

メモリーズ

Memorizu

Written & Directed by SAKANISHI Miiku

2026 / Japan / 97min / 1.85:1 / 5.1ch / Japanese - 1st feature film



Some photos are taken by us, and some are taken of us.

We continually fill albums with many memories we might forget someday.

In the hope we won't lose those moments.

That desire is always partially present in our minds when we press the shutter button, or share photos with others.

Synopsis

Yuta comes to a country town in Kyushu to take care of his father-in-law Makoto, who is recovering from a fractured leg. While helping out with Makoto's old-fashioned photo studio, Yuta exchanges smartphone videos with his wife Yuki and daughter Hana in Tokyo. No earth-shaking incidents occur, but as little details of daily life accumulate as a succession of recordings and memories, the ongoing existence of their lives as a family is gently and vividly brought to light.

Director's Bio & Filmo

SAKANISHI Miiku, Born in Tokyo in 1992.

Graduated from the Film Department at Kyoto University of Art and Design (now Kyoto University of the Arts). Began filmmaking during university, producing short films including "A Little While" and "The Night". Received the Best Film Award at the ISCA (INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CREATIVE Awards) Film Festival 2013 for "A Little While", and the Kyoto University of Art and Design Department Excellence Award for "The Night". After graduating, worked in film as an assistant director (for films like "Tsuki" and "Akaneiro ni Yakareru" directed by Yuya Ishii) and as a making-of director (for films like "Hanataba Mitai na Koi o Shita" and "Kataomoi Sekai" directed by Hiroyasu Doi). His father is SAKANISHI Isaku, the visionary director and filmmaker who established the music video genre in Japan's music scene during the 80s and 90s. He himself has directed music videos, including Awesome City Club's "Wasurezu."

"Memorizu" marks his long-awaited feature film directorial debut.

Crew

Written & Directed by: SAKANISHI Miiku

Project planning: SUN Chiapang

Cinematography: KAMAKARI Yoichi

Lighting: NAGATA Hidenori

Sound: HWANG Young Chang

Production Design: WATANABE Daichi

Editing: FUSHIMA Shinichi

Producers: DATE Masato, FUKUOKA Yoshiho, TSUCHII Tomoo

Production company: Little More Co., Ltd.

Casts

EMOTO Tasuku / HOSHI Moeka

UMEZAWA Masayo, ISAYAMA Hiroko, NARITA Yusuke, URABE Fusako

KASHII Yu / Issey OGATA

EMOTO Tasuku

Born in Tokyo. Made his film debut in the lead role of KUROKI Kazuo's "A Boy's Summer in 1945" (2003), winning Best Newcomer in the 77th Kinema Junpo Best 10 awards. Received Best Actor accolades from the 73rd Mainichi Film Concours and the 92nd Kinema Junpo Best 10 awards for his performances in MIYAKE Sho's "And Your Bird Can Sing"(2019) and Tominaga Masanori's "Dynamite Graffiti" (2019). Recent noted credits include the films TAKAHASHI Banmei's "Peaceful Death" (2020), ADACHI Mojiri's "To Heal the Heart" (2020), YOSHINO Kohei's "Anime Supremacy!" (2022), ANNO Hideaki's "Shin Masked Rider" (2023), and ARAI Haruhiko's "A Spoiling Rain" (2023), as well as the NHK (Japan

Broadcasting Corporation) drama series “Dear Radiance” (2024). Upcoming works include ARAI Haruhiko’s “The Stars and Moon Are Holes in the Sky” (set to open in Japan on December 19th 2025) and MINAMOTO Takashi’s “Samurai Vengeance” (set to open in Japan on February 27th 2026).

Issey OGATA

Born in 1952 in Fukuoka Prefecture. Started his career in theater in the 1970s, established his one-man-show style in the 1980s, and cemented his reputation as one of Japan’s leading solo performers. Won Runner-up in the 42nd Los Angeles Film Critics Association Awards’ Best Supporting Actor category for his performance in Martin Scorsese’s “Silence” (2016). Noted film credits include Alexander Sokurov’s “The Sun” (2005), Toyoda Toshiaki’s “The Miracle of Crybaby Shottan” (2018), Edward Yang’s “Yi Yi: A One and a Two” (2000), and Arthur Harari’s “Onoda: 10,000 Nights in the Jungle” (2021).

HOSHI Moeka

Born in Chiba. Won the Miss iD 2016 Grand Prize as a university student, marking the beginning of her career in show business. Achieved her first starring role in a feature film with Eda Yuuka’s “Girls’ Encounter” (2018). Her performance as Fuji in U.S. streaming show “Shogun” (2024) drew widespread attention, and also won her Best Supporting Actress in Drama Series at the 30th Annual Critics Choice Awards. Other noted film credits include IMAIZUMI Rikiya’s “Over the Town” (2021), DOI Nobuhiro’s “We Made a Beautiful Bouquet” (2021), and Omori Tatsushi’s “The Women in the Lakes” (2024). From January of 2026, she will be seen in NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) BS show “Kyotojin no Hisokana Tanoshimi: Rouge Keicho,” which represents her first starring role in a drama series.



Interview with Director

Director SAKANISHI Miiku first won recognition when his short film “For a While,” made as part of a seminar group while a student at Kyoto University of Art and Design (now Kyoto University of the Arts), won the International Students Creative Award 2013’s Domestic Picture Contents section Grand Prize. The short is an eight-minute depiction of an elementary school-age boy and girl spending time at a park.

“It has barely any story. How I could I show an everyday, ordinary stretch of time, visually? I think that’s how it started for me. Whether I’m shooting video or taking photos, I’m mindful of making a record of something. At the same time, our everyday lives are accumulations of minor moments in time, but people tend to forget such minor things, and that’s what interests me.”

His feature directorial debut, “Memorizu,” is no less focused on recordings and memories, and that which arises in between. It’s a film that intently observes people living in time, namely Yudai and Yuki, who share daily fragments of their lives via images taken with their phones.

“When I was a high schooler, the first iPhone came out. They seemed to make photography more accessible than old school cellphones. You didn’t have to be as apprehensive about shooting something, and you sometimes ended up just doing it without thinking much. It was harder to remember when you shot something, not to mention why.”

Yuki’s father Makoto runs a photo studio, commemorating important landmarks in his customers’ lives.

“When you take photos with a film camera, it’s almost as if it gives you a determination to take something good. It’s bound to be developed and remain as a physical object. Shots taken in a photo studio also have an obvious self-consciousness about them, a certain special something. People who have their photo taken surely won’t ever forget that day as well.”

Why did Sakanishi set out to become a filmmaker? “It was for a totally personal reason, but it was the biggest one.” He’s referring to his late father Isac SAKANISHI, a director of numerous music videos for hit songs from Epic Records Japan.

“He took me along to his video shoots, since I was little. He was always watching moving images of some kind with 5.1-channel audio when he was home. He passed away when I was in my second year of high school, but my first contact with moving images was entirely through the influence of my father.”

This too is a story involving recordings and memories. Sakanishi’s father left behind an extensive body of work, and furthermore, images of his father live on in his memories.

“Whenever my father’s creations were screened or released on DVD, I suddenly had to engage with him, and there were moments when I’d feel his presence descend on me. He

wasn't at home much, so I personally decided to live without a distinct consciousness of whether he's gone or still with me. His approach to education was, either find something you like doing by the time you graduate from high school and proceed along that path, or if you can't, get a job in a field that won't ever disappear like distribution or nursing care. Pursuing a career in visual media might mean being viewed as the son of Isac SAKANISHI. I was apprehensive about that. But, even so, I had an affinity for moving images, and wanted to work with them. I think that's why I chose film"

Although moving images interested him, he wasn't exactly a prolific film watcher in his youth.

"At university, I realized there were people more knowledgeable about cinema than me, then I began watching a lot of films and moving image works to find what I found appealing. I was influenced most by José Luis Guerin's "In the City of Sylvia," and also Abbas Kiarostami, Sofia Coppola, and Edward Yang. I like beautiful angles of view, and the movement of things within and what they successively evoke, so those filmmakers grabbed my attention because of that aspect."

In "Memorizu" as well, his depiction of the windows of ferries and houses staying still like picture frames, while time continues to flow along within them, is a powerful expression of his conceptual approach to creating images.

"As a university student, I sensed there are many works out there that are far more amusing and imaginative than mine. So in response, I started to consider what I could express in the absence of a narrative."

How did "Memorizu" emerge from nothing?

"Initially, I was pushing a short film project about a couple living apart who send videos to each other via their phones, and then it was suggested I develop it as a feature. Its themes would be certainty, existence, and memories. I was writing the screenplay as we were scouting locations, and what I gained through traveling helped flesh out the script. I like stimulating viewers' imaginations through depicting everyday life as ordinarily as possible, and accumulatively, so when I write screenplays, I stick notes about various parts on a wall, and it then becomes a process of rearranging them. There's a difference between what's interesting on the page and on the screen. Communicating not through conversations and such, but through images, is at the forefront of my mind."

To maximize the power of his visuals, Sakanishi's use of music is essentially restrained.

"Images and music are highly compatible. However, in my self-made films to date, I'd never used music. Sometimes, there are moments when music can sound separated from an image, and I'm fearful of that happening. Then again, for the end of this film, I always intended to put together a sequence in which music would play an important part. You could say the importance of that music in the climactic scenes exhibits my father's influence."

MEMORIZU by SAKANISHI Miiku

Criss-crossing recollections elicit emotions that can't be expressed in words. With its profound resonance, "Memorizu" will be a film that lingers in the memories of all who experience it.

*So I won't forget the one I love tomorrow.
So I can remember this feeling someday.
The endless story of family memories and records.*



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