

#HandballStrive

#ハンド全力



PRODUCTION NOTE

The latest film by Daigo Matsui, following up on “Wonderful World End”, 65th Berlin IFF entry!

The film is directed by the versatile Daigo Matsui, who has churned out one hit after another, including *Wonderful World End* (’15) and *Japanese Girls Never Die* (’16), and winning praise at home and broad unique and vibrant perspective to depicting country high school life, driving at the heart of what’s important in a wo for his outside-the-box cinematic style. Matsui has also debuted as a novelist. Here, he brings arld increasingly controlled by social media.

Giving life-size vigor to the leading role of Masao Kiyota is the popular Seishiro Kato, whom many have followed since he was a child actor. The role of his childhood friend, Okamoto, is played by Kotaro Daigo, who rocketed to attention as the lead voice in the Makoto Shinkai- anime, *Weathering With You* (’19). They are supported by a plucky group of up-and-coming young acting talent.

STORY

The school’s handball club is about to close down. Can social media bring it back to life?

Masao Kiyota is a high school student living in Japan’s southern Kumamoto Prefecture. Lacking passion for anything in life, he spends his days like so many youth on his smartphone along with his childhood friend, Okamoto. One day, they upload a photo taken three years previously when they were both part of their school’s handball team. To their surprise, the post goes a little viral. Encouraged, they add the hashtag: “#HandballStrive” and are swarmed with “likes” from around the country. Amidst the sudden social media attention, Masao and Okamoto set to resuscitating a nearly defunct men’s handball team.

CAST

Seishiro Kato (加藤清史郎) Kotaro Daigo (醍醐虎汰朗)
Haruka Imou (芋生悠) Aju Makita (蒔田彩珠)

Directed by Daigo Matsui / “Wonderful World End”(’15), “Japanese Girls Never Die”(’16)

Written by Daigo Matsui, Dai Sato

Japan Release: July 31, 2020

2019 / Japan / 108 min. / Drama / Color / 5.1ch / 1:1.85

DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Daigo Matsui (松居大悟)

Born in Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan in 1985, Matsui leads the theater group "Gojigen".

He made his debut as a film director with "AfroTanaka" in 2012. One of his unique works, "Wonderful World End", which featured girls with Gothic and Lolita fashion and music symbolizing the modern era, was officially submitted for the 65th Internationale Filmfestspiel Berlin, Generation 14 plus. "Our Huff and Puff Journey" is a prize-winner at the Yubari International Fantastic Film Festival. Matsui is an up and coming creator who is highly appreciated in Japan and overseas.

2018 **You, Your, Yours** / *21st Shanghai International Film Festival*

2017 **Ice Cream and the Sound of Raindrops** / *30th Tokyo International Film Festival*

2016 **Japanese Girls Never Die** / *46th International Film Festival Rotterdam - A Band Apart section*

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