

Japanese films
since 1997:

Changes & Challenges since a Miracle Year

Mark Schilling

Wednesday, Sep. 23rd, 7:00 pm on Zoom

In 1997 Takeshi Kitano won a Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival for “Hana-Bi,” Hayao Miyazaki’s “Princess Mononoke” became the biggest hit in the history of Japanese films and Kiyoshi Kurosawa’s “Cure” helped usher in the “J-Horror” boom. But this did not mark a return to the glories of Japanese cinema’s 1950s Golden Age. Instead, developments in the current millennium have been more complex, with local commercial films (including those of Miyazaki/Studio Ghibli) establishing box office dominance over Hollywood, while previously under-represented groups, most notably women directors, have moved closer to the industry forefront. This lecture, primarily based on Schilling’s latest book “Art, Cult and Commerce: Japanese Cinema since 2000” will focus on not only industry ups and downs, but also the filmmakers, films and genres that have been the most significant, artistically and commercially.

Mark Schilling has been reviewing Japanese films for “The Japan Times” since 1989 and reporting on the Japanese film industry since 1990, presently for Variety. Since 2000 Schilling has also been a program advisor for the Udine Far East Film Festival, curating retrospectives on Nikkatsu Action films (2005), the Shinto studio (2010) and Japanese SF/fantasy films (2016). Book publications include “The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture” (1997), “The Yakuza Movie Book – A Guide to Japanese Gangster Films” (2003), “No Borders, No Limits: Nikkatsu Action Cinema” (2007) and “Art, Cult and Commerce: Japanese Cinema Since 2000.” 2019, Awai Books).

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