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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Monday, April 6, 2009

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## **<< Complete Line Up Announcement!!>> Japan Film Festival 2009**

### **Los Angeles, California—**

Japan Film Festival 2009 presented by the Japan America Media Association is pleased to announce the lineup for this year's festival. The festival will begin on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup> at Laemmle's Monica 4-Plex in Santa Monica, April 17<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> at Downtown Independent in Downtown LA. We will be showing 22 feature films including those that will be North American or Los Angeles Premiers.

### **1. Featured Films**

**Opening Film: The Sky Crawlers** Director: Mamoru Oshii April 10<sup>th</sup> (Fri) 8pm

Starring: Rinko Kikuchi, Ryo Kase, Chiaki Kuriyama, Syosuke Tanihara, Ai Yamaguchi

Animation film featuring the voice of Rinko Kikuchi, Academy Award nominee. Director Mamoru Oshii was nominated for the Golden Lion Award for this film at the 2008 Venice Film Festival.

"Kildren" are ageless fighter pilots. They continue to live as adolescence until their death in battle. They are destined to fight in endless war to "entertain" the people who live in a peaceful world.

**Closing Film: Vacation** Director: Hajime Kadoi April 19<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 6pm

Starring: Kaoru Kobayashi, Hidetoshi Nishijima, Nene Otsuka, Ren Osugi, Shuji Kashiwabara

2008 Dubai International Film Festival Special Jury Prize winner and Official Selection for the 2008 Toronto International Film Festival.

Hirai, a veteran prison guard, was getting married to Mika, a single mother. Originally hoping to make time to be with his new family, he found out that he would be entitled to a week's vacation - if he acts as the execution assistant.

**Always 2 Sunset Third Street (LA Premier)** Director: Takashi Yamazaki April 12<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 5:30pm, April 18<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 12pm, April 26<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 2:30pm

Starring: Hidetaka Yoshioka, Shinichi Tsutsumi, Koyuki, Maki Horikita, Hiroko Yakushimaru

Starring Koyuki (Last Samurai) and other casts from the previous installment.

The scene is set four months after the previous series in the Tokyo Shitamachi area. It tells of human events of the residents who live in Yuuhi machi 3 chome.

**Mushi-shi (LA Premier)** Director: Katsuhiro Otomo April 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 4:10pm

Starring: Joe Odagiri, Makiko Esumi, Nao Omori, Yu Aoi

A mystery and fantasy movie of Katsuhiro Otomo who directed "AKIRA" and "Steamboy".

This is the mysterious story of a "Mushi-shi" Ginko who has the ability to calm insects and heal people 100 years ago when mysterious insects "Mushi" existed.

**Campaign** Director: Soda Kazuhiro April 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 1pm

Starring: Kazuhiko Yamauchi, Sayuri Yamauchi, Junichiro Koizumi, Junko Kawaguchi

*Kazuhiro Yamauchi, the main star in this film, will be coming to JFF for a Q&A session!!*

Official selection of the 2007 Berlin International Film Festival. Documentary film.

In the fall of 2005, 40-year-old, self-employed Kazuhiko "Yama-san" Yamauchi's peaceful, humdrum life was turned upside-down. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had suddenly

chosen him as its official candidate to run for a vacant seat on the Kawasaki city council. Yama-san had zero experience in politics, no charisma, no supporters, no constituency, and no time to prepare for the impending election.

Retribution Director: Kiyoshi Kurosawa April 10<sup>th</sup> (Fri) 5:30pm, April 13<sup>th</sup> (Mon) 9:45pm, April 18<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 7:45pm

Starring: Koji Yakusho, Manami Konishi, Riona Hazuki, Tsuyoshi Ihara, Joe Odagiri, Ryo Kase

Director Kiyoshi Kurosawa ("Tokyo Sonata")'s horror film that terrified the world at 2006 Venice Film Festival, starring Koji Yakusho ("Babel") who is a regular actor in Kiyoshi Kurosawa's films.

Detective Yoshioka is investigating a mysterious murder case. However, clues begin to appear that point to him being the murder. As the investigation progresses, even he begins to wonder whether he may be the murderer that he is pursuing.

The Battery Director: Yojiro Takita April 12<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 3:00pm, April 19<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 12pm, April 26<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 12pm

Starring: Kento Hayashi, Kenta Yamada, Yuuki Amami, Goro Kishitani, Masato Hagiwara

A feature film by the Academy Award winning director Yojiro Takida (Departures).

A story of a junior high school boy, who feels alone because of his superior talent as a baseball pitcher. He overcomes his conflict with his family and through the process nurtures his friendship with his classmate and "battery" (pitcher and catcher partnership) partner.

ICHI (LA Premier) Director: Fumihiko Sori April 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 9:30pm

Starring: Haruka Ayase, Shido Nakamura, Yosuke Kubozuka, Akira Emoto, Riki Takeuchi, Takao Osawa

A new and female version of the famous sword hero "Zatoichi", previously performed by world famous actors such as Shintaro Katsu and Takeshi Kitano.

The heroine, Ichi, depends on only her sword hidden in a cane to fight fiercely with men. She falls in love with a samurai through her fights, which leads to her misfortune.

The Gift from Beate Director: Tomoko Fujiwara April 12<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 1pm, April 18<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 2:45pm, April 25<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 6pm

Starring: Beate Sirota Gordon

Ms. Beate Sirota Gordon makes every effort to build "essential equality of the sexes" in the Constitution of Japan after WW II. Supported by her effort, Japanese women devote their energies to establishing a sex equal society.

252: Signal of Life (US Premier) Director: Nobuo Mizuta April 12<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 8:30pm, April 19<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 3pm, April 26<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 5pm

Starring: Hideaki Ito, Masaaki Uchino, Takayuki Yamada, Yu Kashii, Yuichi Kimura

With the biggest monster Typhoon ever to hit Japan, people try to survive while in a furious panic.

### **【Tribute to actor, Ken Ogata】**

A Long Walk (US Premier) Director: Eiji Okuda April 13<sup>th</sup> (Mon) 4pm, April 14<sup>th</sup> (Tues) 6:30pm, April 17<sup>th</sup> (Fri) 7pm.

Starring: Ken Ogata, Saki Takaoka, Kana Sugiura, Shota Matsuda, Eiji Okuda

Veteran actor Ken Ogata stars in one of his final roles. A multiple prize winner at the 2006 Montreal World Film Festival (2006 Montréal World Film Festival Grand Prix des Amériques, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury, and the FIPRESCI Prize).

A middle-aged man who suffers from remorse in his life meets a girl who has blocked out her emotions after being repeatedly abused by her mother. While chased as a kidnapper, he decides to take off on a journey of redemption.

Vengeance is Mine Director: Shohei Imamura April 14<sup>th</sup> (Tues) 3:30pm, April 17<sup>th</sup> (Fri) 9:45pm

Starring: Ken Ogata, Rentaro Mikuni, Chocho Miyako, Mitsuko Baisyo, Mayumi Ogawa

A story of a man who kills five people and flees through Japan. The film show his life of crime, women, and his relation with his father.

## 2. Schedule

### April 10-16

Laemmle's Monica 4-plex

#### April 10th (Fri)

1:00pm Yokohama Mary  
3:15pm Submission Shorts  
(The 8th Samurai, Rose-colored  
Freeway, etc.)  
5:30pm Retribution  
8:00pm Opening: The Sky Crawlers

#### April 11th (Sat)

1:00pm Campaign  
4:10pm Mushi-shi  
7:00pm Evangelion 1.0 You Are  
(Not) Alone  
9:30pm ICHI

#### April 12th (Sun)

1:00pm The Gift from Beate  
3:45pm The Battery  
5:30pm Always – Sunset on Third  
Street 2  
8:30pm 252: Signal of Life

#### April 13th (Mon)

1:15pm FUNUKE Show some love,  
you losers!  
4:00pm A Long Walk  
6:45pm SEX is no laughing matter  
9:45pm Retribution

#### April 14th (Tue)

1:00pm Submission Feature  
3:30pm Vengeance is Mine  
6:30pm A Long Walk  
9:30pm SEX is no laughing matter

#### April 15th (Wed)

1:15pm Yokohama Mary  
3:30pm Dotoku –Roots of Blessing  
6:30pm SEX is no laughing matter  
9:30pm FUNUKE Show some love,  
you losers!

#### April 16th (Thu)

1:00pm Submission Feature  
3:30pm Shorts  
6:40pm From the Season with  
Sakura  
9:00pm Submission Shorts  
(The 8th Samurai, CannibAlien, etc.)

### April 17-19

Downtown Independent

#### April 17th (Fri)

1:00pm School Submissions  
4:30pm From the Season with Sakura  
7:00pm A Long Walk  
9:45pm Vengeance is Mine

#### April 18th (Sat)

12:00pm Always – Sunset on Third  
Street 2  
2:45pm The Gift from Beate  
5:15pm FUNUKE Show some love,  
you losers!  
7:45pm Retribution  
10:00pm Blitzkrieg BOP

#### April 19th (Sun)

12:00pm The Battery  
3:00pm 252: Signal of Life  
6:00pm Closing: Vacation

### April 25-26 Starplex Cinemas

#### April 25th (Sat)

10:00am Before the Dawn  
1:00pm Before the Dawn  
3:30pm Hannari  
6:00pm The Gift from Beate

#### April 26th (Sun)

10:00am Toyo's Camera  
12:00pm The Battery  
2:30pm Always – Sunset on Third  
Street 2  
5:00pm 252: Signal of Life

### 3. Date and Venue

**April 10 (Fri) to 16 (Thu)**      **Laemmle's Monica 4-Plex** (Santa Monica)  
1332 2nd Street Santa Monica, 90401

**April 17 (Fri) to 19 (Sun)**      **Downtown Independent** (Downtown Los Angeles)  
251 S. Main Street Los Angeles, California 90012

**April 25 (Sat) and 26 (Sun)**      **Starplex Cinema** (Irvine)  
4626 Barranca Parkway, Irvine, CA 92604

### 4. Ticket Prices

**【Weekday: Mon to Fri】**

General ----- \$10

Students / Seniors (60+) / Children (12 and under) ----- \$7 (\*Students and Seniors with valid ID)

Matinee(before 4:30pm) ----- \$7

Advance ticket (3 tickets) ----- \$20

\*This ticket is valid for Santa Monica and Downtown LA only. It is NOT valid in Irvine. This is a voucher only and will need to be exchanged for the actual ticket at the ticket office. Your seat will not be guaranteed until you exchange it to the actual ticket. This ticket will be available until April 9th.

**【Weekends:Sat and Sun】**

All Show ----- \$10

For more information, please visit [www.jffla.org](http://www.jffla.org).

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**Media inquiries welcome!**