



Ora, Ora Be Goin' Alone

おらおらでひとりいぐも

2020/138min/Colour/English Subtitles

Distributor: Asmic Ace, Inc.

Director: OKITA Shuichi

Cast: TANAKA Yuko, AOI Yu

Exeter Phoenix screening information:

Wed 2 Mar	Kiba: The Fangs of Fiction	6.00 pm
Wed 9 Mar	Ora, Ora Be Goin' Alone	7.00 pm
Wed 16 Mar	Life: Untitled	6.00 pm
Sun 20 Mar	Aristocrats	3.00 pm
Wed 23 Mar	Iwane: Sword of Serenity	8.00 pm
Wed 30 Mar	The House of the Lost on the Cape	8.00 pm

After decades of low birth rates and lengthening life spans, Japan now has both the highest proportion of older people over 65 (29%) as well as the longest average life expectancy of any country in the world. UN estimates that the average Japanese woman lives to the age of 89, while men will live to 82. Now, the country is looking with concern towards 2025, the year when the post-war baby boomers will create a sudden surge in those over 80 who are more likely to start using more health and social care resources, or who will begin to receive care from family members. While the looming care crisis of 2025 is often discussed as problem of resources (not enough paid care workers or public funds), artists and writers have also drawn our attention to the very human dimension of this historically unprecedented moment. Their work is poignant and gripping, touching on the sometimes humorous, sometimes sombre, sometimes transcendent moments of aging and care, which has become a day-to-day reality for everyone. They remind us that as the numbers of older people increase, they also become more diverse; each one has a story to tell, and we ought to listen if we too are lucky enough to reach a good old age.

In 2021, Japan became the second country in the world after the UK, to appoint a 'Minister of Loneliness,' tasked with implementing policies to reduce social isolation. While the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified concerns about isolation, the steady increase in single-person households has long been a trend for older people. Smaller nuclear households became the norm in post-war Japan, and the generation of younger people who adapted to the prosperous city-based economy now find themselves as empty nesters. Women of this generation who set aside career aspirations to take care of the household might feel liberated in later life, once again taking on the challenge of a new job or devoting themselves to volunteer work, education, or hobbies. But as older couples become frail or disabled, more time may be spent taking care of each other. Since 2019, 'the old caring for the old' (*rorokaigo*) has surpassed care from children as the most common form of unpaid care arrangement for older people, often making the carer exhausted and isolated.

Eventually, when care has ended, the bereaved find themselves more alone than ever. In Tokyo, over 42% of older people live alone. Lonely older people have become targets for telephone fraud and other scams. In this way, staying alone as one grows older can turn the house into a trap. Nationwide, around 30,000 people, most of them older, die alone in their

Dates & Venues:

4 – 13 February
ICA, London

5 – 22 February
Phoenix, Leicester

5 February – 26 March
Firstsite, Colchester

6 – 27 February
Eden Court, Inverness

6 – 27 February
Watershed, Bristol

8 – 23 February
Depot, Lewes

9 – 27 February
Storyhouse, Chester

12 February – 1 March
Cambridge Film Trust, Cambridge

13 February – 2 March
Aberystwyth Arts Centre

13 February – 27 March
Hyde Park Picture House, Leeds

13 February – 27 March
Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff

15 February – 3 March
HOME, Manchester

16 February – 16 March
Brewery Arts Cinema, Kendal

21 February – 31 March
Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle

26 February – 20 March
Queen's Film Theatre, Belfast

28 February – 28 March

Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling

1 – 30 March
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

2 – 15 March
Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee

2 – 30 March
Exeter Phoenix, Exeter

4 – 6 March
QUAD, Derby

7 – 28 March
Cinema City, Norwich

7 – 28 March
City Screen Picturehouse, York

8 – 31 March
Showroom Cinema, Sheffield

12 – 20 March
Belmont Filmhouse, Aberdeen

15 – 29 March
Plymouth Arts Cinema, Plymouth

18 – 24 March
Broadway, Nottingham

18 – 24 March
Filmhouse, Edinburgh

homes every year, sometimes without being discovered for weeks or months.

One distinguishing feature of growing older in Japan, whether alone or with others, is the deepening feeling toward the spirits of the deceased. These spirits are familiar watchful presences; memorialising the deceased becomes way of remembering one's own life in all of its ups and downs. It is both a discovery of one's own individual life story, and the gratitude for the connection with others that made life possible. The main question for Japan's aging society is not how to age healthier, but how to age together, connecting to each other across generations, backgrounds, and worlds.

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