animated Feature Oscar® nominations – the most for an independent distributor – with *The Secret of Kells* in 2010, *A Cat in Paris* and *Chico & Rita* in 2012, and *Ernest & Celestine* in 2014. Upcoming releases include *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya* from Studio Ghibli cofounder Isao Takahata, and Tomm Moore's highly anticipated *Song of the Sea*. GKIDS also handles North American theatrical distribution for the Studio Ghibli library of films, one of the world's most coveted animation collections with titles *Spirited Away*, *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Princess Mononoke*, *Grave of the Fireflies* and others. GKIDS is longtime producer of the New York Int'l Children's Film Festival, an Oscar®-qualifying event and North America's largest festival of film for children and teens. NYICFF jury members include Uma Thurman, Susan Sarandon, Geena Davis, Gus van Sant, Christine Vachon, Henry Selick and James Schamus.

www.gkidsfilms.com

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