

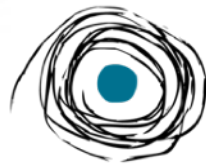
25TH ANNIVERSARY

ALL ABOUT
LILY CHOU-CHOU
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a film by Shunji Iwai

ROCKWELL PRESENTS A ROCKWELL PICTURES PRODUCTION A SHUNJI Iwai FILM "ALL ABOUT LILY CHOU-CHOU"
BRUNO CUNHA, SHIRO OKUNO, YU AO, JUNJI ITO, MARIKO CHIKADA, SUMI NAKABE, TAKA EGAMI, AND A. JAMES HENNING
CASTING BY MITSUMI KUROKI, COSTUME DESIGNER YUKI KAWA, HAIR AND MAKEUP BY SAKURA ITO, PRODUCTION DESIGNER SAKURA ITO
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FILM MOVEMENT®
CLASSICS

presents

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**ALL ABOUT
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“One of the most haunting, viciously honest coming-of-age films.”
—*LA Weekly*

Japan | 2001 | Japanese with English Subtitles
Drama | 146 minutes | 1.78:1

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SYNOPSIS

For young people around the world, music is often the only salvation when pain and suffering becomes too much to bear. Yuichi (Hayato Ichihara) is in 8th grade and worships Lily Chou-Chou, a Björk-like singer whose lush and transcendent music provides the perfect escape from his brutal surroundings. Yuichi also finds solace as the moderator of an online chat room dedicated to his pop idol, but as his real life nightmare of teenage prostitution, crime and bullying grows more untenable, will Lily be enough to save him from isolation and despair?

ABOUT THE FILM FROM A MOVIE TO ANOTHER MOVIE

It was just after I made *Love Letter* that I began to receive film scripts from young aspiring writers. Now, if these were mangas or cartoons, the common thing to do would be to approach publishers, but with screenplays, there are no particular roads you can take to become a professional, and perhaps that's why they end up at my doorstep from time to time. But since I'm a film director and not in the position to comment on other people's scripts, I decided to host a 'salon' with the help of my young producer friends, who would read the screenplays and give advice to the writers. The 'salon' was located on the internet at my website Yen Town Report, and before long, it became one of the most popular features on the site. All of those stray scripts, which had been wandering around aimlessly, had finally found a place to settle down. 'Scena-don't (Script Bowl)', as it is now called, still continues to receive hopeful scripts.

The producers who review the scripts are dubbed as 'the jury', and one of the most passionate and critical of them is Osamu Kubota. His harsh critiques make you forget that the writers are in fact amateurs. Kubota defends his attitude by calling it 'affection'. One day, I came up with the idea to play a prank on him to confirm how keen an eye he has. I sent him an old script that I hadn't shown to anyone. Kubota is of course used to reading my material, but not without the knowledge that I had written it. It was going to be interesting to see how he would react.

The verdict was a devastating one. But his sharp criticism did accurately point out the weakness of my script. And affection? It was there, alright. This made

me curious to see how my current writing as a professional would fare in the same arena. I decided to write a new script for this purpose, and this was how *All About Lily Chou-Chou* came about.

I went to Hong Kong to shoot a commercial, where I had the chance to go see Faye Wong perform. Without even realizing it, I was watching Faye through the eyes of a boy. This boy, the protagonist of the script I had begun to write, was not looking at Faye, but at Lily Chou-Chou, his charismatic diva. It was the moment *All About Lily Chou-Chou* began. As soon as I returned to Japan, I began writing the script. The story of a fanatic fan of an artist named Lily Chou-Chou. Shortly after, I completed the first draft of the novel. At the same time, I began developing the project as a feature film. We approached Takeshi Kobayashi who had worked with me on *Swallowtail Butterfly* to produce the music, and began looking for a female vocalist for the role of Lily. But the problem was the script. Something was missing. Something crucial. And I wasn't able to figure out what it was. After weeks of struggle, I finally made the decision to abandon the film project.

Takeshi Kobayashi was the one who was disappointed the most by the news. He had such faith in the project, that he wouldn't let it go. His almost persistent encouragement and passion gave me new strength, and I soon found myself toying with alternative ideas. To begin with, I decided to concentrate on finishing the story as a novel, rather than a screenplay. As an experiment, I concocted a website named Lily-holic and tried to imagine what kind of messages a Lily Chou-Chou fan would post to its BBS (online forum). Through their exchanges, they would try to solve the mystery of a murder that took place in Shibuya. The simulation worked so well that after that, the script just kept expanding. It wasn't long before I had enough to publish a book. I knew that I had found the missing piece. All I had to do then was to assimilate Lily-holic with *All About Lily Chou-Chou*. And the story was completed.

The process was totally unexpected, but this was how this innovative interactive novel was conceived. Since its debut, *All About Lily Chou-Chou* has been endlessly multiplying, incorporating the messages posted by the users/readers into its original story. This was certainly a project that experienced quite a few twists and turns, even for me. It started as a script for a prank then became a novel, then an unfinished screenplay, and then an Internet novel. And now, I am finally seeing *All About Lily Chou-Chou* as a film. **-Shunji Iwai**

SHUNJI IWAI BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1963, Shunji Iwai graduated from Yokohama National University in 1987. He wrote and directed numerous music videos, commercials and television dramas before he moved to cinema. His TV drama *Fireworks, Should We See It From the Side or the Bottom?* (1993) earned him the Director's Guild of Japan New Directors Award. He made his feature film debut with *Love Letter* in 1995. *Swallowtail Butterfly* (1996) was nominated for the Golden St. George at Moscow International Film Festival and *All About Lily Chou-Chou* (2001) received a Special Mention at the Berlin International Film Festival from the C.I.C.A.E. (International Confederation of Art House Cinemas) Jury in the Panorama section. Iwai's English-language debut, *Vampire* (2011), was nominated for the Sundance Grand Jury Prize. His film *A Bride for Rip van Winkle* (2016), he was inspired by internet dating and released in multiple versions, including a six-episode television series. Besides directing, he has written several essays, novels and screenplays, as well as composing the soundtrack for seven of his films. In 2018, he adapted one of his novels into Chinese-language film *Last Letter* before releasing a Japanese adaptation with the same name in 2020. In 2023, he released *Kyrie*, which had its world premiere at the Busan International Film Festival.



CAST

Yuichi Hasumi
Shusuke Hoshino
Yoko Kuno
Tabito Takao
Shimabukuro
Izumi Hoshino
Shiori Tsuda

Hayato Ichihara
Shugo Oshinari
Ayumi Ito
Takao Ohsawa
Miwako Ichikawa
Izumi Inamori
Yu Aoi

CREW

Director
Screenplay
Music
Director of Photography
Editor
Producer

Shunji Iwai
Shunji Iwai
Takeshi Kobayashi
Noboru Shinoda
Shunji Iwai
Rockwell Eyes



ABOUT FILM MOVEMENT

Founded in 2002, Film Movement is a North American distributor of award-winning independent and foreign films based in New York City. It has released more than 300 feature films culled from prestigious film festivals worldwide including the Oscar-nominated films *Theeb* (2016) and *Corpus Christi* (2020). Film Movement's theatrical releases include American independent films, documentaries, and foreign-language arthouse titles. Its catalog includes works by directors such as Ryusuke Hamaguchi, Lee Isaac Chung, Hirokazu Kore-eda, Maren Ade, Jessica Hausner, Ciro Guerra, Bertrand Bonello and Mélanie Laurent.

In 2015, Film Movement launched its reissue label Film Movement Classics, featuring new restorations released theatrically as well as on digital platforms, Blu-ray and DVD, including films by such noted directors as Ang Lee, Chen Kaige, Luchino Visconti, Stanley Kwan, Peter Greenaway, Bille August, Marleen Gorris, Takeshi Kitano, Arturo Ripstein, King Hu, Lee Chang Dong, Hideo Gosha and Sergio Corbucci.

For more information, please visit www.filmmovement.com

