



三つの光

Mittsu no hikari

Three Lights

Kohki Yoshida

Producer Masashi Yamamoto. **Production company** Cinema Impact (Tokyo, Japan). **Written and directed by** Kohki Yoshida.

Director of photography Takayuki Shida. **Editor** Tatsuma Furukawa. **Music** Yawn of Sleepy. **Sound** L'équipe.

With Ryo Ikeda (K), Hiroshi Suzuki (Masaki), Kazuha Komiya (Aoi), Emi Maki (Michiko), Natsumi Ishibashi (Aya), Takenori Goto (Taiki), Satoshi Morishita (Khosuke), Daisuke Sasaki (Fumi), Yumi Torigoe (Sakurai), Ryuzo Tanaka (Producer).

Colour. 100 min. Japanese.

Premiere February 14, 2017, Berlinale Forum

Aoi is a young nursery school teacher whose fiancé leaves her. Her friend Michiko works in a call centre and has lots of free time, but little freedom. She no longer interacts with her husband, aside from the occasional sad blow job. Then there's her attractive tennis teacher Masaki, with whom she's having an affair that's conducted when they're pulled up in parking lots. And finally there's his friend K., a self-proclaimed genius with authoritarian tendencies. Four people in the vast city of Tokyo united by their love of music. Fate brings them together in a remote abandoned warehouse to work on experimental sounds in an improvised recording studio. Yet the important thing is not the piece itself but the path they take to get there, which means working on one's psychological issues in creative fashion, even as they generate friction with those of the others. In his fourth feature film, Kohki Yoshida precisely dissects the mechanisms of creative energy: personal frustrations, vanities, egotism. He asks why the joint creative process is linked to such pain. With elegance and keen perception, *Mittsu no hikari* shows how harm can lead to ambition – and ambition to harm.

Christoph Terhechte

Productive friendship, creative conflicts

By being involved with movies, one is perpetually close to the act of creation. One must exchange many ideas and opinions throughout the creation of a movie. In that process, conflict arises. Friction occurs due to the common desire to make something great. What is born despite these conflicts is a piece of intimate value to all those involved, regardless of how it is received by others. However, I have personally experienced situations in which differences of opinion spiralled into the ending of friendships. Why is it that, despite coming together with the pure desire to create, when the boundaries between individuals collide, immense pain results? I wanted to depict now, more than ever before, the human relations that surround the personal desires and hopes of those participating in the process of production.

Kohki Yoshida

“Every person has something to express”

What was your starting-point for this film, and how did you go about developing it?

Kohki Yoshida: I wanted to tell a story about people who express something, and I concentrated on the particular abilities of actors. At first I concentrated on their individual gifts – whether in tennis or in piano or flute playing. At the same time, I left plenty of room for talks, from which I could develop episodes based in reality that the actors could play in the film.

The film tells about four protagonists, two men and two women. But its focus is on the lives of the two female characters, Aoi and Michiko. Why did you decide to weight it this way?

The two women appear in the film as a day-care worker and a housewife. I wanted to show people who are far removed from expressing themselves in daily life and from being able to devote themselves to their creativity. It was important to me to show how these women manage to find possibilities for self-expression by becoming creative. I think every person has something to express.

In the course of the experiences the members of the group have together, a powerful dynamic develops among them. In the end, relationships break apart. What aspects of your characters' development interest you in particular?

Sometimes people who have the same goal and a common wish to create something hurt each other deeply, because they become too close. With my film, I wanted to describe how, in the course of a creative process in a group, wishes arise, but also how selfishness can come into play.

The empty warehouse conveys an unusual atmosphere. It seems like an artificial space beyond reality. At what point was it clear to you that this building would be the meeting-place for the group?

In reality, the warehouse in *Mittsu no hikari* is a music studio. Ever since I learned of the existence of this studio three years ago, I have been observing the musicians who come together here. In this period, there was intense creative work, but also many conflicts. I worked for a long time on a concept to turn this into not a documentary, but a feature film. I was

absolutely determined to bring the warehouse onto the screen as an important part of the film.

Under what production conditions did you make the film?

It didn't take long to shoot; instead, we took more time to edit it. Of all my films so far, *Mittsu no hikari* is the one with the longest post-production.

Mittsu no hikari is the fifth film you have made as screenwriter, director, and editor. Have you ever considered working with a screenwriter or editor?

I don't place any special demands on the script. But in the future, I would like to work with other screenwriters, too, and in this way be inspired to new ideas and forms of expression.

Interview: Gabriela Seidel-Hollaender, January 2017



Kohki Yoshida was born in 1980 in Tokyo. He studied Film at Zokei University in Tokyo before working in advertising film and music video production. In 2007, he made his first full-length feature film, *Shorei X*.

Films

2004: *Rasenteki joshoteki / Rising Spiral* (10 min.). 2005: *Echika* (50 min.). 2006: *Sairensui / Silence* (30 min.). 2007: *Shorei X / Symptom X* (67 min.). 2011: *Kazoku X / Household X* (90 min., Berlinale Forum 2011). 2012: *Fukaku kono sei o aisu beshi / Love Thy Woman Deeply* (44 min.). 2013: *Tokyo Bitch, I Love You* (70 min.). 2017: *Mittsu no hikari / Three Lights*.