



## Miyamoto

宮本から君へ

2019/129min/Colour/English Subtitles  
Distributor: KADOKAWA

Director: MARIKO Tetsuya

Cast: IKEMATSU Sosuke, AOI Yu

### Online screening information:

**Fri 19 Feb** 48 hour rental window from 6.00pm

**Tue 2 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](https://onlinecinema.jpf-film.org.uk)

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

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

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

**5 March from 12:00pm**

Check Talks and Events on

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

for more details

Celebrating: Cultural Partners:



©2019 "Miyamoto" Film 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!

Unsurprisingly for a film that's presented as a dual narrative — concurrently exploring two distinct periods of the same romantic relationship — Tetsuya Mariko's incendiary third feature film *Miyamoto* rewards repeat viewings. The fractured storytelling may be a vague challenge initially, but beyond the film's structural nonconformity is a complex tale that is thought-provoking and ambiguous.

Focal character Hiroshi Miyamoto (Sôsuke Ikematsu) is, in the words of his own mother, a "big baby". A skinny, young salaryman in the early years of an uninspiring career in stationery, he is slight in stature, prone to tears, and, for a good portion of the film, missing his front teeth. He can't handle his drink, either — a deficiency which contributes to the film's shocking central act: the brutal rape of his girlfriend Yasuko (Yû Aoi) at the hands of a colleague's hulking son.

Miyamoto's journey towards redemption following such an act might provide a satisfying narrative conclusion in another film. Indeed, Miyamoto does set out to avenge Yasuko's honour and win back her love — and on the surface, he succeeds. But as scenes from the film's opening act that portray the future of Miyamoto and Yasuko's relationship (including the imminent birth of a child) prove, Miyamoto remains deeply flawed in his responsibilities as both an adult and a "protector" — despite vanquishing what he perceives to be the primary threat to their wellbeing.

The true villain of the film, then, is not the rapist — but toxic masculinity as a whole. It is the most potent theme of the entire movie, pervading everyone from Miyamoto's odious, rugby-playing superiors, to Yasuko — whose whole infatuation with Miyamoto stems from a misguided attempt at spiting her abusive ex. Miyamoto himself has a distorted view of the world he lives in as a result. He can only understand Yasuko's trauma as an attack on his own identity as a man, and thus the only way he can deliver justice is by proving his manhood to her in retaliation. Flawed logic, of course, only produces flawed results.

The film, then, can be understood as a cutting statement on the real-life issues concerning patriarchal society. And this is made even more palpable by director Mariko's visceral and realistic style of filmmaking, which favours handheld camerawork, mundane, everyday settings and an unflinching portrayal of primitive violence. The dynamic acting performances of Ikematsu (Best Actor awardee at the Kinema Junpo Awards in 2020) and Aoi, meanwhile, amplify these themes even further.

*Miyamoto* is a film that invites a deeper discussion. Its central question — concerning how a man should overcome a threat to his family's safety and wellbeing — is never sufficiently answered. As such, it is a film that feels deliberately obscure in its message. But through subverting narrative conventions and belying expectations, Mariko nonetheless tells a tale that is far more affecting and enduring

in nature — one that will beckon viewers back again as they search for their own answers.

**James Balmont,**

Film writer for The Guardian, i-D and Dazed