EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01, MONDAY 4 MAY 2020.

BFI JAPAN 2020: OVER 100 YEARS OF JAPANESE CINEMA

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PRESS CONTACTS:
General enquiries about BFI JAPAN:
Liz Parkinson – PR Manager, BFI Cultural Programme - liz.parkinson@bfi.org.uk | 020 7957 8918 / 07810 378203
Judy Wells – Director, Press and PR, BFI - judy.wells@bfi.org.uk | 020 7957 8919 / 07984 180501

Interviews with BFI spokespeople and selected talent available on request via Liz Parkinson
FULL PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS
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BFI PLAYER COLLECTIONS
The BFI’s VOD service BFI Player will be the premier destination for Japanese film this year with thematic collections launching over a six month period (May – October): Akira Kurosawa (11 May), Classics (11 May), Yasujirō Ozu (5 June), Cult (3 July), Anime (31 July), Independence (21 August), 21st Century (18 September) and J-Horror (30 October). All the collections will be available to BFI Player subscribers (£4.99 a month), with a 14 day free trial available to new customers.

There will also be a major new free collection Early Films of Japan (1894-1914), released on BFI Player on 12 October, featuring material from the BFI National Archive’s significant collection of early films of Japan dating back to 1894.

More details and highlights of the collections can be found below:

AKIRA KUROSAWA COLLECTION (11 MAY)
BFI JAPAN will launch on BFI Player with a collection of 21 classics by master director AKIRA KUROSAWA, the first Japanese filmmaker to achieve an international reputation, whose influence on global cinema, from Westerns to STAR WARS cannot be overstated. Many of the films feature Kurosawa’s biggest star Toshiro Mifune (1 April 1920 - 24 December 1997), whose centenary was marked in April this year:

- Timeless classic SEVEN SAMURAI (1954) boasts terrific performances, superb camerawork, expertly mounted battle sequences, and is undoubtedly one of the greatest action movies ever made. The BFI will re-release SEVEN SAMURAI when cinemas have reopened, offering audiences across the UK a chance to see one of Kurosawa’s most popular masterpieces on the big screen.
- A devotee of Western culture, Kurosawa transposes Macbeth to Japan in its medieval period of civil war, to brilliant effect in THRONE OF BLOOD (1957).
- Kurosawa’s supremely entertaining ‘samurai western’ YOJIMBO (1961) stars Mifune at his most charismatic, bringing a raw, animal energy to his portrayal of Sanjuro, a masterless samurai.
- SANJURO (1962), a sequel to YOJIMBO, is another blackly humorous period film, which won fans in the West and (like YOJIMBO) was remade by the master of the spaghetti Western, Sergio Leone.
- RASHOMON (1950) is a story of rape and murder in 12th century Kyoto told in four conflicting versions, each reflecting the experience of one of those present at the crime.
- THE MEN WHO TREAD ON THE TIGER’S TAIL (1945) is a light-hearted kabuki adaptation that subtly satirises the feudal codes promoted by the wartime government.
- DRUNKEN ANGEL (1948) inaugurated Kurosawa’s long-running collaboration with Mifune and is perhaps the first film to fully display the visual flair and dramatic intensity which would typify his best work.
- Both a gripping thriller and a fascinating documentary exploration of Tokyo in the years of the American Occupation, STRAY DOG (1949) is the story of a cop obsessively hunting the criminal who stole his gun.
- Never one to shy away from grand themes, in IKIRU (1952) Kurosawa tackled the biggest and simplest of existential issues: the fact of mortality, and the impact that the inevitability of death has on an individual life.
- THE HIDDEN FORTRESS (1958) is an action-packed romp about a princess and her retainer transporting clan treasures through enemy territory, which went on to inspire STAR WARS.
- THE BAD SLEEP WELL (1960) is one of Kurosawa’s most gripping films, a bleak but stylish thriller which draws on Shakespeare, echoing Hamlet in its story of a man prevaricating over revenge for his father’s death.
- RED BEARD (1965) marked the end of a major phase in Kurosawa’s career. It was his last film starring Mifune, his last in black and white, and his last before changing economic circumstances compelled him to seek funding either independently or outside Japan.
- Kurosawa’s RAN (1985) transports one of Shakespeare’s bleakest tragedies King Lear to feudal Japan to spectacular and unsettling effect, a late triumph for a director in the twilight of his career.
- Further titles in the collection include: SANSHIRO SUGATA (1943), SANSHIRO SUGATA PART TWO (1945), THE MOST BEAUTIFUL (1944), NO REGRETS FOR OUR YOUTH (1946), ONE WONDERFUL SUNDAY (1947), I LIVE IN FEAR (1955), THE LOWER DEPTHS (1957), HIGH AND LOW (1963) and DODES’KA-DEN (1970)

CLASSICS COLLECTION (11 MAY)
The CLASSICS collection, launching on 11 May alongside the Kurosawa collection, will be an essential introduction to great works of 20th Century Japanese cinema, from the Golden Ages of the 1930s and 50s, to the post-war generation
who defied conventions and the new contemporary masters who made their names in the 90s. The collection will be expanded further with titles from masters such as Kenji Mizoguchi being announced and added to BFI Player soon:

- Mikio Naruse’s LATE CHRYSANTHEMUMS (Mikio Naruse, 1954) follows a number of retired geishas who are trying to make ends meet in the new post-war economy. With his customary emphasis on the material circumstances that shape our lives, Naruse’s film is a moving celebration of friendship.

- Naruse’s undisputed masterpiece FLOATING CLOUDS (1955) contrasts two characters: a strong woman who relentlessly pursues her desire, while hoping her lover and society will understand what she has to do to survive, and her lover who craves a conventionally validated social identity.

- Probably Naruse’s best-known film, WHEN A WOMAN ASCENDS THE STAIRS (1960) is a masterful study of a Ginza hostess struggling under constant pressures to compromise her honour. A superb, heartrending film and a classic of post-war Japanese cinema.

- In ONIBABA (Keneto Shinô, 1964), set 14th-century Japan, a mother and her temptress daughter-in-law lure battle-weary samurai into a field, whereupon they murder them and hurl their bodies into a pit. When sexual tensions estrange the pair, the stage is set for a potently erotic horror classic whose spell remains undimmed.

- Masaki Kobayashi’s stunningly beautiful anthology of Japanese ghost stories KWAI DAN (1964) is both a captivatingly creepy horror film and an elegant treatise on death and loss.

- Crime drama HANA-BI (Takeshi Kitano, 1997) tells the story of a tough ex-cop who is forced to retire after a tragic accident, sending him into a spiral of depression, resulting in some questionable decisions.

- Shohei Imamura’s haunting BLACK RAIN (1989) opens in Hiroshima on the seemingly unremarkable morning of August 6, 1945. Despite its searing, horrifying vision of the immediate aftermath of the nuclear blast, Imamura approaches his story of a family’s experience with compassion and restraint.

- A hitman is recruited for an impossible assignment in BRANDED TO KILL (Seijun Suzuki, 1967); when it goes badly wrong he soon becomes the hunted, threatening both his life and his sanity.

- In WOMAN OF THE DUNES (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1964) a man misses the last bus home and spends the night sharing a young widow’s desert shack, only to find the next day that he’s unable to leave. Winner of a Special Jury Prize at Cannes in 1964, the film combines an extremely erotic drama with a terrifically gripping thriller.

- Kore-edâ’s AFTER LIFE (Hirokazu Kore-edâ, 1998) challenges the viewer to reflect on the experiences that most make life worth living with humour and tenderness, in his down-to-earth fantasy set in a posthumous limbo.

- Further titles in the collection include: YOUTH OF THE BEAST (Seijun Suzuki, 1963), GATE OF HELL (Teinosuke Kinugasa, 1953) and CRUEL STORY OF YOUTH (Nagisa Ôshima, 1960).

YASUJIRÔ OZU COLLECTION (5 JUNE)

Famed for his distinctive technical and visual style, and often cited as cinema’s greatest director, YASUJIRÔ OZU’S films use minimalist storytelling and an emphasis on character to paint a portrait of family life and the relationships between the generations. In June BFI Player will release a new collection of 25 of Ozu’s films, the vast majority of which have never been available on VOD before:

- Ozu’s deceptively simple family drama I WAS BORN, BUT... (1932) is one of the world’s best loved silent films. Subtitled, ‘A picture-book for grown-ups’ it tells of generational conflict from a child’s point of view.

- Reportedly one of Ozu’s personal favourites, the funny and tender THE FLAVOUR OF GREEN TEA OVER RICE (1952) is an exquisite domestic drama charting a marital crisis. Also released on BFI Blu-ray/DVD on 18 May.

- The masterly TOKYO STORY (1953) is often cited as one of the greatest films of all time. An elderly provincial couple travel to Tokyo to visit their busy grown-up children, but only their widowed daughter-in-law shows them patient kindness. Also released on BFI Blu-ray on 15 June.

- A Tokyo suburb is the backdrop to cheerful comedy GOOD MORNING (1959). Disillusioned with meaningless talk to their elders, two brothers take a vow of silence when their parents refuse to buy them a TV.

- In LATE AUTUMN (1960), college nostalgia inspires a group of middle-aged men to match-make for the widow of one of their friends and her daughter; they have no idea of the strife their careless interference will cause.

- Ozu’s elegiac final film, AN AUTUMN AFTERNOON (1962), charts the inevitable eclipse of older generations by irreverent youth. A cast of tragi-comic characters weave seamlessly through this gently satirical portrayal of life’s inevitable, endless cycle.

- EARLY SUMMER (1951) is a wonderfully poised ensemble work. When family, friends and colleagues pressure Noriko (Setsuko Hara) to marry, they provoke a surprising decision with wide-reaching consequences.

- Ozu’s first colour film, EQUINOX FLOWER (1958) is a deft comedy that takes an ironic look at the decline of paternal authority. The director’s playful use of colour, poetry and arch humour combine to make this tale of old versus new at once deeply moving and razor-sharp.

- The hugely influential award-winning masterpiece, LATE SPRING (1949) is a tender meditation on family politics, sacrifice and the status quo which examines the compromise between modernity and tradition.
- Hugely popular when it was released, DRAGNET GIRL (1933) remains one of Ozu’s most enduring silent films; by day, sweet-faced Tokiko (Tanaka Kinuyo) is an ordinary typist but come nightfall she’s a glamorous, fun-loving gangster’s moll. When her boyfriend starts to stray, she is forced to confront the effects of her lifestyle.
- WALK CHEERFULLY (1930) sees Ozu combine international cinematic influences with comic touches all of his own. When the leader of a gang of hooligans falls for the beautiful and virtuous Yasue he faces a tough decision: go straight to win her heart or carry on with his life of petty crime and easy luxury.
- With exams looming, Takahashi finds a creative way to avoid doing his revision in I FLUNKED, BUT... (1930), a roguish comedy reminiscent of Harold Lloyd’s THE FRESHMAN.
- Ozu’s earliest surviving film, DAYS OF YOUTH (1929), follows students Watanabe and Yamamoto as they unknowingly compete for the affections of the same girl.
- Hirano and his friends are happily enjoying a carefree college life in WHERE NOW ARE THE DREAMS OF YOUTH? (1932), but when tragedy strikes everything changes.
- WOMAN OF TOKYO (1933) is a tragic tale of misunderstood sacrifice which sees Ozu experimenting with the cutaways that were to become so associated with his later style.
- Made just after TOKYO STORY, EARLY SPRING (1956) tackles the problems of young salaried workers. Shoji and his wife Masako struggle to come to terms with a family tragedy. When the office flirt starts to interest Shoji, the couple’s fragile peace is severely threatened.
- Ozu’s last film in black and white, TOKYO TWILIGHT (1957) is a masterpiece of atmospheric chiaroscuro. Abandoned by their mother when they were young, sisters Akiko and Takako live with their father. Each nurses her own personal sorrow but when Akiko falls into desperate trouble she turns away from her family.

CULT COLLECTION (3 JULY)
The rise of Japanese erotica and exploitation will be explored with a selection of CULT films in July:
- A young woman, already a jaded sexual veteran, embarks on an odyssey of self-discovery in GUSHING PRAYER (Masao Adachi, Haruhiko Arai, 1971); the most cryptic and formally extreme pink film from the most politically radical director to work in the field, Masao Adachi.
- The first in the low-budget, Japanese pop-exploitation series, STRAY CAT ROCK: DELINQUENT GIRL BOSS (Yasuharu Hasebe, 1970) features pop stars Akiko Wada and Meiko Kaji as two tough biker girls who form a friendship.
- Thought to have inspired Tarantino’s Kill Bill, FEMALE PRISONER #701: SCORPION (Shun’ya Itô, 1972) follows Matsu (Meiko Kaji), known as ‘Scorpion’, who is imprisoned after she is betrayed by her manipulative ex-boyfriend and sent to a female prison full of sadistic guards and disobedient prisoners.
- Based on the manga series of the same name, LADY SNOWBLOOD (Toshiya Fujita, 1973) follows a woman looking to enact vengeance upon the men who raped her mother and murdered both her father and brother.
- In Nobuhiko Ôbayashi’s cult classic HOUSE (1977), a school girl visits her ailing aunt’s creaky manor with six classmates only to be greeted by supernatural visions and evil spirits.

ANIME COLLECTION (31 JULY)
The ANIME collection will launch in late July, with titles to be confirmed soon.

INDEPENDENCE COLLECTION (21 AUGUST)
The INDEPENDENCE collection will feature the work of radicals and rebels of the Japanese New Wave and the talents that emerged through Japan’s thriving independent film scenes in the 90s:
- A scandalous, kaleidoscopic vision of Tokyo’s 1960s queer underground, FUNERAL PARADE OF ROSES (Toshio Matsumoto, 1969) is an electrifying collision of the avant garde, trash aesthetics, documentary and drama. A one-of-a-kind counter-culture classic. Also out on BFI Blu-ray on 18 May.
- Shin’ya Tsukamoto’s TETSUO: THE IRON MAN (1989) is a wild cyberpunk tale of a businessman’s agonising transformation into a walking scrap heap and a jaggedly dehumansed vision of the future.
- Hirokazu Kore-eda’s first fiction feature MABOROSI (1995) is a haunting and meditative film which traces a widow’s attempts to cope with and comprehend her bereavement after her husband’s sudden death. MABOROSI announced a vital new presence in Japanese cinema.
- With her father taken ill and his business going belly-up, Sawako leaves Tokyo to move back to her rural hometown in **SAWAKO DECIDES** (Yuya Ishii, 2010). But the elderly female workforce resents her, her hopeless boyfriend tracks her down, and Sawako begins to despair of ever making sense of her life.
- Slapstick comedy **GETTING ANY?** (Takeshi Kitano, 1995) follows a man’s obsession to own a car so he can have sex in it. On his mission to earn enough money he takes a number of unusual jobs and an escalating series of crazy situations unfolds.
- **THE WOODSMAN AND THE RAIN** (Shûichi Okita, 2011) sees an improbable friendship develop between a 60-year-old lumberjack who lives in a mountain village and a film director who shows up to shoot a zombie movie. A sharp satire of the madness of movie-making and a sedately paced, charming character comedy.
- Japanese cinema’s enfant terrible, Sion Sono, unleashes a demented, whirlwind tale of cults, love, violence and perversion in **LOVE EXPOSURE** (2008).
- Ten years after becoming the youngest winner of the Caméra d’Or, Naomi Kawase returned to the Cannes Film Festival and claimed the prestigious Grand Prix for **THE MOURNING FOREST** (2007), a beautiful and contemplative portrait of grief that follows a nurse who still carries the burden of her young son’s death.
- Other titles in the collection include **A SCENE AT THE SEA** (Takeshi Kitano, 1991), **DANGAN RUNNER** (Sabu, 1996) and **ZIGEUNERWEISEN** (Seijun Suzuki, 1980).

**21ST CENTURY COLLECTION (18 SEPTEMBER)**

In September, BFI Player will celebrate the latest Japanese filmmakers that are making waves, including **Sion Sono**, **Naomi Kawase**, **Kiyoshi Kurosawa** and **Yuya Ishii**:

- Naomi Kawase’s island-set **STILL THE WATER** (2014) is a coming-of-age story of two teenagers dealing with the interwoven cycle of life, death and love.
- A struggling street food vendor accepts help from an elderly lady with a sensational recipe up her sleeve, in **SWEET BEAN** (Naomi Kawase, 2015), a bittersweet drama of culinary redemption.
- Four children are left to fend for themselves in a Tokyo apartment by their scatterbrained and selfish mother in **NOBODY KNOWS** (Hirokazu Kore-eda, 2005). Kore-eda’s heartbreaking study of childhood destroyed by neglect and societal indifference boasts superb naturalistic performances.
- **STILL WALKING** (Hirokazu Kore-eda, 2008) is a subtle, moving account of the tensions within a family and Kore-edà’s most Ozu-like film; forty-year-old Ryota, with his wife and stepson, visits his elderly parents to commemorate his older brother, who died saving a boy from drowning.
- **COLD FISH** (Sion Sono, 2010) follows a quiet and unambitious owner of a tropical fish shop whose life and family are taken over by a fellow fish entrepreneur who happens to be a serial killer.
- Sion Sono’s **TOKYO TRIBE** (2014) is an ingenious hybrid of Yakuza gang action and hip-hop musical, set in an undisclosed future, where Tokyo is ruled by street gangs.
- **MITSUKO DELIVERS** (Yuya Ishii, 2011) could be described as a Japanese **AMELIE**, but it has a peculiar charm all of its own; Mitsuko has an unusual philosophy: follows the clouds wherever they take you. This itinerant lifestyle has led to her pregnancy by an absent Californian. Whimsical, offbeat and upending.
- Takashi Miike’s **FOR LOVE’S SAKE** (Takashi Miike, 2012) is a pop musical stuffed with golden oldies from the 60s and a riff on Romeo and Juliet.
- Other titles in the collection include: **JOURNEY TO THE SHORE** (Kiyoshi Kurosawa, 2015), **CREepy** (Kiyoshi Kurosawa, 2016), **THE LUST OF ANGELS** (Nagisa Isogai, 2014) and **HARMONIUM** (Kôji Fukada, 2016).

**EARLY FILMS OF JAPAN 1894-1914 (12 OCTOBER)**

These incredibly rare early films of Japan are drawn from the BFI National Archive and are the earliest known surviving films of Japan. The films, which range from 1894-1914, including the Meiji period up to 1912, have been remastered and digitised under the expert supervision of archivists at the BFI National Archive Conservation Centre. **EARLY FILMS OF JAPAN** bring a Western perspective on Japan and Japanese life, covering a variety of subjects, everyday events and locations. They give 21st century viewers a fascinating insight into Japan, both as a nation of rich history and cultural traditions as well as a country embracing modernity and technological innovation. Highlights of this **free** collection, which also features spectacular examples of early colour film and will be announced in full in October, include:

- **JAPANESE DANCERS** (1894), the oldest surviving film, captures the hypnotic movements of three Japanese women performing an Imperial dance from The Mikado
- **AINUS OF JAPAN** (1913) is a unique record of the Ainu, the indigenous people of the island of Hokkaido
- **JAPANESE FESTIVAL** (1910) celebrating the 50th anniversary of the opening of Yokohama’s Harbour
- **SHOOTING THE RAPIDS ON THE RIVER OZU IN JAPAN** (1907) a hair-raising ride along the River Ozu
J-HORROR COLLECTION (30 OCTOBER)
The J-HORROR collection celebrates the phenomenon that was kickstarted by directors such as Hideo Nakata, Shin’ya Tsukamoto and Takashi Miike, who all made waves internationally with their innovative and terrifying brand of horror:

- Hideo Nakata’s breakout horror hit RING (1998), which kick-started the J-Horror movement, follows a journalist who is investigating a cursed videotape that kills the viewer seven days after watching it.
- Nakata’s follow-up to RING was the incredibly accomplished chiller DARK WATER (2002), in which a single mother desperately tries to shield her daughter from hidden terrors in her apartment block.
- Prolific director Takashi Miike – who has more than 100 directing credits to his name – was at the heart of the explosion of J-Horror. Miike films including the disturbing masterpiece AUDITION (1999), horror comedy GOZU (Takashi Miike, 2003) and surreal zombie musical THE HAPPINESS OF THE KATAKURIS (Takashi Miike, 2001) will all be available in the J-Horror collection.
- BATTLE ROYALE (Kinji Fukasaku, 2000) follows a group of high-school students that are forced to fight to the death by a totalitarian government and was a clear influence on the HUNGER GAMES franchise.
- Shin’ya Tsukamoto’s sequel to TETSUO: THE IRON MAN (available in the Independence collections), TETSUO II: BODY HAMMER (1992) has the Iron Man transforming into a cyberkinetic gun when a gang of vicious skinheads kidnap his son.
- Award-winning filmmaker Kiyoshi Kurosawa delivered one of the finest entries in the J-Horror genre with PULSE (2001), a moody and spiritually terrifying film that delivers existential dread along with its frights.
- Also available in the J-Horror collection will be CURE (Kiyoshi Kurosawa, 1997), KURONEKO (Kaneto Shindô, 1968) and A SNAKE OF JUNE (Shin’ya Tsukamoto, 2002).

DVD AND BLU-RAY
A host of classic and contemporary Japanese films will be released on Blu-ray and DVD by the BFI in May and June as part of BFI JAPAN (and be made available day-and-date on BFI Player). All these forthcoming titles will contain special features and the first pressings will have an illustrated booklet:

- Reportedly one of Ozu’s personal favourites, the funny and tender THE FLAVOUR OF GREEN TEA OVER RICE (Yasujiro Ozu, 1952) will be released on Blu-ray/DVD for the first time in the UK in a Dual Format Edition on 18 May.
- Also on 18 May, Toshiro Matsumoto’s controversial debut FUNERAL PARADE OF THE ROSES (1969) will receive its UK Blu-ray premiere. A counter cultural, anti-establishment milestone, this highly-influential avant-garde classic (which counts Stanley Kubrick amongst its admirers) is a one-of-a-kind cinematic experience.
- On 15 June a brand new 4K restoration of Ozu’s TOKYO STORY (1953) will be released on Blu-ray. One of the greatest films of all time, this enduring masterpiece has never looked so good and is an essential addition to any cinephile’s collection.
- Released on 29 June will be the TAKESHI KITANO COLLECTION, a Blu-ray boxset featuring three of the director’s most popular titles SONATINE (1993), VIOLENT COP (1989) and BOILING POINT (1990), all of which are being made available in high definition in the UK for the first time.

THE JAPANESE CINEMA BOOK
Out now in e-book and print editions from the BFI and Bloomsbury, The Japanese Cinema Book provides a new and comprehensive survey of one of the world’s most fascinating and widely admired filmmaking regions. Ranging from renowned directors such as Kurosawa and Ozu to neglected popular genres such as the film musical and encompassing topics such as ecology, spectatorship, home-movies, colonial history and relations with Hollywood and Europe, The Japanese Cinema Book presents a set of new, and often surprising, perspectives on Japanese film. Edited by Hideaki Fujiki (Nagoya University, Japan) and Alastair Phillips (University of Warwick, UK), the book features writing from a broad range of expert scholars and critics, and provides a groundbreaking picture of the different ways in which Japanese cinema may be understood as a local, regional, national, transnational and global phenomenon.

UK WIDE ACTIVITY
The BFI will re-release Akira Kurosawa’s timeless classic SEVEN SAMURAI (1954) in selected cinemas UK-wide on 23 October (pending the reopening of cinemas). One of cinema’s most legendary epics, SEVEN SAMURAI has influenced the work of directors from George Lucas to Steven Spielberg, and spawned remakes, such as John Sturges’ acclaimed Western, THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN (1960). With their village raided every year by vicious bandits, a group of peasants hire seven samurai warriors to protect them.
For audiences across the UK, the BFI have curated a touring package of classic Japanese films, many in new 4K restorations, so that regional cinemas are able to support BFI JAPAN, with key titles from Ozu, Kurosawa and Matsumoto being made available from the autumn and into 2021. The BFI will work in partnership with the BFI Film Audience Network to help venues book titles and host special events once they are able to consider reopening to the public.

BFI JAPAN AT BFI SOUTHBANK

BFI JAPAN will continue at BFI Southbank once the venues has reopened:

- **THE GOLDEN AGE** (Late 2020, dates TBC), curated by Alexander Jacoby (Oxford Brookes) and James Bell (Sight & Sound), surveys the great Japanese studio era from the 1930s to the early 1960s. The season will celebrate the work of filmmakers such as Kenji Mizoguchi, Yasujirō Ozu, Mikio Naruse and Akira Kurosawa, who crafted films that rank among the supreme masterpieces of world cinema – their visions embodied through the performances of great actors such as Kinuyo Tanaka, Setsuko Hara, Hideko Takamine and Toshirō Mifune.

- **RADICALS AND REBELS** (Late 2020, dates TBC), curated by Alexander Jacoby (Oxford Brookes) and James Bell (Sight & Sound), features 20th Century Japanese films made after 1964, including the Shochiku New Wave and genre classics of the 1990s. The season will spotlight directors like Seijun Suzuki who drew inspiration from international pop culture to re-energise genre cinema in exciting, radical ways, as well as a new wave of independent filmmakers such as Nagisa Oshima and Kiju Yoshida, who crafted films of uncompromising individuality and political engagement that commented forcefully on issues such as racism, crime and gender norms.

- **21ST CENTURY JAPAN** (Early 2021, dates TBC), co-presented by the Japan Foundation and curated by Junko Takekawa (The Japan Foundation), this season will focus on work made after 2000, presenting films rarely seen in the UK that show just how versatile contemporary Japanese cinema is.

- **ANIME** (Summer 2021, dates TBC), curated by Justin Johnson (BFI) and writer Hanako Miyata. This major two month season will spotlight the early years of anime, classics of the 80s and 90s directed by key figures such as Satoshi Kon and Mamoru Oshii, contemporary masters like Makoto Shinkai and Mamoro Hosoda and female filmmakers such as Naoko Yamada. Plus regular screenings of mega-hits from Studio Ghibli and their master filmmakers including Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata.

MEDIATHEQUE COLLECTION – LOST IN JAPAN

The BFI Southbank Mediatheque – which gives audiences free access to thousands of items from the BFI National Archive – will feature a new collection to coincide with BFI JAPAN when the venue reopens. LOST IN JAPAN will explore depictions of Japan, its culture and relationship with the UK across the past five decades. Join Russell Harty as he tours JAPAN IN AQUARIUS (1971), and backpacker Ian Wright as he travels from Tokyo to Taiwan in LONELY PLANET (1995). WIRED IN JAPAN (1988) looks at tech and female J-pop stars, while in SOUTH OF WATFORD (1985) we meet anarchic duo Frank Chickens. Elsewhere in the arts, MANGA EROTICA (2000) surveys the more explicit realms of animation and a cult figure is profiled in SCENES BY THE SEA: THE LIFE AND CINEMA OF ‘BEAT’ TAKESHI KITANO (2001). Our own rapidly fragmenting corner of the globe comes under scrutiny, meanwhile, in AS OTHERS SEE US – A JAPANESE VIEW OF EUROPE (1993).

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

BFI JAPAN will also feature a programme presented in collaboration with international partners including the National Film Archive Japan (NFAJ) in Tokyo, with more details to be announced soon.

#BFIJapan
Visit www.bfi.org.uk/japan for more information

– ENDS –
STILLS AND MOVING IMAGE ASSETS
Clips from selected archive titles and BFI DVD releases are available for press use on request. All the below images and more can be downloaded via this link:
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3sz5kr0ch0p8mxar/AAAFwOiC3zhaDI7Hf2eiAaYa?dl=0
NOTES TO EDITORS:

Press Contacts:

Liz Parkinson – PR Manager, BFI Cultural Programme
liz.parkinson@bfi.org.uk / 020 7957 8918 / 07810 378203

Judy Wells – Director, Press and PR, BFI
judy.wells@bfi.org.uk / 020 7957 8919 / 07984 180501

About the BFI
The BFI is the UK’s lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of World Cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.

About BFI Player
BFI Player is the greatest global cinema on demand. You can rent the latest releases, subscribe to classics and explore the best free archive titles from the BFI National Archive and UK-wide National and Regional archive partners. Since launching in 2013, BFI Player has become a go-to destination to access a wide range of films that many people may be unable to see at their local cinema. As well as being accessible to UK audiences through the BFI’s own website, (https://player.bfi.org.uk/), BFI Player is also available through a range of video platforms, including Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV and to viewers in the USA on the Roku Channel. BFI Player is home to collections which have been expertly curated by BFI programmers and special guests, offering audiences a different type of streaming experience.

New customers to BFI Player are offered a 14-day free trial to familiarise themselves with the service, after which it will automatically turn into a paid subscription for £4.99 per month unless cancelled before the trial ends.

About the BFI Film Audience Network
Supported by National Lottery funding, the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN), is central to the BFI’s aim to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone. Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN is a unique, UK-wide collaboration made up of eight Hubs managed by leading film organisations and venues strategically placed around the country. FAN also supports talent development with BFI NETWORK Talent Executives in each of the English Hubs, with a mission to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers.

BFI Japan is a celebration of more than a century of Japanese cinema, led by BFI, the Independent Cinema Office and Film Hub Midlands on behalf of the BFI Film Audience network, supported by funds from the National Lottery.