



OFFICIAL SELECTION  
UN CERTAIN REGARD  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES



A KIYOSHI KUROSAWA FILM

# BEFORE WE VANISH

*Don't let them into your head.*

Starring MASAMI NAGASAWA, RYUHEI MATSUDA and HIROKI HASEGAWA

Original play by TOMOHIRO MAEKAWA "BEFORE WE VANISH aka Sanpo Suru Shinryakusha"





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A KIYOSHI KUROSAWA FILM  
**BEFORE WE VANISH**

STARRING  
MASAMI NAGASAWA, RYUHEI MATSUDA  
MAHIRO TAKASUGI, YURI TSUNEMATSU  
HIROKI HASEGAWA

RUNNING TIME: 2H09  
CINEMASCOPE – COLOR – SOUND 7.1 – 129 MIN – JAPAN

INTERNATIONAL SALES

World excluding Asia

**wild bunch**

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## S Y N O P S I S

After going missing for several days, a man named Shinji (Ryuhei Matsuda) mysteriously reappears, acting nothing like his former self. His relationship with his wife Narumi (Masami Nagasawa) had been on the rocks, but now Shinji is calmer and kinder than before, which only serves to exasperate Narumi further. Shinji also has a bizarre new daily routine of strolling around the neighborhood and engaging strangers in deep, conceptual conversations with no apparent purpose. Elsewhere in town, a family is brutally murdered, and journalist Sakurai (Hiroki Hasegawa) begins to investigate the odd circumstances of the killing. As an ominous mood spreads over an otherwise ordinary town, Sakurai and Narumi each try to understand what lies behind the spiraling chaos. One startling discovery leads to another, and they soon realize the psychological and spiritual essence of all humanity is at stake.

# DIRECTOR INTERVIEW

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TURN “BEFORE WE VANISH”, A WELL-KNOWN THEATRE PLAY IN JAPAN, INTO YOUR NEXT FILM?

This film is a largely faithful adaptation of Tomohiro Maekawa’s play. I wanted to stick to the setting of the play as closely as possible. In other words, it’s set in a place with a U.S. military base nearby.

I’ve adapted a few novels up until now, but this was my first time making a film based on a play written for the stage. Not to mention, in a way, that the play’s premise in a way parodies alien invasion science fiction films from the 1950s. For this film, we attempted to take that premise and shift its setting to modern-day Japan, which was a process that required a very complex and delicate balance. Then again, I enjoyed it too, because the science fiction genre is one I’d very much wanted to try for many years.

DO YOU SEE ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THE MOOD UNDERLYING THE CLASSIC SCI-FI YOU MENTION AND OUR PRESENT DAY?

The 1950s, when films of this genre were popular, were part of the so-called Cold War era, and I hear that people’s lives were underlaid with anxiety, that casual, everyday unease could have links to imminent global war. In addition, a lot of media addressed this danger head-on, and at the same time, entertainment that laughed it off in fiction and eased everyday concerns, even just a little, was also significant. I can’t accurately judge how much danger our world is in at this moment. However, in recent years, I’ve often felt a kind of extraordinary unease in my everyday life. It arises partly from a gut feeling that the world has arrived at a particularly dangerous juncture. That sensation unmistakably corresponds with my latest film in some way.

WERE THERE SPECIFIC REFERENCES FOR THE FILM, INCLUDING ANY PARTICULAR POLITICAL SUBTEXT?

There have been countless entries in this genre through the years, so I decided to refrain from using any specific works as references. Nevertheless, after completing this film, I felt there was something John Carpenter-esque about the scenes between Sakurai and Amano, although I’m not sure why that is. More than that, as I said earlier, this genre is always fundamentally connected somehow to the global crises of the times, so I had to be very careful to avoid making some kind of misguided statement. I have never intentionally included a political message in my films, not once. However, I think that a filmmaker’s political stance tends to show through in his or her work, even if that wasn’t the intention.

THERE'S ALSO SOMETHING CLASSIC ABOUT THE TONE AND FEELING THAT THE MUSIC BRINGS TO THE FILM.

My request to composer Yusukey Hayashi was: "I want the kind of music that sticks with you forever after one listen" and the soundtrack is the product of his painstaking hard work. For reference, I had him listen to Ennio Morricone's work from the 1970s.

YOU'VE WORKED PROLIFERICALLY IN BOTH FILM AND TV – HAS THIS BEEN A CHALLENGE FOR YOU AS A DIRECTOR?

Since the 1980s in Japan, the differences between film and television have virtually disappeared. That is to say, cast and crew and directors became able to move back and forth freely between both mediums, and it's become difficult to find differences between them, in terms of either budget or quality. That has been spurred on by today's digitalization of moving image media and the shift to the Vista aspect ratio for televisions, to the point where it's safe to say that there is no longer any difference between films and television drama series. However, strangely enough, the film format still seems to be regarded as superior to that of tv drama. In other words, the ideal length for a story is 120 minutes, the ideal for television works is a film-like quality, and the ideal viewing environment is inevitably a screen in a large theater. It seems that myths such as these will persist for some time yet (or perhaps only for a few years). If that is the case, I want to make my own television work resemble films as closely as possible.

IN THE FILM, PEOPLE HAVE THEIR HUMAN CONCEPTS OR VALUES TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM AND OFTEN SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES. ARE THERE CONCEPTS YOU THINK WE WOULD ACTUALLY BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT?

That would have to be "war".

IS THE FILM'S CLIMAX INDICATIVE OF WHAT YOU THINK HUMANITY MUST DO TO SURVIVE INTO THE FUTURE?

A climax involving a dramatic act of altruism and love by Narumi, one of the protagonists, was something I didn't see coming at all. Rather, I thought the story would more likely end with a dramatic transformation experienced by Shinji, her husband. Essentially, in the end, he would transcend the differences between species, overturn the notion of an alien invader, and bravely choose a vaguer identity. To avert the threat of global war, it might be necessary for individuals to transform their values in a similarly substantial way.

# CREW PROFILES

## DIRECTOR: KIYOSHI KUROSAWA

Born in 1955 in Hyogo Prefecture. Began making 8mm films at university, and made his commercial feature film directorial debut in 1983 with “Kandagawa Wars”. Attracted international attention with “Cure” (1997), and went on to deliver other notable works including “License to Live” (1998), “Barren Illusion” (1999), and “Charisma” (1999). “Pulse” (2000) was awarded the FIPRESCI Prize in the Un Certain Regard section of the 2001 Cannes Film Festival. Subsequent films received acclaim at home and abroad, including “Bright Future” (2002), which was selected In Competition at Cannes in 2003, “Doppelgänger” (2002), “Loft” (2005), and “Retribution” (2006), which screened at that year’s Venice Film Festival. “Tokyo Sonata” (2008) won the Jury Prize in Cannes’ Un Certain Regard section, and Best Film at the 2009 Asian Film Awards. His WOWOW miniseries “Penance” (2011) accomplished an unusual feat for a television production when it was screened out of competition at the 2012 Venice Film Festival, also travelling to many other festivals around the world. Recent works include “Real” (2013), “Seventh Code” (2013), which won Best Director at that year’s Rome Film Festival, “Journey to the Shore” (2014), winner of Best Director in Cannes’ Un Certain Regard section and the 33rd Kawakita Award in 2015, “Creepy” (2016), an official selection of that year’s Berlin International Film Festival, and “Daguerrrotype” (2016), Kurosawa’s first overseas production, made with a French cast and crew. Recipient of the 2016 Tokyo International Film Festival’s Samurai Award.

## ORIGINAL AUTHOR: TOMOHIRO MAEKAWA

Playwright and theatre director. Born in 1974 in Kashiwazaki, Niigata Prefecture. Established Ikiume Theater Company in 2003, for which he writes and produces. Depicts otherworldly phenomena lurking adjacent to everyday life through the supernatural lens of science fiction and horror-tinged works such as “Before We Vanish”, “Taiyo”, “Kansu Domino”, “Player”, “Henrin”, and “Kemono no Hashira”, as well as his short story collection “Toshokan-teki Jinsei”. Also wrote and directed the Super Kabuki II production “Sora wo Kizamu Mono: Wakaki Bussui no Monogatari” (2014), featuring Ennosuke Ichikawa IV, and the Toru Nakamura-starring “Kikkai: Koizumi Yakumo Kara Kiita Hanashi” (2009), “Gendai Nogaku-shu VI: Kikkai Sono Ni” (2011), and “Tono Monogatari: Kikkai Sono San” (2016). Revised “Taiyo” as “Taiyo 2068” in collaboration with world-renowned director Yukio Ninagawa, starring “Twisted Justice” actor Go Ayano. Winner of numerous theatrical accolades, including Yomiuri Theater Awards (Grand Prize, Best Direction, and Best Play), a Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology Award for Art for Best Newcomer, a Kinokuniya Theater Prize, a Yomiuri Literature Award for Best Theater Script, and a Tsuruya Nanboku Drama Award. Also wrote the original stories for Jinsei Kataoka’s manga “Livingstone” and Kei Kobayashi’s picture book “Kurai Tokoro Kara Yatte Kuru.” His plays “Before We Vanish” and “Taiyo” have been novelized, and the latter has also been adapted for the big screen as Yu Irie’s film “The Sun” (2016), for which Maekawa also co-wrote the screenplay.

## WHAT IS “BEFORE WE VANISH”?

One of Ikiume Theater Company’s most famous works, this play was first performed in 2005, and again in 2007 and 2011. After its first theatrical run, it was novelized in 2007 by Maekawa himself, then serialized in *Da Vinci* magazine, and will be published in book form by KADOKAWA Novels in July of 2017.

## CO-SCREENWRITER: SACHIKO TANAKA

Won the 33rd Kido Prize for her original screenplay “Natsu no Tabi” (2007). “Before We Vanish” is her third collaboration with Kiyoshi Kurosawa as co-writer, after “Tokyo Sonata” (2008, with Kurosawa and Max Mannix) and “Real” (2014, with Kurosawa). Other works as a screenwriter include Ryuichi Hiroki’s “The Lightning Tree” (2010, with Masato Kato), Natsuki Seta’s “A Liar and a Broken Girl” (2011, with Seta), Takahisa Zeze’s “Life Back Then” (2011, with Zeze), Takeshi Furusawa’s “Another” (2012, with Furusawa), Osamu Minorikawa’s “Sue, Mai and Sawa: Righting the Girl Ship” (2013), and Takehiko Shinjo’s “Beyond the Memories” (2013, with Satomi Oshima).

## ORIGINAL MUSIC: YUSUKE HAYASHI

Studied musical composition under Yutaka Takahashi, Atsutada Odaka, and Hinoharu Matsumoto. Began composing music for films due to the influence of his father, cinematographer Junichiro Hayashi. Nominated for Best Music at the 36th Japan Academy Prize for Yasuo Furuhashi’s “Dearest” (2012). “Before We Vanish” is his fourth collaboration with Kiyoshi Kurosawa; previously he scored “Doppelganger” (2003), WOWOW television miniseries “Penance” (2012), and “Seventh Code” (2014). Other soundtrack credits include Tadafumi Ito’s “By Rule of Crow’s Thumb” (2012), Yu Irie’s “The Sun” (2016), Teruyoshi Uchimura’s “Gold Medal Man” (2016, with Uchimura and Rie & Party Monster), Takeshi Furusawa’s “ReLIFE” (2017), and Mari Asato’s “Hyouka” (2017).

## CINEMATOGRAPHY: AKIKO ASHIZAWA

Gained experience as an assistant cinematographer after graduating from university, then struck out on her own in 1982. “Before We Vanish” marks her eighth collaboration with Kiyoshi Kurosawa, following “Loft” (2006), “Retribution” (2007), “Tokyo Sonata” (2008), WOWOW television miniseries “Penance” (2012), “Real” (2013), “Journey to the Shore” (2015), and “Creepy” (2016). Won awards for her work on Masato Harada’s “Chronicle of My Mother” (2012) at the 67th Mainichi Film Concours and the 36th Japan Academy Prize. Received the 66th Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology Award for Art for Artistic Excellence in Film and the 40th Yamaji Fumiko Film Award in 2016.

# C A S T

## MASAMI NAGASAWA (NARUMI KASE)

Born on June 3, 1987 in Shizuoka Prefecture. Received her first starring film role in 2003 in “Robokon” for which she won a New Artist Award at the 27th Japan Academy Prize. Played the female lead in “Crying Out Love in the Center of the World” (2004), for which she won Best Supporting Actress at the 28th Japan Academy Prize. Her role in “Love Strikes!” in 2011 brought three awards, including the Rising Star Award at the 11th New York Asian Film Festival. Starred in the John Woo-directed Chinese production “The Crossing” in 2014. In 2015, she received a Best Supporting Actress nomination at the 39th Japan Academy Prize for her role in internationally renowned filmmaker Hirokazu Kore-eda’s “Our Little Sister”. She was also chosen as a rising star at the 20th Busan International Film Festival’s Casting Board, which recognizes promising young Asian movie stars. Took the starring role of Sally Bowles in a Japanese production of the musical “Cabaret” in 2017, and voiced the character of Ash (originally performed by Scarlet Johansson) in the Japanese dubbed version of the animated film “Sing”. Further credits include “Nada Sousou” (2006), “Gaku” (2011), “From Up on Poppy Hill” (2011), “Beyond the Memories” (2013), “Wood Job!” (2014), “I Am a Hero” (2016), “Your Name” (2016), “Good Morning Show” (2016), “Gold Medal Man” (2016), and “Tsuoku” (2017). Will also appear in “Gintama”, set for release later in 2017.

## RYUHEI MATSUDA (SHINJI KASE)

Born in Tokyo on May 9, 1983. “Before We Vanish” marks his first appearance in a film by Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Made his acting debut in “Taboo” (1999), for which he won numerous awards for Best Newcomer, including at the Japan Academy Prize and Blue Ribbon Awards. Drew attention for his lead performance in “The Great Passage” (2013), which brought him a Best Actor award at the 37th Japan Academy Prize and several other accolades. Other major credits include “Blue Spring” (2002), “Otakus in Love” (2004), “Nana” (2005), “Nightmare Detective” (2007), “The Summit: A Chronicle Of Stones to Serenity” (2009), “Kanikosen” (2009), “Tada’s Do-It-All House” (2011), “Phone Call to the Bar” (2011), “A Chorus of Angels” (2012), “Detective in the Bar” (2013), “Tada’s Do-It-All House: Disconcerto” (2014), “A Farewell to Jinu” (2015), “The Mohican Comes Home” (2016), “The Magnificent Nine” (2016), “My Uncle” (2016), and “The Tokyo Night Sky is Always the Densest Shade of Blue” (2017).



## HIROKI HASEGAWA (SAKURAI, THE JOURNALIST)

Born in Tokyo in 1977. “Before We Vanish” marks his first appearance in a film by Kiyoshi Kurosawa. His credits span a wide range of prominent film, television, and theater productions. Won a Best Newcomer Award at the 35th Japan Academy Prize for his performance in “Second Virgin” (2011). Nominated for the 40th Japan Academy Prize’s Best Leading Actor Award for his role in Hideaki Anno’s “Shin Godzilla” (2016). Other notable credits include “Suzuki Sensei” (2013), “Why Don’t You Play in Hell?” (2013), “Lady Maiko” (2014), “Princess Jellyfish” (2014), “Attack on Titan” and “Attack on Titan: End of the World” (both 2015), “Love and Peace” (2015), “This Country’s Sky” (2015), “Mozu the Movie” (2015), “Sailor Suit and Machine Gun” (2016), and “Double Life” (2016).

# C R E W

Directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa

Original play by Tomohiro Maekawa “Before We Vanish”  
aka “Sanpo Suru Shinryakusha”

Screenplay Sachiko Tanaka  
Kiyoshi Kurosawa

Original Music Yusuke Hayashi

Production Yoshio Nakayama  
Masanari Nagayama  
Eiji Omura  
Tadashi Osumi  
Masaya Yabushita  
Yosuke Miyake  
Hideki Ohyagi  
Miyuki Matsuda  
Yoshiki Sakurai

Executive Producers Daisuke Kadoya  
Yoshinori Chiba  
Takehiko Aoki

Producers Yuji Ishida  
Naoto Fujimura  
Yumi Arakawa  
Tomomi Takashima

Line Producer Nobuhiro Iizuka

Associate Producer Ryo Otaki

Cinematographer Akiko Ashizawa

Production Designer Norifumi Ataka

Lighting Director Hidenori Nagata

Sound Mixer Shinji Watanabe

Video Engineer  
& Digital Imaging Technician Keigo Kagamihara

Set Decorator Tomoya Yamada

Editor Koichi Takahashi

Sound Effects Designer Kenji Shibasaki

Script Supervisor Yukari Yaginuma

Costume Designer Haruki Koketsu

Hair & Make-Up H A M A

Music Producer Toru Wada

Vfx Producer Shuji Asano

Vfx Director Jun Yokoishi

Assistant Director Takashi Kitano

Production Manager Akira Sagara

Presented by “Before We Vanish” Film Partners (Nippon Television/NIKKATSU/WOWOW/YOMIURI  
TELECASTING/PONY CANYON/NIPPON PLANNING CENTER /office saku/ Hirata Office)

Planned by NIKKATSU Production DJANGO FILM

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