



## Me & My Brother's Mistress

おろかももの

2019/96min/Colour/English Subtitles  
 Distributor: Green Light

Director: HAGA Takashi, SUZUKI Sho  
 Cast: KASAMATSU Nanami, MURATA Yui

### Online screening information:

**Fri 19 Feb** 48 hour rental window from 6:00pm  
**Mon 1 Mar** 48 hour rental window from 6:00pm

To browse our full selection of films and screening schedule, please visit:

[onlinecinema.jpf-film.org.uk](http://onlinecinema.jpf-film.org.uk)

For more information about Japan Foundation Touring Film Programme, visit:

[www.jpf-fim.org.uk](http://www.jpf-fim.org.uk)

A related talk event will be held online via Zoom on:

**27 February from 12:00pm**

Check Talks and Events on

[onlinecinema.jpf-film.org.uk](http://onlinecinema.jpf-film.org.uk)

for more details

Celebrating: Cultural Partners:



We have a new Instagram account specifically for the Touring Film Programme! Follow us to stay updated and tag us in your stories and posts!

High school student Yoko witnesses her brother Kenji, about to get married, having an affair with a woman called Misa. But when Yoko is compelled by impulse and curiosity to confront Misa, she finds herself captivated by Misa's particular combination of softness, strength and fragility. Winning a record five prizes, including the grand prix, at the 13<sup>th</sup> Tanabe Benkei Film Festival, as well as the audience award at the 2019 Skip City International D-Cinema Festival, this film dominated the Japanese independent film scene in 2019.

What is particularly noteworthy about this film is that it stands out in Japanese cinema as a refreshingly feminist work. Having only ever been treated as a convenience by former boyfriends, Misa is earnest in her love for Kenji, who values her even though he is engaged. Kenji's fiancée Kaho realises that he has another woman, but doesn't believe he will ever leave her. Yoko, who is struggling to discover her own path in life, ends up making a surprising proposal to her brother's mistress. There are plenty of Japanese films that depict women in conflict, but the fact that the women in this film are fighting not society or men, or even the woman standing in front of them, but for their own pride, is what hints at a new wave of female-focused Japanese cinema.

On the technical side, the precision of the camerawork and editing shows a level of execution not often found in a debut feature; from the smooth transition from the opening close-up of Yoko holding her camera, ready to catch her brother in the act, into the scene she sees through the viewfinder as she releases the shutter, to the momentary juxtaposition of Yoko's eyeline and Misa's back when the former follows the latter into an Italian restaurant. Directors Haga and Suzuki studied together at Nihon University College of Art. Haga was in charge of cinematography on Suzuki's graduation film "Border" (2011), and they also worked as assistant director and cinematographer on Tsukada Marina's "Kara no aji" (2016), which won the grand prix at the 10<sup>th</sup> Tanabe Benkei Film Festival. The fruit of so many collaborations can truly be seen in this film.

Turning our eyes to the cast, protagonist Yoko is played by Kasamatsu Nanami, who also starred in "Kara no aji" and "Saimon & Tada Takashi" (2017), masterfully exhibiting a range of expressions that embody the ambivalence of a teenage girl. Murata Yui, herself the director of "Hisokana toiki" (2014) and "Désolée" (2017) amongst others, also studied at Nihon University with directors Haga and Suzuki, and succeeds in portraying Misa as a woman of irresistible charm. Nekome Hachi as Kaho captivates the audience with her eyes and refuses to let go. Support is provided by a cast of actors well known to these directors: Iwago Satoshi (also in "Kara no aji") as Kenji, Minamihisamatsu Mana as the high school teacher, and Hayashida Sakie as Kenji's bartender ex-girlfriend.

It may be true that this film fits the mold often seen in Japanese independent cinema of a film featuring actors who have worked together in the past made by a

crew, including scriptwriter Numata Masataka, who studied together at university. But the characters, written with these actresses in mind, feel like flesh and blood, and the level of teamwork between the crew, built up over so many years, adds to the passion of this film. Perhaps the sisterhood that forms between Yoko and Misa will, with time, mature as has the brotherhood between directors Haga and Suzuki. I am certain that these directors, like Yoko and Misa, have a bright future ahead of them.

**HASEGAWA Toshiyuki**

Programming Director of SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL